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ECONOMIC SURVEYS
Report on Activities

1. Since May 1964, when the Trade and Surveys Division and the Division of Economic and Social Development were re-organized, the Economic Surveys Section has shared membership of the new Economic Development Division with the Planning and Policies Section. Its main activity during the year under review was the preparation of the Economic Survey of Africa.
2. Work on the Survey was commenced in 1963 in response to a request of the second session (paragraph 85 of the report of the second session). This project is also designed to accommodate proposals made in other sessions for research to be undertaken on economic problems, such as monetary systems (Resolution 30(III)), transport and communications (Resolutions 106(VI), 114(VI)), etc.
3. There has been no general survey of African problems, covering the main productive sectors, foreign trade, etc. since the publication of the "Economic Survey of Africa since 1950", prepared on the basis of research at United Nations Headquarters. This study, which dealt with a rather limited range of subjects, covered the period up to 1958, when few countries had achieved Independence. An up-to-date comparative analysis of experience by different African countries will provide a basis for governments to compare developments in their economies with those of other countries, including in many cases neighbours with similar problems. It should help those drawing up economic plans if they can see how others have succeeded or failed in dealing with some of the major obstacles

to economic development, and how rates of progress have differed in different sectors of various economies.

4. It was decided (following the views expressed by several delegates to the second session) that the Survey should be split into separate volumes for each of the main sub-regions, i.e. West Africa, North Africa, and East Africa. It is easier to reach meaningful generalisations for sub-regions than for Africa as a whole. Moreover, the preparation of sub-regional studies will help the planning of practical steps within each sub-region towards economic integration. The basic studies for the sub-regional volumes are a series of papers which have been prepared in the past 12 months on agriculture, manufacturing, etc. in each sub-region, drawing on country studies prepared in 1963 (see E/CN.14/252).

5. A short study has also been prepared of South Africa. It was decided to do this partly in order to complete the coverage of the continent; partly because, when political problems have been overcome there, the South African economy will be an important element in an integrated African continent; and partly so as to assist governments formulate their own policies and proposals, vis-à-vis the present Republic.

6. Another volume will describe the international setting of Africa's economic problems, with particular attention to the determinants of the continent's commodity exports. Some general conclusions will be drawn from the sub-regional studies for the continent as a whole.

7. Within each volume, there are three sections, one referring to the present position in the area concerned; the second to the trends which can be deduced, with particular reference to the motive forces of development; and the third to future prospects. Because of limited resources and because of lack of statistics, it will not be possible to cover all the countries in the region with equal thoroughness. An attempt is being made however to produce as comprehensive a study as possible, whilst concentrating attention to some extent on the better documented, larger economies.

8. Work has been completed on the West Africa volume and on the study of South Africa. These two parts will be published in 1965. The North Africa volume is well advanced and this may also be published before the end of 1965. Preliminary work has been undertaken on the East Africa volume, and on the volume dealing with Africa in the world economy, and it is expected that these will be completed in 1965.

9. Though mainly the responsibility of the Economic Surveys Section, a substantial part of this work is being done by the Planning and Policies Section, while other units in the secretariat have contributed material and comments on early drafts. The specialized agencies have also provided material which has been used, and help has been obtained from the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Europe.

10. The second activity that made considerable demands on the resources of the Section was the Economic Survey of Zambia. The United Nations Mission which undertook this task was appointed by both the Economic Commission for Africa and the Food and Agriculture Organization, the latter assuming responsibility mainly for the preparation of the part of the report dealing with land and agriculture. The Mission's work was carried out in response to an invitation from the Government of Zambia, who expressed the intention to have ready by the date of Independence an integrated outline of a development programme as a basis for the formulation of a sound policy for accelerated economic growth. The Mission, comprising 6 members and 16 consultants, studied all aspects of the country's economy in considerable detail, and at the end of their seven months' work, presented the Government with a report containing a number of recommendations on a wide range of subjects, which should, as the Government desires, form a framework for a comprehensive national plan.

11. Owing to the concentration of resources on the two foregoing assignments, only one number of the Economic Bulletin for Africa was produced during 1964. However, the next number makes amends by the variety of the subjects it covers. Besides the usual review of world economic conditions and of trade trends in the region and some selected countries, the Bulletin examines the behaviour of the markets for certain important commodities produced within the region, and thus focuses attention on a

subject in which the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development has aroused profound international interest. This number also contains four special articles which are all of topical interest. Two of these deal with outline development plans for two countries - Congo (Leopoldville) and Zambia. (See E/CN.14/325 Part B) and above). A third article (Inland Transport in West Africa), deals with a serious growth-inhibiting factor that could be identified in every sub-region on the continent and is duly receiving the attention of the secretariat on a regional scale. The last special study which is on Demographic Levels and Trends in Africa, surveys past and prospective population trends.

12. The Regional Advisers on Economic Research and Money, Banking and Public Finance engaged in a round of activities. These included research tasks and direct assistance to governments. The first-mentioned Adviser provided assistance in the organization of economic research for development planning with particular reference to national accounting; and the other advised two governments, one on commercial banking legislation, and the other on financial aspects of development planning.