



**ORGANIZATION OF
AFRICAN UNITY**

Secretariat
P. O. Box 3243

منظمة الوحدة الإفريقية
السكرتارية
ب. ب. ٣٢٤٣

**ORGANISATION DE L'UNITÉ
AFICAINE**

Secrétariat
B. P. 3243

Addis Ababa .•. أديس ابابا

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Twenty-first Ordinary Session

Addis Ababa - May 1973

CM/505/Rev.2

**AFRICAN
CANDIDATURES TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**



AFRICAN CANDIDATURES TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

At its Twentieth Ordinary Session in February 1973, the Council of Ministers adopted Resolution CM/Res.291 (XX) inviting the Administrative Secretary-General to make the necessary approaches to States belonging to the Organization for the drawing up of a list of African candidates for high-level posts in the major international Organizations.

That Resolution was in response to the desire of the Organization of African Unity for an effective solution to be found to the problem of African candidatures in international organizations, a problem which has increasingly been of concern to African States over the years.

Indeed, the under-representation of Africans at high-level posts in the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations family and Africa's failures whenever it submitted candidatures to important posts in the major international Organizations, particularly the FAO and WHO, call for the OAU policy-making bodies to examine the situation in order to adopt a more dynamic and effective policy.

For the purpose of analysis, the following is the classification of the problem of African candidatures in international Organizations:

- A. Candidatures to the posts of Directors General of Specialized Agencies of the United Nations family;
- B. Candidatures to vacant posts in certain Committees, Commissions and other Organs of the United Nations General Assembly.

As regards candidatures to the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations family, the following table shows the dates on which the posts of Directors General of these Specialized Agencies will become vacant:

UNESCO	November 1974
ILO	May 1975
FAO	January 1976
WHO	January 1978

However, since the elections of new Directors General, except the Director General of UNESCO, will be held several months before the expiration of the term of office of the present Directors General, it is necessary that the OAU policy-making bodies chose the African candidates at least one year before the date on which the elections will be held. With regard to the election of Director General of UNESCO, this will be held during the UNESCO General Conference scheduled for November 1974. The post of Director General of the International Labour Office will most likely be filled during the Governing Body's session in November 1974.

Negotiations for the acceptance of candidates for each of these posts are made years in advance of the dates of election. It is therefore necessary that the OAU establishes contacts, through the diplomatic channel, with the various regional groups, particularly, those of the Third World, in order to ensure the fullest support for the African candidates.

Africa's set-backs in the past during elections to important posts in international Organizations were due to the late acceptance of African candidatures after other regional Groups had already acquired firm support for their candidates. Secondly, the African candidates rarely succeeded in obtaining

the unanimous support of African States. The OAU policy-making bodies should, therefore, take concrete measures to remedy this situation and to enable Africa to place a greater number of Africans in the high-level posts of the Specialized Agencies.

As regards African candidatures to the posts of Directors General of UNESCO and the ILO which will be filled in 1974, OAU, with the unanimous agreement of Member States, should choose its African candidates as soon as possible in order to enable the various African Groups to establish consultations with the other regional Groups.

Since Resolution CM/Res.291 (XX) of the Twentieth Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers invited the Administrative Secretary-General to make the necessary approaches to Member States for the drawing up of a list of African candidates, the Administrative Secretary-General forwarded a telegram to all Member States, kindly requesting them to submit such candidatures to the General Secretariat for the decision of the OAU policy-making bodies.

The candidatures thus submitted and those which were submitted during this Session of the Council have been attached as an annex to this document. These candidatures are being submitted for the approval of the OAU policy-making bodies.

With regard to African candidatures to vacant posts in certain Committees, Commissions or other Organs of the United Nations General Assembly, the Council of Ministers decided, during its Thirteenth Ordinary Session, to adopt a common stand on African candidatures in order to maintain the cohesion of the African Group. The OAU General Secretariat was requested,

in this regard, to inform the Council regularly of all candidatures for the Council's approval of the African candidates in order to avoid possible divergencies at the time of elections.

The General Secretariat is pleased with the cohesion of the African Group and the African solidarity which have made it possible, since the 24th Ordinary Session of the United Nations General Assembly, for all the candidates who had been duly accepted by the previous sessions of the Council of Ministers to be elected.

Unfortunately, there was a want of the unity, cohesion and discipline which had stood to the credit of the African Group during the 27th Ordinary Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

There was disagreement over the choosing of 16 countries to participate on Africa's behalf on the Board of Directors of the Environment Secretariat during the meeting of the African Group held on 15 December 1972.

Contrary to its usual practice, the African Group was divided during the votes at the General Assembly because it could not agree on its list of candidatures.

The future of the African Group would be at stake if an urgent solution is not found by the OAU Council of Ministers laying down the criteria for choosing African candidates to the various organs of the United Nations.

The seats allotted to Africa are certainly insufficient and all the delegations are desirous of participating at the same time in the deliberations of these Organs.

The debates of the African Group on the question of candidatures are becoming more and more heated and seem to be going beyond the limits of courtesy characteristic of diplomacy and the behaviour of African diplomats at the United Nations Organisation.

Africa now has 41 States, members of the OAU, and it is only necessary that some of them should accept to withdraw their candidatures when the seats allotted are not sufficient.

What is happening, unfortunately, is that States working in several important Organs of the UN are ever refusing to allow those which are not members of any Organs to have the opportunity of participating actively in the deliberations of the UN, and because there are no rules of procedure covering this, the African Group cannot impose any solution that does not immediately contradict the interests of any given country.

It would be desirable for the Council of Ministers to give precise directives to the African Group on distribution and choice of countries to the various seats allotted to Africa in the important Organs of the UN.

The Executive Secretariat of the African Group has, in this regard, prepared a report for the Group on the criteria for distributing seats.

This report has been submitted to the present session under Code No. CM/505/Add.1 for consideration and adoption if the Council of Ministers deems it expedient. Reference to the African Group in considering the delicate question of candidatures.



AFRICAN UNION UNION AFRICAINE

African Union Common Repository

<http://archives.au.int>

Organs

Council of Ministers & Executive Council Collection

1973-05

African Candidatures to International Organization

Organization of African Unity

Organization of African Unity

<https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/7808>

Downloaded from African Union Common Repository