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## REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

CRITICAL ECONOMIC SITUATION IN AFRICA: UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF  
ACTION FOR AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT 1986-1990

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

EXTERNAL DEBT CRISIS AND DEVELOPMENT

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE

Letter dated 2 September 1988 from the Permanent Representative of  
the German Democratic Republic to the United Nations addressed to  
the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you the enclosed text of the statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic on the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990.

I kindly request you to have this statement circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 12, 39, 82, 83, 84 and 86 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Harry OTT  
Ambassador Extraordinary  
and Plenipotentiary  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

\* A/43/150.

## ANNEX

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic on the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990

1. The German Democratic Republic commends the efforts of the African States and the contribution of the United Nations aimed at redressing the critical economic situation in Africa in conformity with the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UNPAAERD), Document A/RES/S-13/2, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its 13th special session. That Programme stakes out the lines for national action of African States and for targeted co-operation between the African and other Member States of the United Nations to combat the economic emergency situation in a number of African countries and to advance overall socio-economic development in Africa. It has to be noted though that little progress has so far been made in the implementation of UNPAAERD. The heavy burden of Africa's colonial past continues to have particularly persistent effects in the economic field, which have been exacerbated by new forms of external dependence, notably the grave consequences of the continent's specific forms of external indebtedness. Latest United Nations publications and reports by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, including the United Nations World Economic Survey for 1988, the Annual Report of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the report by prominent financial experts of February 1988 on financial flows for Africa, and the report by the Secretary-General on the net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries (Doc. E/1988/64) give a clear picture of this situation. An expression of those developments is the absolute decline of the per capita income in African countries. Additional facts are that external financial flows to the sub-Saharan countries during the 1985-1987 period fell by about 6.5 billion dollars annually from their level in the early 1980s, that the per capita imports of these States

have decreased substantially and are presently as low as they were 20 years ago. The continual deterioration in the terms of trade of these countries that has subsisted since 1981, the fall of official development assistance and private investments, as well as the enormous debt service rate that has since 1983 been accompanied with a permanent net drain of resources from the whole of Africa, have resulted in a situation where the African macro-economic conditions are even more unfavourable than they were at the time of the UNPAAERD's adoption.

The persistently critical economic situation of Africa poses a challenge to the whole international community. Peace, security, disarmament, political stability and socio-economic progress are basic prerequisites for a successful economic development of the African continent. The resolution of the tasks flowing from the relationship between disarmament and development, and the implementation of the "disarmament for development" principle are of particularly topical importance for Africa.

2. Solidarity, assistance and mutually advantageous co-operation are irrevocable elements of the German Democratic Republic's foreign policy. It recognizes the need for the African States to be assisted in their policies for the economic and social development of the continent by suitable international measures, and it contributes to this end within the bounds of its own possibilities. The GDR has been making particular efforts towards the establishment of the political and economic environment that is vital for the long-term solution of the economic and social problems of the African States. In so doing, it regards peace, security and disarmament as fundamental prerequisites also for a prosperous economic development of Africa.

Cuts in arms expenditures worldwide would release financial and material resources which would benefit the combat against underdevelopment, hunger and diseases.

The German Democratic Republic attaches great importance to the endeavours of African States to find political solutions to existing conflicts and to prevent the emergence and spread of new ones. It deems it urgently necessary for the Republic of South Africa to abandon its policy of aggression and destabilization against the States and peoples of southern Africa that causes serious economic and social strains and paralyzes development.

The German Democratic Republic welcomes the accords that have been reached in recent negotiations between Angola, Cuba, South Africa and the USA on achieving independence for Namibia, including the agreement to propose to the Secretary-General of the United Nations 1 November 1988 as the date for the beginning of implementation of Security Council resolution 435. The GDR has repeatedly called for realization of this resolution, and has been displaying solidarity with the struggle of the peoples of the region for an independent Namibia. Consequently, it encourages all measures that may lead to a peaceful settlement of the conflict in southern Africa. Recognition of the right of every people of the continent to choose and pursue its own way of economic and social development without external interference would also be conducive to development.

The external economic environment of development is equally important for Africa's recovery and development. The GDR's position is therefore one of active commitment to the democratization of international trade, economic, monetary and financial relations. It advocates a global and equitable solution to external indebtedness that would heed the interests of developing countries just as much as the requirements of a stable and harmonious evolution of the world economy.

The German Democratic Republic believes that its endeavours for preserving peace, strengthening international security and achieving more sound international economic relations are a factor supporting the efforts of the African States to surmount underdevelopment and ensure growth and prosperity.

3. Other evidence of the German Democratic Republic's abiding solidarity with the peoples of the African continent is the financial and material assistance it has been providing to governments and national liberation movements within the scope of its possibilities and in accordance with the orientations contained in the United Nations Programme of Action. In 1986 and 1987 such assistance for Africa reached almost 750 million marks, and its figure envisaged for 1988 is 370 million marks.

The German Democratic Republic's assistance is primarily geared to the promotion of productive farming, the creation of national industries and the building of viable infrastructures, including those in the fields of public education, basic and advanced vocational training, and public health. Therefore, the GDR supports the activities of African States to develop their human resources. At the same time it considers that human resource development should be given a central place in the ongoing implementation of UNPAAERD, since the elimination of illiteracy and the education and training of qualified national personnel are indispensable prerequisites for a sustainable socio-economic development.

Over 6,000 African nationals received basic or advanced vocational training in GDR enterprises and institutes in 1986 and 1987, and another 3,000 will take up such training in this country in 1988. 2,850 Africans were studying at universities and other academic institutions in the GDR in 1986-1987. The trainees or students have such training and education free of charge; it is financed by the GDR Government.

Moreover, non-governmental organizations of the GDR such as the trade unions, youth, journalists' and sport organizations, co-operatives and religious communities are engaged in training or educational activities in specific areas, bearing the expenditure involved in this valuable form of assistance.

Within its assistance activities in favour of African countries the German Democratic Republic last year chiefly sent teachers and lecturers, medical doctors and nurses, graduate engineers, economic experts, agricultural mechanics and vocational instructors on assignments to these countries. 4b7 Africans received free in-patient and out-patient treatment in medical facilities or underwent health cures in health resorts in the GDR in 1987.

The German Democratic Republic assists the African front-line States in various ways in pursuing their national and regional programmes for economic and social development. Such assistance is furnished both at the bilateral level and in the framework of activities of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference. Food aid and other vital supplies for refugees from South Africa and Namibia who are depending on the hospitality of the front-line States is another form of assisting these countries.

4. The German Democratic Republic provided instant economic aid to African countries in particular emergency situations, including to Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia. Solidarity supplies and services of the GDR for Mozambique from 1981 to 1987 reached a total value of 278 million marks, and the value of such assistance for that country in 1988 will be some 28 million marks. The overall volume of aid which the GDR has been affording Ethiopia since 1983 to fight the consequences of the catastrophic drought amounts to 130 million marks. The GDR's solidarity aid for Angola since

1981 has reached 48.7 million marks. In all these instances the aid has been financed from funds of the Government, the Red Cross and the Churches of the GDR and, above all, from public donations.

5. The German Democratic Republic's economic policy vis-a-vis the African countries is aimed at maintaining long-term, stable and predictable links based on the principles of the sovereign equality of either partner, non-interference in internal affairs, and mutual advantage. In conformity with the orientations of UNIPAAERD this country's co-operation in the economic and techno-scientific fields and its trade with the African countries are chiefly focussed on agriculture, re-equipment and expansion projects in processing and manufacturing industries, on transport and communications, supplies of metallurgical equipment, the construction sector and building materials industry, and the energy sector. The German Democratic Republic executed a large number of projects in these areas in bilateral co-operation since the 13th special session of the United Nations General Assembly. The scope of such projects has been broad, ranging from cement factories, textile works, grain mills, mineral extraction and processing plants, power-generation installations, high-precision mechanics and optical works to agricultural training centres. The construction of such facilities will continue in 1988.

6. The German Democratic Republic is a market for traditional and non-traditional products of African developing countries in accordance with the capacities of either side. It is a buyer of agricultural produce and, on an increasing scale, of semi-finished and finished products of the light industry.

The GDR is anxious to expand the range of importable goods and to take into account increasing export capabilities of the African developing countries in terms of semi-manufactures and manufactures.

The German Democratic Republic's trade and economic relations with African developing countries are based on inter-governmental agreements and arrangements which, in most cases, have long terms of validity and thus add to the stability and predictability of these ties. Joint Economic Commissions, which have been established with a number of countries, and their periodic sessions and deliberations contribute towards enhancing and expanding economic and trade relations. Long-term credits have been granted to some African countries to facilitate their economic development.

7. The German Democratic Republic considers that the development of goods exchanges as well as stable and equality-based economic and techno-scientific co-operation with African developing countries are the main method of supporting them in their efforts to build and to maintain effective socio-economic infrastructures, to modernize their agriculture, to carry on with industrialization, and to overcome economic difficulties. Within the limits of its possibilities the GDR will continue such co-operation with, and such assistance for, African States.

8. The German Democratic Republic holds that the priority task of the forthcoming meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole on the review and appraisal of UNPAAERD will be to identify the reasons why, despite the great efforts undertaken by African countries and support measures initiated by the international community, the critical economic and social situation in Africa is persisting. In that context



it appears essential to examine the economic aspects of Africa's development in their interlinkage with the political and social ones. Special attention needs to be devoted to the development of human resources. In this connection the GDR considers the Declaration of Khartoum of March 1988 relating to the socio-economic aspects of recovery and development in Africa as an important follow-up activity to UNPAAERD, which should find due consideration in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. Furthermore, it believes a priority line of action for the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole should be the elaboration of effective measures to create an international environment favourable to economic recovery and development in Africa. These measures would have to include, not least, moves for the settlement of Africa's external indebtedness, for halting the net outflow of resources from Africa and increasing the flow of resources to Africa, as well as agreements in the field of international commodity trade designed to ensure stable export earnings for African countries.

9. The German Democratic Republic supports the activities by the United Nations and the entire UN system for the implementation of the UNPAAERD. The Joint Meeting of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (ACC/CPC) in Geneva in early July 1988, and ECOSOC's second regular session of 1988 have again demonstrated that an effective co-ordination of all activities of the United Nations and the UN system is of decisive importance for employing the potentialities and possibilities of the United Nations and the UN system not only for overcoming emergency situations but also with respect to long-term objectives of economic stabilization and development.

Therefore, the German Democratic Republic holds the view that the United Nations and its bodies as well as the organizations of the UN system, in further implementing the UNPAAERD, should focus their efforts particularly on such tasks as are of fundamental importance for mobilizing means and ways for the solution of Africa's socio-economic problems, will lead to an effective co-ordination of all relevant UN activities and can thus help achieve practical results in the interests of African economic recovery and development.

Berlin, 10 August 1988.

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