

Contribution by the AU Office in Geneva

I. INTRODUCTION

The Executive Secretary briefed members of staff on the 28th October 2002 on the brainstorming meeting that took place in Addis Ababa from the 12 to 19 October 2002. The outcomes of the various committees set up during the brainstorming meeting were distributed to the staff members. A follow-up meeting took place on the 31st October 2002, to deliberate on the method of work that would facilitate the prompt preparation of the AU Geneva office contributions to the ongoing exercise in Addis.

Subsequent brainstorming sessions took place on the 4-6th November, 2002 under the chairmanship of H.E. Mrs Sophie Kalinde, AU Executive Secretary, to identify and focus on priority areas. The following proposals are being submitted as the contribution of the staff members of the AU Geneva office to the establishment of the AU Commission; one that is commensurate to its mandate and the expectations of the African people.

II. METHOD OF WORK

The staff meeting agreed to set up four working groups as follows:

- Group I :
 - Devolution of Assets and Liabilities
 - Extra budgetary resources
 - Conditions of service
- Group II :
 - Popularisation of the AU
 - Organigramme, Human Resources requirements.
- Group III :
 - Specialized Agencies
 - Technical Committees
- Group IV :
 - Culture and Mentalities

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

After considering the reports of the Working Groups, the meeting agreed on the following proposals:

A. Devolution of Assets and Liabilities to the AU

- i) Assets that are of long term value and can benefit AU should be taken over by AU not on book value but on new valuation as assessed by Experts. Three quotations for the assets will be sent out to commence work on this issue
- ii) Assets that are determined as obsolete during the evaluation exercise should be disposed off through tender with priority given to staff members.
- iii) Evaluation process

The issues of the staff evaluation and promotion were raised and discussed. After a long debate, the meeting agreed that:

- A fair and professional evaluation be conducted by independent external evaluators on the staff who were not evaluated in previous similar exercises.
 - As for the new posts established under the new AU structure, existing staff that meet the requirements of the new posts should be considered.
 - Reassignment of existing staff to posts in the new structure for which they are qualified merits attention.
 - Workable procedures be made to allow staff members who have reached the ceiling to be promoted.
- iv) Staff members who are made redundant or those who opt to go on their own should be compensated in line with the relevant practises of International Organisations.

B. Extra budgetary resources

- i) To contact UPU for printing a special issue of postal stamps with AU logo.
- ii) Engage in fund-raising efforts among potential donors including the Diaspora
- iii) Purchase of an office which can be rented to Missions
- iv) To organize ,on a rotational basis, the following income-generating events :
 - Concert and Pop Stars especially the African musicians and bands
 - Football matches with African and International stars
 - International fund raising campaigns for African Children (Bill Gate's foundation is willing to allocate an amount of 700 millions US dollars to educate Children in the developing countries, Africa in particular)

B. Conditions of Service

After a lengthy debate on this issue, the meeting agreed that the AU condition of service should be completely different from those of the OAU. In this regard, a revision exercise is required in order to improve the Working Conditions at the AU Geneva Office:

i) The Post Adjustment allowance

The Post Adjustment allowance in Geneva is 54%. The cost of living in Geneva and the various indices of consumption indicate that this is not a true reflection of the reality. In addition, the above rate has not been reviewed for the last fifteen years (15 years), while at the same time the prices of consumable goods and other services have risen up.

Proposal: An increase by 20% of the current Post Adjustment allowance can be considered as a reasonable adjustment.

ii) Housing Allowance

In order to maintain and respect the standards of international Organisations, there is an urgent need to increase the Housing allowances for all categories of staff, without any distinction.

iii) Dependency allowance

The AU should take into account the reality of the XXI century and increase accordingly the dependency allowance. There is a need to emulate the philosophy of the United Nations. Indeed, the UN takes into account the fact that a staff member is contributing to the welfare of the elders (such as parents); hence a specific allowance is granted in addition to the ordinary allowances for the spouse and children.

iv) Preferential Rate

An adequate preferential rate should be allocated to the AU Geneva office, higher than the current one.

v) Education Allowance

This allowance should be increased across the board. (HQ and regional offices.)

vi) Representational car

The model and type of representational cars need not be uniform due to differences in the terrains of the various duty stations.

vii) Pension scheme

The new pension scheme should ensure that the AU staff member receives a monthly entitlement after retirement.

viii) Health Insurance

The AU Geneva office is of the view that a new health insurance scheme be put in place in order to provide such services to AU staff and their dependants even after retirement, wherever they choose to live in retirement. The modalities of putting such a scheme into effect need to be explored.

ix) OAU/ALICO Agreement:

There is an urgent need to reconsider the OAU agreement with ALICO. Other possibilities should be explored with other international insurance companies.

The Office suggests the setting up of **AU staff mutual insurance society against sickness and accident.**

- x) Continuous sound training process in order:
 - to allow staff promotion
 - to improve the staff skills in the field of the new information and communication technologies.
- xi) As part of the campaign to promote the image of the African Union, one should explore the possibility of **acquiring/hiring adequate residences for all AU representatives outside the continent.**

This recommendation is based on the fact that most African Governments who host an AU regional office usually provide a residence and office premises to the AU representatives, which is not the case for those who are representing the AU outside Africa.

- xii) Granting of a language allowance to the AU staff who masters more than one working language of the Union
- xiii) Revising repatriation allowance from present 2500 kilos by sea to one 40-foot container.
- xiv) Revision of travelling entitlements on home leave that accompanied luggage be from present 5 kilos to 20 kilos and unaccompanied from present 20 kilos to 50 kilos and on final repatriation from present 20 kilos to 50 kilos for accompanied and 50 kilos to 100 kilos for unaccompanied.
- xv) Revision of installation allowance on transfer from present ten days to thirty days, and on initial appointment from thirty to sixty days.

D. Specialized Agencies

The Durban decisions called for, inter alia, a review of the existing OAU Specialized Agencies with a view to determining their relevance in light of the objectives of the Union. Currently, there are seven specialized agencies that the AU could inherit from the OAU namely:

- African Telecommunication Union (ATU),
- Pan-African Postal Union (PAPU),
- African Railways Union (ARU),
- Supreme Council of Sports in Africa (SCSA),
- African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI)
- -----
- -----
- African Intellectual Property Office (this is a proposed additional specialised Agency devoted to work on intellectual property rights)

A cursory look at these organizations reveals a clear desire by an earlier generation of Pan-Africanists for building institutions with the technical expertise necessary for the attainment of genuine continental integration. Obviously, the same dream of continental integration should, as a matter of principle, inform the review of these agencies taking into account

changed circumstances in this era of globalisation. Indeed, the contemporary role of national governments in a number of sectors relevant to these agencies need to be considered as that would inevitably impact on their inter-governmental nature.

In as far as Geneva Office is concerned, a catalytic role is envisaged that links the continental specialized Agency to its international/ multilateral equivalent with the overriding objective of facilitating common African position in the relevant multilateral forum. The ATU, PAFU and ARI are relevant to the Geneva office as the ITU and ILO are based in Geneva and the UPU is based in Berne.

E. Specialized Technical Committees

Article 14 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union provides for the establishment of seven Specialized Technical Committees. Paragraph 2 of Art. 14 introduces an element of flexibility as it vests the power of restructuring the 7 STC's as well as establishing new ones with the Assembly of the Union.

The STC's that are earmarked to work on technical subjects that fall within the purview of the activities of the Geneva office are those covered under sub-paragraphs c, e and f of Art. 14.1 which respectively are:

- Committee on Trade, Customs and Immigration matters,
- Committee on Transport, Communication and Tourism and
- Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs.

The following restructuring proposals could be recommended to the Assembly of the Union:

- A specific technical committee on Trade and Customs be established due to the enormity of the challenges facing member states in multilateral trade negotiations and the regional integration initiatives.
- The Trade and Customs Committee to work closely with the African Group in the WTO, through the Geneva AU office in the servicing of the annual Trade Ministers conference of the AU/AEC. This will ensure a more coherent articulation of common African positions in the WTO and to a lesser extent work in UNCTAD, WCO, WIPO and other trade-related organizations.

The Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs is over-loaded functionally. At a time when Africa is plagued by all manner of diseases, it is imperative that the AU accords Health and health-related matters a sharp focus. Accordingly, it is proposed that a specific committee on Health be created or a separate committee under the existing Commission on Labour and Social Affairs be devoted to Health. The combination of the two sectors, even though they are social, is practically unworkable.

In view of the foregoing restructuring proposals, a specific committee on tourism and immigration and another committee on transport and communication be established.

F. Popularization of the African Union

As the Representational Office of the AU in Geneva, the Headquarters of a number of United Nations Bodies/Specialized Agencies, the Geneva Office is suited to undertake activities aimed at sensitizing the international community to the aims and objectives of the African Union as well as its achievements. This could be done through:

- public lectures and seminars,
- distribution of pamphlets,
- publishing of articles in the newsletters of the UN Bodies,
- distribution of AU Emblems and Logos,
- interaction with Civil Society,
- observance of the AU Day in Geneva in the most appropriate manner.

G. Organigramme and Human Resources Requirements

The nature and volume of the activities to be undertaken by the Office under the AU umbrella, calls for a fundamental shift from the previous OAU structures, taking into account the new mandate of the AU and its programmes as well as the dynamics of the 21st Century international relations. The Office is accredited to the international organizations of the United Nations System based in Geneva and other European capitals - in particular UNCTAD, WIPO, WTO, Commission on Human Rights, WHO, ILO, ITU, UNHCR, IMO, etc.

In this regard, the meeting considered the following structure as adequately equipping the Office to effectively cover the various activities of the above organizations and hence promote and protect Africa's interests:

- 1 Executive Secretary
- 2 Assistant Executive Secretaries
- 2 Senior Political Officers, 1 Human Rights Officer, 1 Humanitarian Officer
- 2 Senior Trade Specialists, 1 Senior Economist, 1 Economist
- 2 Translators/Interpreters
- 1 Senior Health Officer, 1 Senior Labour Officer
- 1 Information/Communication Officer, 1 Documentalist
- 1 Finance/Administration Officer, 1 Administrative Assistant/Protocol Officer
- 3 Secretaries, 1 Receptionist, 2 Drivers, 1 Messenger

Please find attached the corresponding organigramme.

H. Communication channels

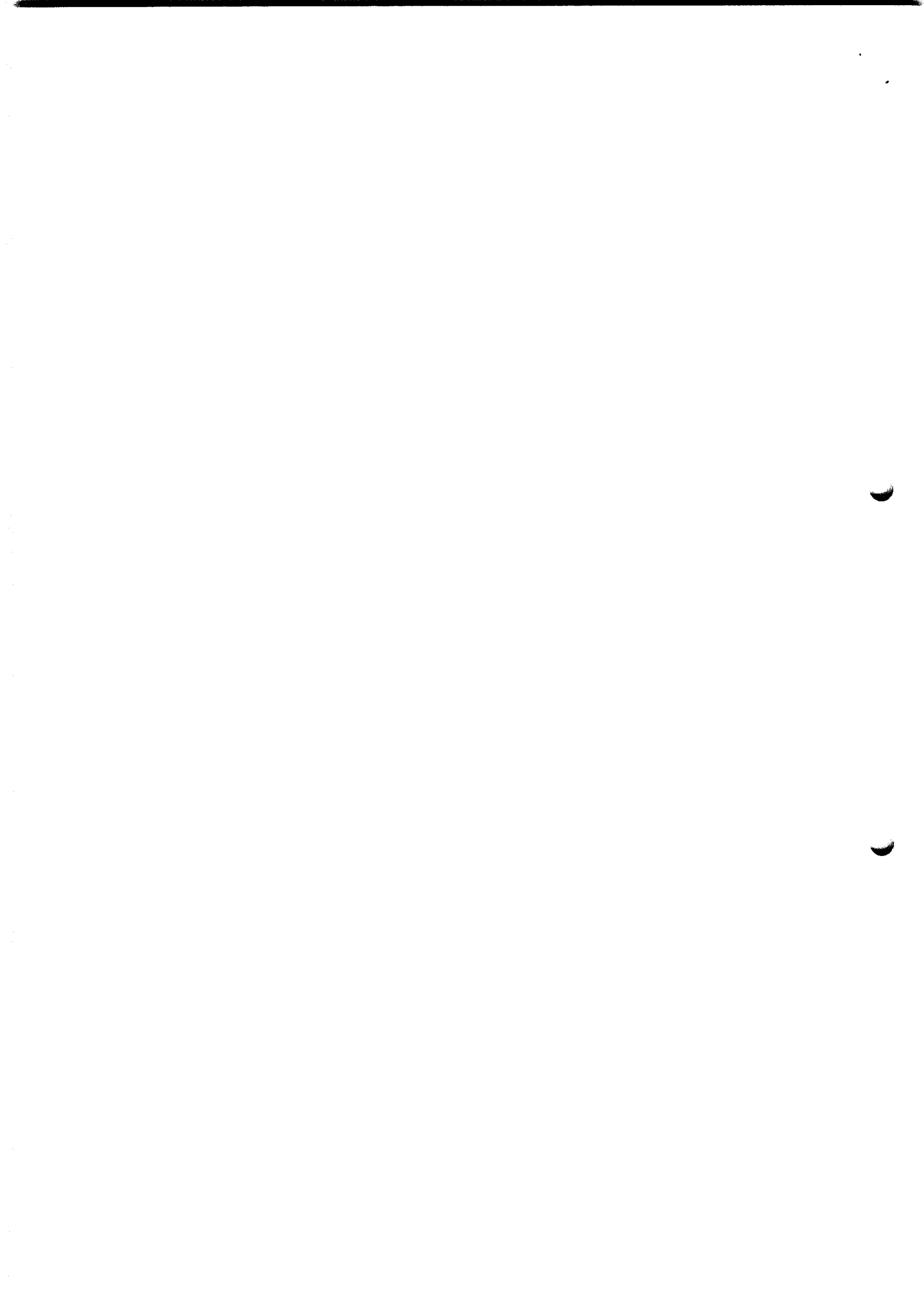
The Geneva Office covers a number of organizations whose activities impact on almost all the Directorates of the AU Commission. For the smooth functioning of the Office, it is advisable that it reports directly to the Bureau of Chairperson of the Commission. It is envisaged that copies of all such communication will be sent to the relevant Directorates.

I. Culture and Mentalities

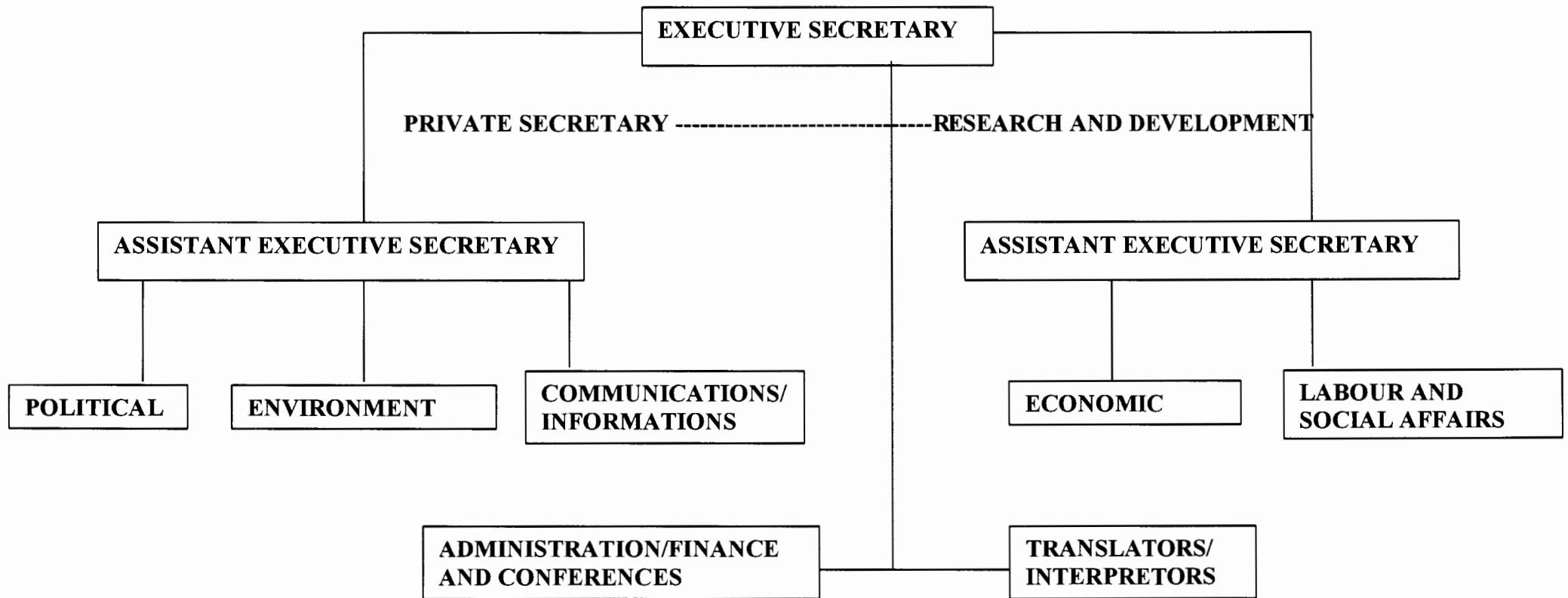
The meeting recognized the need to formulate a Code of Conduct that will guide all members of staff of the AU Commission. The Code of Conduct will, in essence, put premium on loyalty to the objectives and principles of the AU, the ideals of Panafrikanism, tolerance and understanding, etc.

It was also underscored that the culture of impunity can be discouraged by strict adherence to the Rules and Regulations governing the staff members. It was also noted that harassment, of any nature, at the work place is an affront to human dignity and must be adequately addressed.

Members of staff recognized the need for a complete overhaul of the system of rewards and punishment whilst appreciating the contractual arrangements between the Commission and its Staff. Indeed, it was noted that all decisions pertaining to the promotion and recognition of staff must be based on merit.



ORGANIGRAM OF THE AU GENEVA



EXECUTIVE SECRETARY	
ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY POLITICAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS	ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ECONOMIC AND ADMINISTRATION
1 POLITICAL OFFICER 1 HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER 1 COMMUNICATION OFFICER	1 ECONOMIC OFFICERS 1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC OFFICER 1 ENVIRONMENT OFFICER 1 FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION OFFICER
2 TRANSLATORS/INTERPRETERS	
1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/ DOCUMENTALIST 1 SECRETARY 1 SECRETARY/ RECEPTIONIST 2 DRIVERS 1 MESSENGER/CLEANER	

Total : 17

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

SECRETARY

ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

TRANSLATOR/INTERPRETER

POLITICAL

ECONOMIC

COMMUNICATIONS/
INFORMATION

LABOUR/
SOCIAL

FINANCE/
ADMINISTRATION

ENVIRONMENT

HUMAN RIGHTS
UNHCR
IOM
OCHA
DISARM-
AMENT
AFRICAN
GROUP
NGO
RELATIONS
ICR
IJC
PARLIA-
MENTARY
UNION

UNCTAD
WTO
WIPO
ITC
FAO
COMMON
FUND
UNDP
IMO
TOURISM
AFRICAN
GROUP
UNIDO

ITU
UPU
AFRICAN GROUP

ILO
WHO
CRIME
PREVENTION
GENDER
AFRICAN
GROUP

1 Secretary/Documentalist
1 Secretary/Receptionist
2 Drivers
1 Messenger/Cleaner

UMO
DESERT-
IFICATION
IAEA
UNITAR
UNESCO
IBE
R & D

Group 4 : Sam and Mohamed

Culture and mentalities.

1. Staff members should try to have cohesive relationship among themselves.
2. Rotation should be made every five years to enable staff to have more knowledge about AU.
3. Staff should be trained and eventually promoted. A driver or a secretary should not die as a driver or as a secretary.
4. There is need of respect.

GROUP 3- Mensa/ Musa

Terms of Reference

Identify possible contributions by the Geneva office to the work relating to the Specialized Agencies and Specialized Technical Committees.

Specialized Agencies

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- Pan-African Postal Union (PAPU), ← UPU & PRIVATISATION
- African Railways Union (ARU), Recm. 8
- Supreme Council of Sports in Africa (SCSA),
- African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI) URTNA - in KENYA
- ----- DATU
- ----- PAN AFRICAN EMPLOYERS UNION

A cursory look at these organizations reveals a clear desire by an earlier generation of Pan-Africanists for building institutions with the technical expertise necessary for the attainment of genuine continental integration. Obviously, the same dream of continental integration should, as a matter of principle, inform the review of these agencies taking into account changed circumstances in these era of globalization. Indeed, the contemporary role of national governments in a number of sectors relevant to these agencies need to be considered as that would inevitably impact on their inter-governmental nature.

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- Committee on [Trade] [Customs] and Immigration] matters, [TOURISM & TRADE & CUSTOMS
- Committee on Transport, Communication and Tourism and HEALTH
- Committee on [Health] Labour and Social Affairs. LABOUR & SOCIAL AFFAIRS

We may propose following elements that could be recommended to the Assembly for restructuring :-----

SPECIALISED AGENCIES
SCSA
COUNCIL
ASSEMBLY

- a specific technical committee on Trade be established due to the enormity of the challenges facing member states in multilateral trade negotiations,
- The Trade committee work closely with the Africa Group in the WTO, through the Geneva AU office in the servicing of the annual Trade Ministers conference of the AU/AEC. This will ensure a more coherent articulation of common African positions in the WTO and to a lesser extent work in UNCTAD, WIPO and other trade-related organizations,

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Group I : Chatti, Munembo

The following are draft recommendations made by the Group on Assets and Liabilities of the AU, Conditions of Service and Extra-budgetary Resources.

I. Devolution of Assets and Liabilities to the AU

- a) Assets which are of long term value and can benefit AU should be taken over by AU not on book value but on new valuation as assessed by Experts.
- b) Obsolete Assets can be disposed off through tender and priority be given to staff.
- c) For the Staff of former OAU who wish to continue to work should be transferred to AU. Staff members who are made redundant or those who opt to go on their own should be compensated in line with what other International Organisations do.
- d) Liabilities could be divided into two categories:
 - i) Arrears of contributions (Headquarters)
 - ii) Liability incurred in a normal business transaction. Regarding trading liabilities if proved that incurred on behalf of former OAU they should be taken over by AU. (Headquarters)

II. Extra-budgetary resources

The following ideas can be materialised from AU Geneva office:

- i) To contact UPU for printing a special issue of postal stamps with AU logo.
- ii) Contacting Organisations and individuals who wish to donate
- iii) Purchase of a good office block which can be rented to African Missions
- iv) To organize on a rotation basis the following events :
 - Concert and Pop Stars (like the music campaign in the 80's to assist Africa during the famine)
 - Football matches with African and International stars
 - International fund raising campaigns for African Children

III. Conditions of Service

- A. Review (upward) of the :
 - i) Post Adjustment Allowance in Geneva (54%) (Addis Ababa 48%)
 - ii) Housing allowances (to professionals and GS categories. UN System is based on the size of the family and not exclusively on grade)
 - iii) Dependency Allowance
 - iv) Education Allowance
 - v) Car loans and representational cars
 - vi) Pension Scheme
 - vii) Insurance (staff members should be insured even after retirement)

- B. Sound training policy for the AU Staff
- C. Acquisition of a residence for the AU representation (part of the AU image abroad)
- D. Granting of a language allowance to the AU staff who masters more than one working language of the Union
- E. Revising repatriation allowance from present 2500 kilos by sea to one container
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- G. Revision of installation allowance from present 10 days to 60 days.

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Specialized Technical and representational Agencies

AU Geneva Collection

2002

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