

**ORGANIZATION OF
AFRICAN UNITY**

SECRETARIAT

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ADDIS ABABA

**ORGANISATION DE L'UNITE
AFRICAIN**

SECRETARIAT

B. P. 3243

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

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CM/345 (Part 1)

**REGIONAL SECRETARIAT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOR
AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR (SRAM)**



H.E. Mr. DIALLO TELLI
Secretary-General of the Organiza-
tion of African Unity
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Ref. ME/mm

Subject: SRAM
Consultative Status (Observer Status)

Mr. Secretary-General,

Following our discussion of 21 February 1970 at Africa Hall, I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency a request for consultative status on behalf of the Regional Secretariat of Catholic Education for Africa and Madagascar (SRAM).

This Regional Secretariat co-ordinates all the activities of catholic schools in African countries south of the Sahara with the exception of South Africa and Rhodesia.

Consequently, it serves about 5 million young Africans from all classes of society. Needless to say, all the children attending these schools are not necessarily catholic and the percentage of christians, in this respect, varies from one country to another.

Through the privileged means of education, the Regional Secretariat of Catholic Education for Africa and Madagascar seeks to work for Africa, its development and unity. It is therefore in order to better meet the needs of our continent that during their meeting in Kinshasa on 26 August 1964, the Africans in charge of catholic education asked for the headquarters, which was until then in Europe, to be transferred to Africa. This has been done since 1965.

The Regional Secretariat of Catholic Education for Africa and Madagascar is pursuing its educational objectives with the intention of serving the African States in collaboration with inter-African bodies.

At a time when African countries are pooling their efforts for the realization of common goals, our ambition is to make our contribution to African Unity. We believe that we can better achieve this goal if we are granted consultative status with the decision-making bodies whose plans and directives in the field of education we desire to execute.

Convinced, Mr. Secretary-General, that our request will be taken into consideration, I remain entirely at your disposal for any further information or documents which you would require. Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my high consideration.

M. EKWA s.j.
Regional Secretary

REGIONAL SECRETARIAT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOR AFRICA AND
MADAGASCAR (SRAM)

CONSTITUTION 1/

1. In accordance with Article 11 b (x) of the constitution of the CIEO, a "Regional Secretariat for Africa and Madagascar (SRAM) was set up in Africa.
2. The SRAM is headed by a regional Secretary-General who ensures its running. He is appointed by the CIEO Council at the proposal of the African delegates.
3. At international meetings SRAM's role is to defend the African point of view in matters discussed therein.
4. In addition to such representation at international gatherings, the functions of SRAM include:
 - a) ensuring implementation of CIEO programmes of activities for the region;
 - b) ensuring an exchange of information and experience between the regions of Africa and Madagascar in all matters pertaining to education;
 - c) c) presenting a report on activities to the annual session of the sub-regional representatives (cf. Art. 5).
5. The SRAM Secretary-General is assisted by eight sages called SRAM "sub-regional Representatives" who are from English-speaking and French-speaking countries, taking into account the geographical distribution of Member Countries.

(x) "The Regional Secretariat is the permanent executive organ of the Office. The Regional Secretariats are regional organs of the Office and are entrusted with the Office's activities for the regions considered. Their establishment and approval are decided on by the Council and submitted for decision to the next General Assembly which gives them the status of regional organ. They are governed by rules and regulations adopted in accordance with the present constitution and approved by the Council" 1/. Acts of the Sixth General Assembly, Paris, 13-16 July 1965. 1/

The Regional Secretary calls meeting of these representatives once a year. Their task is to help the Regional Secretary to carry out the programme of activities for the region. Should four of them request an extraordinary meeting, the Regional Secretary shall convene such meeting and include in the agenda the points raised. The quorum required for the sub-regional representatives to meet, shall be 6 out of 8 members.

6. The SRAM Regional Secretary shall also organize meetings of all matters concerning the catholic school in Africa and Madagascar, propose solutions and guide-lines, draw up programmes of activities for submission to the CIEO General Assembly. The regional conference shall be held every four years at least.
7. The SRAM budget shall be financed by the CIEO Council, after establishment of the programme of activities and consideration of estimates, and by any other possible contributions.

REGIONAL SECRETARIAT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOR AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR (SRAM)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Regional Secretariat of Catholic Education for Africa and Madagascar was established in 1962 with its headquarters in Brazzaville.

It is one of the five regional bodies of the "Catholic International Education Office"(1). These local organizations which sometimes embrace one continent, are entrusted with the task of studying the region's specific problems in the field of education and seeking appropriate solutions.

Consequently, in order to be better able to meet Africa's specific needs, the Africans in charge of catholic education requested, at their meeting held on 26 August 1964 in Kinshasa, that the SRAM headquarters which had been momentarily transferred to Europe, be moved back to Africa. In March 1966, at the proposal of the CIEO meeting in Rome, it was decided to set it up in Kinshasa under the directorship of Rev. Father Ekwa.

In August 1965, SRAM held its first panafrican conference. All those who were concerned with education in Africa were present: public organizations, both governmental and inter-governmental and, private organizations, both denominational and non-denominational.

All the participants had one common objective; to serve Africa better through education and instruction, instruments par excellence of the advancement of African nations (2).

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- 1) The Secretariats for Europe, America, Asia, the Near and Middle East have their headquarters in Brussels, Bogota, Manilla and Beirut respectively.
 - 2) Catholic Education in the Service of Africa - Report of the Panafrican Catholic Education Conference, Leopoldville, 16-23 August 1965.

* Unofficial translation

SRAM IN THE SERVICE OF AFRICA

A. SRAM in the Service of States

By co-ordinating the educational activities of its 25 member countries, the SRAM intends to make a major contribution to African development and unity. Its activities are not modeled on a structure of the past. It plans and desires to put its educational service in line with the present context of the economic, social and political development of the continent.

Accession to independence is not without such common problems as the role of the school in awakening national conscience, imparting a sense of civic duty, the intensive training of national cadres, etc. There is also the often similar methods of integrating private educational institutions with the national educational system along with the problems of legal recognition which they entail. Within the school systems themselves, africanization of cadres and teaching staff is a matter of concern to all African States.

Our task is to put the school, all schools, in the service of Nations.

B. SRAM in the Service of African Development:

What is the situation of education in our continent?

It is indeed difficult to determine, for any given year, the figures representing a factual situation of education for all African countries.

According to a study carried out for the year 1963-1964, there are 21 million children in primary schools out of a total population of about 290 million inhabitants; this represents a rate of enrolment of 44% in primary schools. (1)

(1) cfr. Auger G.A. In L'enseignement Catholique au service de l'Afrique. Leopoldville, 1965.

Moreover, according to UNESCO's world statistics, it is established that the school pyramid in African countries, with quite a large base, is characterized by the poor enrolment at the secondary and higher school levels. Thus, out of every 100 students, 90 are at the first level, elementary, 9.6 the secondary, and 0.4 the higher, whereas the world average school pyramid shows that out of every 100 students, 77 are at the first level, 20 the secondary and 3 the higher.

On the one hand, these data show the still low level of enrolment in Africa, and on the other, the shorter duration of education as compared with the world average duration of education.

In other words in our countries, the universal right to education which demands that the least should be "compulsory and free elementary education for all, and general technical and vocational training", is still far from being a concrete reality. It also means that for us to get nearer to achieving this, the joint effort of all concerned is necessary.

As regards educational results, it is admitted that our educational systems should be more and more adapted to African realities. Furthermore, their effectiveness and their contribution to development are checked too often by legacies of the past. If education is in effect a factor of development, it can only be so if it is adapted to follow closely the concrete economic realities of our rapidly changing countries.

However, economic development is not an end in itself. The final objective of education is to develop the "whole man" and his natural traits.

In this respect, we think that our systems of education should be based more on our own civilization.

In actual fact, this means that the courses - geography, history, literature - should strictly conform to African context. At the primary as well as the secondary level, "Africanization" should be forged and promoted.

In the face of such a programme that calls for reflexion and action and an appeal which is as vast as our continent itself, we can only respond by harmonizing our efforts.

The SRAM intends to put all its efforts into this. Its five million students - 30% of the continent's school-going population - constitute a human potential of vital importance to Africa of tomorrow.

To orientate this living force in line with developing and united Africa, we think it is indispensable to know the intentions and options, the educational plans of action, the general development plan and the economic aims of the policy-makers at the pan-African level.

That is why the SRAM which desires to collaborate in, and contribute fully to the fight against illiteracy, the development of science and culture, the development of African cultures, and align its action with African Unity, seeks consultative status(observer status) with the "Organization of African Unity".

REGIONAL SECRETARIAT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOR AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR

Field of action

BURUNDI

CAMEROON

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE

CONGO-KINSHASA

IVORY COAST

DAHOMY

ETHIOPIA

GABON

GAMBIA

GHANA

UPPER VOLTA

KENYA

LESOTHO

MADAGASCAR

MALAWI

MALI

NIGERIA

UGANDA

RWANDA

SENEGAL

SIERRA LEONE

TANZANIA

TCHAD

ZAMBIA



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