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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Meeting of the Council of  
Plenipotentiaries of the  
North African MULPOC

Tangier, (Morocco)  
12 - 13 April 1985

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF PLENIPOTENTIARIES  
OF THE NORTH AFRICAN MULPOC

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF PLENIPOTENTIARIES

A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. The Meeting of the Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC was held in Tangier, Morocco, on 12-13 April 1985.

2. Representatives of the following member States of the MULPOC attended the meeting: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

3. The meeting was also attended by the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and other international organizations as observers: United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO), Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (AATPO), Centre of Industrial Studies for the Maghreb (CEIM),<sup>and</sup> the Permanent Advisory Committee for the Maghreb (CPCM).

4. The meeting elected the following officers:

Chairman: Egypt

Vice-chairman: Morocco

and decided that the ECA secretariat should be responsible for drafting its report.

B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The following agenda was adopted:

1. Opening of the Meeting;

2. Election of Officers;

3. Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work;

4. Report and Recommendations of the Fifth Meeting of the Committee of Experts of the North African MULPOC:

i) Progress Report on the Implementation of the Work Programme 1984-1985,

ii) Social and Economic Conditions in North Africa,

iii) Desertification and Economic Crisis,

iv) Review of the Implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action in the Field of Trade:

(a) Trade promotion in North Africa: report of the Workshop of Directors of Export Promotion Centres,

- (b) Project document on the promotion of Afro-Arab Trade and Financial Co-operation;
- v) Review of the Implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action in the Field of Science and Technology;
- vi) The Implementation in North Africa of the Regional Food Plan for Africa:
  - (a) Report on the study on subregional co-operation between Egypt and the Sudan in Livestock and Cereals,
  - (b) Co-operation in Agricultural Research and Crop Protection;
- vii) Review of the report: Further Clarifications on the PADIS Programme and the Proposed Establishment of North African Documentation and Information System (NADIS);
- viii) Industrial Development Decade for Africa:
  - (a) Progress report on the Implementation of the Work Programme of the ECA in the Field of Industry in the North African MULPOC,
  - (b) Promotion of Subregional Co-operation within the Framework of the Industrial Development Decade for Africa;
- ix) Medium-term Development of Forest Industries in North Africa: Report of Forest Industries Advisory Group (FIAG);
- x) Migration from the Maghreb countries to West European Countries: report on the Study on Migration from the Migration from the Maghreb to West European Countries;
- xi) Transport and Communications Decade: report on comments and suggestions by African countries on the conclusions of the ECA study on the establishment of efficient shipping links between North Africa and Africa South of the Sahara;
- xii) The Integration of Women in Economic and Social Development:
  - (a) Report of the Subregional Committee for the Integration of Women in Economic and Social Development in North Africa,
  - (b) Priorities and Work Programme for the Period 1985-1986;
- xiii) Water Resources Development in Africa and Environmental Problems Related to their Development;
- xiv) Report on the Establishment of the North African Graduate Institute of Management;
- xv) The Mobilization of Resources for the Implementation of the Work Programme of the MULPOC;
- xvi) Adoption of the Work Programme 1985 and 1986-1987;

xvii) Preparations for the forthcoming ECA meetings:

- (a) Sixth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole,
- (b) Fifth meeting of the Conference of Ministers of the African Least Developed Countries,
- (c) Eleventh meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers,
- (d) Fourth Biennial Pledging Conference.

5. Other business

6. Adoption of the report

7. Date and venue of the next meeting

8. Closure of the meeting.

C. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDING

Opening statements

6. The meeting was called to order by the representative of Algeria as the outgoing Chairman of the Council, who welcomed the Governor of the Province of Tangier and all participants and expressed his gratitude to the Government of His Majesty King Hassan II for hosting the meeting of the Council.

7. In his opening statement His Excellency Mr. Bouab, Governor of the Province of Tangier, welcomed participants to Tangier. Dialogue and understanding on matters affecting the well-being of the people of Africa, he said, were vital; since its establishment and first meetings, in 1979, the North African MULPOC had been concerned with just such questions (trade, the food situation and the participation of women in development among others) and had given them priority in its work programme. Progress in those areas was all the more important in Africa's difficult present circumstances, which drought was exacerbating in some countries. African countries must work together to deal with their problems and achieve the self-reliance and self-sufficiency which were so necessary; ECA was one mechanism for helping them to do so.

8. He was convinced that the Council would find ways of coping with the problems of the subregion: he wished participants success in their work.

9. The Acting Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA, Mr. Tchouta Moussa, expressed his thanks to His Majesty's Government and the Governor of the Province of Tangier for the hospitality they had shown to the MULPOC and to all attending the present meeting.

10. Although crisis had affected the States of North Africa less than some other countries, it was still very present. The Committee of Experts was to be congratulated on the recommendations it had submitted on matters of vital

importance to the subregion. He welcomed the call for subregional co-operation on the medium-term programme for agriculture, because agriculture must be Africa's highest priority. He commended the call for discussions on the possibility of creating a preferential trade area in North Africa to match the three major economic groupings (ECCAS, ECOWAS and PTA) that already existed on the continent. In view of the close links between transport, shipping in particular, and intra-african trade he suggested that action on the experts' recommendations in those areas should be carefully co-ordinated. He also looked forward to effective action on the questions of migration and the establishment of a North African documentation and information system, and said that both he and the Executive Secretary took a personal interest in the integration of women in development.

11. ECA gave the MULPOC as much support, financial and otherwise, as it could within the limits of its own resources; since those resources were not great it was important for the MULPOC to receive support from other quarters as well as UNDP, of course, contributed, but contributions from member States were also important, both as a means of securing further from UNDP and in their own right.

12. In conclusion he urged all the governments of the subregion to ensure that they were represented at the forthcoming series of ECA meetings at ECA to prepare for the impending economic summit of OAU.

13. The Chairman referred to the importance of this session in the process of the preparation of the forthcoming meetings in Africa at the top of which is the African Economic Summit. He added that the deliberations of this session reflect the solidarity and the collective self-reliance between the countries of the sub-region of North Africa with the view of implementing the Lagos Plan of Action, the delay of which is due to the effects of the world economic crisis in addition to the natural disasters, in particular and desertification.

Report and recommendations of the fifth meeting of the Committee of Experts of the North African MULPOC (agenda item 4)

14. The officer-in-charge of the MULPOC introduced the report of the Committee of Experts (ECA/MULPOC/Tangier/P.V/2) and described briefly the intention of each of the ten draft resolutions which the experts recommended for adoption by the Council.

15. Regarding the report of the Committee of experts, the Chairman put an emphasis on the food and agriculture sector as a priority sector in the light of the draught which affected the economies of member States. He further stressed the importance of raising the finance needed for the implementation of the MULPOC studies and projects. Finally, the Chairman stressed the necessity of co-ordination, avoiding duplication between the various institutions serving the same fields.

16. One representative pointed out that the wording used to describe the experts' decision under item 23 of their agenda (date and venue of the next meeting) did not make clear the principle that meetings of the MULPOC should normally be held at the MULPOC's headquarters. After a brief exchange of views the Council agreed that the principle should be reflected without precluding the right of any State to offer to host a MULPOC meeting elsewhere; the secretariat was requested to ensure that the Council's view was duly recorded.

17. It was pointed out that the Committee of experts had also referred to the question of funds for the study on the medium-term development of forest industries to the Council for consideration. One representative, supported by other representatives, said that asking member States to fund a project in full would set a precedent, and he was reluctant to take such a decision.

18. The Council therefore decided to call on the Forest Industries Advisory Groups to continue to seek funding for the study, and on the Director of the MULPOC to approach member States for contributions in kind for the completion of the project: a draft resolution to this effect was submitted for its consideration.

19. On that understanding, the Council approved the report of the Committee of Experts. It then took up the 11 draft resolutions recommended to it by the experts and adopted them with a number of amendments: the definitive versions are annexed to this report.

#### Other business (agenda item 5)

20. No other matters were raised.

#### Adoption of the report (agenda item 6)

21. At its final meeting held on 12 April 1985 at 7 p.m., the Council adopted its report as presented in this document.

#### Date and venue of the next meeting (agenda item 7)

22. The Council decided that the principle of holding meetings of the MULPOC at its headquarters should be respected, but that consultations on the date of the next meeting and any invitations to hold it elsewhere should be held by MULPOC secretariat with member States.

#### Closing of the meeting (agenda item 8)

23. After an exchange of courtesies, the Chairman declared the meeting closed. A motion of thanks addressed to His Majesty the King of Morocco, to the Moroccan government, to the people and to the local authorities was unanimously adopted.

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Resolution No. 1

Trade Promotion in North Africa

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Having considered the report and recommendations of the workshop of directors of North African export promotion centres,

Aware of the potential role of export promotion centres in the promotion of subregional trade,

1. Calls on the MULPOC secretariat in collaboration with other regional organizations concerned with the promotion of trade, to:

- (a) do its utmost to enhance co-operation among the national trade promotion centres in North Africa and develop a programme for strengthening existing centres and encouraging their establishment where none exists; such assistance and co-operation should extend to cover information, training, promotion activities, research and the harmonization of trade policy;
- (b) make comparative studies, in close collaboration with the national centres, on the foreign trade of all the countries in the subregion to identify, in conjunction with research on supply and demand, items suitable for trading, obstacles to such trade and means of overcoming them;
- (c) to exploit every available opportunity to solve the problems of funding and as soon as possible, with the economic agents of the subregion, organize a round-table on trade promotion and development in the countries concerned;
- (d) to make plans for a feasibility study on the establishment of a multinational trading company in the subregion;
- (e) to promote the policy of exchanging staff for limited periods among trade promotion centres to conduct joint market surveys;
- (f) to examine the possibility of establishing the institutional framework to promote a preferential trade area for the countries of the subregion;
- (g) to facilitate the creation of an intergovernmental group of experts to recommend ways of harmonizing trade policies in the subregion and gradually <sup>reducing</sup> tariff and non-tariff barriers so as to create a preferential trade area;

2. Appeals to member States and requests the ECA secretariat to encourage the mobilization of the financial and human resources needed to carry out the recommendations of the workshop of directors of North African export promotion centres;

3. Calls on the MULPOC to make plans for regular workshops of directors of the North African export promotion centres.

Resolution No. 2

Afro-Arab Trade and Financial Co-operation

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Noting the project profile on Afro-Arab trade and financial co-operation,

Acknowledging the readiness of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) to engage in consultations on the formulation of projects relating to trade development,

Requests ECA and ECWA to engage in consultations with international bodies with a view to securing the necessary co-operation and financial support for jointly approved projects relating to trade and financial co-operation between African and Arab countries.

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Resolution No. 3

Implementation in North Africa of the  
Science and Technology Chapter  
of the Lagos Plan of Action

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Recalling the provisions of the science and technology chapter of the Lagos Plan of Action,

Having considered the report of the secretariat (Doc. ECA/MULPOC/Tangier/E.V/4) on the Implementation of the Science and Technology Chapter of the Lagos Plan of Action for the period from November 1983 to November 1984,

Aware of the considerable scope for developing and applying science and technology in the subregion and of the need to provide the secretariat with adequate information for a review of the science and technology chapter of the Lagos Plan of Action for the period April 1980 to December 1984,

1. Takes note of the report on the activities of the secretariat (ECA/MULPOC/Tangier/E.V/4);
  2. Appeals to all States of the subregion to co-operate in implementing the review by responding promptly to the questionnaire already circulated by the secretariat;
  3. Requests the North African MULPOC to report to the 1986 meeting of the Council of Plenipotentiaries on the findings of relevance to the countries of the subregion, with a view to the formulation of recommendations on follow-up action.
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Resolution No. 4

Implementation of a Medium-term Programme for Agriculture  
in the North African MULPOC subregion

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Viewing with deep concern the food and nutritional situation in North Africa, which has not improved in recent years in spite of the efforts of the governments of the subregion,

Aware of the concern expressed by the Eleventh Summit Conference of Arab Heads of State on Joint Arab Economic Action, held in Amman in November 1980, on the food situation and the high priority that must be accorded to food security schemes,

Bearing in mind the recommendations and conclusions of the Regional Food Plan for Africa and of the Lagos Plan of Action,

Recalling ECA Conference of Ministers' Resolutions 351(XIV); 418(XVI); 462(XVIII); 463(XVIII) and 479(XVIII),

Recognizing that there is great potential for improving and expanding agricultural production and productivity through joint ventures at the subregional level, especially by co-ordinating and strengthening co-operation in agricultural research and training,

1. Approves the 1985 Programme of Work for the North African MULPOC in the agriculture sector;

2. Calls on the MULPOC, with the assistance of the ECA/FAO Joint Agriculture Division, to complete the study on co-operation and trade in food and agriculture production between Algeria, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyyah, Morocco and Tunisia during 1985;

3. Requests ECA to expand its assistance through the ECA/FAO Joint Agriculture Division to the agriculture programme of the North African MULPOC;

4. Calls on ECA to submit the medium-term programme for agriculture (1985-1987) to UNDP for financing, after amending it in accordance with the suggestions made by the countries of the subregion;

5. Urges the UNDP Bureau for Arab States to approve the project and provide financial resources for its implementation;

6. Reiterates its recommendation that preference should be given to expertise available at the subregional level in the implementation of the project and the activities of the North African MULPOC in the agriculture sector.

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Resolution No. 5

PADIS Programme and the Establishment of NADIS

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Recalling resolution 10 adopted at its fourth meeting,

Recalling also resolution 498(XIX) adopted by the ECA Conference of Ministers at its tenth meeting,

1. Takes note of documents ECA/MULPOC/Tangier/E.V/14/Rev.1 and ECA/PADIS/RTC/I/11;
2. Decides to set up the subregional technical committee for PADIS called for in paragraph 4 of the Conference of Ministers' resolution 498(XIX);
3. Further decides that the Committee will comprise one suitably qualified governmental expert from each member States;
4. Requests the Director of the North African MULPOC to call a meeting of the Subregional Technical Committee as soon as possible and in any event before the end of 1985;
5. Decides that the purpose of that meeting shall be:
  - (a) to explore in greater detail the question whether to establish NADIS;
  - (b) to consider, pending the possible establishment of NADIS, possible ways of using PADIS to benefit the subregion, including the creation or strengthening of national centres;
  - (c) to elect a chairman to represent the Committee on the Regional Technical Committee.

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Resolution No. 6

Industrial Development Decade for Africa

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Recalling its Resolution No. 4 adopted in April 1984 on the Industrial Development Decade for Africa,

Noting with satisfaction the progress report of ECA on the status of implementation of the Decade programme in the subregion, and the efforts made by the secretariats of ECA and UNIDO to provide information on the promotion of subregional co-operation within the context of that programme,

Aware of the importance of the subregional co-ordinating committee and sectoral committees on iron and steel, engineering and chemicals, and of the contribution that such committees can make to the implementation of the Decade programme,

Aware of the important role that indigenous agents of production, distribution, skills development, investment promotion and finance in the public and private sectors can play in the implementation of the Decade programme,

1. Decides to convene during 1985 a sub-regional expert meeting to examine in depth the question of establishing a subregional co-ordinating committee for the implementation of the IDDA programme and sectoral committees on iron and steel, engineering and chemicals and to make recommendations thereon to the Council of Plenipotentiaries in 1986;
2. Requests the ECA, UNIDO and MULPOC secretariats to provide all requisite information for the smooth conduct of the meetings and calls on the MULPOC to provide the necessary services for the meeting;
3. Welcomes the UNIDO proposal to hold, in conjunction with ECA, a meeting of experts to arrange for the creation of the subregional co-ordinating committee as part of the programme for the Industrial Development Decade for Africa.
4. Requests the international organizations concerned to organize a meeting of economic agents from the member States of the subregion to decide on the contributions and other forms of support they require from governments and elsewhere, to carry out the projects identified in the programme for the Industrial Development Decade for Africa.
5. Calls on the MULPOC secretariat to request the said organizations, UNIDO in particular, and member States to facilitate the holding of such a meeting.

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Resolution No. 7  
North African Emigrants in Western Europe

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Having considered the ECA document on the study on emigrants from the subregion to Western Europe,

Reaffirming the importance of the question for the subregion, in particular the need for the emigrants' home countries to seek improvements in economic and social conditions for emigrants in the countries to which they migrate and make arrangements for the professional and social reabsorption of those that return,

1. Requests the ECA secretariat to summarize the replies to the **questionnaire** drawn up at the request of the Council at its previous session, together with the information available from other governmental and intergovernmental bodies that have studied the question, including ILO and the Arab Employment Organizations;
  2. Further requests the ECA secretariat to mobilize the financial resources needed to launch specific projects dealing with the problems of migration;
  3. Calls on the ECA secretariat to submit its report to the next meeting of the Council, in 1986;
  4. Calls on the Director of the MULPOC to extend the study to cover all the States of the subregion.
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Resolution No. 8

Establishment of Efficient Shipping Links between North  
Africa and Africa South of the Sahara

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Convinced of the importance of shipping to the smooth development of African maritime trade and, more particularly, of coastal shipping in the orderly development of intra-African commerce,

Aware that African shipping is dominated by foreign tonnage on both coastal runs and long hauls,

Also aware that this foreign stranglehold penalises both African economies and African fleets, whose financial returns are generally low for this reason in particular,

Noting the ECA study on the establishment of efficient shipping links between North Africa and Africa South of the Sahara, and the comments by African countries on that study's findings;

1. Requests ECA to update the statistics in the study and devote some attention to analysing the tramp vessel market;

2. Decides to hold, in 1985, a meeting on shipping attended by the North African operators concerned: fleet owners, shipping agents, forwarding agents, consignees, foreign trade officials, etc... for the purpose of:

- (a) considering the status of shipping in the North African subregion and proposals for subregional co-operation among the operators concerned;
- (b) considering the status of shipping in Africa and proposals for co-operation between North African operators and operators from other subregions of Africa;
- (c) considering the advisability of setting up a North African subregional institutional structure to co-ordinate shipping activities, and possible means of doing so;

3. Calls on the Director of the MULPOC to contact member countries with a view to discovering if any one of them would be willing to host such a meeting.

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Resolution No. 9

Integration of Women in Economic and Social Development

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Having considered the report of the Third meeting of the subregional Committee for the integration of women in development, held in Tangier, Morocco, on 6 and 7 April 1985,

Having also considered the report on priorities for the integration of women in economic and social development in North Africa and the work programme for 1985-1986,

1. Takes note of the two reports and endorses the priorities and work programme for 1985-1986;
2. Urges the Executive Secretary of ECA to intensify his approaches to UNDP for the necessary funds to carry out the priority projects and the work programme;
3. Appeals to donor agencies to continue to give technical and financial support for these projects;
4. Recommends ECA and donor agencies to make preferential use in these projects of the skills and facilities available in the subregion;
5. Requests aid from ECA and the MULPOC to facilitate visits and exchanges of experience among their member countries to reconcile differences in viewpoint and allow an increasing number of women to benefit from the projects designed for them;
6. Calls on member States to redouble their efforts to provide information regularly for the bi-annual newsletter on women in North Africa, using research workers and experts on women and women's affairs to enrich this publication;
7. Decides that the officers of the subregional Committee for the integration of women in development should attend the meetings of the MULPOC's policy-making bodies;
3. Recommends that the five-year programme of implementation for the Arusha Forward-Looking Strategies give consideration to the question of Arab women who are refugees or the victims of armed conflicts.

Resolution No. 10

Mobilization of Human and Financial Resources

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Recognizing that the MULPOC work programmes for 1985 and 1986-1987 require resources to supplement those provided under the regular budget of ECA and the amounts made available by UNDP for the agricultural development and women's programmes,

1. Calls on the member States of the North African MULPOC, in recognition of their cardinal responsibility for the success of economic development through multinational co-operation in the subregion, to contribute in cash and kind towards specific projects in the MULPOC's work programme;
  2. Appeals to UNDP to continue and increase its aid to the MULPOC;
  3. Calls on all United Nations specialized agencies to supplement the MULPOC's resources by providing experts and conducting studies on specific projects within their spheres of competence at their own expense.
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Resolution No. 11

Development of Forest Industries in Northern Africa

The Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC,

Noting with concern the progress report of the ECA/FAO Forest Industries Advisory Group on the study of the medium-term development of forest industries in North Africa,

Aware of the importance of the study for the subregion,

1. Decides that the search for funds for the project should continue;
  2. Requests the ECA/FAO Forest Industries Advisory Group and the MULPOC secretariat to seek external assistance from appropriate international sources;
  3. Further requests the MULPOC secretariat to contact the States of the subregion to explore the possibilities of providing assistance in kind for the conduct of the study.
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