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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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Item 7 of the provisional
agenda**
REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

Particular problems facing Zaire with regard to transport,
transit and access to foreign markets

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolutions 34/193 of 19 December 1979, 35/59 of 5 December 1980 and 36/139 of 16 December 1981, the General Assembly requested the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to provide Zaire with technical assistance in order to help it solve its transport problems. The Economic and Social Council likewise adopted resolution 1981/68 of 24 July 1981 containing a similar request.
2. The ECA assistance was to focus on the following points:
 - (a) Technical assistance for studies on the international trade problems of Zaire, taking into account the latter's special situation as a semi-land-locked country;
 - (b) Assistance in finding the funds necessary for the implementation of transit projects.
3. In 1978, the Commission sent a preliminary mission to the Government of Zaire to identify the nature and magnitude of the international transport problems, to discuss possible solutions and to make concrete proposals.
4. The mission considered that the ideal solution for Zaire would be the possession of a national large-capacity transport route linking the province of

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Shaba to a deep-water port at Banana on the Atlantic coast. The mission nevertheless acknowledged that in the short term it would be necessary to improve the infrastructure and equipment of the existing route between Lubumbashi and the Zaire River estuary.

5. A joint ECA/UNCTAD mission subsequently visited Zaire in November 1981 with a view to bringing the 1978 study up to date, identifying projects that would improve the national route and foreign access routes and making recommendations and proposals for the improvement of these various routes.

6. At the invitation of the Zairian Government, the Executive Secretary of the Commission visited Kinshasa from 29 March to 3 April 1982 in order to draw up a concrete programme for the implementation of the recommendations and proposals made by the earlier missions. Substantial progress has now been made in the implementation of this programme.

A. Action undertaken since May 1982

7. In September 1982, an ECA mission went to Kinshasa to finalize the report of the joint ECA/UNCTAD mission with the Zairian Government.

8. On that occasion, the terms of reference for the pre-feasibility study for the Ilébo-Kinshasa railway and the joint Zaire-Angola project for the dredging of the Zaire River estuary were drawn up. With regard to the Matadi-Banana railway, it was decided, in agreement with the Government, to suspend the updating of the study carried out in 1972: it would seem that there is now a preference for an entirely new route, situated much further to the north.

9. An ECA official undertook a mission to the Zairian Government, and in particular the Maritime Transport Authority, in November and December 1982. The purpose of the mission was to prepare the study on the dredging of the Zaire River estuary (joint Zaire-Angola project). This study has now been completed and will be transmitted to the Zairian Government in the very near future for finalization.

10. In December 1982, another ECA official visited Kinshasa to collect as much information as possible with a view to the completion of the pre-feasibility study for the Ilébo-Kinshasa railway. The study is virtually complete and, like the study mentioned above, will be transmitted to the Zairian Government in the very near future for finalization.

11. With regard to the project relating to the Commission for the Joint Exploitation of the River Zaire, which Zaire, the Congo and the Central African Republic decided to establish in March 1982 at Yaoundé, the terms of reference have been drawn up by ECA and contacts will be established with the countries concerned in order to facilitate the consultant's work.

12. During the visit of the Executive Secretary of ECA to Zaire in March-April 1982, it was decided to organize a round-table meeting with the Zairian Government, ECA and potential providers of financing to study Zaire's transport

problems and in particular those relating to the national route. This round-table meeting, the organization of which was approved by the General Assembly in resolution 37/205 of 20 December 1982, will be held at Kinshasa on 28 and 29 June 1983.

13. With a view to preparing a comprehensive document for submission to the providers of finance at the round-table meeting, a mission consisting of two consultants and an ECA official visited Zaire in February and March 1982. The purpose of the mission was to identify, essentially for the national route, a coherent set of projects concerning river routes, river ports, roads, railways and airports, and to prepare the corresponding project profiles. The work of the mission resulted in the preparation of a comprehensive document which was finalized with the Zairian Government in April 1983. The document has been sent to all the parties involved in the Kinshasa round-table meeting. It should be noted, however, that a project profile is being prepared by UNCTAD, relating to the purchase and establishment of a rolling-stock pool in the subregion, grouping Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe; this project profile will be submitted separately.

14. The document consists of two volumes. Volume I (DEC/TRANSCOM/RTZ/I) contains a general description of Zaire and its transport problems, together with a summary of the profiles of the 54 projects selected and a financial estimate. Volume II (DEC/TRANSCOM/RTZ/II) contains all 54 of the project profiles.

15. From the financial standpoint, the programme presented will cost \$1,984 million, of which external sources are expected to provide \$1,412. The programme has been divided into a series of four priorities:

(a) Priority I: Upholding of the existing transport potential.
Cost: \$685 million;

(b) Priority II: Assistance and training: upholding the performance potential of Zairian organizations responsible for the management of transport and infrastructure. Cost: \$100 million;

(c) Priority III: Improvement and expansion of the existing transport facilities. Cost: \$1,020 million;

(d) Priority IV: Entirely new projects (basically studies).
Cost: \$179 million.

B. Results of the action undertaken by ECA

16. To a large extent, the results of all these activities will not be known until after the round-table meeting of 28 and 29 June 1983. Information concerning the results of this meeting will be submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1983 and to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.