

50361

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



PROVISIONAL

E/CN.14/SR.127(VII)
4 March 1965

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Seventh session
Nairobi, 9-23 February 1965

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND
TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING

held at the City Hall, Nairobi, on Tuesday,
23 February 1965, at 10.20 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. MBOYA (Kenya)

Secretary: Mr. SYLLA

CONTENTS:

- Working parties (resumed)
- Sub-regional office for Central Africa
- Date and place of next session (item 13 of the agenda)
(resumed)
- Closure of the session

Participants wishing to have corrections made to this provisional summary record are requested to write them on two copies of the record and to send the corrected copies to the Documents Co-ordination Office (Room 180) as soon as possible. If necessary, the corrected copies may be sent by post to the Co-ordination Unit, Economic Commission for Africa (P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) after the session, to arrive not later than 30 April 1965.

WORKING PARTIES (E/CN.14/L.300/Rev.1) (resumed)

The CHAIRMAN recalled that resolution E/CN.14/L.300/Rev.1, which had been adopted by the Commission at its 125th meeting, provided for the establishment of seven working parties each of which, with the exception of that on economic integration, would consist of ten members. The Commission must now devise some formula for determining which countries would participate in which working parties.

Mr. HAMONI (Mauritania) said that such a decision would conflict with the mandates of delegations to the Commission and was one that could only be taken at the highest level of their respective Governments. He therefore reserved his own delegation's position on the composition of the working parties.

Mr. GABDOU (Chad) supported the Mauritanian representative. His delegation, which had abstained from voting on resolution E/CN.14/L.300/Rev.1, fully agreed that any decision concerning the composition of the working parties should be taken by Governments.

Mr. BOUM (Cameroon) felt that any allocation by the Commission of places in the working parties would be premature. Delegations should first decide which working parties were of interest to their particular regional group.

Mr. GABALLAH (United Arab Republic) said that, if membership in the working parties was to be decided on a regional basis, the question would arise whether all regions were to be treated equally or whether more weight was to be given to those regions comprising the most countries.

Mr. MARTINS (Nigeria) proposed that each country should indicate to the secretariat the working parties in which it wished to participate, giving them in order of preference, from one to four. The secretariat would then proceed to set up the working parties on the basis of the information received. The selection of the participants themselves would be left to their Governments.

Lij Endalkachew MAKONNEN (Ethiopia) supported that proposal.

Mr. RASHID (United Republic of Tanzania) said that he agreed in principle with the Nigerian proposal but thought that the question raised by the UAR representative was a very important one. He suggested that the various sub-regional groups might meet informally to decide which working parties were of special interest to them before the individual countries submitted their preferences to the secretariat.

The Chairman called for a vote on the Nigerian proposal.

The Nigerian proposal was adopted by 24 votes to one with three abstentions.

Mr. MAZIGH (Tunisia) said that his delegation was obliged to table two reservations on the decision taken concerning the designation of members of the working parties. It had not been initially opposed to the Executive Secretary's suggestions (E/CN.14/L.244), indeed had sought to improve upon them by insisting that the working parties must be representative. With that consideration in mind, it had accepted the proposal that members be nominated by the Commission itself rather than by the various regions; but the procedure now decided upon was disturbing, although he did not wish to imply any lack of confidence in the Executive Secretary.

His second reservation was that the exact status of representatives from donor countries associated in the activities of the working parties had not been defined. As in the case of the former Standing Committees, they should have the status of observers, which would be in conformity with United Nations practice in similar contexts and should meet the objections raised during the discussion.

SUB-REGIONAL OFFICE FOR CENTRAL AFRICA (E/CN.14/L.318/Rev.1)

The CHAIRMAN recalled that, at the preceding meeting, the seven-Power draft resolution on the Sub-Regional Office for Central Africa (E/CN.14/L.318) had occasioned a lengthy debate and had ultimately been rejected. The same sponsors, who were all member States of the

Central African sub-region, had submitted a new draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.318/Rev.1), expressed in very similar terms. From the procedural point of view, he knew of no rule precluding the introduction of such a resolution; he accordingly invited the Commission to discuss it in the usual way.

Mr. BOUM (Cameroon) introduced the revised draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.318/Rev.1), which reflected the wishes of the countries of the Central African sub-region. Since the matter with which it dealt had been discussed at length at the previous meeting, he suggested that it should be put to the vote immediately.

Mr. MWILA (Zambia) agreed that the Commission should vote on the revised draft resolution immediately unless the majority wished to discuss it further.

Mr. RASHID (United Republic of Tanzania) questioned the wisdom of establishing a precedent by permitting reconsideration of a question that had already been decided at the previous meeting. He proposed that the Commission should decide by vote whether it wished to reopen the discussion.

Lij Endalkachew MAKONNEN (Ethiopia) seconded the Tanzanian representative's proposal.

Mr. WALTER (Mauritius) noted that the Commission's rules of procedure did not provide for reconsideration of a question that had already been disposed of, and supported the Tanzanian representative's proposal.

Mr. BOUM (Cameroon), supported by Mr. KPADO (Central African Republic), pointed out that the draft resolution before the Commission was not the same as that rejected at its previous meeting. The Commission was therefore not covering the same ground twice.

Mr. YAKER (Algeria) vigorously opposed the reintroduction of a problem that had already been settled.

At the request of the Algerian representative, the vote on the Tanzanian representative's proposal was taken by roll call.

Algeria, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Léopoldville), Gabon, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, Togo, Tunisia.

Against: Algeria, Dahomey, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, United Arab Republic.

Abstaining: Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Sudan, Zambia.

The Commission decided by 13 votes to 9 with 10 abstentions to reconsider the question of the sub-regional office for Central Africa.

Mr. RASHID (United Republic of Tanzania) asked whether some of the members of the Commission had been authorized to vote by proxy for others not present during the roll-call vote.

Mr. SYLLA (Secretary of the Commission) said that the secretariat had received written notification from Gabon to the effect that the Central African Republic had been authorized to speak and vote on its behalf, and verbal authorization from Congo (Brazzaville) entrusting its representation to Cameroon.

Mr. MATOVU (Uganda) suggested that, in view of the Commission's decision, the revised draft resolution now before it should be thoroughly discussed.

Mr. BOUM (Cameroon) proposed that the revised draft resolution should be put to the vote immediately; its subject was of vital concern to all African countries and not affected by purely national considerations.

Mr. YAKER (Algeria) proposed that the operative paragraph of the revised draft resolution should be amended to read as follows:
"Approves the measures taken by the Executive Secretary to establish the Office for this sub-region in a country of the sub-region designated in agreement with the Governments concerned".

He had further objections to the second preambular paragraph, but would, for the sake of unanimity, refrain from expressing them.

Mr. BOUM (Cameroon), speaking on behalf of the co-sponsors, accepted the amendment proposed by the Algerian representative.

The Algerian representative's amendment was adopted by 25 votes to none with three abstentions.

The draft resolution E/CN.14/L.318/Rev.1), as amended, was adopted by 26 votes to none with two abstentions.

Mr. APEDO-AMAH (Togo) protested vigorously against the decision to revert to a draft resolution which the Commission had rejected at a previous meeting. He also noted that fourteen heads of delegations had been absent when the Commission had reached its decision on the question of the members of working parties, and emphasized that no decisions should be taken unless all members were present. Furthermore, the secretariat should have informed delegations that a plenary meeting was being held.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out to the Togolese representative that the Commission could take any decision it wished, providing there was a quorum, and certainly did not have to wait until all members were present. Moreover, it was for delegations themselves to enquire about the times of meetings and ensure that they were duly represented.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY said that the secretariat had done everything possible to ensure the proper conduct of the session, and was not prepared to accept irresponsible accusations or to have doubts cast on its performance.

Mr. DIAROUMEYE (Niger) said that the heads of delegations of fourteen countries had in fact been meeting in another room; nor had they been advised that a plenary was being held. But they could blame only themselves for their oversight.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION (item 12 of the agenda) (continued)

Mr. MARTINS (Nigeria) said that in view of the decision taken to hold biennial sessions, he wished formally to renew his Government's invitation to hold the Commission's eighth session at Lagos in 1967.

The invitation was accepted by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN said that the exact dates of the session would be settled by negotiation with the host Government.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

Lij Endalkachew MAKONNEN (Ethiopia) thanked the Government of Kenya for its hospitality and all those who had contributed towards making the session a success.

The CHAIRMAN said that it had been a great experience to preside over the Commission's discussions. In considering Africa's economic future, it had been fitting for the Commission to renew its pledge to achieve the total liberation of the continent. Its resolute efforts to establish an African economy would never be entirely successful while any part of Africa remained occupied by aggressive and destructive forces. The continuation of colonial domination in Angola, Mozambique, South West Africa, Portuguese Guinea and South Africa denied those areas the right to take part in the important task of economic reconstruction and deprived the whole continent of their natural and human resources. It was tragic that one of the most economically and technically advanced parts of the continent, namely, South Africa, could not contribute to the Commission's deliberations concerning the utilization of resources and means of reciprocal assistance. No member

of the Commission could be indifferent to the inhuman policy of apartheid and the expression of pious hopes was not enough; the time had come for action in the form of economic sanctions and other measures.

He intended to send a message of greeting, on behalf of the Commission, to the Prime Minister of the newly independent State of Gambia and hoped that Mauritius would also achieve independence in the near future.

Africa could only save itself by its own efforts and determination. Although the continent had friends in the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other bodies, the pace of economic development must ultimately depend upon the African countries themselves. The Governments of those countries were facing a great challenge and he felt humbled by the faith the masses had placed in them. Assistance from abroad must be based on genuinely African plans, the aim of which should be to improve standards of living and to establish a truly African socialist society.

The discussions at the session had marked a definite turning point in the Commission's work. It had moved from the stage of surveys, studies and reports to that of action programmes in certain major spheres. It was imperative to foster intra-African trade, the possibilities of which had hitherto been largely overlooked. African countries would never be completely free of their former colonial masters until they had developed their own potential markets, a process that would stimulate healthy and balanced economic growth, and should lead to an expansion of communications.

The second pressing need was to find African technicians and advisers. They already existed and he hoped that their services could be made available to the whole continent.

The significance of the Commission's decision to establish Working Parties was that those bodies would constitute a mechanism for concentrating on specific issues and for associating Governments in the execution

of specific programmes. They would also provide a means of building from below through the development of national solutions from agreements reached at the sub-regional level.

Resolution 102(VI) had been reinforced by the decision concerning sub-regional offices. As a result of that decision, the Commission would be concerned with promoting economic integration at the sub-regional level as a foundation for the economic integration of the continent.

Emphasis had rightly been placed on the need to combat illiteracy and to promote training as prerequisites for the transition to the industrial stage of development. Attention had also been given to improving public administration, so necessary for the effective functioning of national, sub-regional and continental economies.

Finally, the Commission had reached important decisions concerning co-operation with the Organization of African Unity.

He was convinced that the session had been a useful one and that a real contribution had been made to the cause of African reconstruction. He had been invited as Chairman to establish contact with all member States at the highest level and hoped to do so during the coming two years.

He then declared the seventh session of the Commission closed.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.