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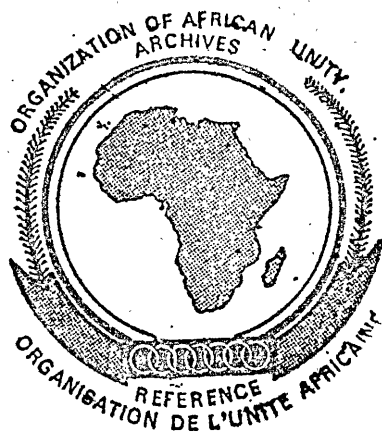
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Ad'is Ababa

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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
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Tripoli 20 - 28 February 1978

Report of the Secretary General on the
Drought and Natural Disaster



CM/866

MICROFICHE

Progress Report for the year 1977 - 78 Section of Drought
and Other Natural Disasters

1. Natural Disasters in Africa in 1977 - 78

Other natural disasters swept down on our Organization apart from the persistent drought, often with catastrophic consequences:

floods in Furundi, Mozambique and Kenya, tropical cyclones in Madagascar and Mauritius, invasions of depredators (rats ferboa, locusts) in Senegal, Mali, Niger, Chad, and Sudan, violence eruption in the Comoros.

A. Persistence of the drought

Besides the drought which took place in the Sahel countries (Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Upper Volta, Niger, Chad, Cape Verde, the Gambia etc.) in 1968 - 69 and 1972 - 73 the Sahel countries presented some anomalies in rainfall in 1975/76 and in 1976 - 77 although this situation was less serious, it led to a shortage of cereals and made the leaders of these countries decree a state of emergency in August 1975. (Niger) and (Senegal) and in October 1977 all the counteies of the CILSS and prticularly the Cape Verde Islands.

When the first estimates of the harvest were made in August 1975, it seemed that Niger showed a very important food deficit and President Seyni Kountche sent his ambassador in Brussels to Rome so as to inform the FAO of the situation. Capitain Moumouni Djermakoye Adamu, Minister for Foreign Affairs appcales' in Niamey on 9 February to the leaders of diplomatic missions and to the heads and representatives of international organizations for an international solidarity so as to help the Republic of the Niger make up the deficit which, in that year amounted to 200,000 metric tons of cereals. Calculations were made over and over again as harvest estimations became more specific and in the needs of the people clearer although there was still a wide margin of appreciation.

This deficit was reduced by the production of other self-consumed crops. (Cow peas, cassava, vegetable gardening; the most affected areas were the Department of Tahona, the northern part of the Department of Maradi, the Department of Niamey, the Tanout area in the Zinder Department and the Department of Agades which traditionally always experience a shortage in production. The number of the victims estimated at about 100 per cent was nearly 1,000,000 out of which 500,000 lives in the Department of Daliowa and

There was a larger number of victims in the settlement areas than in the areas of the nomads on account of the density of the population and of the movement of the people from the north to the South. People also migrated to neighbouring countries such as Nigeria, Upper Volta, the Peoples Republic of Benin, Ivory Coast, Togo etc.

The major donations received during this disaster include: USA (21,100 metric tons of sorghum), France (14,000 tons) EEC (17,000T) Federal Republic of Germany (10,000T) Great Britain (5,000T) Switzerland (5,00T), Canada (5,000T) Canada (5000T + 200 million CFA francs), the People's Republic of China (16.5 million CFA francs), Pakistan (5000T of rice) and Saudi Arabia (500 million CFA francs).

At the beginning of the month of May 1975, the assistance from the international community represented, on the whole half the food shortage anticipated. But one of the serious problems of the government of the Niger was to make this aid, reached the affected region, many of which became isolated in the rainy season which followed.

In spite of the irregular rainfall in 1977, the agricultural situation improved, a temporary surplus of 80,000 tons was anticipated, but it was decided to import rice and wheat so as to solve the new problem resulting from the drought that occurred during 1977-78.

In Mali, after three years of pronounced drought which led to an imbalance, 1975 showed a very clean economic equilibrium, particularly, in the field of agricultural production. The increase in production was not only due to the return to normal rainfall but also to the efforts made for several years with a view to undertaking large scale operations for rural development.

The 1975 - 76 campaign with its production of 900,000 tons of millet and sorghum and 300,000 tons of paddy rice, not only made it possible to meet the needs in consumption and seeds, but also led to the export in 1975, of 53,000 tons of cereals in 1975, representing an amount of more than 2 billion Malian Francs. An overall production of 113,000 tons was anticipated but the expected results could not be achieved because of the irregular rainfall; if there was a non negligible shortage of (150,000 T) of grains, stock breeding was more particularly affected by the drought, about 200,000 head of cattle were reared, in 1975 - 76 this figure was considerably reduced in 1976 - 77.

In the later part of the month of July, the rains were considerably delayed in all the Sahel countries, except in Mali and Niger. On 17 August, the Gambia was officially declared a disaster pro'c' area. The country's authorities announced that the agricultural situation was disastrous and a decrease of 40 per cent was expected in the amount of the cereals produced (millet and maize).

In the west of the country, 70 per cent of the food stuffs produced were destroyed. The rainfall was scanty (100; 1 mm in May - June against 513.1mm for the same period in 1976).

According to the Gambian Minister of Agriculture the corresponding statistics of 1972, one of the darkest years of the last drought in the Sahel.

In Senegal, after some weeks of a glaring impatient waiting, the appearance of the rains somehow changed illusions.

In Cape Verde, the 1977 situation has become very serious: There was no hope for harvest for the just ended crop season. The shortage in cereals stands at 60,000 T of corn and it is necessary for the country to have more than 10 million dollars in aid. The Minister of Rural Development of Cape Verde presented another emergency plan to a meeting of donors of the SAHEL in Dakar in October 1977. This aid may be in the form of money, food or equipments and materials likely to help satisfy the needs of the population. This plan further provided for the creation of employment opportunities for the rural population, the protection of the livestock, the realisation of hydro-agricultural harvesting project, road repair works, etc...

In Chad also, the effect of the drought in 1977 has been very serious. Generally in October 1977, Member countries of the CILSS announced a provisional deficit of 500,000 T of cereal. A state of emergency was introduced anew in the countries of the SAHEL. It was through its Minister responsible for coordination, Mr. Boulama Monga that CILSS once again appealed to the international community for indispensable relief measures in favour of the SAHEL countries for the year which is just ending.

B. Other natural disasters

Tropical Cyclones

In January and February 1977, two tropical Emily and Harvea (swept over) Madagascar and Mauritius causing very serious material damages and resulting in loss of lives.

The Emily Cyclone which swept across the East Coast of Madagascar on 1 February 1977 between Mahanovo and Mosy-Varka, caused material damages amounting to about 18,158,400.000 Madagascar Francs. These damages affected especially social and community infrastructures (schools, colleges, health centres, public buildings), road infrastructures, bridges, agricultural infrastructures and resources, (rice farms, hydraulic infrastructures, cattle, etc.). To this, must be added human victims, including 3 dead, 16 wounded and 30,000 rendered homeless.

Towards the end of February 1977 came the Harvea Cyclone. It swept across different parts of the Malagassy territory. More violent than the Emily, the Harvea Cyclone caused very serious damages in Diego-Suarez Province, especially in the Antalalia district where 60% of the village called Ambotri-halanama was destroyed. Serious damages were also caused in the Tannarive Province especially in Vaterna and Tulcar province.

In Mozambique, the month of January 1977, after a period of protracted drought, came a 3 week torrential rains resulting in the passage of Emily and Harvea Cyclones. There were floods in the Limpopo Incomatic and Unubeluzi bassins in the Southern provinces of Graza and Maputo.

II. Activities of the Drought and other Natural Disasters Section

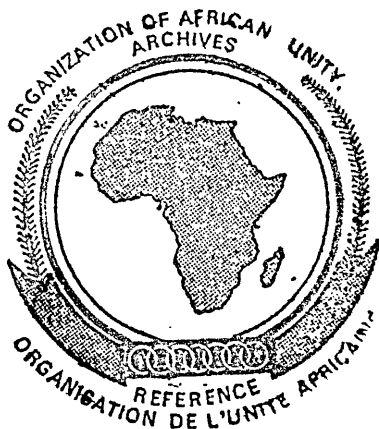
The activities of the Section were quite little, especially with regard to interventions. This situation is a direct result of the limited available funds.

The Section prepared the yearly meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on drought and other Natural Disasters in June 1977. A report on this meeting was submitted to the 29th Session of the Council of Ministers in Libreville in Document CM/837 (XXIX). To the number of important conclusions of this report should be added the distribution of US\$180,450.30 in accordance with CM/Res.450 (XXV) and CM/Res.540 (XXVIII) to certain Member States which are victims of natural disasters and which have submitted applications, as follows:

Cape Verde	US\$20,000 + 80,000
Chad:	US\$15,000
Burundi:	US\$15,000
M Madagascar:	US\$25,000
Mozambique:	US\$25,000

The Section also participated in several meetings on drought and desertification, including:

- OAU/UNEP preparatory meeting on desertification in Nairobi from 12 to 16 April, 1977.
- 2nd meeting of the SAHEL Club in Ottawa in May 1977.
- UN Conference on desertification in Nairobi from 29 August to 10 September 1977.
- Enlarged meeting of experts on SAHEL Institute organized by the CILSS at Ouagadougou from 24 to 28 October, 1977.



A week organized by WHO on the application of meteorology and hydrology to drought problems in the SAHEL in Niamey from 2 to 11 November 1977.

7th meeting of the Council of Ministers and Assembly of Heads of State of the CILSS in Banjul (Gambia) from 12 to 21 December, 1977.

Finally, upon invitation from the Government of Madagascar, the Section undertook a mission to Madagascar to evaluate on the spot the damages caused by the Emilia and Harvea cyclones in January and February 1977.

A Seminar on nomadism in Africa programmed for December 1977 was postponed to February 1978 on condition that quorum is attained.

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