

**ORGANIZATION OF
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**ORGANISATION DE L'UNITE
AFRICAINNE**

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CM/399

INTER-AFRICAN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



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1. As a follow-up to the study on the establishment of a technical assistance programme among African States, the ECA and OAU Secretariats, as part of their policy of co-operation prepared a joint memorandum on this important issue (Doc. CM/316/Part 7 Add.1) which was submitted for consideration at the 14th Session of the Council of Ministers. The object of that memorandum was to examine the possibility of intra-African co-operation through the utilization of a joint pool of African specialists with experience in problems of development to accelerate the economic and social expansion of Africa. In particular, the document aimed at providing the Council with the possibility of assessing the advantages of setting up, under OAU sponsorship and with the co-operation of ECA, an African technical assistance programme for the employment of staff, to ensure that the Council laid down definite guidelines to both Secretariats on the character of the technical assistance programme and also, to determine the general principles governing its organization and administration. If the proposals contained in the memorandum had been accepted, the Council would have been in a position to appoint a small ad hoc Committee of senior officials concerned with manpower problems or other officials and legal practitioners to draft a convention on the operation of the programme.

2. After an examination of the document produced by both Secretariats, the Council in Resolution CM/Res. 214(XIV) decided that the memorandum should be forwarded to the Governments of Member States for their comments and observations. In accordance with this decision, the OAU General Secretariat, as of 3 April 1970, forwarded to Member States the text of the memorandum. In its covering note, the General Secretariat requested Member States to forward their observation not later than 31 May 1970. When this report was being drafted, the General Secretariat had received replies from the following eight Member States: The Gambia, Mauritius, Upper Volta, Madagascar, Mali, the United Arab Republic, the Central African Republic and Togo.

3. The Secretariat thought the time ripe for reproducing the essential points recorded in the comments of the above-mentioned Governments, before the text of the draft Convention which is now submitted to the Council for its comments with a view to its ultimate adoption, if the Council so decides.

OBSERVATIONS OF MEMBER STATESI + II - OBJECT OF MEMORANDUM AND AIMS OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAMMEUPPER VOLTA

The idea which prompted the OAU and ECA Secretariats to submit jointly a draft for the establishment of an inter-African technical assistance programme to the OAU Council of Ministers at their 14th Session is an excellent one. When one thinks of the numerous advantages of such a programme, it deserves nothing but praise. Actually, the application of an inter-African technical assistance programme would facilitate the progressive elimination of the elements of foreign technical assistance which are often a source of neo-colonialism, espionage, and foreign constrain. It would certainly help to crystallize the economic aspects of African unity and, in due course, its political aspects as the confrontation of individuals and different kinds of experience would lead to an exchange of knowledge in all fields. This would be true only if conditions making for efficiency were secured; because, if the programme were implemented as described, there would be a number of difficulties encountered.

It could lead to a brain drain from the poorer countries to the richer ones, and from the richer countries to the very rich ones. In point of fact, under the pretext of providing less favoured countries with assistance, qualified staff might endeavour to secure more lucrative jobs, inasmuch as the document states that experts may select the country where they wish to serve. The poorer countries would, therefore, be left in lurch. Not only would they fail to receive assistance, but they would also run the risk of losing their qualified staff.

The system is liable to become a market for lucrative jobs and the primary overriding objective of the programme, namely, to assist African countries in need of help without distinction would be defeated.

The case of the OAU refugees is an excellent illustration of this concern.

It is a well-known fact that the refugees indicate on their applications the names of the countries where they would like to serve, in

order of preference. Experience has shown that the countries which are now abundantly endowed by nature nor favoured by history or geography, are never mentioned in their files.

Another difficulty which stems from this practice lies in the actual choice of experts. Where is one to recruit African specialists with adequate experience and knowledge when it is no secret that the independent States of Africa in general and those south of the Sahara in particular joined the ranks of the international comity of sovereign nations not so long ago. African Governments would find it difficult to allow their experts to proceed to other States to provide them with assistance.

The shortage of competent and highly qualified staff is a common characteristic of developing countries; and we would, therefore, run the risk of procuring adventurers rather than technical assistance specialists.

In such a position, it would become necessary in order to meet the shortage, to use inexperienced, young university graduates who, with more theoretical knowledge than practical experience, would tinker with field activities and consequently hold back an undertaking which should "get off the ground" quickly. We must constantly bear in mind the fact that we are living in an age of speed and our progress must be attuned to the imperatives and tempo of the age. The problem still remains a complex one in spite of the eminently obvious advantages of an African assistance programme. African States would still, as at present, be left with foreign technical assistance which is made up, more often than not, of young people without experience and not really suited to their tasks.

It follows, therefore, that if an inter-African technical assistance programme is to be effective, it must take account of certain factors: it would have to take strict measures to avoid any brain drain from poorer to richer countries; it would have to limit, in a flexible manner, the selection of specialists and, to do all these things, it would need to act with a certain degree of rigour. Also, as time goes on, experience would suggest other changes which would require gradual adjustments to avoid any re-enactment of the painful drama of injustice which has been staged in Africa.

MADAGASCAR

The Malagasy Government agrees in principle with the view that Madagascar should participate in an inter-African technical assistance programme, as set out in Doc. CM/316 (Part 7 pages 3 - 4.) In the present state of things, Madagascar could, if necessary, provide some experts.

MALI

An examination of the documents in question reveals a certain amount of ambiguity in the actual concept of the project. Indeed, the memorandum has been drawn up on the basis of fact collected from students of African universities and research institutes; but it is common knowledge that the young African cadres, for various reasons, have a tendency to prefer serving outside their country of origin. It would seem, therefore, that the consultation is vitiated from the start because it does not reflect the capacities or even the potentialities of individual States, but rather the wishes of isolated students.

Bearing in mind the objectives set by OAU and ECA as well as the fact that the operation as presented involves a number of States, it would have been logical for the consultation to have been addressed to Governments which are the entities most closely concerned.

As regards the organization and procedure for carrying out the operation, we think it would be advisable to slant the studies in such a way as to obtain a solution similar to international technical assistance. In this connexion, the formula adopted by ILO would seem to be appropriate.

If necessary, consideration could be given to the preparation of an inter-African technical assistance Charter adapted to the special aspects of African policies and the stage of development at which African countries have arrived.

We therefore think it would be advisable to postpone examination of this matter by the higher OAU/ECA organs to allow time for a more exhaustive study on the methods to be determined.

III - SERVICE CONDITIONS UNDER THE PROGRAMMEGENERAL OBSERVATIONSMAURITIUS

The chapter on Conditions of service make no reference to medical facilities. This should be included under conditions of service with the technical assistance personnel being entitled to the same level of treatment as that to which they are entitled in their country of origin.

MADAGASCAR

The form of contract, although drawn up under the auspices of OAU and ECA, should be left to the assessment of the recipient Government which normally should come to some understanding of the expert's country of origin, OAU and ECA being, as it were, something in the nature of a Placement Bureau.

(a) DURATION OF SERVICEUNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The proposed programme divided the types of service into short-term service which is of one month or less up to six months, and medium-and-long-term service which is of one to two or more years.

The proposed programme did not specify the category of service of more than six months up to one year. The U.A.R. Government is of the view that this service should fall under the category of medium-and-long-term service.

TOGO

In principle, service is for a period of two years, subject to renewal.

(b) JOB DESCRIPTION

No comment.

(c) TRAVELLING EXPENSESMAURITIUS

Under conditions of service, paragraph 9(c), Commonwealth Countries should have the alternative of seeking finance for the donor country share of travel fares through the Commonwealth third country programme.

MADAGASCAR

The donor country should bear the travel expenses both ways of the technical assistance official and the members of his family irrespective of the length of the contract.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The proposed programme suggested that the donor country should provide the travel fare (including 10 Kilogrammes excess baggage allowance) for the experts they supply if their service is less than one year, in case of more than one year service, the donor country should provide the outward fare while the receiving country provides the homeward fare.

The U.A.R. Government is of the view that the recipient country should provide the outward and homeward fare in all cases, whether the service is less or more than one year.

TOGO

Travel expenses shall be borne by the country providing aid.

(d) SALARIES AND ALLOWANCESMAURITIUS

Paragraph (d) - Salaries and Allowances should be amended. It is recommended that instead of asking donor countries to grant a "topping up allowance" a common fund should be established out of which "topping up" and "inducement" allowances could be met. Countries and organizations outside the OAU could be asked to contribute to this fund.

MADAGASCAR

The proposals contained in the above memorandum with regard to salaries and allowances are acceptable.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The proposed programme suggested that African Experts should be entitled to salaries based on the recipient government local salary scales appropriate to their grade. It also stated that where local salary scales for the relevant grade of service are below those of the donor country, the proposed programme suggested that the donor country should grant a topping-up-allowance to be paid to the home account of the expert.

The U.A.R. Government is of the view that the recipient country should pay all salaries and allowances of the experts and that this salary scale should not be less than that paid to expatriotes of other countries or the salary he is entitled to in the donor country.

TOGO

In principle, the donor country assumes responsibility for experts' salaries. In this case, the experts are housed free of charge by the Togolese Government. They are responsible only for paying electricity and water bills, charges for voidance and refuse disposal.

Occasionally, in certain agreements, the Togolese Government shares in the payment of experts, meeting one given item calculated on a basis agreed by the two Governments. This fixed element hardly exceeds CFA fr. 40,000.

The experts in this category pay a moderate rental for apartments made available to them by the Government. Expenses for electricity, water etc. are their responsibility.

The experts serving the Government as technical advisers receive a "topping up" salary of CFA fr. 6,000 when they use their own vehicle for their official duties.

For an official mission outside the duty station, the Government makes an official vehicle available to all experts.

(e) INCOME TAX

MADAGASCAR

Inasmuch as all salaries and allowances paid to the expert or technical assistant are provided by the recipient country, income tax is fixed at the rate in force in the latter. Obviously, double taxation should be avoided.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The proposed programme suggested that the experts serving for periods longer than three months deserve no exemption from income tax in the place the income is earned.

The U.A.R. Government suggests that the minimum period for exemption from taxes should be extended to six months.

TOGO

Experts receiving the single element of fr. 40.000 pay a progressive monthly tax. All experts pay a quarterly tax on vehicles (car license).

(f) FOREIGN EXCHANGE

MADAGASCAR

It should be possible for inter-African technical assistance staff to transmit to their country of origin a portion of their earnings and all their savings at the end of their service.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The proposed programme suggested that experts should be accorded the privilege of acquiring the necessary foreign exchange for remitting part of their local earnings to their home countries provided remittance in any one year do not exceed 50% of the total earnings.

While endorsing the suggestion, the U.A.R. Government proposes that the transfer should be in convertible currency and should be provided for on monthly basis.

(g) HOUSING FACILITIES

MADAGASCAR

No preferential treatment should be given to inter-African technical assistance staff. Members of such staff shall enjoy similar advantages as are accorded to the officials of the recipient country with similar professional qualification and similar responsibilities.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The U.A.R. Government suggests that the recipient country should be responsible for securing adequate accomodation to the expert serving under the technical assistance programme. The expert should also be entitled to the equivalent of one month salary upon his arrival to the recipient country as an advance payment to be repaid by instalments.

TOGO

See (d) Salaries and allowances.

(h) LOCAL TRANSPORT

MADAGASCAR

Since inter-African technical assistance staff are equated with the officials of the recipient country, they should conform to the rules in force in that country as regards local transport.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The U.A.R. Government approves the arrangements set forth in the proposed programme regarding local transport.

TOGO

Experts holding posts of technical adviser to the Government, receive a "topping up" salary of CFA fr. 6,000, when they use their own vehicle for official purposes.

For an official mission outside the duty station, the Government makes a vehicle available to all experts.

(i) LEAVE ENTITLEMENTUNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The U.A.R. Government endorses the views expressed in the proposed programme and further suggests that the expert should be entitled to spend his leave in the donor country. Travelling expenses for the expert and his dependents should be paid by the recipient country.

TOGO

Since travelling expenses are a charge on the country providing aid, questions of leave shall be settled as part of bilateral agreements.

(j) DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGESMADAGASCAR

Duty-free purchase of a car or other items of equipment should be left to the discretion of the recipient Government.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The proposed programme suggested that African experts should be granted duty-free privileges to purchase such items as private cars, refrigerators, radios, televisions, air conditioners etc....

The U.A.R. Government agrees to this proposal.

TOGO

Shall be exempted from the payment of duties and taxes, all imports per family of:

- a motor car (or a motorcycle)
- a refrigerator
- an air conditioner (two if the family includes children).

(k) SERVICE CONTINUATION, SENIORITY, PROMOTION
AND PENSION RIGHTS

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The U.A.R. Government agrees to the recommendation contained in the proposed programme regarding service continuation, seniority and pension rights.

RECOMMENDATION

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The U.A.R. Government may wish to consider recommending that the recipient countries should bear the expenses of medical treatment of the African expert and his dependents, and also travelling expenses for treatment if adequate treatment is not available in the country of service.

TOGO

Medically speaking, foreign experts shall have the same advantages as are accorded to nationals in respect of health insurance.^{1/}

^{1/} Alternative: insurance against illness.



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