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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
Thirty-third Ordinary Session
Monrovia, Liberia, July 1979

SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
PAN-AFRICAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK



CM 0985

MICROFICHE

Introduction

The Panaftel Co-ordinating Committee in accordance with OAU Resolution CM/Res. 654 (XXXI) met on two occasions in December 19-20 1978 Geneva and in Addis Ababa 16 April 1979.

The principle items of the agendas for the two meetings were:

- (a) Progress report on the Panaftel project;
- (b) The African Transport and Communications Decade.

Implementation of the Panaftel network

The progress being made in the implementation of the Panaftel Network was reviewed during both meetings. The Committee was provided with information on each aspect of the Panaftel Network, i.e., International Telephone and Telex Exchanges, Transmission systems, Satellite systems by the Project Co-ordinator. During the introductions and the subsequent discussions the following points received particular attention:

- (i) Several links of the Panaftel Network though implemented at considerable cost were not in operation due to operational or maintenance difficulties. A stage in the implementation of the Network had been reached in which attention must be focussed on the operation and maintenance of the Network to ensure that the large investments made will be utilized efficiently. In this regard increased technical assistance in the field of maintenance is considered to be necessary for example by creating small sub-regional group of experts.
- (ii) Although some financing has been obtained for pre-investment studies and implementation, there is a substantial number of routes which have not been able to attract the necessary finance and are causing much anxiety in addition to other important routes which for reasons other than technical and financial are

1. The Secretary General has the honour to present attached herewith as Annex I the Sixth Report of the Co-ordinating Committee for the Pan-African Telecommunication Network (PANAFTEL). Whereas the original members of the Committee were OAU, ECA, ADB and ITU, in accordance with resolution CM/Res. 654(XXXI) of Khartoum the Pan-African Telecommunication Union (PATU) is now a member and participated in the last two Sessions of the Committee.

2. The Committee in its Sixth Report brings to the attention of the Council the extent of its activities in the implementation of PANAFTEL and points out important question to be considered by the policy making bodies of the OAU.

3. On its part the General Secretariat undertook to address itself to the international financing institutions and technical institutions in accordance with CM/Res. 654(XXXI) by making known to these bodies the contents of the resolution. In addition in liason with the General Secretariat the ITU circulated resolution CM/Res. 654(XXXI) to the Director General of each telecommunications administration so that more expeditious action may be taken by them for the speedy and rational implementation of PANAFTEL.

yet to be implemented although all pre-investment studies have been completed. In particular the links are Zaire - Zambia; Zaire - Congo; Zaire - Rwanda, Central African Empire - Cameroon; Ethiopia-Sudan; Central African Empire-Congo and Somalia-Kenya. These routes are critical for the completion of an integrated and viable network and it is important that they be completed by the middle of the transport and communications Decade. The Committee decided therefore to draw the attention of the Council of Ministers to these problems.

- (iii) The Committee noted with appreciation the decision of BADEA to finance pre-investment surveys of some additional routes which are currently under preparation by ITU.
- (iv) The Committee also noted ADB's report that loan financing had been granted to a number of countries and that negotiations were underway to give more loans.
- (v) The Committee agreed that a UNDP-type tripartite meeting should be convened in the near future to consider the implementation of the Panafstel project. The principal participants shall be UNDP as financing body for project RAF/73/023, ITU as executing agency and PATU. It was agreed that this meeting should be preceded by studies on operations and maintenance problems on existing links and the delay in implementing the links for which surveys have been carried out.
- (vi) The Co-ordinating Committee agreed to study in detail the recommendation on establishment of an experimental satellite earth station for training purposes, issuing from the West African sub-regional meeting in Ouagadougou January 1979. It was considered that this experimental earth station might be essential for training in space communication technology and a similar one in India financed by UNDP was thought inadequate to satisfy the growing needs of India, African and other developing countries.

- (vii) The Committee considered and approved the reports of the technical sub-committee set up for the purpose of formulating medium and long-term targets for telecommunication development in Africa and to propose a programme for the first phase of the Decade to meet the medium-term targets. The reports are now to be considered by the Inter-Agency meeting in Addis Ababa 17-20 April and subsequently by the Conference of Ministers of Communications, Information, Transport and Planning, Addis Ababa 8-12 May 1979.
- (viii) The Committee also agreed that the routes for which surveys have been completed but are not yet implemented for lack of finance as well as the survey of those routes which were required to complete the Network should be financed within the Transport and Communications Decade Programme.
- (ix) The Committee agreed that to ensure the success of the Decade the following principles would need to be adhered to:
- (i) ECA is the lead agency for the execution of the Decade Programme;
 - (ii) Each agency should be responsible for the execution of projects in the sector relating to its competence;
 - (iii) Close collaboration and association between the agencies and Regional organizations in all the activities of the Decade are considered essential.
- (x) The Committee agreed to meet again in the second week of December 1979.

Annexed hereto are maps of the Panaftel Network project as requested by the Council of Ministers during its Thirty-first session in Khartoum, July 1978.

Secretary General of the
International Telecommunication Union

The Executive Secretary of the
UN Economic Commission for Africa

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For the Secretary General of the
Organization of African Unity

For the President of the
African Development Bank

For the Secretary General of the
Pan-African Telecommunication Union



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