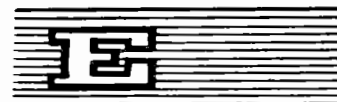




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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Sixth meeting of the Technical
Preparatory Committee of the
Whole

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
15-22 April 1985

Item IV.1 of the provisional agenda*

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Twentieth session of the Commission
and Eleventh Meeting of the Conference
of Ministers

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
25-29 April 1985

Item V A. of the provisional agenda

REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE REGIONAL
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE FOR PADIS
(Addis Ababa, 26-28 March 1985)

* E/ECA/TPCW.6/1/Rev.2
E/ECA/CM.11/1/Rev.2

I. ORGANIZATION AND ATTENDANCE

1. The First Meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for the Pan-African Documentation and Information System (PADIS) was held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) from 26 to 28 March 1985. The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa convened the meeting in accordance with resolution 498(XIX) adopted by the Conference of Ministers at its 10th Session in 1984.

2. Present at the meeting were representatives of Algeria, Ethiopia, the Niger and Zaire as well as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The following organizations were represented by observers: the Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Information System (ACCIS), the African Development Bank (ADB) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

3. The terms of reference of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS were set out in resolution 498(XIX); the main ones are:

(a) To establish the overall policy of PADIS, particularly by laying down policy, technical and financial guidelines;

(b) To advise the Executive Secretary on the formulation and implementation of the work programme of the project in accordance with those guidelines;

(c) To oversee the execution of the project at all levels;

(d) To take any other action to enhance the effectiveness and economic viability of the project;

(e) To meet as often as required but not less than once a year, and, during the transitional phase, not less than twice a year,

(f) To co-opt specialists in the relevant disciplines as necessary; and

(g) To report annually on its activities to the Conference of Ministers through the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole.

4. Professor Adebayo Adedeji, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa opened and chaired the meeting. The officer responsible for PADIS acted as rapporteur.

II. OPENING OF THE MEETING

5. In his opening address, the Executive Secretary welcomed the delegates and outlined the background to PADIS, which had been designed as a development-oriented regional information system. In particular, he stressed the efforts made by ECA in establishing the Pan-African Documentation and Information System pursuant to the decision adopted by the ECA Conference of Ministers at its meeting in Rabat in 1979.

6. He indicated that the establishment of PADIS had progressed in a climate of deteriorating social and economic conditions and expressed his concern over the serious set backs encountered at multilateral level in financing several third world projects.

7. Finally, the Executive Secretary thanked donors for their financial support to the PADIS project and reminded participants that their work would have a real impact on the development of PADIS.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

8. The agenda adopted by the meeting is given below:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of officers and adoption of the agenda
3. The evolution of the PADIS programme
4. The establishment of a Regional Co-operative Information System
5. Assistance to member States and African Institutions: orientations, approaches, components and progress to date
6. The establishment of a data-transmission network using up-to-date telecommunications technologies
7. The capacity of the Central Co-ordination Office of PADIS to execute the PADIS regional programme
8. The choice of computer technologies for the PADIS System
9. Financial implications of the PADIS programme
10. PADIS work programme for the period 1985-1986
11. Any other business
12. Date and place of the next meeting
13. Adoption of the report
14. Closure of the meeting

IV. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

A. Evolution of the PADIS programme
(Agenda item 3)

9. In his introduction, a representative of the secretariat said that document ECA/PADIS/RTC/I/3 gave a summary of the main studies pertaining to the establishment of the Pan-African Documentation and Information System (PADIS). He highlighted the main points of each of the studies carried out over a period in order to demonstrate how the concept of the project had evolved since the idea of creating an African information system was mooted.

10. The first section of the document contained the proposals underlying the creation of an African information system. The second section gave the basic concepts formulated in the feasibility study prepared by an inter-agency team. The third section of the document set forth measures for implementing the first phase of the project.

11. The fourth and fifth sections gave the main conclusions of the project specification drawn up by UNDP and a summary of activities during the period 1982-1984. The sixth part of the document summarized the chief criticisms made by specialists on the various aspects of the project and the last section contained the conclusions and a certain number of observations.

12. In the discussions which followed presentation of the document, a member of the Committee noted that PADIS was designed as a development-oriented system, that the project had made progress in the right direction in comparison with the DEVSIS-Africa study, and that it now comprised bibliographic, reference and statistical data bases. He stressed the need to develop additional pilot data bases as models for national centres.

13. The representative of UNDP said that the role played by member States was crucial to the success of the PADIS project, and informed the meeting of the forthcoming evaluation.

14. The observer for ACCIS, indicated that the organization's terms of reference included the distribution of United Nations's data bases to member States and expressed her organization's willingness to give such assistance to PADIS.

15. The Committee took note of the paper presented by the secretariat and considered it as a comprehensive account of the development of PADIS since its creation.

B. Establishment of a Regional Co-operative Information System

(Agenda item 4)

16. A representative of the secretariat, presenting document ECA/PADIS/RTC/I/4, emphasized that the structure adopted for PADIS consisted of sub-systems and components which set out the specific types of information to be processed. The structure planned comprised the following four information sub-systems:

- (a) Bibliographic reference sub-system:
(components PADIS-DEV and PADIS-COM);
- (b) Reference data sub-system:
(components PADIS-CORE and PADIS-PROM);
- (c) Numerical data sub-system:
(components PADIS-STAT and PADIS-TEND);
- (d) Sub-system of data bases with remote access via inter-connections with extra-African centres and networks:
(component PADIS-STISD).

17. He informed the Committee that four components (DEV, COM, CORE and STAT) out of the seven planned for the programme had been set up during phases I and II of the project (1980-1984). The other three components were PADIS-PROM (project monitoring), PADIS-TEND (quantitative, non-statistical technical data) and PADIS-STISD.

18. He also said that the installation of the above-mentioned data bases in the Central Co-ordination Office (PADIS-CCO) had been completed during the same period. However, the proposed inter-connection with extra-African networks, planned as part of PADIS-NET, had not gone beyond the preliminary study stage. Co-operation agreements for PADIS-DEV had been established with Guinea, the Niger and Botswana and could be used as models for other components and other member States.

19. In the discussion that followed, a number of participants stressed the need for developing a primary document delivery system. The ACCIS observer called the attention of the Committee to the frustration encountered by users at not being able to obtain the documents cited in the data bases consulted. A representative of the secretariat explained that, although that problem was serious, it did not arise for the PADIS-DEV and PADIS-COM components which had a built-in system of document production.

20. Regarding the components PROM, TEND and STISD, two points of view were expressed. A member of the Committee informed the meeting that his country was currently establishing data bases of the STAT, PROM and TEND types, the latter two not yet having been set up by PADIS. His country was ready to share its

experiences in this field and, with financial assistance from PADIS, would be able to complete the components presently being developed.

21. Another delegate suggested that the priorities of PADIS should be revised to meet the present requirements of member States and wondered whether it was not in the best interest of PADIS to delay setting up the TEND and STISD components and concentrate instead on existing components at national level.

22. Regarding PADIS-STAT a member of the Committee requested clarification on the relationship between PADIS and ECA Statistics Division in the implementation of this component. In his reply a member of the secretariat explained that in conformity with its mandate, the Statistics Division was responsible for the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistical data. The role of PADIS was to provide hardware and software support and to co-operate in the installation and maintenance of the internal data base.

23. In conclusion, it was suggested that it would be useful if PADIS could disseminate the information available on the system's various components. The Committee took note of the document.

C. Assistance to member States and African Institutions
(Agenda item 5)

24. In presenting document number ECA/PADIS/RTC/I/5, a representative of the secretariat indicated that sections I and II gave a picture of the present state of information and documentation at the national, subregional and regional levels in Africa.

25. He stated that the issue of subregional centres has been gaining importance as the PADIS programme advanced: their roles were discussed in section III, paragraphs 27-31. He added that the need to make PADIS assistance as comprehensive and effective as possible was dictated by the paucity of information and documentation activities in Africa and also by the diversity at country level. As a result, PADIS assistance encompassed advisory services and training, and whenever possible, financial and material assistance (paragraphs 40-44).

26. A representative of the secretariat stated further that progress in strengthening the capacity of member States to participate in PADIS had been satisfactory. The first three years have been devoted mainly to the creation and strengthening of the PADIS Central Co-ordination Office and since the past year efforts had been dedicated to improving the situation at the national level, as the cases of Benin, Botswana, the Niger and Zambia, testified.

27. In view of the efforts of PADIS to establish links with national centres in member States, it was suggested that, rather than creating new centres, it was advisable to strengthen the capacity of the existing ones. That might enable PADIS and member States to develop the network at reasonably low cost.

28. It was further stated that the problem of developing national centres was a complex one which needed to be addressed urgently. In this connection, it was suggested that a recommendation be made to governments to set up inter-ministerial committees to be responsible for PADIS activities at national level.

29. It was further suggested that in trying to set up national and subregional centres, PADIS should give attention to existing information providers in each member State as they were aware of information needs.

30. The existing resources should be developed taking into consideration the wishes of policy-makers and technocrats. PADIS should also promote progressive computerization of the Information Services which were now growing in a number of member States, in addition to encouraging the conventional library and documentation services.

31. In reply to the various interventions, a representative of the secretariat, stated that assistance by PADIS was given in response to requests made by member States and, resources allowing, PADIS would continue to assist member States to set up centres or to strengthen existing ones.

D. Establishment of a Data Transmission Network using up-to-date Telecommunication Technologies

(Agenda item 6)

32. In his introduction, a representative of the secretariat first drew the attention of the Committee to the terms of resolution 377(XV) of the ECA Conference of Ministers which requested the international community to "... provide a full support to the African continent for the immediate implementation and development of the project in order to allow an effective organization of the regional, subregional and national input centres as a network". Consequently, the PADIS project included setting up an information system and a network of participating centres, defining the status of information experts and establishing a common policy among member States. With respect to the PADIS-NET project, he said that its aims were to adopt common standards, to establish co-operation agreements between participating centres, to draw up a training plan and to set up a Pan-African telecommunication network.

33. The implications of the PADIS-NET project at regional, subregional and national levels were reviewed.

34. The subregional centres were expected to contribute to PADIS-NET by pooling primary document archives (microfiches) and data bases prepared by the participating centres of each subregion (North, West, Centre and South-East). At the national level, it was stressed, other participants could belong to the network at three different levels of connection (without sophisticated facilities, with a computing centre, or with computer and telematics facilities).

35. The eventual structure of the telecommunications network required a very thorough feasibility study taking into account the existence of the PADIS headquarters Central Co-ordination Office and of subregional centres. An outline of the estimated channel capacities required for the telecommunications network between the subregional centres and PADIS Central Co-ordination Office and between participating centres and the corresponding subregional centres was presented to the Committee.

36. In the discussions that ensued a point was raised regarding the location of PADIS subregional centres. It was suggested that the criteria for establishing subregional centres within the MULPOC offices might not be the most appropriate since in certain subregions, such as Central Africa, there were two MULPOCs.

37. In reply, a member of the secretariat stated that the system had been adopted to ensure efficient use of existing facilities and resources available to PADIS: sites of subregional centres also depended on the willingness of the host country to share the costs of setting up the centre.

38. It was further stated that PADIS-NET should be linked to the national networks, although these were still lacking in many countries of the region. The need for hardware, software and information format to be compatible was therefore emphasized.

39. A suggestion was made that missions should be undertaken by PADIS to various member States to assist them in designating participating centres. It was further stated that exchanges, of clearly defined information, e.g., tapes, printed matter etc., should be instituted. The need for data transmission networks was stressed and a recommendation was made that a feasibility study on the establishment of a PADIS network should be carried out as soon as possible.

40. The future outlook of PADIS network was discussed, and members felt that emphasis should be placed on weaker points. For example, it was observed that most centres in Africa were not computerized, and that compability with PADIS should be emphasized.

41. A long debate took place on PADIS national participating centres and a request was made to the Executive Secretary of ECA to urge member States to designate PADIS liaison centres. Members felt that once this was done, the centres would link with subregional centres and PADIS. Standards should be laid down, and in establishing national and subregional centres, the existing standards should be brought into line.

42. An observer suggested that PADIS should bear in mind that a number of countries in Africa were setting up their sections of PANAFTEL, and wondered whether PADIS needs had been taken into consideration in this plan.

43. A member of the Committee suggested that before talking about computerization, manpower training should be given priority. He also wondered why PADIS had not taken further action on the project documents submitted to various countries to assist in the establishment of national documentation centres.

44. A member of the secretariat replied that the various member States had all received the same documents and that there was no agreement for PADIS to finance the establishment of national centres. Citing Ethiopia as an example, he stated that significant assistance has been given to the Ethiopian Ministry of Mines for the compilation of a mines index and for training in bibliographic information processing

45. Finally, the Committee agreed on the following points:

(a) Priority should be given to the establishment of new national centres and the expansion of existing ones to enable countries to participate in PADIS effectively;

(b) Countries' levels of development in information sciences should be taken into account when creating or expanding national centres. North Africa already had operational national centres, whereas most of the ones in sub-Saharan Africa, were still in embryo;

(c) A time frame for the establishment and, where appropriate, strengthening of national centres should be agreed upon, and governments ought to meet some of the costs incurred;

(d) Subregional centres should be set up very cautiously and national centres suitable for gradual development into subregional centres should be identified;

(e) Member States should be urged to take an interest in PADIS financial and manpower problems in order to enable it to develop as an effective system for the countries of Africa. In this connection, the establishment of two subregional centres (WADIS and ESADIS) was continuing and negotiations were in progress with the host countries, the Niger and Zambia, for them to bear some of the cost. Negotiations were still going on with interested countries with a view to selection of host countries for other subregional centres;

(f) The Committee should take note of all that had been said in relation to setting up a PADIS network and PADIS should carry out a feasibility study.

E. The capacity of the Central Co-ordination Office of PADIS to execute the PADIS Regional Programme
(agenda item 7)

46. A representative of the secretariat, introducing the item, first drew attention to the immediate aims of the PADIS project and then informed the Committee that a management structure embracing the following activities was

planned: bibliographic data, reference data, numerical data, technical operation, data processing, printing and reproduction and administrative services. It had been planned to have 45 staff, including 15 professional-level posts, by the end of phase II of the project (1984).

47. In fact, only 27 staff, including 7 at professional level, had been on board by December 1984. Bearing in mind that the staff covered activities not falling within the project, it could be concluded that only 31 per cent of the staff expected had really been used for the PADIS project (3 at professional level and 11 at general service).

48. With regard to the financial aspect, during the period 1980-1984 (phases I and II) a total of \$US6,368,202 had been made available by ADB, UNDP, IDRC and ECA. This amounted to 28 per cent of the ideal budget initially planned in 1980 for the project.

49. Stressing the problems encountered by the project during the period 1980-1984, he presented a number of detailed proposals for remedying these inadequacies. The proposals related to separation of the team of equipment involved in the project from the technical support structure at ECA, an increase in project staff members, particularly the recruitment of a team of regional technical advisers, and the organization of appropriate administrative structures for the PADIS management services. Finally, he proposed that a five-year project, with participation by other United Nations agencies, should be set up to consolidate the programme for phase III.

50. Members of the Committee congratulated PADIS on the remarkable quantity and quality of the work accomplished despite very limited financial and manpower resources. They paid tribute to UNDP, IDRC, ADB, ECA and other donors for their assistance and hoped that they, other donors, and member States would continue to extend assistance.

51. The chairman felt that points (ii) and (iii) relating to dividing the PADIS Computer configuration into two, one devoted to the ECA secretariat and the other to the PADIS project needed further examination.

52. He also stated that items (iii) and (iv) concerning recruitment of additional regional advisers for PADIS was a very important question which required immediate action and suggested that a recommendation be made to the ECA Conference of Ministers to that effect.

F. CHOICE OF COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE PADIS SYSTEM

(agenda item 8)

53. A representative of the secretariat, introducing document ECA/PADIS/RTC/I/8, said that the choice of computer hardware and software for PADIS had been examined thoroughly in the DEVSIS-Africa Study and the report by Mr. Pobukovsky, Chief of the UNESCO Division of Library, Archives and Documentation Services.

54. He said that the bibliographic-processing software had been chosen from three alternatives with the appropriate capacity - ISIS, MINISIS and MILOR - and recommended that MINISIS and CDS/ISIS software be adopted progressively. However, the final PADIS choice for phases I and II was MINISIS which met the following criteria: quality of the hardware, conditions of maintenance, training facilities, delivery time, availability of programmes and documentation, costs and, finally, back-up services.

55. In the ensuing discussion, one representative drew the attention of the meeting to the fact that the criteria used for the choice of hardware had led to the selection of the configuration currently in use at PADIS merely because the prevailing conditions at Addis Ababa were favourable for it. He added that application of the same criteria in his subregion, for instance, might lead to a different choice and he wondered whether that state of affairs might jeopardize compatibility between centres participating in the network. Another representative spoke of the need to exercise caution to avoid PADIS being looked on as the promoter of a particular computer product.

56. One observer, offering clarification on the issue of compatibility, explained that the use of different software and hardware by participating centres will not hamper mutual exchange of information provided that the components for bibliographic description and data collection had the same format. He went on to explain that the MINISIS software currently in use at PADIS could accept inputs from most micro-computers. Lastly, he said that most national centres did not, and would not for some time to come, have computers and therefore immediate needs were rather to assist national centres to acquire micro-reprography equipment to enable them to support document delivery activities.

57. A member of the secretariat indicated that the choice of equipment had been influenced not only by the recommendations of the expert who studied the matter but also by the fact that other hardware supporting the ISIS package was sophisticated and costly. Also at the time only five or six member States owned such machines. Since then, the ever decreasing cost and increasing reliability and versatility of the computer brand in use at PADIS had enlarged the number of users. Hence, the availability and quality of maintenance services had also increased. Finally, he said that wherever PADIS had provided member States with computer equipments the choice had been based on factors such as maintenance, training and cost.

58. One representative mentioned his country's wide experience in the use of MINISIS software and its readiness to share that experience with PADIS.

59. A member of the secretariat then explained that three technical criteria should underlay discussion on the issue of compatibility - compatibility in sphere of use, morphology and terminology. The first referred to the definition and type of data required by participating or corresponding systems (author, title, etc.); morphology related to the manner in which data was recorded in those fields and terminological compatibility concerned the uniformity of the vocabulary (usually a controlled vocabulary) used to describe the content of the information matter (publications, information on experts, institutions, etc.) to allow use of the same vocabulary to retrieve the material later.

60. The observer for ACCIS informed the meeting of her experience with the MINISIS software and expressed here confidence that MINISIS was the best package for processing bibliographic information. She felt that it was unfortunate that MINISIS ran on only one make of computer but that should not be a deterrent to its use.

61. Finally, the Committee agreed that the choice of hardware and software for PADIS was satisfactory under the prevailing conditions. However, it felt that member States should be able to select the systems best suited to local conditions provided that standardization and compatibility are given due consideration.

62. The meeting took note of the document.

G. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE PADIS PROGRAMME (agenda item 9)

63. In his introduction, a representative of the secretariat informed the Committee that PADIS activities for 1985 would receive \$US 1,246,533 in support from UNDP, IDRC and ECA.

64. For 1986, PADIS had an amount of \$US 854,084.00 committed by UNDP and ECA. An additional \$US 392,000 was urgently needed if PADIS was to continue into 1986, the activities begun in 1985. Furthermore, recruitment of a number of technical advisers would require an extra \$US 210,000.

65. He put forward to the Committee specific proposals for ensuring that the project would continue to have adequate funds after 1985. The proposals entailed negotiation of an emergency aid package (\$US 390,000 for 1986) from UNDP and submission of a resolution (see annex) to the ECA Conference of Ministers that would empower the Executive Secretary to negotiate, on member States' behalf, with financing sources.

66. The Committee was also given a rough estimate of the amount of assistance that subregional centres and the regional centre could hope to receive each year.

67. In the discussions that followed, the representative of UNDP explained that the prospects for additional financing from UNDP would depend on the outcome of the tripartite evaluation to be carried out not later than September 1985. Furthermore, he stated that the outcome of the evaluation would show to what extent the other main donors were prepared to continue with financing the PADIS project.

68. A representative of the ECA Technical Assistance Co-ordination and Operations Office indicated that her office knew of UNDP's intention and remarked that she would like to know if the mission would take decisions regarding further financing of the PADIS project. In that respect she suggested that the terms of reference of the evaluation mission should be defined precisely in view of the disappointing results obtained from the global approach adopted by UNDP in similar cases. She then stated that the principle of a tripartite review required participation by the Executing Agency, UNDP and governments. Concerning this, she suggested that a member of the Regional Technical Committee should represent African Governments on the evaluation team.

69. The Chairman stated that there should be no opposition to this suggestion since the Regional Technical Committee represented the ECA Conference of Ministers.

70. The representative of UNDP said that since the terms of reference and composition of the evaluation team were still under consideration, he saw no difficulty in considering the suggestion. He also indicated his intention to submit the matter to UNDP Headquarters.

71. The representative of one member State asked whether member States would continue to bear the cost of their representation at future meetings of the Regional Technical Committee.

72. The Chairman replied that resolution 498 (XIX) of the ECA Conference of Ministers was clear on that question and that the financial situation of the project made it impossible to bear the cost of participation by member States. He said that it will not be the first time that member States had covered the cost of attending meetings. Another representative suggested that the matter should be considered at the meeting of the Conference of Ministers.

73. Two representatives enquired if there were established channels for members of the Committee to relate the outcome of the Regional Technical Committee meeting to the countries in their respective subregions. A member of the secretariat indicated that subregional technical committees already existed for the West, East and Southern African subregions and that one would be created for North Africa at the next meeting of Plenipotentiaries of the MULPOC for that subregion. He added that the chairmen of those subregional technical committees were also ex-officio members of the Regional Technical Committee.

H. PADIS work programme for the period 1985-1986

(agenda item 10)

74. A representative of the secretariat indicated that document ECA/PADIS/RTC/I/10 set out details of the activities to be carried out by PADIS in 1985, grouped under 7 topics: training, bibliographic data base, reference data bases, numerical data bases, PADIS-NET network, data processing and user services.

75. Regarding data processing, he indicated that measures were presently being taken to upgrade the computer facilities at the Central Co-ordinating Office by installing an additional HP 3000/44 processing unit which would then be upgraded to 3000/48.

76. He also drew the Committee's attention to the forthcoming establishment of an Arabic unit with the co-operation of the Arab-League Documentation Centre (ALDOC) in accordance with the wishes of the Arab States in the region. The Arabic version of MINISIS used by ALDOC would also be installed together with terminals and a printer with Arabic characters.

77. With regard to 1986, he said that a detailed work plan would be established upon receipt of confirmation that the necessary funds were available to continue the project activities.

78. He hoped that the financing level would allow PADIS activities to increase in 1986 in the fields covered in the work programme for 1985, particularly with regard to assistance to member States.

79. During the subsequent discussion, an observer said that the document presented was a list of activities to be executed during 1985 rather than a truly structured work plan listing detailed objectives.

80. A member of the Committee underlined the importance of the introduction of Arabic, one of the official PADIS languages, at operational level and the necessity of approaching scientifically the problem of access language to the PADIS data bases.

81. The Chairman agreed and suggested that PADIS should prepare as soon as possible, and certainly for consideration at the second meeting of the Regional Technical Committee:

(a) A medium-term plan setting forth the objectives for the next five years; and

(b) A short-term plan for the period 1986-1987 showing annual budget expenditure and activities to be completed in the same period.

82. The Chairman also suggested that these documents should be ready before the Tripartite Evaluation Team meeting, which would be held in September 1985.

I. Any other business

(agenda item 11)

83. In view of the fact that UNDP funding of PADIS phases I and II would come to an end in 1986, the UNDP representative stated that an evaluation of the project was to take place in September 1985, and its findings would determine the future UNDP level of funding.

84. Regarding the composition of the evaluation team, the UNDP representative stated that he would convey to UNDP Headquarters the Committee's suggestions for including representatives of member States in addition to those of ECA, UNDP and other donors.

J. Date and place of the next meeting

(agenda item 12)

85. The date and place of the next meeting would be decided later.

K. Adoption of the report

(agenda item 13)

86. The meeting adopted the present report as amended together with a summary of the chief observations and recommendations for submission to the next meeting of the Conference of Ministers.

L. Closure of the meeting

(agenda item 14)

87. Mr. Adebayo Adedeji, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, expressed his thanks to members of the Committee and observers for their contributions and declared the meeting closed.

ANNEX

FIRST MEETING OF THE REGIONAL TECHNICAL
COMMITTEE FOR PADIS

Draft resolution for the consideration of the Technical
Preparatory Committee of the Whole at its sixth meeting

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling resolution 359 (XIV) of 27 March 1979 on the project for a Pan-African numerical and non-numerical data bank,

Recalling also resolution 377 (XV) of 12 April 1980 on the implementation of the Pan-African Documentation and Information System (PADIS) project,

Further recalling resolution 413 (XVI) of 10 April 1981 regarding financial support for PADIS,

Recalling the resolution on PADIS adopted by the third session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers,

Recalling resolution 438 (XVII) of 30 April 1982 on the PADIS system,

Recalling resolution 469 (XVIII) of 2 May 1983 on African statistical services,

Recalling resolution 498 (XIX) of 26 May 1984 on the establishment of a PADIS Regional Technical Committee,

Noting with satisfaction the progress made by certain member States with a view to participating in PADIS,

Noting with satisfaction that establishment of the PADIS network is progressing satisfactorily with the setting-up of the Central Co-ordination Office and two of the four subregional centres,

Having examined the report of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS at its first meeting held at Addis Ababa from 26 to 28 March 1985,

1. Adopts the report of the First Meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS;

2. Expresses its thanks to the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the African Development Bank (ADB) for their financial assistance and to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Government of France for their technical support to the PADIS project;

3. Invites member States which have not yet done so to designate their participating centres to PADIS.

4. Requests the Executive Secretary to inform agencies responsible for development aid programmes of the importance member States attach to implementation of the PADIS programme;

5. Empowers the Executive Secretary of ECA:

(a) to negotiate, on behalf of member States, with development aid agencies (UNDP, EEC, ADB, and IDRC in particular) likely to provide the financial assistance needed to execute third-phase activities of PADIS at the regional, subregional and national levels;

(b) to negotiate with member States on the details of their active participation in the technical and financial aspects of the PADIS regional project;

(c) to negotiate with specialized technical bodies (PATU, ITU, IBI, and ESA), the preparation of a feasibility study on the establishment of a Pan-African data transmission network for PADIS requirements;

6. Further requests the Executive Secretary to set up a team of regional technical advisers to assist in the implementation of the project;

7. Also requests the Executive Secretary to submit to the next meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers a report concerning:

(a) the detailed plan of work for Phase III of the PADIS programme (1986-1989);

(b) planned and secured financing for Phase III of the PADIS project; and

(c) the degree of current and expected participation by member States in PADIS and its network.