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ADDIS ABABA

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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

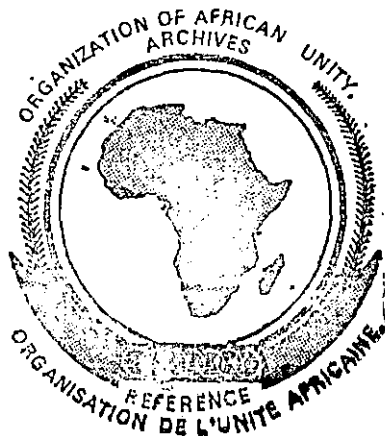
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CM/371

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON OAU
ACTIVITIES IN EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL
HEALTH AND RELATED FIELDS

GENERAL REPORT



CM 0371

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REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON OAU
ACTIVITIES IN EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL,
HEALTH AND RELATED FIELDS

General Report

Introduction:

1. The Department of Education, Science, Culture and Health has had a very active period since September, 1970. There was a very successful symposium on schistosomiasis (Bilharziasis) in November, 1970. Some research workers from Member States and a good number of experts of international repute in this field from other parts of the world participated in the symposium. The cultural workshop and symposium held in Mogadiscio on African Folklore, music and dance from October 16 to 19, 1970, at the generous invitation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Somalia was an unqualified success. Immediately after the symposium the ACC meeting was held at the same venue. In December 1970 a positive step was taken towards the implementation of resolution CM/Res.116(IX) which empowered the Secretariat to work towards the establishment of a centre for research and teaching in Earth Sciences. Four experts selected by the Scientific Council of Africa met at the Secretariat for the first time to consider a plan of action for the establishment of the proposed centre for Earth Sciences.

Education:

2. The volume of work in Education is fast increasing and studies on pre-primary education, equivalence and recognition of degrees and diplomas, revision of educational targets, and assessment of the implementations of the resolutions of the Conference on education and scientific and technical training in relation to development in Africa, Nairobi, 1968, are underway. These studies are being conducted through questionnaires and meetings of experts, and member states are urged to assist in supplying the necessary information. Without the prompt co-operation of Member States, the studies will take longer to complete.



3. It was reported to the 15th Session of the Council of Ministers that there would be an inter-Secretariat meeting of the OAU, ECA and UNESCO to resume the revision of the Addis Ababa-Tananarive-Lagos targets for education and training (Nairobi Conference Resolution II - Regional Priorities and Objectives). The inter-Secretariat meeting took place in July 1970. It discussed briefly the factors to be taken into consideration which include various aspects of progress made at all levels and in all types of education; prospects of economic development; financing of education and impact of education on social changes. Other important items discussed include information relevant to the revision of targets and methods and techniques to be used in the revision of targets. Finally, a division of responsibilities among the 3 Secretariats and a tentative time table for the various stages of the revision were agreed upon. The OAU has been given the task of collecting:

- (a) Projections of GNP and of financial allocation to education in terms of GNP;
- (b) Projections of school enrolment in each African Member State in 1970's; and
- (c) Information concerning educational legislation in each African Member State.

Of these three items, the work on item (b) is underway and several Member States have already completed the OAU questionnaire which has been circulated but the Secretariat still appeals to those Member States that have not as yet submitted their completed questionnaires to do so. Item (a) and (c) will very soon be carried out. The agreed timetable to complete the revision of the educational targets is as follows:

- (a) September-October 1970 - A draft of the paper defining precisely the work to be done with a timetable of the various stages should be prepared by UNESCO and sent to OAU and ECA for comments.
- (b) 1971 - Preparation of draft document.
- (c) End of 1971 - Inter-Secretariat meeting.
- (d) Early in 1972 - Meeting of Consultants from the African countries
- (e) 1972 - Revision of the document.
- (f) 1972 - Despatch of the document by the Director-General of UNESCO to the governments of the African Member States.

4. Following the decision of the United Nations to celebrate 1970 as International Education Year, (IEY), the Council of Ministers of the OAU welcomed the initiative of the U.N. and urged all Member States to participate fully in the celebrations. Some Member States have already reported on activities of the IEY and this will be made known to the Educational, Scientific, Cultural and Health Commission (ESCHC), which is scheduled to meet in May 1971 in Cairo, U.A.R. at the kind invitation of the Government of the United Arab Republic. Even though the celebrations of the IEY are over, yet the Secretariat still urges Member States, which have not so far sent in reports on their activities to do so as soon as possible to enable a continental picture to be drawn of the celebrations of the IEY. Moreover, from some reports received from Member States, it can be inferred that some decisive educational measures have been taken which, in future, the Secretariat believes would greatly assist in the study of educational activities of Member States.

5. As reported to the last session of the Council of Ministers, the Secretariat is still working on the implementation of the resolution on the Equivalence and Recognition of degrees and diplomas (Resolution ESCHC/Res.4(I)). Replies to the questionnaire which covered entry requirements to the various higher educational institutions, names of degrees, diplomas, awarded and duration of various courses of study are being received from some Member States. A committee of five experts from five African universities is tentatively scheduled to meet from 22nd to 25th March, 1971, at the OAU Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Budgetary provisions have already been approved by the Council of Ministers at its 14th Session for the meeting of the Committee of experts. As the replies to the OAU questionnaire from some OAU Member States have not been received, the Secretariat kindly requests those Member States to send the completed questionnaires as soon as possible. As this is a matter which affects the employment of skilled personnel, exchange of technical personnel and of teachers and students among Member States, the co-operation of all is called for.

6. The committee of five experts is expected to codify the information received from Member States and submit tentative criteria for equivalence and recognition of degrees and diplomas, which will then be circulated to Member States for comments, to the Association of African Universities for advice, in accordance with the advisory status granted to the Association by the OAU. Finally, the draft proposals will then be presented to the appropriate political organs of the OAU for approval.

7. As requested in resolution No. ESC/EC/Res.1(I), the secretariat is still gathering information on pre-primary education for circulation within Member States. Some Member States have already completed the OAU questionnaire on the subject but more replies will be needed before the compilation work starts. As the aim of this resolution is to interest Member States in this stage of a child's education, they are urged at least to indicate their future plans in this area.

8. On the recommendation of the joint OAU/UNESCO Conference on Education and Scientific and Technical Training in relation to development in Africa (Nairobi, July 1968), the OAU adopted all the resolutions of that Conference. The resolutions included the following items:

- (a) Regional Priorities and Objectives;
- (b) Reform of Primary Education;
- (c) Pre-requisites for Scientific and Technical Training;
- (d) Science Teaching at the Second and Third Level;
- (e) Technical and Vocational Training;
- (f) Role of Teachers and of Educational Technology;
- (g) Inter-African Co-operation in Higher Education.

The Secretariat has requested all Member States for a report on the stages reached in the implementation of the various resolutions on education, and it is proposed to submit a report on this matter to the ESC/EC and the higher organs of the OAU.

Health:

9. In close collaboration with the World Health Organization and other United Nations Agencies, and in whole-hearted co-operation with the Member States, the Health Bureau is working, although in a very modest way, towards the realization of a higher standard of health for the African peoples. Despite the magnitude of the problem, the innumerable and tremendous difficulties in our way and the present lack of all manner of resources, the Health Bureau is confident of the achievement of this goal. This confidence stems from the growing awareness at Government levels in Africa that socio-economic development is impossible without good health and that investment in health yields good dividends, nay, that good health is a powerful instrument for social and economic development; from the gigantic and commendable efforts of the World Health Organization and other United Nations Agencies;

from the unity of purpose animating the regional, continental and international organizations operating in Africa to ensure good health to the Africans and, above all, the strong determination and desire of our people themselves to enjoy good health.

10. Staff - The Health Bureau has been previously handicapped in the performance of its multifarious duties by a lack of personnel. It is happy to report, however, that the staffing position will shortly be improved. In fact, two highly qualified and well-experienced doctors have been recruited for the two posts of Senior Health Specialists. One Director, two Senior Health Specialists and a Nurse will soon constitute the Staff of the Health Bureau. It can reasonably be expected that the Bureau will function more fully and more efficiently on the assumption of duty of the two Health Specialists. The Administrative Secretary-General is grateful to the two Member States which have kindly seconded the medical doctors to the Health Bureau.

11. Cholera Outbreak - The second half of 1970 witnessed the outbreak of cholera in different parts of Africa: North, East and West. However, this quarantinable disease has appeared in West Africa for the first time and is now posing a serious threat to many African countries. The march of cholera in Africa has been checked by WHO's timely advice, directions and measures. These were:

- (i) Prompt notification of cases in application of International Sanitary Regulations without implementation of any arbitrary or excessive measures in international traffic and trade;
- (ii) Development of epidemiological investigations and surveillance activities;
- (iii) Reinforcement of general sanitary measures with Health Education;
- (iv) Provision of emergency stocks for diagnostic and treatment facilities including rehydration fluids and antibiotic (tetracycline);
- (v) Provision of cholera vaccine for population at great risk;
- (vi) Vaccination of key Health personnel and other key National working groups;
- (vii) Organization of meetings for the diagnosis, treatment, surveillance, control and prevention of cholera.

The OAU Health Bureau has been following very closely the spread of the cholera outbreak and has been prevailing upon the Member States to notify, under International Sanitary Regulations, cases of cholera and other quarantinable diseases. Member States are kindly requested to send such notifications not only to WHO and the neighbouring countries, but also to the OAU Health Bureau. The need for co-ordination between neighbouring countries cannot be too strongly emphasized.

12. WHO Regional Committee for Africa -

A Senior Health Specialist of the Health Bureau was sent as observer to the 20th Session of the Regional Committee for Africa, which was held in Accra, Ghana, from the 9th to the 16th September, 1970. The main priorities in the countries of the African Region were once more stressed:-

- (i) Collaboration and co-ordination in the field of epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases;
- (ii) Training of Africans according to a system well adapted to local needs and conditions;
- (iii) Development or strengthening of Basic Health Services.

The meeting was considered to be another milestone on the road to future progress in the achievement of good health for the African peoples.

13. Symposium on Bilharziasis -

The first OAU symposium on Bilharziasis, organized by the Health Bureau in collaboration with the Ethiopian Medical Association, was held in Addis Ababa from 3rd to 7th November, 1970. It was a great success. Topics discussed included: Epidemiology, Malacology, Clinico-Pathology, Chemotherapy, Prevention and Control of Schistosomiasis.

Participants to this Symposium came from far and wide. Some were from the Member States of the OAU; others were from International Organizations such as WHO, FAO, EAC and OCEAC and others still were from some foreign countries including the U.K., U.S.A., Japan, Taiwan, Denmark, India, West Indies and Peru. Among them were some of the World most eminent scientists in the field of schistosomiasis.

The papers presented were interesting, informative and of a high standard. The working committees made 23 recommendations to OAU Member States and the Administrative Secretary-General of the OAU was requested to ensure that these recommendations were thoroughly and efficiently implemented. The conclusions and recommendations of the committees are as follows:-

A. Epidemiology:

- (i) The assessment of the public health importance of schistosomiasis in relation to morbidity and mortality is essential:

- (a) Prevalence studies should be completed in those countries of Africa where critical data are lacking. This should include the measurement of intensity in terms of "egg output" in human faeces and urine;
- (b) In determining morbidity rates, all available diagnostic methods should be utilized on representative human population samples in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies.
- (ii) The assessment of the Socio-Economic significance of schistosomiasis in Africa is considered essential. The repercussions from schistosomiasis in various communities need analysis.
- (iii) Further research is necessary to determine the significance of both domestic and wild animals as possible reservoirs, particular in relation to transmission of Schistosoma mansoni and Schistosoma intercalatum.
- (vi) Immunological studies are necessary to determine the significance of homologous and heterologous immunity in the community.

B. Malacology:

- (i) There is an urgent need to establish one or more Malacological Reference-Research Centres in Africa with the help of relevant international organizations where necessary. Such centres would be responsible for the study and identification of snails of both medical and veterinary importance as well as training of personnel from Member States of the OAU.
- (ii) There is an urgent need for each Member State to increase studies involving the identification, distribution, susceptibility and ecology of intermediate host snails.
- (iii) There is also a need for increased exchange of scientific information between Member States of the OAU on snail intermediate hosts and of data collected from extra African territories. This exchange of information could be co-ordinated by the proposed centres.

C. Clinico-Pathology:

- (i) In order to obtain more detailed and comparable information on morbidity and clinical manifestations, there is an urgent need to standardize the classification of the disease, Schistosomiasis. It is suggested that this disease be realistically classified into three stages: Early or Mild; Intermediate or moderate; Severe or Late. Further, it is recommended that criteria for these stages be clearly defined.
- (ii) In order to clarify the natural history of the disease in man, it is recommended that longitudinal studies should be carried out in man and in experimental animals.
- (iii) There is a need for comparative, geographical studies on the epidemiological, clinical and pathological aspects of the disease.
- (iv) It is strongly felt that more use should be made of new knowledge and techniques in the study of Schistosomiasis as is already being done in some Institutions. Recent advances in the application of immunological histo and cyto-chemical, and isotopic techniques should be used in the study of Schistosomiasis.
- (v) Pathological autopsy material is sorely needed and its collection should be encouraged.

D. Chemotherapy:

The participants noted that none of the presently available drugs is ideal. The results reported at the present symposium on the use of Ambilhar (niridazole) and Etrenon (Iycanthone) indicated that they were both effective though side effects were reported:

- (i) The use of these and other drugs should continue under strict medical supervision to determine the optimum conditions under which they can be used;

(ii) Additional research is necessary on the comparative value of presently available Schistosomicidal drugs using standard statistical evaluation techniques;

(iii) Efforts should be exerted to develop more effective, easily administered, less toxic and less expensive drugs;

(iv) Information should be sought on the effect of chemotherapy on the susceptibility of the individual to re-infection.

E. Prevention and control;

(i) Molluscicides should be used in current snail control programmes where feasible;

(ii) Carefully controlled field trials are necessary to assess the effect of biological methods for the control of host snails of African Schistosomiasis including their effect on crops and environment;

(iii) Research is necessary to develop techniques to prevent the re-infestation of areas cleared of snails by present control measures;

(iv) Health education programmes should be intensified to emphasize the importance of hygienic measures which can play an important role in the prevention of schistosomiasis;

(v) The use of a combination of control measures as present information suggests that no single method will be effective;

(vi) In view of the soil and water resources development essential to the economic advancement of Africa and now taking place here, all OAU Governments should give timely and adequate attention to the prevention of snail proliferation and the spread and increase in prevalence of schistosomiasis in these development areas;

(vii) All OAU Member States should establish National Schistosomiasis Plans for their countries, with international assistance if necessary; and these plans should include basic studies and comprehensive control programmes, suitable to their particular social and economic situation.

16. Scientific Advisory Panels -

In accordance with Resolution ESC/C/Res.12(I) concerning the establishment of Scientific Advisory Panels on Health matters, the first Advisory Panel on viral, bacterial and parasitic diseases in Member States scheduled to be held from the 4th to the 8th January, 1971, has been postponed owing to unforeseen and compelling circumstances. It will be held from the 19th to 23rd April, 1971. The Health Bureau sincerely hopes that the co-operation of the Member States will be forthcoming as usual to make the work of the Panel a success. The second Advisory Panel on Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition and Environmental Sanitation in Africa will meet some time in November 1971.

Nutrition:

17. It is expected that Resolution ESC/C/Res.20(I) on Nutritional matters is being implemented by Member States. Efforts are now concentrated upon:-

(i) the establishment of a pilot scheme for Eastern Africa for the OAU programme on regional food stocks of grains;

(ii) the establishment, on a regional basis, of more centres for producing protein-rich food in Africa from local raw materials with bilateral or multilateral aid;

(iii) the meeting on Nutrition to be held in Accra under the auspices of OAU/FAO/WHO.

Sanitation:

18. The Health Bureau has not yet undertaken any activities in this field. However, the outbreak of cholera in North, East and West Africa will no doubt bring home to the Member States the need for implementing early Resolution No. ESC/C/Res.15(I) on Environmental Sanitation. The importance of good water supply and the proper disposal of faecal matter cannot be over-emphasized. The promotion of environmental sanitation is a necessity.

NATURAL RESOURCES

A. Minerals:

19. Africa is undoubtedly one of the continents richly endowed with a great deal of natural resources on both the earth's surface and below it. Only a very small fraction of these is at present exploited and even this does not provide any appreciable material benefit to the Africans. Most of these resources are hauled to foreign countries to serve as a basis for industrial enterprises there. Such a trend must be reversed without delay and it is precisely for this and other considerations that in 1967 the Council of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU approved in principle by resolution CM/Res.116 (IX) the proposal to establish the Inter-African Centres for Training and Research in Africa to provide the necessary manpower for the exploitation of these natural resources as well as to ensure that other governmental institutions are adequately serviced by African nationals. Ten areas were selected and the first one for immediate implementation was the Centre for Earth Sciences (including geology, geophysics, mineralogy).

Centre for Research in Earth Sciences:

20. Four experts have been selected by the Scientific Council of Africa to consider a plan of action for the establishment of the first centre. The first meeting of these experts took place at the Headquarters of the General Secretariat in December 1970. The four experts are Dr. A.E. Nyema-Jones, Chief Geologist of the Government of Liberia, Prof. Dr. Abdou Aly Shala, Professor of Hydrology and Director of the Desert Institute, Mataria, Cairo, U.A.R., Prof. M.O. Oyawoye, Professor of Geology, University of Ibadan, Nigeria and Dr. Phillippe Ouedraogo, Department of Mines and Geology, Ouagadougou, Upper Volta.

21. During the meeting, they examined problems facing African geologists and the most important of these they considered to be the lack of experience in field mapping and mineral exploitation. The first task for any proposed Centre of Training and Research, in their view, was the provision of adequate facilities and services for the training in field mapping and mineral exploitation. When this had been achieved, full-scale professional courses could be embarked upon.

22. Some of the initial functions of the Centre as envisaged by the panel of experts were:-

- (a) The Centre should provide all services that are now being undertaken in Europe and elsewhere on behalf of most African countries such as the dating of rocks, chemical analysis of rocks, geological surveys, geo-chemical and mineral surveys, hydrological surveys, small-scale drilling, assaying and petrographic studies;
- (b) The Centre should also provide special equipment which normally individual African countries could not afford; and
- (c) It should be able to undertake the services which are now performed on behalf of African countries through contracts or technical assistance from foreign countries.

23. In addition to the above services the panel considered that the training of middle grades technical staff was of such paramount importance to engage the attention of the Centre from the very beginning. Technical staff must be trained in thin-section techniques, general laboratory services, the use of drilling equipment and the maintenance of equipment in general.

24. Decision on the siting of the Centre, in view of the panel, should take into account such factors as good climate to ensure long periods of field work, presence of mappable structures for demonstration, and good facilities for an industrial base. On the basis of the points raised above, questionnaires were prepared and circulated to Member States and African Universities for the necessary background information.

B. Science and Technology:

25. As was reported in the previous report CM/344, a Regional Symposium on the Utilization of Science and Technology for Development in Africa was organized by the Economic Commission of Africa in co-operation with UNESCO at Addis Ababa from the 5th to the 16th of October 1970. The OAU was represented at the symposium.

26. Each participating country was given the opportunity to review the general position with regard to the utilization of science and technology for development in that country. Also issues and problems involved in achieving a more effective utilization of science and technology were examined and an attempt was made at considering and proposing steps to be taken in terms of policies, plans and actions to enable a more effective utilization of science and technology to be achieved within a number of sectors of national development activities in Africa.

C. Agriculture:

27. Africa is short of protein, particularly animal protein and supplies of such food items as meat, milk, butter, must be assured in order to ensure this essential dietary factor. It was for improving the cattle industry on the continent that the campaign against rinderpest was launched in West and Central Africa. Now that a successful control of this disease has been achieved, attention has now been turned to the Control of Contagious Bovine Pleuro-pneumonia (CBPP). A report on this is contained in a separate document from the Lagos Office which directly controls the Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (IBAR) located in Nairobi, the Inter-African Phytosanitary Bureau (IPSB) located in Yaounde and the Inter-African Bureau for Soils and Rural Development (BIS) in Bangui.

28. With regard to the implementation of the Regional Food Stocks of Grains Member States within the Eastern African Region which are directly involved have been requested to submit proposals to the United Nations Development Fund for assistance on an individual basis to cover the feasibility study.

CULTURE

A. Proposed Inter-African Bureau of Linguistics:

29. It was reported in document CM/344 that draft proposals on the qualification and experience of the Director of the proposed Bureau had been circulated and that an advertisement had already been issued inviting applications for the post of Director for the Bureau. Four applications have so far been received and a selection from among the applicants would soon be made.

B. All-African Cultural Festival:

30. It is to be recalled that the First All-African Cultural Festival was successfully staged in July 1969 in Algiers at the generous invitation of the Government of Algeria. The OAU is continually improving its present programmes which are aimed at making the All-African Cultural Festival an effective means for African Social Development, unity and solidarity. Now the OAU is set to have the Second All-African Cultural Festival in 1972 and has already taken some steps in the preparation for that Festival.

31. The African Cultural Council (ACC) held its Second ordinary session in Mogadiscio, at the kind invitation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Somalia, from October 19 to 20, 1970. The ACC, which has been charged with the task of managing and organizing the All-African Cultural Festivals, adopted the report of its first session held on the 2nd August, 1969, in Algiers, Algeria. The ACC unanimously accepted the generous offer of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to make Kinshasa the venue of the 1972 Second All-African Cultural Festival. Among other things, the ACC decided on the themes of the 1972 Festival and Symposium which are "Africa 1972 - Highlights of Development in the Arts" and "Authenticity and Development of African Arts and Cultures, Research and Civilization and the Role of culture in the struggle, development and unity." The ACC also revised the sections to be staged, the general rules governing competition and decided that prizes should be given in the form of African objects such as "spear" and "shield". Certificates of attendance would be issued to all Member States of the OAU who would have participated in the Festival. Final list of African objects for prizes, the selection of jurors and the criteria by which they should judge would be dealt with at the next meeting of the ACC. It is gratifying to report that the holding of the meetings of the ACC and the Cultural Seminar on African folklore, music and dance, described below, has greatly influenced each other and enhanced, as anticipated, their outcomes.

32. As the ACC has taken the necessary major steps in the preparation for the Second All-African Cultural Festival, Member States must plan to participate fully in that Festival.

C. Seminar and Workshops:

33. By resolution No. ESCHC/Res.10(1) the Secretariat was authorized to organize workshops and seminars in order to provide opportunities for African artists to exchange views in their areas of competence and also to contribute to the general development of African cultures. As a start along these lines, a Seminar on African folklore, music and dance was successfully held from October 16-19, 1970 in Mogadiscio, at the kind invitation of the Democratic Republic of Somalia. Eighteen Member States with 43 participants were represented at the Seminar. Also present was an observer from UNESCO. Four countries delivered papers on the topics of the Seminar and their papers were exhaustively discussed by the participants.

The discussions on African folklore, music and dance were centred, mainly on their appearance, contribution and their influence on the cultures and way of life of various African communities, and their future contribution and development as part of the life, dignity and unity of Africans. Finally, the participants made recommendations on African culture in general and on African folklore, music and dance in particular. The recommendations ranged from making research for preservation, propagation of African cultures to the establishment of National Councils to develop African cultures. The recommendations will be presented to the ESCHC for adoption.

34. As indicated earlier, the holding of workshops and seminars on various cultural items is very useful to the AOC to get new ideas and to plan and execute rationally, the All-African Cultural Festivals. The seminars and workshops will also assist African artists and men of culture in getting together, in exchanging ideas, in making concrete proposals to preserve and propagate African cultures and in contributing to the cultural wealth and progress of mankind. In the draft 1971/72 budget, estimates for a second cultural workshop/seminar on African drama and African languages have been included and it is hoped that the Council of Ministers will strongly support the holding of such meetings and approve the amount of money requested.

O.A.U. STAFF CLINIC

35. The Clinic has been functioning satisfactorily since May last. It provides free Curative and Preventive services to all Members of the Staff and their eligible dependents and examines new appointed officers at the General Secretariat. The work load in the clinic as well as in the Health Bureau has increased considerably and this has led to a recommendation for the appointment of a part-time medical officer for the Staff Clinic.

Conclusion:

36. The Department is now able to report on positive activities in all fields. A campaign has now been launched against Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP), after the successful rinderpest campaign; bilharziasis has now been brought into the open after the successful symposium and it is hoped the recommendations would be adopted in due course; the establishment of a Centre of Excellence has now taken a concrete turn and in education a meeting would soon be convened on the equivalence of degrees. These have all been possible through the unstinted support of all Member States in numerous ways and the Department hopes that backed by such massive support, it can look forward to a brighter future.

1971-02

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