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CAMH/3(IV) Part I
CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS OF HEALTH
FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION
22 - 30 APRIL 1991
MBABANE, SWAZILAND
PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION CAMH/ReSa2(III)
ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE
TO FACE EPIDEMICS AND NATURAL DISASTERS IN AFRICA

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Introduction

1; The basic legal texts that assisted the General Secretariat of the Organization of African Unity in conducting the study on the development of a plan of action for disaster emergency preparedness in Africa included:

(i) The Conference of African Ministers of Health

Resolution CAMH/Res;2(III) on Emergency Preparedness and Response to face Epidemics and Natural Disasters in Africa;

(ii) The OAU Council of Ministers document CM/1565(L)Res;2 on Emergency Preparedness and Response to face Epidemics and Natural Disasters in Africa;

(iii) ECA Resolution 645(XXXIII) on Support to the Countries of the South Western Indian Ocean affected by Tropical Cyclones and Natural Disasters;

(iv) UN General Assembly Resolution 42/169 on International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

2; The OAU General Secretariat played the role of lead organization in convening inter-agency meetings on disasters in Africa;

Implementation of Resolution CAMB/Res;2(III)

3; Guided by the resolution CAMB/Res;2(III) adopted by the Conference of African Ministers of Health at its Third Ordinary Session, that was held in Kampala, Uganda, from 3 to 5 May 1989, the General Secretariat of the Organization of African Unity

undertook the following steps for the implementation of the relevant parts of the resolution:

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)

The OAU General Secretariat took the initiative and prepared a document entitled "Disasters in Africa: Guidelines for a Plan of Action for Disaster Preparedness and Response";

In furtherance of its endeavour to promote co-operation among concerned organizations, the OAU General Secretariat called for an Inter-Agency meeting to examine the above-mentioned document; The meeting was held at the CAD Headquarters from 16 to 18 October 1989, and was attended by representatives from 14 relevant organizations; The Secretariat was congratulated for preparing such a good document;

Pursuant to the recommendations of the Inter-Agency meeting, the document was submitted to the OAU Council of Ministers at its 51st Ordinary Session that was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 19 to 24 February 1990; The Council approved the document, adopted the attached resolution CM/Re5a1253(LI) and recommended the distribution of the document 'OAU Secretary-General's Report on Disasters in Africa: Guidelines for Disaster Preparedness and Response (Doc: CM/1586(LI))', as widely as possible; Accordingly, the document was distributed to:

- All OAU Member States
- UN System
- NGOs -
- Regional Organizations

- (iv)
- (a)
- (b)
- (C)

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16th ECA Ministerial Conference that was held in Tripoli, Libya (1-19 May 1990);

16th FAO Regional Conference for Africa that was held in Marrakech, Morocco (11-16 June 1990);

The OAU General Secretariat convened another Inter-Agency meeting on Disasters in Africa with the purpose of ensuring the implementation of the resolution. The meeting was held at the WHO Headquarters from 25 to 27 April 1990; It was attended by representatives from ten relevant organizations; The meeting made recommendations including:

The meeting supported OAU's intention to prepare for a regional meeting on disasters in Africa;

- The purpose of the regional meeting is to identify project priorities at national, sub-regional and regional levels to be implemented during the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction;

The decade became operational as of January 1990; There is need for intensive preparations for the regional meeting at all levels - Member States as well as the OAU Secretariat; Member States should develop national action plans for disaster preparedness and response on the basis of the CAD Guidelines, they should seek the Secretariat assistance, if need arises;

UNDRO (United Nations Disaster Relief Organization) pledged to provide OAU Secretariat with a consultant to assist in the preparation of the regional meeting;

4; Further to the activities described above, the OAU General Secretariat will convene the "Regional Meeting on Disasters in Africa" in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in March 1992; All OAU Member States, UN System, donors, NGOs and other relevant international and regional organizations will be invited to attend the meeting:

5; It is worth mentioning that the study conducted by the OAU General Secretariat has helped to analyze objectively disasters in Africa, their extent, measures undertaken to combat disasters and the preparation of guidelines to prevent disasters in the Continent. . .

6; It is not possible to prescribe a uniform pattern of national preparedness or contingency planning for all countries since their resources, administrative structure and infrastructural facilities vary widely; Furthermore, it is not appropriate to recommend a rigid set of guidelines for all disasters even for the same country, since each disaster has its own peculiarities; A copy of the document is attached for easy reference;