



ADDIS ABABA

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS  
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CM/403

ESTABLISHMENT OF INTER-AFRICAN CENTRES  
FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH (OR CENTRES OF  
EXCELLENCE) IN AFRICA

Progress Report



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Progress Report

1. It is a pleasure to report that the four-man Team of Experts has completed the draft project-plan for the OAU Centre on Earth Sciences. The Team, which consisted of Professor M. O. Oyawoye, Nigeria - Chairman; Dr. A. E. Nyema-Jones, Liberia; Dr. P. Ouedraogo, Upper Volta; and Professor A. A. Shata of UAR, was appointed by the OAU last September, and requested to draw up a draft project-plan for the Centre on Earth Sciences. The OAU Centre on Earth Sciences (which includes geology, geophysics, geochemistry, mineralogy, etc., etc.) had previously been selected as the one to be established first in order to serve as a pilot scheme for the OAU programme to establish several Inter-African Centres for Training and Research in selected scientific disciplines.

2. The OAU programme on Inter-African Centres for Training and Research was formally initiated in 1967. Since then, ten scientific disciplines have been selected, with a view to eventually establishing in Africa, the Centres where those disciplines would, among other things, be taught, and where appropriate research and development would be undertaken. The ten disciplines selected are: Earth Sciences; Applied Science and Technology; Food Science and Technology; Water Resources, Planning and Development; Marine Science and Technology; Human Medicine and Pharmacology; Veterinary Science; Climatology and Meteorology; Basic sciences; and Social Sciences. This list is considered open for additions. The OAU has had no previous experience to rely upon in attempting to carry-out such a complex programme, and, therefore a pilot scheme was deemed necessary to fill this gap. Subsequently, the OAU selected the Centre for Earth Sciences as the one that should be established to provide the necessary practical experience in constructing and operating the proposed Inter-African Institutions. The four African Experts were appointed by the OAU in September 1970, to draw up a draft project-plan for the Centre for Earth Sciences.

3. The Experts held their first meeting on the 14th December 1970, which was reported upon in document No. CM/371/Part 1 to the 16th ordinary session of the Council of Ministers. Secondly, starting from Cairo in U.A.R., the Team visited several African countries in northern, western, central and eastern Africa. That tour started on the 22nd March, 1971, and ended on the 27th April, 1971. All the four Experts, plus Dr. M.H. Rajabally, the Director of the Health Bureau of the OAU, participated in the tour. The Director carried out other additional duties relating to health during the tour. The countries visited, in the order in which they were visited, were: United Arab Republic, Libya, Algeria, Morocco, Senegal, Guinea, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Ghana, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zambia, Kenya and Ethiopia. Due to difficulties in plane-connections in some cases,

due to cancellations of flights in some others and due to other reasons, the following countries, which had initially been included in the Team's itinerary, were not visited: Sierra Leone, Niger, Cameroun, Tanzania and Uganda. Letters of apology have already been forwarded to these five countries that were not visited.

4. The visits were used, among other things, for obtaining an accurate position of the services in Earth Sciences currently provided and planned within Member States; for obtaining details of their needs, and for securing information that would enable the Experts to define more accurately the scientific environment that the site of the Centre should have. As indicated above, the visits were concluded on the 27th April, 1971, in Addis Ababa. Thereafter, and during their stay in Addis Ababa, the Experts wrote the "country reports" covering the visits to the countries mentioned. The Experts as well as the OAU, are grateful to those Member States visited, for the arrangements they made and for their contributions, which made the visits a success.

5. From 27th April to 3rd May 1971, the Experts met in Addis Ababa for their second meeting. The Secretariat submitted to them a report on the completed questionnaires that had been received from some Member States and from some African Universities on the subject of the proposed OAU Centre on Earth Sciences - vide document SC/EDC/2. Altogether, only seven Member States responded. The response from African Universities was far better in that twenty two Universities - which is more than a half of the total universities in Africa - responded to the questionnaires. The information furnished by those Member States and Universities covered a wide range of aspects, including the strength of their professional and middle-grade personnel, work accomplished, equipment present or on order, various research and development activities, student enrolment and plans for the future. The information provided was summarized as appropriate, and also tabulated in various tables contained in the document mentioned above. Individual Experts had also submitted their proposals covering all the aspects involved in the proposed Centre. No memoranda were received from any source.

6. Having received the information furnished by some Member States and some Universities through questionnaires, and having seen on the spot, the state of services and needs of some of the Member States, the Experts were in a position to draw up the required draft project-plan for the OAU Centre on Earth Sciences.

7. The draft project-plan itself was built around the various aspects that that were spelt-out in the Terms of reference which had previously been drawn up by the Secretariat, and submitted to the Council of Ministers for general information. Subsequently, the Experts added two small parts, and formally adopted those Terms of Reference during their first meeting in December 1970.

8. The draft project-plan completed by the Experts, include; the Definition of the Departments and other units which will compose the proposed Centre; the professional and middle-grade personnel to be employed; the various courses to be offered by the Centre, such as practical courses, post-graduate courses and training of technicians; the equipment to be provided; the technical services to be offered to Member States and proposals for possible sites for the proposed OAU Centre.

9. The four Experts have worked with determination, devotion and involvement on the draft project-plan for the proposed OAU Centre on Earth Sciences. They have also used their expertise and time, to do a good job in a relatively short time. Theirs was a pioneering and historic work in the life of the OAU. It is therefore not out of place to strongly propose that the OAU Member States should, at an appropriate time, extend to them their sincere thanks for a job well-done. Thanks are also due to those Member States and Universities which spared these Experts for service to the OAU.

10. The draft project-plan prepared by the four Experts, will be presented to the Implementation Committee for consideration. The Implementation Committee was appointed in September 1970 by the OAU, and is composed of five African Experts, i.e. Professor Edouard Adjanohona of Dahomey, Professor David P. Wasawo of Kenya, Professor Abdelmalek Guessous of Morocco, Professor Kosonike Thomas of Sierra Leone and Professor E.N. Dafaalla of Sudan. Like the four Experts on the Centre for Earth Sciences, these five Experts of the Implementation Committee, were appointed after being proposed by the Scientific Council of Africa. The Committee has been given its Terms of reference, which include the task of keeping the entire OAU programme on Centres of Excellence under constant review so as to ensure that it serves the development needs of OAU Member States. A meeting of the Implementation Committee is to be convened as soon as possible, in order to consider the draft project-plan for the OAU Centre for Earth Sciences.

11. After being considered by the Implementation Committee, that draft project-plan will be submitted to the Council of Ministers, and then to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government for approval. It is hoped that during the last two stages in the processing of that draft project-plan, the Secretariat will have obtained some information on possible external aid, which will be duly presented to the political organs of the OAU.

12. The Council of Ministers should therefore wait for the recommendations of the Implementation Committee on the draft project-plan on the OAU Centre for Earth Sciences prepared by the four African Experts. In the meantime the Council is invited to take note of the completion of the project-plan for that Centre.

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# Establishment of Inter-African Centers for Training and Research (or centers of excellence) in Africa – Progress Report

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