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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE OAU PROGRAMME TO ESTABLISH INTER-
AFRICAN CENTRES FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH
IN AFRICA



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1. Two of the decisions taken by the 20th ordinary session of the Council of Ministers in February 1973, brought nearer, the day when the OAU and Africa, will witness the construction and operation of the first OAU Centre for Training and Research in Africa. The Council of Ministers, decided in decision CM/Dec. 238(XX) :-

- " (a) to adopt the project-plan for the Centre (for Earth Sciences) which was contained in document SC/EDC/2, and
- (b) to adopt the recommendation of the African Experts who drew-up the project-plan, that Nairobi in Kenya, be the site of the OAU Centre for Earth Sciences."

It is recalled that the Inter-African Centre for Training and Research in Earth Sciences (including Geology, Mineralogy etc. etc.) is among the Centres which the OAU decided to establish in Africa, and at present there are ten such Centre on the list. The remaining Centres will be in : Applied Science and Engineering, Food Science, Technology and Nutrition, Water Resources, Marine Science and Technology, Human Medicine and Pharmacology, Veterinary Science, Climatology and Meteorology, Basic Sciences and Social Sciences. The Centre for Earth Sciences was selected to serve as a pilot scheme for the whole programme, and the decisions mentioned above clear the way for action to be transferred from a theoretical level to a practical one.

2. The project-plan of the Centre for Earth Sciences, provided for about 300 students to undergo intensive and extensive courses within the Centre at professional and middle levels. The Centre would also offer, at the payment of fees, advanced technical services to Member States including analysis of minerals and rocks, assaying of mineral ore, prospecting for metal or industrial minerals, and preparation and printing of geological maps - to mention only a few of the technical services listed. Advanced research and development facilities would be provided for use by the Centre itself, and by research workers from Member States. These services (training, technical aid and research and development facilities) are aimed at supplementing those being offered by Member States through their national universities or research institutions. The Centre will not be affiliated to any University, and is eventually planned to be manned by Africans only, using English and French as languages of instruction.

3. Following a previous OAU decision, applications for external aid have been sent to the UNDP and to three non-African Countries, whose reactions are still awaited.

4. As regards the proposed Centre for Food Science, Technology and Nutrition, the four experts appointed by the OAU to prepare a draft project-plan for that Centre met in Addis Ababa in December 1972. The questionnaires which they approved as part of the process of gathering information and data, have already been sent for completion to Member States, to African Universities and Research Institutions. Also requests have been sent to selected non-African Institutions as directed by the experts for details of their curricula in Food Science, Technology and Nutrition. It is anticipated that by June 1973, adequate replies will have been received from these sources to enable the Secretariat to inform the Experts of the information and data made available. It is planned that in September 1973 the four experts will tour selected African countries which would serve as a representative sample of the OAU membership in order to gather information on local conditions and requirements in food science, technology and nutrition. The Experts are expected to present their draft plan to the Third Session of the ESCH Commission scheduled for December 1973. The Implementation Committee will also consider that draft project-plan, before the latter is submitted to the Council of Ministers for consideration.

5. Following previous arrangements aimed at maximizing benefits and avoiding duplication of effort, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), is supposed to be processing the establishment in Africa of Centre(s) for Applied Science and Engineering - one of the ten selected disciplines. Several meetings were held by the ECA on this subject. The approach of the ECA on this programme is slightly different from that of the OAU - although the programme itself is an OAU programme. The ECA has established a Panel of Consultants composed of African and non-African members, who advise it on this issue. The OAU uses only African Experts. Secondly, the ECA believes in promoting the expansion of selected national universities to provide places for students from other African countries. So far, the OAU approach has been to establish an Inter-African (and hence International) Centre to undertake the expected training, technical services and research and development. Due to these differences, the Implementation Committee directed, and it has been endorsed by the political organs of the OAU, that the OAU should process the establishment of a Centre(s) for Applied Science and Engineering in a manner similar to that used for Earth Sciences and Food Science, Technology and Nutrition. The ECA would be consulted, and brought into the scheme at the stage where a project-plan has been drawn-up for consideration by political organs of the OAU. This co-operation

with the ECA is meant to avoid duplication, and to maximize benefits accruing from a judicious application of resources and efforts to the tasks in hand. The Secretariat will be in a position to initiate action on the Centre for Applied Science and Engineering after the drafting of the project-plan of the Centre for Food Science, Technology and Nutrition will have been completed.

6. The scientific exploration, utilization and development of the vast natural resources that Member States possess, require an adequate number of trained high and middle level personnel, supported by research and development and other scientific facilities with a "take-off" capacity, so as to make meaningful contribution to accelerated overall development of Member States. With the establishment of the proposed OAU Centres for Training and Research, valuable facilities and services would be made available to Member States to supplement their efforts in these regards. With the establishment of the proposed OAU Centres for Training and Research, it will no longer be necessary in most cases, to go outside Africa, for advanced technical and scientific services. Added to this, the "brain drain" that arises from lack of training and research facilities of a sophisticated nature, will no longer be justified. Thus, the bringing into operation of the proposed OAU Centres for Training and Research, should raise pan-African self-sufficiency in scientific training, research and services to an appreciable level.

Addis Ababa
March 1973

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Progress Report on the OAU Programme to establish inter African Centres for training and research in Africa

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