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REPORT ON THE SECOND REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INTEGRATION  
OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT SPONSORED BY THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION  
FOR AFRICA HELD IN LUSAKA ON DECEMBER 3rd to 7th, 1979

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1. The main purpose of the conference was to review progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving the minimum objectives of the World and Africa Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development and to draw up programmes and strategies for 1980 - 1985, as well as to prepare for the World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark in July, 1980.
2. The A.N.C. (SA) was represented by Comrades Mavis Thwala (as head of the delegation), Cynthia Singh, Mavivi Myakayaka, Eleanor Mbako and Duduzile Ndelu. Other Liberation Movements represented were Z.A.N.U. (PF), Z.A.P.U. (PF), SWAPO of Namibia and the P.A.C. 32 African states, members of the Economic Commission for Africa were also represented by high-ranking government officials. There were 9 member-states of the United Nations (not members of the E.C.A.), United Nations bodies and agencies and non-governmental organisations.
3. The conference was opened by His Excellency Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, President of the Republic of Zambia. He said that the quest for equality of the sexes had definite similarities with the fight for racial equality being waged in Southern Africa. Among issues that the conference should address itself, the President mentioned the need for the complete removal of the evils of oppression, racial discrimination and apartheid from the African continent and welcomed the fact that the conference would address itself to the issue of apartheid and its effects on women in particular. In that regard he felt that the conference should express genuine support for the struggle through the formulation of practical courses of action which would contribute to a lasting solution.



4. During deliberations it was noted that in all three fields that the second half of the Decade for Women had to concentrate upon viz "Employment, Health and education" various objective problems had been met with by women in the Africa Region. With regard to employment, despite vital roles that the women play especially in the rural areas, they lack training, access to credit and improved technology. In education fewer than half of the girls of school-going age were in school; the enrolment of girls was highest at the primary level, and fell rapidly with ascent of the education ladder. Girls and women still enrolled in the traditionally "feminine" fields. In health, the need of women are great. Africa had the world's highest death rates for women and children.
5. In policy formulation, planning and monitoring, most governments had initiated programmes to improve the situation of women. Nearly all the countries of the region had established some kind of machinery to deal with women's situation. Yet it was known that few women were represented at high levels of planning and policy making, or in executive or managerial positions.
6. The conclusions on this item of the agenda were that there was no direct correlation between the economic contribution of women and their status in society, that women are generally confined to traditional sectors of the economy with very little access to wage employment, that illiteracy and dropping out from school were major problems facing women in the region, that health education had not improved much since 1975 and that despite changes in legislative and constitutional provisions to the contrary women had not achieved social equality.



7. A special item on the agenda relating to Apartheid and the status of Women in Southern Africa was discussed. The conference stressed that strategies and concrete suggestions that could be implemented both regionally and internationally to bring about permanent change in the conditions of women in Southern Africa are necessary.
8. On the basis of the unanimous agreement that apartheid is an evil that could have long been destroyed if it were not for the assistance the South African regime gets from some Western countries, the conference adopted a resolution presented by the liberation movements calling for the implementation of the United Nations resolutions for a complete boycott of South African goods, economic sanctions and a comprehensive embargo.
9. In her statement to the conference, the Secretary-General of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women said that the deliberations on the situation of women in Southern Africa would be <sup>an</sup> essential input for the World Conference agenda item on apartheid.
10. The Pan-African Women's Organisation (P.A.W.O.) representative underlined the organisations' support for the liberation movements in Southern Africa, women and children in the front-line states and in the Sahel affected by natural and man-made disasters. She further urged the E.C.A. to work in collaboration with P.A.W.O.

Report by: Mavis Thwala.  
Head. Delegation.