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المنظمة الأفريقية للوحدة

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

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Item No.

ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL
SECRETARIAT IN THE ECONOMIC,
SOCIAL, TRANSPORT AND
TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FIELDS

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY-GENERAL



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REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY-GENERAL IN THE
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, TRANSPORT AND TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FIELDS

NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EEC:

From July 1973 to the end of the year, the Secretariat was deeply involved in preparations for the negotiations with the European Economic Community. In Lagos, Dar-es-Salaam and in Brussels, African Trade Ministers responsible for the negotiations, established an appropriate negotiating machinery consisting of a Committee of African Ambassadors and Plenipotentiaries, Committees of African Experts and an Ad Hoc Secretariat.

2. In their last meeting in Addis Ababa (February 20 - 22), the Trade Ministers reaffirmed the eight principles and reviewed the progress in these negotiations since their commencement in November 1973.

3. World events have given a new dimension to these negotiations. Afro-Arab relations as well as the solidarity of the Third World in negotiating for more remunerative price for their products have strengthened Africa's resolve to negotiate for a fair deal in these on-going negotiations with the EEC.

4. A separate (Document CM/558) report is being submitted to the Council on the conduct of these negotiations and the stands taken by the two parties.

5. Against the background of the "Declaration on Co-operation, Development and Economic Independence", and in the light of the directives of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government contained in the light principles the Council can review the situation and make the necessary recommendations to the Assembly.

THE EIGHTH OAU/ECA JOINT MEETING ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

6. As in the past the Eighth OAU/ECA Joint Meeting on Trade and Development took place in Geneva from 9 to 17 August 1973, before the 13th Session of the Trade and Development Board. Twenty-five African countries attended the Joint Meeting. The OAU and ECA Secretariats serviced both this meeting, as well as the daily meetings of the African Group during the 13th Session of the Trade and Development Board.

7. A major objective of the meeting was to take stock of African positions on international negotiations on trade and monetary issues, and make recommendations, where appropriate, to African Governments, within the framework of the decisions of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its Tenth Ordinary Session, held in May 1973. An important function of the OAU/ECA Joint Meeting was to examine studies prepared by the Secretariats of the OAU/ECA in the field of Trade and Finance and to make recommendations for further action.
8. Furthermore, the meeting was convened to assist African countries to harmonize their positions on various issues which were coming before the Thirteenth Session of the Trade and Development Board.
9. The OAU/ECA Joint Meetings are being increasingly recognized, not only by African Governments, but also by Governments in other parts of the world, as well as by international organizations, as the principal African Governmental expert body for discussions of problems related to international trade and finance. Discussions at the Eighth Joint Meeting were concentrated on the Multilateral Trade Negotiations; the Intensive Inter-governmental Commodity Consultations within UNCTAD; future relations between African countries and the EEC, as well as on the reform of the international monetary system. The relevant recommendations of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Non-aligned countries in Algiers in September 1973, were also studied.
10. In relation to Multilateral Trade Negotiations, the African position was governed by the general principles and guidelines adopted in May 1973 by the Tenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU. The Eighth OAU/ECA Joint Meeting attached considerable importance to the need for African countries to prepare themselves fully for these negotiations and in particular to the need for defining a common African position. Further, the Joint Meeting recommended that the OAU and ECA Secretariats should participate as observers in these negotiations.
11. With regard to the Intensive Inter-governmental Commodity Consultations within UNCTAD, it would be recalled that resolution 83 (III) of the Third Session of UNCTAD requested its Secretary-General to arrange for intensive inter-governmental Consultations on Commodities or groups of

commodities to take place in the period from October 1973 to March 1975. The Seventh Special Session of the Committee on Commodities was entrusted with the consideration of this matter. The Eighth OAU/ECA meeting, therefore, reviewed the work of the Seventh Special Session of the Committee on Commodities. A list of twenty-two priority commodities adopted by the First African Ministerial Conference on Trade (Abidjan 9 - 13 May 1973), was submitted to the Seventh Session of the Committee on Commodities. The Eighth OAU/ECA meeting confirmed and endorsed that list, and recommended that coffee in particular should be included in the final list adopted by UNCTAD.

12. On the question of the Special Measures in favour of the Least Developed of the Developing Countries, the meeting stressed the need to implement Resolution 62 (III) of the Third Conference of UNCTAD on Special Measures for the Least Developed Countries, as well as Resolution 80 (III) of the same Conference, and in particular Section C paragraph 10 on the establishment of an inter-governmental group for the special measures for the least developed countries.

THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

13. During the 13th Session of the Trade and Development Board, the African Group stood by its previous position on the Inter-governmental Consultations on Commodities. The main problem here was the insistence of some Latin American Delegations on banning coffee from the list of commodities which were to be subject of those consultations. The African delegations considered that the position of the Latin American countries constituted a veto on the African priority list of commodities. This introduced politics into a matter which otherwise was but a technical one. Africa therefore found itself forced to resort to political pressures to bring about a solution. In the confrontation between the African group and the UNCTAD Secretariat, supported by the Latin American Group, much tension resulted and the work of the 13th Session had to be suspended for two weeks at one point. These drove home to all delegations from other regions as well as to the UNCTAD Secretariat the determination of Africa to have coffee in the list. The Board then passed a resolution including coffee on the list of the commodities which were to be subject of intensive inter-governmental consultations in the period between October 1973 and March 1974.

14. The "coffee incident" underlines the need for a thorough review, by the highest political organs of the OAU, of a number of pertinent issues relating to Africa's participation in UNCTAD meetings and other international forums. Of particular importance is the need for strengthening Africa's bargaining position. Member States must find effective means of ensuring adequate representation in UNCTAD and other international organizations.

15. The establishment of the OAU Geneva Office should facilitate the provision of adequate services for the African Group in Geneva, specially during UNCTAD meetings. The next, immediate need is for all the OAU Member States to have missions in Geneva, to facilitate the effective participation of Africa in the many UNCTAD meetings which take place in between the Sessions of the Trade and Development Board.

16. The General Secretariat also participated in the deliberations of the 58th Session of the International Labour Conference, held in Geneva from 6 to 27 June 1973. The role of the Secretariat consisted mainly of co-ordinating the activities of the African Group both within the Conference and at the meeting of the Governing Body of the ILO. Within the African Group ensuring the participation of African Liberation Movements at ILO meetings to implement the provisions of Resolution No. VI adopted by the 57th International Labour Conference was of special significance. Undoubtedly, the participation of the Liberation Movements in ILO meetings is a feather in the cap of the African Group at the ILO. This important decision was reached through the cohesion and understanding of all concerned. Through the concerted effort of the African Group, the African Liberation Movements have now acquired observer status with the ILO and are the spokesmen and authentic representatives of the aspirations of the African populations of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands.

17. One of the important questions discussed by the International Labour Conference (ILC) was the changes to be made in the structure of the ILO, especially the Governing Body, on which ten Member States have Permanent Seats. The remaining seats on the Governing Body are distributed among the other members of the Body through elections. Africa, and the Third World as a whole, have asked that the system of Permanent Seats within the Governing Body be abolished and that the election of the Director-General

be made, henceforth, by the General Conference, in order to give every member of the ILO the opportunity to participate effectively in the work of this international organization. The dilatory tactics and procedures used by the countries with permanent seats however, continue to stand in the way of the much-needed reform.

18. The deliberations of the 58th Session were held under the Chairmanship of an African, H.E. Bintu Tshiabola, Commissioner of State for Labour of the Republic of Zaire, who was unanimously elected to the post.

19. The 59th Ordinary Session, scheduled for June 5, 1974, will continue to discuss the question of Permanent Seats with a view to finding a solution. It is now over ten years since this question has been before the ILC. As early as 1971 a Committee was set up to consider the matter.

20. Furthermore, the OAU Secretariat participated fully in the deliberations of the International Trade Union Conference on Apartheid. The Conference was organized by the United Nations and was attended by 380 trade unionists throughout the world, representing over 200 trade union movements. In its final session, and in an important resolution, the Conference "decided that concerted action be taken to eradicate apartheid policy in South Africa and invited all UN Specialized Agencies as well as inter-governmental organizations to initiate and intensify anti-apartheid action and to increase aid to the oppressed people of South Africa in their legitimate struggle for the observance of fundamental human rights, in close co-operation with the African peoples and their organizations and the whole international trade union movement". All Trade Union Organizations were further called upon "to commence on 10 December 1973 a world-wide week of action against the discriminatory policy of apartheid in South Africa".

FOURTH ILO REGIONAL CONFERENCE:

21. The OAU General Secretariat participated in the deliberations of the Fourth ILO African Regional Conference which was held in Nairobi, Kenya from 26 November to 6 December 1973. The report of the Director-General of the ILO dealt with issues of contemporary relevance to Africa, as it

struggles to embark on the difficult process of development and nation-building within the framework of the UN Second Development Decade, and what contribution Africa can expect from the ILO as it tackles these tasks and challenges.

22. With this in view, the report of the Director-General of ILO dealt with Human Dignity, Economic Growth and Social Justice in a Changing Africa; an ILO Agenda for Africa, the Ratification and Implementation of International Labour Conventions in Africa, with special reference to conventions relating to Employment Policy, Forced Labour, Social Policy and Labour Inspection; and thirdly with Employment, Status and Conditions of life and work of non-national (migrant) workers in Africa.

23. The OAU General Secretariat was effectively presented at the Conference and on that occasion brought out the OAU stand on the three main issues that were discussed at the Conference. Having closely followed the discussions of the agenda items, the OAU General Secretariat wishes to make a number of suggestions and recommendations which it thinks should be considered by the competent OAU policy-making organs.

24. The General Secretariat believes that the conclusions of the Fourth ILO African Regional Conference are of a nature to cement the relations of co-operation which already exist between the ILO and the OAU. Indeed many of the actions required by this Conference need a closer co-operation between the two Organizations. The first such action is in the area of helping African countries to frame and implement a concerted migration policy, with a view to facilitating freedom of movement on a continent-wide basis for migrant workers and other non-national workers, and rational principles on treatment of non-nationals in respect of employment and occupation with nationals of the host country.

25. It should be recalled that the problem of free movement of workers throughout the African continent has been discussed by the Council of Ministers during its previous sessions. At these sessions, however, many Member States were opposed to the principle of workers' unqualified freedom of movement in Africa. The same Member States, as represented by their Labour Ministers at the ILO Regional Conference requested the ILO and accepted to reconsider the question of freedom of movement of workers in Africa. In order to avoid difference of approach to this

question between the Foreign and Labour Ministers, the Council of Ministers might wish to consider the question again and pronounce itself as it sees fit on it, taking due regard of this recommendation of the 4th ILO African Regional Conference.

26. The second recommendation which necessitates joint action by ILO and OAU concerns social security. The Regional Conference recommended that, with a view to better protection of non-nationals, the co-ordination and harmonization of labour legislation should be extended to all countries in Africa affected by migratory movements, through the conclusion of new agreements or possibly the extension to other countries of existing agreements.

27. On the basis of the previous decisions of the Council of Ministers, as well as of the Conferences of African Labour Ministers, and in the light of the viewpoints expressed by the African Advisory Committee at its 4th Session held in Yaounde in 1971, the General Secretariat approached the ILO requesting it to co-operate in extending the OCAMM Convention on Social Security. This move did not, however, receive the expected attention from the ILO. In view of the recommendation made by the 4th African Regional Conference, a fresh appeal needs to be made to the ILO to reinforce its collaboration with the OAU for the implementation of this recommendation. The Council might therefore wish to consider this.

28. A third recommendation related to the employment of African refugees. In its recommendation, the Regional Conference stated that any national legislation or administrative practice which might hinder the applications of the provisions of international instruments relating to refugees, which deal with their access to employment and maintenance in their occupations, should be abolished. Furthermore, the Conference invited the ILO to co-operate with national, regional, and international organizations in:

- (a) determining the employment needs of refugees and the resources available for this purpose in the various countries and branches of activity, and
- (b) drawing up and implementing special vocational training and rehabilitation programmes for refugees.

29. There is no doubt that the problem of refugees is a very complicated and political one. Therefore, any organization wishing to assist African refugees should co-operate with the OAU Bureau for Placement and Education of ^{African} Refugees, in order to co-ordinate the efforts made throughout the world to help African refugees. Here too, it seems appropriate that an appeal should be made to the ILO to strengthen its collaboration with the OAU Bureau in implementing this recommendation. As before the Council might wish to consider making such an appeal.

30. The last point which, although not among the recommendations of the Regional Conference, requires close collaboration between the OAU and ILO is the problem of clandestine trafficking in African Manpower. It will be recalled that the OAU Secretariat, as far back as June 1972, called upon the ILO and ECA to make inquiries and studies on this problem so as to enable African Governments to take appropriate measures to put an end to this form of slavery in the 20th century. The ILO's response to the OAU appeal was not satisfactory. As the OAU delegation pointed out at the Regional Conference, the ILO contribution was just a record of the action taken by the ILO in elaborating and adopting international instruments on the problem of forced labour. In the circumstances, the General Secretariat is still awaiting a substantial contribution from the ILO on the research made on this important matter, within the framework of the good relations of co-operation which exist between the two Organizations.

31. These are some of the important suggestions which the General Secretariat has found necessary to bring to the attention of the Council for consideration. If these suggestions are agreeable to the Council, a suitable resolution could be adopted in order to furnish the Secretariat with the necessary authority for implementing the resolution along the lines outlined above.

SYMPOSIUM ON CONDITIONS OF LIFE AND WORK OF AFRICAN WORKERS IN TERRITORIES STILL UNDER COLONIAL AND/OR RACIST DOMINATION:

32. As part of the celebrations marking the Tenth Anniversary of the Conference of African Labour Ministers within the framework of events programmed for the 10th Anniversary of the OAU, one of the items submitted and approved by the OAU Tenth Anniversary Committee was the Symposium on the

Working and Living Conditions of African Workers in the Territories still under Colonial and/or Racist Domination. However, owing to the very heavy and crowded programme, it was found necessary to postpone the Symposium to a later date. In addition it was appreciated that the staging of such a Symposium under haphazard circumstances would not achieve the desired or intended results.

33. The General Secretariat feels that in order to vest the Symposium with all the seriousness it deserves, and to ensure it all success, it would be advisable to consider a number of important points which should be solved beforehand before holding the Symposium. The overall theme of the Symposium itself must, first of all, be determined, defined, spelled out and accepted by the Conference of African Labour Ministers. This would clarify the subject and objectives of the Symposium, both for the African Labour Ministers themselves, the General Secretariat and the participants. Besides, the items (topics) to be included on the agenda of the Symposium should also be fixed, so as to facilitate contributions. Such topics should reflect the under-current theme(s) and ramifications of the Symposium, and could perhaps touch on and include, inter alia, the following areas:

- (a) working and living conditions, i.e. conditions of life and work;
- (b) freedom of association;
- (c) freedom of the right to organization and collective bargaining;
- (d) right to work and choice of employment;
- (e) relationship(s) between the rights set forth under items (b), (c) and (d) vis-a-vis other civic rights;
- (f) forced (conscripted) labour as set forth in International Labour Convention No. 105;
- (g) workers' health, security and hygiene,
- (h) social and family implications of practices that separate workers from their families as regards local and migrant labour;
- (i) social security for workers and their families (dependents)
- (j) job reservation policy;
- (k) occupational horizontal and vertical mobility of labour;
- (l) labour facilities and training;
- (m) educational facilities for workers;

- (n) general consideration of the application of ILO Conventions and Recommendations in the territories under consideration;
- (o) working and trade union relationship between the workers and trade union leaders on the one hand and the Government machinery on the other.

34. Another question which came up during the close examination of the projected symposium by the last session of the Conference of African Labour Ministers was that of financing, which went hand in hand with the invitation of participants. The question covered first of all, financing of the symposium itself: technical staff needed, sound running of the proceedings, documentation etc. Then arose the question of financing participation by workers from dependent territories. In effect, if trade unionists from the territories concerned must take part in the symposium, the question would arise of who would pay for their travel and sojourn. Obviously it would not be the colonial or racist regimes who would do that. Furthermore, even if the appropriations necessary to cover this cost were available, the question would still arise as to how the trade unionists would receive their airline tickets and how they would be able to leave those territories.

35. Only after all these problems have been solved can the invitations be sent out, enclosing an aide memoire explaining the overall theme as well as all the other subjects with which the symposium would have to deal. In the view of the General Secretariat it appears necessary, before a serious Symposium could be held, that a decision on these problems be made. The Secretariat's heavy programme could not enable it to give all the attention desired to the preparation of the symposium, unless improvisation occurred, in which case the symposium would not reach any concrete results which could help the OAU, the trade unions of independent African countries and international organizations interested in the fate of thousands of Africans still held down by the yoke of colonialism, racism and racial discrimination, to improve and intensify their action in favour of the involuntary victims of the evil of the century. That is why the General Secretariat strongly recommended to the Conference of African Labour Ministers at their last session that it approve the principle of holding a Symposium, define its subject, agenda, the participation as suggested above, and allow the time needed for the preparation for and holding of the symposium.

36. The Eleventh Ordinary Session of the Conference of African Labour Ministers had in fact decided that the Symposium be held as part of the celebrations marking the Tenth Anniversary of OAU, under the aegis of the Conference itself, in collaboration with the newly created Organization of African Trade Union Unity. The representatives of the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) and of the Arab Labour Organization (ALO) - both organizations are based in Cairo - expressed the desire to be invited and associated with the holding of the Symposium.

37. A parallel but similar development took place in Geneva during the currency of the 58th Session of the International Labour Conference. On that occasion, a world-wide campaign by workers and trade unions in support of "oppressed workers in South Africa engaged in a legitimate struggle against the racist minority regime of South Africa" was made at the close of a two-day International Trade Union Conference against Apartheid.

38. Consequent upon the adoption of the Geneva Resolution, an African Committee for Trade Union Co-ordination and Action against Apartheid has since been formed and is headquartered in Kinshasa, Zaire. Its purpose is the implementation, at African level, of the resolution adopted on 16 June 1973 by the International Trade Union Conference Against Apartheid. The Committee is composed of nine (9) representatives who were elected on the criteria of geographical representation and the scale of air and sea traffic handled by the proposed countries.

39. The said resolution calls upon all trade union organizations to take all measures within their power to implement the provisions of the resolution and associate all their members with such action, and in particular to: inter alia, take an active part in the Decade of Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination which, in accordance with the decision of the United Nations General Assembly, began on 10 December 1973 on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It therefore seems appropriate that, in order to synchronise and maximise OAU efforts with other international agencies and organizations, and thus campaign effectively against racism by highlighting its evils globally, the Symposium should fittingly be stated in this calendar year (1974).

40. In order to embarrass the regimes in southern Africa and further reinforce the campaign against racism and racial discrimination, the Secretariat is of the considered opinion that the Symposium should be held in any one of the independent African States contiguous to southern Africa.

41. Since the Symposium is, in the main, to be a world-wide campaign against Apartheid, racism and racial discrimination, it would be appropriate to invite and associate the following international organizations with it: the ILO, UNESCO, UNHCR, UN Committee on Apartheid, the AAPSO and ALO. Invitations could also be extended to what are considered friendly and sympathetic European countries e.g. the Scandinavian countries. Above all, the interested National Liberation Movements recognized by the OAU should be invited; also the following: the Pan-African Youth Movement(s), the World Youth, the World Council of Churches, the major international Trade Union Organizations, and other international student, women and voluntary organizations should be invited. It is hoped that at least some of these invitees will present papers based on their own experience, standpoints and advise the OAU on what action should be taken.

42. On the occasion of the Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Conference of African Labour Ministers, the General Secretariat drew the attention of the Conference to the proposed Symposium. It was pointed out in this regard that the funds for the Symposium had already been requested in the OAU regular budget, and that the Symposium should preferably be held in one of the independent African countries adjacent to Southern Africa. The Conference was informed that consultations were under way with the Governments of Member States bordering southern Africa, with a view to obtaining a venue for the Symposium. Unfortunately none of these Governments had so far indicated its willingness to host the Symposium.

43. Many delegates supported plans to hold the Symposium subject to the invitation from a Member State contiguous to southern Africa. The Conference concluded that the Symposium should be held, preferably within the current calendar year, as the funds for that purpose had already been requested in the OAU Regular Budget, and that a venue and date should mutually be agreed upon between the OAU General Secretariat and the Government of the Member State playing host to the Symposium, if an invitation were received from a Member State bordering the territories concerned.

44. The delegate of Lesotho, emphasising that the peoples of southern Africa, as typically exemplified by his country, were more than anybody else heavily affected by Apartheid, racial discrimination and abhorrent labour practices, suggested that the Symposium should preferably be staged in these areas that are surrounded by racialist countries. He then said that, on return to his country, he would take up the matter of hosting the Symposium with his Government and then inform the OAU General Secretariat of developments thereafter.

45. The Council is invited to consider the matter, giving particular attention, inter alia, to:

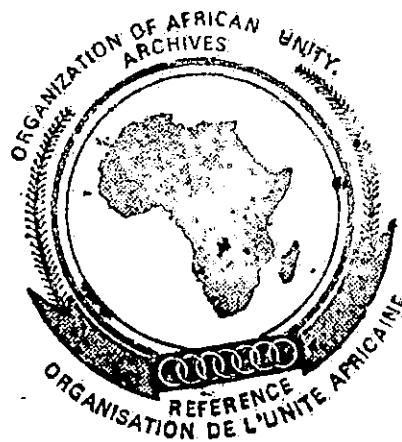
- (a) the question of who should participate in the Symposium
- (b) the topics to be included in the Symposium
- (c) the most suitable venue for the Symposium, it being understood that the Symposium should be held in an African country most affected by, exposed to, or immediately concerned with, the evil effects of racism, apartheid and other forms of racial discrimination.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

46. In the area of Transport and Communications the General Secretariat undertook various steps in order to facilitate the harmonious development of **these infrastructure** in Africa. Among other things, the General Secretariat distributed to all Member States draft constitutions for the establishment of a Pan-African Telecommunications Union and an African Highway Association. Constitutive Conferences for these are expected to be convened later this year or early next year.

47. Meanwhile, the General Secretariat continued consultations with the ECA, ITU and ADB in the effort to secure finance for the implementation of the Pan-African Telecommunications Network. With the lack of support for the proposed Pan-African Telecommunications Fund, bilateral and multilateral sources of finance are now being considered. Ways and means of technical and financial co-ordination by the Co-ordinating Committee, viz. OAU, ECA, ITU and ADB are being studied.

48. The Council might also wish to know that the Organization of African Unity has formalized its relations with the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization. The Administrative Secretary-General of the OAU and the Secretary-General of IMCO signed at the headquarters of the OAU the Co-operation Agreement approved by the Council of Ministers in Rabat. Consultations are to be initiated to undertake joint activities in the areas of training, improvements of ports and harbours and in other aspects of maritime transport in Africa.



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