

# The Abuja Statement

## Introduction

### Background to the Abuja Conference

At the request of African Governments, the United Nations General Assembly convened a Special Session on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa from 27 May to 1 June 1986. After lengthy negotiations, agreement was reached in General Assembly resolution S-13/2 of 1 June 1986 on the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD). In this programme, African Governments reasserted their commitment to spearhead the region's economic recovery and development based on Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, 1986-1990 (APPER), adopted by the 21st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in July 1985. The international Conference committed itself to support and complement the African Efforts. The International Conference on Africa: *The Challenge of Economic Recovery and Accelerated Development* was organised jointly by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Federal Republic of Nigeria and in collaboration with the Organisation of African Unity and the African Development Bank (ADB) as one of the major follow-up actions to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, at the regional level, in the belief that the chances of successful implementation of APPER and UN-PAAERD will be greatly enhanced by efforts aimed at placing the programmes in their proper historical perspective and context, and at promoting deeper understanding of their principles and basis, as well as the policy issues and choices involved.

### Objective of the Conference

The Main objective of the Conference was to assist the African countries and the international community to fully exploit the opportunities and advantages of APPER and the UN-PAAERD, and to ensure that a truly solid foundation is laid for the achievement of the longer-term goals of African

development. Coming up a year after the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Africa, and two years after the adoption of APPER, it was hoped that the Conference would be able to undertake a preliminary assessment and evaluation of the prospects for economic recovery and accelerated development on the continent and recommend necessary future actions.

### **Participation**

Participation in the Conference was at the highest level. It involved African Heads of State and Government, Government Ministers and high-ranking officials, executive heads and senior officials of United Nations agencies, international, regional and sub-regional development and financial organisations and institutions, donor agencies as well as African and non-African scholars. In all, there were over 200 participants at the Conference.

### **Organisation of the Conference**

The Conference was comprehensive both in its scope and coverage. The first part of the Programme of the Conference, covering the first two days, was devoted to a review and appraisal of the responses of African programmes (APPER and UN-PAAERD). The second part was devoted to deliberations in prospects for Africa's accelerated and long-term development. In all, there were seven substantive plenary sessions and four group discussion encounters over the five-day period, 15-19 June 1987.

Seventy-four papers, all extremely stimulating, pertinent and useful, were submitted to the Conference by African countries, regional and international institutions and individual participants. In view of the large number of papers and the need to maximise exchange of ideas and experiences, and to ensure that the Conference was issue- and policy-oriented, there were no formal presentations of papers. Rather, the rich collection of papers served as background documents to the discussions and deliberations in both plenary sessions and group encounters.

### **The Abuja Statement: The Preparatory Process**

For the preparation of the *Abuja Statement*, a select panel of 20 eminent participants, comprising government ministers and high-ranking officials, executive heads and senior agencies, African and non-African scholars was constituted into a Drafting Committee whose membership was left open-ended. In the end, close to 40 people participated in the work of the Committee, drawing on the proceedings in the plenary sessions and discussion groups. The Committee produced a synthesis of the deliberations and summary of conclusions and recommendations which was issued at the concluding session of the Conference as the *Abuja Statement*.

### **Acknowledgements**

The ECA wishes to acknowledge with thanks the generosity of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in co-sponsoring and hosting the Conference very generously. It also wishes to express, once more, its gratitude to the Government of Canada, the United Nations Development Programme, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Swedish International Development Authority, the Ford Foundation and the African Development Bank for their financial contributions and support.

In addition the ECA is particularly thankful and grateful to all authors of papers for the very rich gathering of ideas which their efforts made possible, and to all participants for their response to the Conference which was overwhelming. Finally, the collaboration of both the Organisation of African Unity and the African Development Bank is gratefully acknowledged.

## **Abuja Statement on Economic Recovery and Long-term Development in Africa**

1. *An International Conference on Africa: The Challenge of Economic Recovery and Accelerated Development* was convened in Abuja, the new Federal capital of Nigeria, from 15 to 19 June 1987, for the purpose of making an in-depth review of Africa's recovery process and prospects for long-term development.

2. Such a review and assessment was both crucial and timely, taking into account the time that had elapsed since the adoption of Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990 (APPER) and the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD) in 1985 and 1986 respectively. The Conference was also deemed timely in view of the continuing gravity of the economic situation facing Africa, in spite of the efforts in the implementation of those programmes. It had accordingly become necessary to undertake a critical assessment of actions that had so far been taken by Africa and the international community in their implementation, with a view to identifying what progress had been made and the constraints that were impeding Africa's economic recovery and long-term development. This statement reflects the conclusions and recommendations which have emerged from this review and assessment. It draws attention to the emerging trends, opportunities and constraints and puts forward concrete and practical proposals for generating sustained recovery and growth and bringing about structural transformation of the African economies.

3. Over 200 African and world experts and scholars, government officials and policy-makers from 36 countries, 24 organisations from the United Nations system and 28 African and non-African inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations participated. To assist the Conference in its task, several issue- and policy-oriented papers and studies were submitted as background documentation. The diversity and very high level of participation provided a unique opportunity for a balanced exchange of ideas and reasoned recommendations. The Conference was therefore appreciative of the initiative and effort by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa in organising this important Conference. The Conference was also appreciative of the co-sponsorship by the Federal Republic of Nigeria and to co-operation of the Organisation of African Unity and the African Development Bank.

4. The Conference was particularly honoured that His Excellency Major General Ibrahim Babangida, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and His Excellency Colonel Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the People's Republic of Congo and current Chairman of the organisation of African Unity, personally addressed the Conference. The Conference was greatly encouraged by the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Javier Perez de Cuellar. The Conference welcomed the statement delivered by Madame Monique Landry, Minister of External Relations of Canada, reflecting Canada's interest in and support for Africa's recovery and development.

5. The Conference proceedings were conducted in seven plenary sessions and several group discussions. While detailed proceedings will be published in due course, this Statement brings out the highlights of the issues, conclusions and recommendations for action. The Conference hopes that African Governments and peoples and the international community will take prompt and appropriate actions to implement the recommendations.

## **A. Overall Assessment of the Situation**

### **Progress, problems and prospects in the recovery process**

6. The review of the progress made in the implementation of APPER and UN-PAAERD was at three levels: action taken by African Governments; action taken by African Regional and sub-regional organisations and institutions; and, action taken by the international community. The Conference noted that the measures undertaken so far by African Governments included, among others, higher public investment in the agricultural sector, reduction in public expenditure, reduction of subsidies and transfers, greater incentives to farmers and domestic manufacturing, restructuring of public

administration, reform of public enterprises, squeezing of public sector wages and reform of the exchange system. These measures have so far yielded some positive results in a number of countries, particularly in improved agricultural production and in the rationalisation and better utilisation of resources. More than anything else, these measures have demonstrated the limitations and constraints that need to be removed if the process of recovery is to gain any momentum on a sustainable basis.

7. The collapse of international commodity prices has drastically reduced the actual and potential earnings from increased volume of commodity exports; the expected inflow in the level of resources to support the recovery process has not been forthcoming to the extent that they can have an adequate impact on the situation; and additional external debt-service burdens have put serious limits on what can be mobilised to promote domestic reconstruction and development as envisaged in APPER and UN-PAAERD. The net effects of these are the aggravation of balance-of-payments problems and the dire need for external resources, thus forcing many countries to implement structural adjustments programmes aimed at correcting current financial imbalances. To date, 28 African countries are implementing such measures.

8. In many countries, the period of the adjustment programme has been too short to allow for a realistic evaluation and, in any case, there is hardly any country that has been able to mobilize adequate resources to support its adjustment programme. What has become evident, however, is that unless structural adjustment programmes are closely related to the wider objectives of APPER and UN-PAAERD, and unless more substantial resources can be mobilised to support the programmes, there is great danger that the process will have negative impact on growth, living standards, employment, social development and political stability.

9. The Conference was gratified to learn that sub-regional concerted approaches to the promotion of the recovery process had begun to emerge. For example, the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) had pledged individual and collective support to initiate a West Africa-wide recovery process through a joint plan of action to be launched on 8 July 1987. Such a programme would concentrate, *inter alia*, on subregional food security, drought, desertification control, water resources development and management.

10. Similar efforts have been taken in other sub-regions, particularly in Southern Africa under the auspices of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), where concerted efforts particularly designed to counteract the destabilising policies of South Africa have preceded both APPER and UN-PAAERD. These concerted efforts focus especially on strengthening the sub-regions alternative transport and com-

munications structure, the development of food security, strengthening of the sub-region's capacity, securing social and economic infrastructure, reducing the sub-region's dependence on South Africa, and the promotion of co-operation in the fields of trade, industry and energy.

11. The Conference also noted with satisfaction the substantial increase in the authorised capital of the African Development Bank (ADB) which would be available to finance projects in response to priorities of APPER and UN-PAAERD. The Conference also welcomed the growing role of ECA and OAU in promoting the objectives and monitoring the implementation of APPER and UN-PAAERD.

#### **Africa and the international community**

12. While it is generally agreed that much of the effort and resources required for implementing the recovery programmes and bringing about long-term development in the region will have to come from African countries themselves, the Conference recalled that the contribution of the international community had been underscored as being critical during the thirteenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the critical economic situation in Africa. African countries had estimated their external financial needs for the recovery programmes at \$US45.6 billion for the five-year period and their external debts servicing requirements conservatively estimated at \$US14.6 billion annually, thus bringing the average annual external resource requirement under the UN-PAAERD to between \$US24 billion and \$US34 billion on the assumption that commodity prices remained at the 1985 level. While it did not commit itself to these figures, the international community did undertake to make every effort to provide sufficient resources to support and supplement Africa's development effort and agreed that measures had to be taken to alleviate Africa's debt burden.

13. The Conference noted with satisfaction that a number of positive steps had been taken since last year. These included (a) the replenishment of IDA resources to the tune of \$US12.4 billion and the decision to allocate 45 per cent thereof to Sub-Saharan Africa; (b) the increase in the level of the grant element in official development assistance (ODA) by some developed countries to the hard pressed low-income African countries; (c) the cancellation of ODA debts by some donor countries in favour of some least developed African Countries. The Conference also welcomed the recent decision of the thirteenth Summit meeting of the seven most industrialised market economies of the West, held in Venice, Italy, from 8 - 10 June 1987, that consideration should be given by the Paris Club to the possibility of applying lower interest rates to the existing debts of those African countries that are undertaking adjustment efforts and that agreement should be reached on longer repayment and grace periods to ease the debt burden. It

also endorsed the proposal submitted by the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund to the Summit for a significant increase in the resources of the structural adjustment facility over a period of three years beginning 1 January, 1988.

14. While the Conference would wish to express its appreciation for these efforts, there is some concern that they may not be adequate to meet the external resource needs of Africa for its recovery programme, particularly in the face of the dramatic fall in commodity prices and the escalation of debt burden obligations. The Conference is also of the view that the approach so far to the African external resource needs is rather ad hoc and partial in nature, and therefore, likely to have limited impact. What is required is a comprehensive approach to the debt problem and aid flows that would provide the financial resources required for economic recovery and development in Africa.

15. Delegates noted the continuing decline of primary prices including oil. They also noted the grim prospects for future commodity prices which would increase the already substantial need for resources in African countries. In view of the sizeable magnitude of the resource needs of those countries, however, they called on the industrial countries to make special efforts to increase the flow of capital and concessional aid, to remove protectionist barriers and structural rigidities in their economies, and to create an international environment conducive to growth-oriented structural adjustment and increased trade.

16. The Conference stressed the importance of south-south co-operation in Africa's economic recovery and long-term development. Such co-operation was particularly essential in bringing about the structural changes required for self-reliance and self-sustained development. The main areas outlined included the building up of appropriate technological capabilities through technical assistance, inter-regional trade among developing countries and human resource development.

17. In view of the foregoing analysis, the Conference came to the conclusion that the prospects for recovery depended on the concentration of efforts on such issues as (a) sustainance of domestic policy reforms; (b) continuation of the efforts to improve economic management; (c) ensuring that structural adjustment programmes were consistent with the objectives and priorities of the recovery programmes; (d) the alleviation of the debt burden; (e) the intensification of the search for a solution to the commodities problem; (f) the removal of the constraints on achieving fully adequate levels of official development assistance; and, (g) the amelioration of the impact of acts of political and economic destabilisation on the recovery of the countries of Southern Africa. Accordingly, the Conference devoted considerable part of its time to in-depth study of those issues in group discus-

sions. The recommendations contained in the latter part of this Statement were derived from those detailed discussions.

### **Long-term development prospects**

18. The second part of the Conference was devoted to reviewing Africa's prospects for long-term development in the light of the experience of the past seven years since the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos in April 1980. The Conference undertook this review in the light of the historical, socio-cultural and political situation of Africa as well as the scientific and technological perspectives. It came to the conclusion that Africa's long-term development must be based on a fundamental structural change which would not happen by itself and which therefore had to be engineered by the Africans themselves as envisaged in the Lagos Plan of Action. In accordance with APPER, the food and agricultural sector should constitute the base for structural change with the African countries gradually reducing the importance and significance to their national economies of exports of primary commodities while increasing the role of domestic and intra-African production relationships until the latter became more dominant and the former more marginal.

19. In order to achieve such a structural change, Africa must take measures to overcome its scientific and technological backwardness. However, the Conference believed that structural changes at the political and cultural levels would also have to be engineered. In a situation where rapid changes were taking place in the geo-political and technological word order, Africa would have to contend with the pace, content and turbulences of global structural shifts. The continent must also gear itself to respond to the long-term demand prospects for its primary commodities and endeavour over time to move out of the present structure of export-oriented primary commodity system. However, the continent's ultimate future had to remain firmly rooted in its own uniquenesses and diversities, in its cultures, in its peoples and in its natural resources. An improvement in the capacity to respond to these changes must, therefore, be an essential component in Africa's long-term development strategies.

20. Africa's history and recent experiences confirm that the future prospects of the continent will not hinge simply on issues of economic growth and financial flows. It will require a re-focusing of the African ethos and a re-gathering of all African forces. Africa, as an entity in the world, will have to derive its strength from its internal socio-cultural authenticity, territorial and political cohesion and economic viability based mainly on endogenous forces.

21. New political perspectives are also imperative for setting into motion the process of African progress. A viable development strategy for Africa



should be predicated on a comprehensive programme of social transformation which requires vision, resolve and commitment on the part of the African leadership. The democratisation of the African society and increased accountability of those entrusted with power are vital for the mobilisation of greater popular participation. For such necessities to become realities, African political perspectives *vis-a-vis* external political and economic interests will also have to be sharpened to become more decisive and enlightened so that the destiny of Africa is assured to be in the hands of the African people.

22. Overcoming scientific and technological underdevelopment will be one of the critical pre-conditions to Africa's economic maturity in the coming twenty-first century. To achieve this task, Africa will have to depend less on technology transfers that only deepen its dependency. It must, instead, make consistent efforts to develop, acquire, adapt and internalise such technologies and scientific knowledge that will enable it to make full and effective use of its resource endowments and in relation to its needs. Two areas that will have to be focussed upon include the enhancement of African research and innovation and their institutionalisation in the fabric of society and the development and fuller utilisation of African scientific and technical skills.

23. Given the present political and economic fragmentation of the continent, it will be difficult if not impossible for Africa to realise its vision without collective self-reliance, economic co-operation and integration. Although the process of co-operation in Africa has been going on for some time, it will require strengthening and rationalisation. Efforts at African integration can bear fruits only if African countries honour faithfully their commitment to integrate their economies particularly through productive activities. It is only in this way that the objective of an African Economic Community can be achieved.

## **B. Conclusions and Recommendations**

24. In the light of the foregoing analysis, the following conclusions and recommendations are proposed for the most careful consideration of African countries and the international community.

25. Measures for accelerating the recovery process:

- (a) *Sustaining domestic policy reforms and improvement in economic management:* African countries must continue to pursue structural policy measures, taking into account the need to minimise the adverse social impact of such measures and to take into account the human dimension of adjustment; ensure that budgetary cuts do not

affect the development of social infrastructure, particularly health and education services; and, put greater emphasis on the rationalisation of government institutions, with a view to the recovery process. In the light of the recommendation of the Niamey Symposium of Grass Root Development, African Governments must create favourable conditions for decentralisation of decision-making, and for delegation of authority and responsibility for increased access to resources so as to broaden the participation of all groups of the population in the recovery process.

- (b) *Structural adjustment programmes and the recovery process:* African countries must sustain and accelerate the process of economic recovery by increasing the level of investment in agriculture, developing rural transportation with greater emphasis on low-cost transport equipment and promoting agro-allied industries. They must ensure that structural adjustment programmes are consistent with the requirements of recovery and growth. They are urged to undertake, with the assistance of African regional institutions, concerted efforts to exchange information on their negotiations with international financial organisations and donors on policy reform measures and structural adjustment programmes. They must also take appropriate measures for controlling capital flight and the brain drain from Africa.
- (c) The ECA Secretariat should constantly monitor, through in-depth studies, the impact of structural adjustment programmes on medium and long-term development; and,
- (d) At the sub-regional level, collective approaches to recovery and development within the framework of the existing sub-regional economic communities should continue to be devised and vigorously implemented.

#### **Debt and debt service payments**

26. In view of the severity of the debt-servicing problem in many countries in Africa and its dire implications for recovery and development prospects, new efforts will be needed to deal with this problem, particularly in so far as low-income countries are concerned. These efforts should include:

- (a) Lower interest rates on existing debts, which, in rescheduling agreements, could be critical in some cases; longer repayments and grace periods to ease the debt-service burden as agreed upon at the recent Venice Summit should be pursued;
- (b) Conversion into grants of bilateral government-to-government debt and interest obligations for low-income countries undertaking structural adjustment programmes where this has not already been ac-

complished;

- (c) Repayment of debt in local currency could be considered; and,
- (d) Conversion of debt and debt-servicing obligations into investment portfolios.

#### **Development assistance**

27. In addition, there is an urgent need for increased aid flows that will provide the resources required for recovery and development. In this connection, the Conference welcomes the recent initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General to establish a High-level Advisory Group on Resource Flows to Africa which will make practical recommendations to ease the debt burden and increase resource flows to the continent. The Conference also welcomes the new initiatives by some major bilateral donors to increase resource flows to Africa. African Governments and institutions and other development programmes should offer to assist these countries in establishing and expanding their activities in Africa.

28. In addition to all these, the Conference is putting forward the following policy options for serious consideration:

- (a) Further increase of bilateral aid and more effective use of these flows for recovery and development;
- (b) A significant increase in additional concessional resources through multilateral institutions. In this regard, special support should be given to proposals or agreements to triple the Structural Adjustment Facility and replenish IDA and the African Development Fund at higher levels and to allocate substantial parts thereof to Africa;
- (c) Consider the possibility of issuing new special drawing rights (SDRs) in relation to development needs;
- (d) With the assistance of ECA, the African Development Bank and the African Center for Monetary Studies, consideration should be given to the possibility of setting up an African consultative machinery to enable member States to exchange information and harmonise their positions for the meetings with creditors in the Paris and London Clubs.

#### **Commodities, trade and price stabilisation**

29. Within the overall context of Africa's recovery and accelerated growth, the Conference arrived at the following conclusions: (a) Intra-African trade offers substantial opportunities for trade expansion, and increased production; thus one way of reducing the vulnerability of the economies is to intensify efforts towards sub-regional and regional co-operation in trade including trade in commodities; (b) Existing initiatives in international co-operation in commodities need to be continued and strengthened, especially as regards

the operation of the common fund; (c) There is a link between commodity, price level, external debt and the need for international resource flows; and, (d) Over the past ten years there have been marked rigidities in the trade policies of industrialised countries towards Africa, especially with regard to trade in processed or semi-processed commodities dependence, a trend which has proved detrimental to Africa's efforts to shift away from commodity dependence. In the light of these conclusions, the following proposals were addressed to specific target groups, namely, the African Governments, the international community and international institutions.

(a) *African Governments* should:

- (i) Initiate supply rationalisation measures so as to bring production and supply of their commodities in line with long-term demand trends; to this end, Governments should take steps to promote new domestic and export demand for their primary commodities through increased market research, development measures and improved market information systems;
- (ii) Diversify efforts while avoiding repeating costly mistakes or creating new surplus situations; the diversification should include the use of locally available raw materials for production, instead of relying on imported ones;
- (iii) Examine the prospects for the increased use of counter-trade as a measure to promote intra-African trade expansion, including trade in primary commodities without having to use scarce external currencies.

(b) *The International Community* should:

- (i) Ensure that the Uruguay Round of negotiations enables the granting of more liberal access to industrial country markets of African exports, including tropical products. The possibility of a more rational system of world agricultural trade in the 1990s should be encouraged;
- (ii) Continue to discuss especially at the forthcoming UNCTAD Conference, the problem of commodity price changes, seeking measures to deal with the problem of reduced income as African countries undertake long-term structural adjustments;
- (iii) Give further consideration to expanding donor participation Stabex schemes to include other OECD donor countries;

(c) *International Organisations and Institutions* should bear in mind, where structural adjustment and programmes undertaken under the auspices of the multilateral financial institutions are targeted to achieve external balance, that the reference prices on which the programmes are based are themselves, subject to short-term distortions; therefore less rigidity in the price assumption is necessary. The

Conference urges full discussion of issues related to commodities, trade and the special problem of least developed countries at the forthcoming UNCTAD Conference.

### **Political and economic destabilisation and the consequences for economic recovery and development**

30. The Conference recognised that peace, security and stability are necessary pre-conditions for Africa's economic development. Recovery and economic development efforts in the countries of the Southern African region, members of the Southern African Development Co-operation Conference have been and continue to be frustrated by the racist regime of South Africa and its continued policies of aggression and political and economic destabilisation. To achieve peace, stability and security in the region the Conference recommends the following:

- (a) Continuation of the campaign to ensure divestment by all transnational corporations in South Africa;
- (b) Full implementation by African countries of the measures identified in APPER in support of the national liberation movements and the SADCC countries;
- (c) Support to the efforts of SADCC countries to strengthen co-operation among themselves and reduce their dependence on South Africa, particularly through maximum transport and communications routes, food security and manpower development;
- (d) Increased assistance by the international community to the SADCC countries to allow them to implement their recovery programmes and cover the cost of aggression and destabilisation policies of South Africa, which was estimated to have cost the region over US\$2 billion annually; and,
- (e) International and regional development and financial institutions should increase their co-operation with and assistance to SADCC countries.

31. As a result of the continuous aggression by the South African regime and its support of destabilisation activities in Mozambique and the current drought affecting large areas in that country, Mozambique is facing a serious economic emergency. Thousands of people are facing severe famine. The Conference urges more urgent humanitarian relief, specially food aid and shelter as well as assistance in removing the fundamental cause of instability.

### **Prospects for long-term development**

32. As far as the prospect for accelerated and long-term development are concerned, the general conclusion of the Conference is that Africa needs a new approach to its political economy. This should involve more coherent

and more clearly thought out principles to guide its development process to provide a framework for more efficient resource mobilisation. In this context, recovery must also mean economic reconstruction for long-term development which, in turn, calls for new forms of social organisation and economic management and the bridging of economic and social disparities.

33. The Conference therefore decided to forward the following recommendations to African countries:

- (a) The internalisation of the productive forces and the growth impetus, as well as increased and effective self-reliance and co-operation on a regional basis;
- (b) Intensification of popular participation in the economic development process and the promotion of social justice and distributive equity;
- (c) Recognition of the fundamental role of women in the development process;
- (d) Development and enhancement of African research and the encouragement of the process of technological and scientific innovation and adaptation;
- (e) Ensure consistency of the development process and environmental sustainability;
- (f) Greater reliance on African technical and scientific skills and entrepreneurship;
- (g) The political, social, administrative and cultural dimensions that are conducive to long-term development must be created to ensure the success and sustainability of the development process.

#### **Economic co-operation in Africa and between Africa and the international community**

34. In order to reverse the disappointing experience with economic integration and to ensure that the process of integration contributes more effectively to economic development and structural change, African countries should embark on a comprehensive approach to economic integration involving (a) the rationalisation of existing co-operation organs in each sub-region, and their effective mobilisation for co-ordinated planning and development at the sub-regional level; and, (b) the pursuit of measures for the close co-ordination of economic and social policies at the sub-regional level as well as for the joint planning and development of community projects in the key economic sectors.

35. The current effort to harmonise the activities of the multinational institutions established under the aegis of the Organisation of African Unity and the Economic Commission for Africa should be accelerated with a view to ensuring that their institutions act in support of the comprehensive approach to economic co-operation and integration.

36. The comprehensive approach to economic co-operation should be accompanied by new efforts to promote closer collaboration with other developing regions, in particular the newly industrialising countries (NICs) which are now in a position to provide African countries with an effective programme of technical co-operation in support of sectoral planning at the sub-regional level in the key economic sectors.

37. Realising that, in the final analysis, the pursuit of self-reliant and self-sustaining development on the continent would demand a new pattern of economic relationship with the developed countries, involving new trade structures and new efforts to promote foreign investment in Africa, African countries should devise appropriate mechanisms for promoting collaboration between the different productive sectors in Africa and those in the developed countries.

#### **Follow-up actions**

38. The Conference would be most grateful to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity for bringing the recommendations of the Abuja Statement at all forthcoming appropriate major international forums. The Conference particularly referred to the forthcoming Twenty-third Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Unity, as well as the Summit of Francophone countries, the Commonwealth Conference and the fourteenth Summit of the seven most industrialised countries, that are scheduled to be held in Canada. The Conference also requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to bring the document to the attention of the forty-second Session of the General Assembly.

39. The Executive Secretary of ECA should follow-up on the implementation of the above recommendations taking into account the consideration that would be given to them by the above main international forums. One of the major challenges that faces Africa is how to sustain international public interest in Africa's long-term development through continuous and effective communication that will reach all levels of society. This is a challenge that faces the Governments of Africa as much as faces the United Nations in general and its regional arm, the Economic Commission for Africa, in particular. It is therefore imperative that it should be addressed in a comprehensive manner. In this connection, ECA can, with necessary financial support, play a catalytic role.

#### **Vote of thanks**

40. In conclusion, the Conference wishes to reiterate its appreciation for the generous hospitality of the Nigerian Government and people in providing the necessary facilities for the meeting. Its deliberations and conclusions

were particularly enlightened by the inspiring addresses of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the President of the People's republic of Congo and current Chairman of the OAU, and by the enriching message of the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Done at Abuja.  
Federal Republic of Nigeria,  
19 June 1987.