

## INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

SEVENTH AFRICAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE  
(Harare, 29 November-7 December 1988)

## PROVISIONAL RECORD

## FOURTH SITTING

Wednesday, 30 November 1988, 11.30 a.m.

President: Mr. NkomoFIRST REPORT OF THE SELECTION COMMITTEE:  
SUBMISSION AND ADOPTION

The PRESIDENT - The next item of business is the first report of the Selection Committee. May I invite its Chairman, Mr. Ndoye, Government delegate, Senegal, to come to the rostrum and submit the report.

Interpretation from French: Mr. NDOYE (Government delegate, Senegal; Chairman of the Selection Committee) - I have the honour to submit to the Conference the first report of the Selection Committee. During its first meeting held on Tuesday, 29 November 1988, the Committee elected me as its Chairman. The two Vice-Chairmen are Mr. Rey, the Employers' delegate from Mauritius, and Mr. Mutandare, the Workers' delegate from Zimbabwe.

The Committee decided to recommend to the Conference the establishment of two committees to deal with the technical items on our agenda, namely the Committee on Rural and Urban Training and the Committee on Co-operatives.

In conformity with article 10 of the Rules concerning the Powers, Functions and Procedure of Regional Conferences convened by the International Labour Organisation, the Committee decided to recommend to the Conference the establishment of a Credentials Committee composed of: Mr. Yoma Golom, Government delegate, Chad; Mr. Okogwu, Employers' delegate, Nigeria; and Mr. Fonda Sima, Workers' delegate, Cameroon.

The Committee recommends to the Conference to start the discussion of Part I of the Report of the Director-General at the morning session of the Plenary on Wednesday, 30 November, i.e. today. The Committee also recommends to the Conference that the delegates who wish to speak on the Report of the Director-General should inform the Clerk of the Conference as soon as possible, so that the Speakers' List might be closed on Thursday, 1 December by 12 noon.



The Committee also recommends that, in accordance with past practice at previous regional conferences, the resolutions submitted in accordance with article 13 of the Rules should be examined by the Selection Committee. This Committee has decided to set up a working group, composed of four members of each group, to this effect.

This is the first report of our Committee that I would like to recommend for adoption.

The PRESIDENT - I thank the Chairman of the Selection Committee for that report. Are there any objections? If there are no objections, the report is adopted.

(The report is adopted.)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL:  
DISCUSSION

The PRESIDENT - I shall now give the floor to Mr. Blanchard, Secretary-General of the Conference, to present his Report.

Interpretation from French: The SECRETARY-GENERAL - His Excellency, Mr. Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, has honoured the Seventh African Regional Conference by his presence. We could not have hoped for a better start for our discussion of the report which I have the honour of addressing to you and which I am submitting for your consideration today. I have attempted in my report to comply with the recommendations of the African Advisory Committee which was convened in Yaoundé in January 1987. You might remember that the Committee had asked me to deal with two important questions for the African people, the first regarding apartheid, and the second regarding the condition of women in Africa. The persistent practice of apartheid in South Africa is an ever-increasing source of concern for the international community. This, in fact, was the very essence of the remarks just made by President Mugabe. You will, of course, discuss these matters in detail, continuing the generally passionate discussions that take place during the International Labour Conference, which is held by many to be a sort of world parliament of labour. Drawing on the contributions of its 150 member States, the Conference endeavours year after year to bring more pressure to bear on the racist apartheid regime. Here in Harare the voice of Africa will be heard once again, specifically on the painful problems of Black African workers in South Africa, on the measures of repression and coercion to which they are subjected and on the denial of the right of trade unions to play their essential role in ensuring the application of the principles espoused by the ILO, which forbid all forms of discrimination based on race, colour, sex, religion or political opinions. We are all aware of the symbolic character of this meeting. This is the seventh of its kind in a series of regional conferences, and the first to be held in a country which, along with its neighbours, feels the pain of the inhuman and intolerable policy of apartheid. Let us hope that the appeal launched by Africa will be heard beyond the frontiers of our warm host country. Do we not have grounds for hope in the light of the recent signature of the accords which, if implemented, will lead to the independence of Namibia? Need I remind you that the International Labour Conference last June welcomed the President of SWAPO - and heard his moving plea for the independence of the people of Namibia?



Although our struggle against apartheid must be constant, govern our behaviour, and reinforce our determination, it is not the only item on the agenda of this Conference. There are many other areas of concern, in respect of which the Office has endeavoured to give you all the latest information; it has proposed as subjects for discussion rural and urban training, the development of the co-operative movement in Africa, and the condition of the African woman, covered in the second part of my report to the Conference. These reports raise disquieting questions concerning the situation of the world of labour in Africa. Since the last regional conference was held in 1983, many African countries, far from making some progress, have on the contrary experienced setbacks, owing in some cases to natural disasters, and in others, if not all, to the effects of an ongoing crisis which undermines the efforts of these countries to re-establish their fundamental economic balance. There is still the risk of distortion and imbalance. Unfortunately, many factors compound this risk in the African continent, perhaps more so than elsewhere. The most serious of these factors concerns the rate of growth of the population, which is still too high.

This growth in population has a strong impact on the labour market; increasing numbers of young Africans, many of whom are remarkably well-educated, are unable to find work once they finish their training. This problem, if it remains unsolved, may lead to dramatic consequences. The Office has tried to provide the basis for a suitable response in its report on rural and urban training. We have advocated the promotion of self-employment and small enterprises and the creation of jobs in rural areas and in the urban informal sector. We have also advocated in-service training, the decentralisation of training efforts, so that these might reach out to the young, and not the other way around. We have advocated recourse to instructors who are not only professional trainers, but practitioners in their own right. Some may consider these suggestions daring or unorthodox, or think the same of our suggestions for co-operatives, whose development could reinforce the social fabric in Africa. At any rate, if there are limits to our daring, the tripartite structure of our Organisation does invite us to look for new approaches to problems that escape conventional analysis and solutions. I think the same applies to the exchange of views that will take place in this Conference on the working conditions of African women and on the condition of African women in general. As noted by the President of the Governing Body, as well as the members of the Governing Body delegation in their speeches yesterday, African women should play a role commensurate with the qualities of courage, perseverance and ingenuity which they exhibit day after day. Of course, we need to recognise these qualities, and safeguard their equality, as recommended in international standards which, although usually unanimously adopted at the International Labour Conference, are often neglected in their application.

Beyond the technical questions which will be dealt with in this Conference and which are very important for the development and progress of your countries, there is the world-wide economic situation and its impact on the African continent. In this connection, I would like to draw your attention to the importance of the work carried out by our Organisation as regards the choice of macro- and micro-economic policies in the structural adjustment measures which each of your countries have had to undertake owing to the economic crisis and the debt burden. Needless to say, that our Organisation is not opposed to adjustment policies: they are unavoidable, in your countries as well as in industrialised countries, some of which should implement them swiftly before urging developing countries to do the same. But this being said, our Organisation has been more sensitive than others to the social implications of these policies. In fact, we have noticed time and time again that these measures lead to a deterioration in the conditions of life of the most vulnerable and underprivileged categories of population. It is to ward off this danger that a high-level meeting on employment and structural adjustment was held in Geneva a year ago, under the auspices of the ILO. The Governing Body last week discussed in detail the follow-up to be given to this meeting and invited me to continue our action, and even to strengthen it further. I will try my best to



reinforce our action, and specifically to respond to the requests for assistance of countries which seek to develop measures that will restore the economic balance while improving the lot of the poorest categories of the population.

The plan of action which the Office is to develop will respond to the will repeatedly expressed by the Conference and the Governing Body to give priority to the current problems of African countries, especially at this critical juncture, in the fields of labour, employment, development of human resources and industrial relations. As the President of the Governing Body, Mr. Mensah, told us, the draconian economy measures which were agreed upon last week by the Governing Body do not mean, and I repeat, do not mean that the resources earmarked for technical co-operation activities in Africa will be reduced. This means that we will maintain the same rhythm, if not accelerate that rhythm. I would like to remind you that for 1988 alone, more than \$62 million were allocated for a great many practical projects and activities in your countries; and this sum represents 53 per cent of all resources that the Organisation has earmarked for technical co-operation activities. Therefore, Africa has the lion's share.

As you can see, the ILO is greatly concerned by the problems of your large continent. It mobilises the best of its staff at headquarters, in your region and in the field. These concerns fire the approach of our Governing Body and will inspire your Conference today and in the week to come; and I hope that this Conference will be a landmark on the road of our struggle against discrimination and apartheid and for the defence of human rights, social justice through equitable economic progress and finally for a just sharing between the rich nations in the North and the poor nations in the South. This lofty ideal justifies the presence of the various delegations who have taken up the cause and who are meeting today in Harare.

Allow me to end on a personal note and to set aside the notes I have used for this speech. Unfortunately, I shall be unable to attend all the deliberations of the Conference until it ends on 7 December. At the end of this week, I am obliged to go back to Geneva because I have many vital obligations next week, not least the need - given the time of year - to finalise the Programme and Budget proposals for the next 1990-91 biennium.

I would like to add that the Conference will understand how saddened I am by the loss of my colleague, friend and brother, Elimane Kane, who was supposed to be with us here - as the President mentioned yesterday - at this Seventh African Regional Conference, to which he was so looking forward. We have suffered a great loss. It is very hard for me to bear, even more so since another Deputy Director-General is leaving the Office; indeed, I believe it is today that Mr. Bolin is retiring.

You can therefore understand that I have many obligations in Geneva. I am not saying this merely to ask for your indulgence but to try and explain the reasons for which I shall, unfortunately, be unable to participate in the work of this Conference until the end.

Having said that, I am sorry to leave, but I am sure that the Secretariat of this Conference is fully competent; its team members are highly efficient and experienced, be they from Geneva or from Africa. They are led by Mr. Faisal Abdel-Rahman who, as you know, is the Assistant Director-General in charge of the programme for Africa.

Therefore, I am fully confident that my team will be able to respond to the various needs of this Conference until its end.

Allow me to end by saying that I hope that the deliberations of the Conference will be, as always, open, impassioned and frank and that they will have a favourable outcome commensurate with your ambitions, of which I spoke earlier.



The PRESIDENT - I wish to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Francis Blanchard, for his introductory remarks to the Director-General's Report and I open this debate to the participants.

Mr. UMAR (Minister of Labour, Employment and Productivity, Nigeria) - Mr. President, I rise on behalf of myself and of the delegation of Nigeria to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of this Conference. I have no doubt that under your guidance this session will make a valuable contribution to the objectives, goals and aspirations of the International Labour Organisation. I also congratulate Mr. Blanchard and his entire staff for the lucid and detailed Report that he has given us. I am sure that the Report of the Director-General, which deals with recent developments in labour and social matters in South Africa and Namibia, is quite appropriate for this Conference. The policies and practices of apartheid as applied in South Africa continue to be a matter of major concern not only to the ILO but to all those who believe in human rights and equal opportunity for all. The ILO must be commended for its efforts and activities to combat apartheid. In this respect, I recall the Declaration concerning Action against Apartheid in South Africa and Namibia updated during the 75th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 1988. There is also the Programme of Action against Apartheid, which was drawn up along the lines recommended by the Tripartite Conference on Action against Apartheid that met in this city in May this year. The ILO continues to provide invaluable information and useful data on the continued operation and nefarious effects and consequences of the apartheid system. Information on action against apartheid taken by governments, employers' and workers' organisations of member States of the ILO as well as by international, government and non-governmental bodies is just part of the information that the ILO provides on a permanent basis to nations and organisations genuinely interested in putting an end to the obnoxious system of apartheid in South Africa. We also appreciate the value, importance and impact of the programme of activities of the ILO for South Africa and Namibia in the field of technical co-operation. The programmes include assistance in the form of three seminars in the field of labour standards, workers' education, equality of opportunity and treatment. Members of the national liberation movements and South African Black trade unionists have been given fellowships in management training and administration and support to visit ILO headquarters. A feasibility study has also been carried out on possible ILO action in respect of child labour in South Africa and assistance has been rendered by other bodies and governments through the ILO.

These efforts of the ILO notwithstanding, the racist Government of South Africa continues to protect its own position from political opponents, concentrating even more than previously on the retention of power by the minority White population. It has demonstrated that it is prepared to use all its powers to crush internal Black opposition and to harass and eliminate opponents abroad. Recently, the apartheid regime even boasted that it has developed the capability to produce nuclear weapons. That certainly is an attempt to strike fear into the front-line States and many other African States. I trust that none of them will succumb to this blackmail.

The Report of the Director-General highlights the major events in South Africa since June 1986, when the state of emergency was introduced by the obnoxious apartheid regime. Since then over 30,000 people, including many children, have been arrested, beaten and tortured. Censorship has been tightened and the military has gained increasing influence over foreign and domestic policy. Open aggression and other coercive acts of destabilisation of neighbouring States have continued and are on the increase.



In February 1988 the Government took measures to prohibit specific activities by any organisation or individual, immediately restricted 17 anti-apartheid organisations and prohibited specific political actions by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). In addition, a number of Black leaders were banned. However, in spite of the ruthless use of state power, worsening poverty, growing unemployment, stagnating Black economic advancement and growing trade union repression, Black opposition has continued through rent boycotts, stay-aways and active protest through trade unions. We salute them for these courageous acts and we urge them not only to sustain but to intensify them.

At the international level limited sanctions have come into effect, but opponents of sanctions still maintain that contact and dialogue with the Government of South Africa, together with Black economic advancement, is the key to ending apartheid. However, the harsh intolerance of any opposition, the determination to maintain White power through the divide-and-rule tactics of the apartheid regime and the failure to permit any significant degree of Black advancement over the last 30 years of economic progress undermine those arguments.

The condition of the Black workers in South Africa became worse after the Whites-only election to the House of Assembly in May 1987. Black workers are subjected to inhuman labour practices. The racist regime has on many occasions employed the use of violence in quelling peaceful industrial action by defenceless Black workers. Working conditions for Black workers have not seen any significant improvement; they still earn low wages and are denied freedom of association.

I wish to reiterate here Nigeria's continued and total commitment to the freedom of Blacks in South Africa and its willingness to subscribe to any measure that is designed to put an end to the oppressive and criminal system that degrades the Black race. We support any move that will completely isolate the racist regime within the international community because the policy of apartheid is not only inhuman but a crime against humanity. Nigeria will continue to support the imposition of economic and mandatory sanctions against South Africa as a way of bringing about the much needed change in the racist enclave.

In Namibia, instead of allowing the implementation of United Nations resolution 435, South Africa imposed a "transitional government". That imposed administration has not improved labour and social conditions since its inception two years ago. There is abundant evidence of poverty, high unemployment, inadequate Black education, the absence of an industrial relations system, an economy exploited by external interests and brutal repression by occupying South African forces.

South Africa should stop treating Namibia as a "fifth province" of Pretoria. South African companies should desist from dominating all economic sectors of Namibia. Mr. Botha should remove the army of occupation from Namibia. Foreign economic control and exploitation should cease.

Before I end this intervention, I wish to comment on the issue of women's work in Africa which needs the urgent attention of our various governments. The Director-General rightly noted that women's work in Africa needs to be viewed within the wider context of the current socio-economic conditions prevailing in the continent. Our problems are multifarious, ranging from massive ecological degradation and alarming levels of food scarcities related to stagnation of low growth rates of the agricultural sector to a general decline in the level of prosperity.

In order to solve the above problems, we must harness fully our human resources. We in Nigeria have long recognised and accepted the role of women in the development of our society. In politics, women have emerged as ministers in government and as senators and parliamentarians in the legislative houses. In the field of education women have risen to the enviable position of vice-chancellor of some of



our universities; in the private sector they now occupy the position of chief executive in some of our major banks and companies. In the civil service many are now directors-general in ministries, as well as principal representatives of Nigeria abroad.

The Nigerian Government, conscious of the relative economic disadvantage of women, particularly in rural areas, recently launched the "Better Life for Rural Women Programme" whose objectives are: the stimulation and encouragement of women towards improving their standard of living; the achievement of a more fulfilling life for women and their families; and emphasis on self-development, particularly in the areas of education, small-scale business, agriculture and recreation.

Nigeria is also committed to the provision of "Health for All by the Year 2000". Consequently, the Government has launched a nation-wide campaign of immunisation of children. Under this programme women are advised to get their children vaccinated against various diseases such as polio, smallpox and whooping cough. In addition, family planning units are being set up in our hospitals, maternity centres and clinics. The aim of the exercise is to create an awareness among women of the advantages of limiting the number of children to four.

We also take measures to ensure rural women's participation in collective activities which include social clubs such as the National Council of Women's Societies, Young Women's Christian Association, Mass Mobilisation for Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) and co-operative societies. These various organisations are instruments of mobilisation to harness the resources of women and fight for their rights when trampled upon.

As I am addressing this august gathering, a nation-wide survey on women in co-operatives is also under way in Nigeria. The purpose of the survey is to determine the extent of the involvement of women in the co-operative movement in Nigeria and to help the Government of Nigeria to formulate a vigorous policy for the promotion of co-operatives among women throughout the country with a view to improving their lot.

Fifty years after the introduction of co-operatives in my country, considerable progress has been made in various facets of the co-operative movement. There are over 25,000 co-operative societies with a membership of well over 2 million people. The most popular types are thrift and credit societies and agricultural co-operatives of various kinds. Others are craft and industrial co-operatives, fishery co-operatives and housing co-operatives. The Nigerian Labour Congress and the industrial unions now have their own societies. A recent development in the co-operative sector is the promotion of co-operatives in the formal sector among such trades as tailoring, motor mechanics, welding and furniture making. The programme, which began in 1987, is being implemented within the framework of the National Directorate of Employment whose chief objective is employment generation. To date, over 718 societies with a membership of over 33,000 have been formed throughout the country.

The policy of the federal military Government and the state governments in Nigeria is to work hand in hand with the co-operative movement and give it as much financial and administrative support as possible without interfering in the running of the societies at their various levels. It is gratifying to note that this policy is paying off.

It may not be out of place to mention here the bold efforts being made by the present administration in Nigeria to deal with the menacing problem of unemployment. In a bold attempt to tackle this problem the federal military Government has created a National Directorate of Employment under my Ministry. In brief, the Directorate operates through four core programmes: the youth employment and vocational skills development programme; the small-scale industries and graduate employment programme; the agricultural programme; and the special public works



programme. These programmes have created jobs for over 50,000 young men and women in the first two years since their inception. Details about these programmes will be circulated by the secretariat.

Mr. ARAP MIBEI (Assistant Minister for Labour, Kenya) - Mr. President, on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your most deserving election to guide the deliberations of the Seventh African Regional Conference of the ILO. With your most distinguished experience and shining qualities of leadership, my delegation has confidence that you will successfully guide the deliberations of this session of the Conference.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to express my delegation's deep appreciation and thanks to the Government and people of Zimbabwe for their most generous hospitality and the excellent facilities which have been placed at our disposal since our arrival in this beautiful city of Harare.

Allow me once again to take this opportunity to thank the Director-General of the ILO for his most detailed, clear and excellent reports for this African Regional Conference. The Director-General's Reports are given in three separate volumes. In Report I the Director-General has dwelt on two very important issues which continue to preoccupy the African peoples and which call for urgent attention, namely the problem of apartheid in South Africa and the continued illegal occupation of Namibia and the plight of women in Africa. Report II contains a very comprehensive and detailed account of the current state of rural and urban training in Africa. Report III gives a very detailed review of co-operative development in the African region, that is, its scope, impact and prospects.

The above three Reports will form an important basis for discussion at this Conference.

The Seventh African Regional Conference is being held at a time when the continent of Africa is faced with a serious socio-economic crisis, aspects of which include massive ecological degradation, alarming levels of food scarcity which is related to stagnation or low growth rates of the agricultural sector, a general increase of levels of poverty, the problem of underemployment and unemployment, ignorance, disease, etc.

With the above in mind, my delegation notes that the greatest concern of the continent of Africa today is twofold. First, to eliminate the abhorrent system of apartheid in South Africa and end that regime's illegal occupation of Namibia; and second, to attain rapid economic recovery and accelerate Africa's economic growth as the only way by which Africa can uplift her people's standard of living and quality of life.

In his Report to the Conference, the Director-General of the ILO has given a very detailed and comprehensive account of the current political situation in both South Africa and Namibia, including the recent developments in labour and social matters there. Extensive information has also been provided on the continued deterioration of the standard of living of the majority under the apartheid system and the growing racial polarisation following the Whites-only election held in May 1987. In the case of Namibia, my delegation is equally appalled to note that after two years of the so-called "transitional government" as imposed by South Africa, the general labour and social conditions there have remained completely unchanged and truly hopeless. Conditions have continued to be characterised by utter poverty, high unemployment, inadequate Black education, the absence of an industrial relations system, an ethnically based and inefficient administration, an economy exploited by outside interests and repression by occupying South African forces. The so-called "transitional government" has failed to work for the independence of Namibia under United Nations resolution 435. My Government has followed with keen interest the recent negotiations aimed at the implementation of resolution 435, and I hereby reiterate Kenya's full support for SWAPO, the authentic and legitimate representative of the Namibian people.



It is in the light of the above that my delegation notes with appreciation the ILO's total commitment to the promotion and maintenance of human rights and freedom of association generally. At this juncture, I would like to state clearly that my delegation is appalled to note that in South Africa and Namibia the White minority regimes continue to pursue the inhuman policy of apartheid, whereby millions of innocent Black people are denied their fundamental human rights simply because they are not White. This situation is totally unacceptable and Kenya urges the international community to move in concert and greater vigour to halt this open abuse of humanity. My delegation strongly condemns this most inhuman and evil system of government and we shall continue to appeal wholeheartedly to all peace-loving peoples of the world to unite against apartheid and to rid the world of this most evil system.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the ILO's activities to assist the front-line States, the liberation movements and the Black trade unionists in South Africa. My delegation is indeed delighted to note that the ILO over the years has been able to render substantial financial support to the various anti-apartheid activities. It is proper that such efforts be intensified with greater determination.

My delegation has noted with appreciation that the Seventh African Regional Conference is scheduled to hold an in-depth discussion of a very important technical item entitled "Rural and urban training in Africa". The fact that this item has been placed on the Conference agenda is a clear indication of the importance that the ILO continues to attach to training for national development. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate again the ILO's Director-General for his very detailed and comprehensive report on rural and urban training in Africa. We fully agree with the Director-General's view that training, whether for rural development, self-employment or for work in the informal sector, must be based on clear objectives and needs and be aimed at well-defined target groups in order to correspond better to labour market realities. Again, since wage employment in Africa generally was not expected to expand on a scale or at the rate required to absorb more than a small percentage of entrants onto the labour market, training should to a larger extent be directed at self-employment, particularly in the rural areas and the informal sector.

My delegation fully realises that the ultimate solution to our problem of unemployment and underemployment for our people lies in the actual success of our Government's long-term development strategies.

In my country's Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1986 on economic management for renewed growth, a target average GDP growth rate of 5.6 per cent a year is established for 1984 to 2000. Such rapid growth will only be possible through the efforts of a well-organised and trained labour force.

We wish to point out that in Kenya under Presidential Circular No. 1 of March 1988 a new Ministry of Technical Training and Applied Technology was created and charged with the following functions: technical training policy, technical education, handling all training issues relating to the various institutes of technology, national polytechnics, technical vocational training, jua kali (i.e. very small-scale industries), development training programmes and vocational training under the Directorate of Industrial Training, etc. The creation of such a fully fledged Ministry responsible for training is a clear indication of the importance which the Kenyan Government continues to attach to training generally.



In Kenya today education in terms both of numbers and of content has undergone a fundamental transformation since the attainment of our independence in 1963. Since then education has continued to receive recognition as a cornerstone of the nation's socio-economic transformation. One of the most important and far-reaching education policy changes that has taken place since independence is the introduction in 1985 of the 8-4-4 education system (that is, eight years of primary education, four years of secondary education and four years of university education), which has completely shifted the emphasis of Kenya's educational curricula at various levels from a purely academic to a practical and technical emphasis in terms of content. The 8-4-4 educational system has ushered in the era of "education for self-reliance" and has resulted in a major re-examination of priorities and goals in education.

In July 1983 Kenya adopted what is now referred to as the district focus strategy for rural development. Under the strategy each district in Kenya, through its district development committee, is responsible for rural development planning and co-ordination, project implementation, management of development resources and overseeing of the local procurement of goods and services. The various districts have now become the centres of rural development and the training of all officers involved up to the grass-roots level which will help in the successful operation of the district focus development strategy. The aim of this strategy is to involve Kenyan nationals at all levels in shaping their welfare.

Regarding the current situation of women in Africa, my delegation believes that women's work in Africa needs to be viewed within the wider context of the socio-economic conditions currently prevailing within the region. The Africa of today is keenly aware of the urgent need to mobilise all its available domestic resources, including human resources, for the achievement of the continent's objectives.

The third item on the agenda of this year's Conference is of special interest to my country's delegation, namely co-operatives, on which the Director-General has provided a very comprehensive and clear report entitled "A review of co-operative development in the African region: scope, impact and prospects".

In Kenya the co-operative movement has enjoyed very steady growth since the attainment of our independence in 1963. Registration has grown from a mere 665 societies in 1963 to a total of 5,227 as of 30 June 1988. These societies and unions have consistently increased every year, reflecting our Government's commitment to the policy of increased participation and mobilisation of rural communities in co-operative activities.

It should be noted that the 5,227 societies and unions (with a total membership of nearly 2 million co-operators) continue to render services in the following major economic activities: the production, marketing and processing of agricultural products such as coffee, dairy products, pyrethrum, cotton and sugar-cane, the supply of farm inputs, housing development, building and construction, fisheries development, savings and credit, banking facilities, etc. In Kenya today co-operatives have excelled in the mobilisation of savings for both rural and urban development through their members. The most important fact to note here is the establishment of the producer-based savings and credit co-operative societies and the Co-operative Bank of Kenya Ltd., which offer their members savings and credit facilities. The Co-operative Bank of Kenya acts as the central bank of the Kenyan co-operative movement.

Another phenomenon that has occurred in the co-operative movement is the establishment of co-operative insurance services, which cover all insurance matters of the co-operative societies.



As a matter of policy, the Kenyan Government recognises the important role that co-operatives continue to play in fostering development within the overall national development objectives, especially in the rural areas where the majority of co-operators continue to live.

The co-operative movement in Kenya currently contributes close to 50 per cent of the gross national product. It is also estimated that one out of every two Kenyans directly or indirectly derives his livelihood from the co-operatives. The movement is currently expanding to embrace the informal sector, commonly known as "jua kali" co-operatives (or small-scale, open-air industries).

It is in the light of the current worsening problems associated with the food crisis, urbanisation, rising national indebtedness and growing unemployment in Africa that it is becoming increasingly important to be clear about what co-operatives can and cannot achieve and the specific context in which they can best operate.

My delegation entirely agrees with the Director-General of the ILO when he says in his Report that "with growing demands on, and expectations of, co-operatives, it might be an appropriate time to reassess their potential".

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate Kenya's position that it is only through a very clear understanding of the problems facing us that we can find workable solutions. In Kenya, our Government under the wise, seasoned and most able leadership of our President, His Excellency Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi, through his philosophy of love, peace and unity (called "nyayo"), has continued to assess, modify and make better our approach to the rapid transformation of our people into better producers. A healthy democratic system of government and security for all and sound economic policies have been the main pillars of our success. Indeed, it was only last month that the country celebrated the tenth anniversary of the nyayo era, which His Excellency the President of Zimbabwe attended.

It is an era we look back upon with a lot of pride based on major national achievements. Next month our nation will be celebrating the 25th year of its independence and once again all Kenyans agree with one voice that it has been a glorious 25 years. It is for this reason that Kenya once again calls upon the world community to bring pressure to bear on the apartheid regime in South Africa so that our brothers and sisters can have the right to share their destiny unfettered by apartheid.

My delegation also calls upon the South African minority regime to withdraw immediately and unconditionally from Namibia so that the people of that country can enjoy freedom with independence. My country also calls upon the South African minority regime to cease forthwith its destabilisation activities and acts of aggression against the front-line States.

We call upon the South African regime to conduct its relations with its neighbours in a sane and responsible manner, guided by the internationally respected principle of good neighbourliness. The regime is warned that its unacceptable policy of apartheid and its attempts to dislocate the security of its neighbours will only serve to increase the resolve of the people affected to bring apartheid to an end by whatever means. Kenya will continue to support all efforts aimed at the speedy dismantling of apartheid, including total mandatory economic sanctions.

Finally, I wish to extend to you all my country's greetings and best wishes in our deliberations. And I may add that I was very much moved by the wise thoughts which His Excellency the President of Zimbabwe offered us this morning. I am sure that they will guide us during our deliberations.



Interpretation from French: Mr. RUPHIN (Government delegate, Madagascar) - The delegation of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar, which I have the privilege of heading at this Conference, would like to associate itself with all those who warmly congratulated Mr. Nkomo, the Minister of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare of Zimbabwe, on his unanimous election as President of this Seventh African Regional Conference. We hope, Mr. President, that under your enlightened guidance we shall be able to achieve results commensurate with the hopes of our continent. We should also like to thank the Republic of Zimbabwe for the welcome and hospitality afforded us. Despite the problems of which we are all aware, and despite its position as a front-line State, Zimbabwe is once again proving its commitment to - and its faith in - the future of the whole of Africa.

We should also like to extend our thanks to Mr. Blanchard, the Director-General of the ILO, for the excellent Report on which our discussions will be based. Part I of Report I discusses objectively and without complacency the problems plaguing Africa, namely labour and social problems in South Africa and Namibia, while Part II is a study on the work of African women. Reports II and III respectively discuss rural and urban training and co-operatives.

All three reports are remarkable for the rigour of their analysis and for the wealth of information they contain, and will definitely be very helpful in our attempts to improve the welfare of the peoples of Africa.

Although the tripartite negotiations on Namibia hold out hopes for a peaceful solution of this issue - a solution which can be none other than the independence of that territory - we must none the less keep an eye on what is happening at the gates of our host country, namely in South Africa, where the evil system of apartheid still holds sway. There seems to be no possible solution, and the Black majority is still subjected to the arrogance of the White regime, which has made an institution out of apartheid - an institution which embodies the denial of human rights in the most virulent form and negates the fundamental principles of modern democracy. The struggle of the Black inhabitants of South Africa, of which Nelson Mandela remains the living symbol, is the struggle of us all, whether we are Africans or not. Deaf to the appeals of history, the South African leaders continue to flout the international community with the connivance of certain countries which, out of interest, selfishness or even disguised admiration, refuse to co-operate in order to abolish apartheid. Only concerted action will enable South Africa and its people to be freed of the infamous tyranny of the White minority.

The South African workers, strengthened by the knowledge that the cause of the Black people is just, are spearheading this struggle for national liberation. A special tribute should be paid to their sense of organisation, their capacity for mobilisation and their respect for discipline. I shall mention only two trade unions among many others: the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU). The struggle of the Black trade unionists for the respect and equality of all South African workers is only one of the aspects of the fight against apartheid. The worsening of social unrest, the iniquitous wage policy and the barbarity with which the racist authorities are attempting to beat down the Black workers prompt us to concentrate on the struggle against apartheid in order to guarantee the future of the Black majority.

It must be admitted that codes of conduct and sanctions against South Africa have had little effect. According to the Government of the United States, reporting under the Anti-Apartheid Act, 23 of the 25 countries that have imposed



sanctions maintain "significant" diplomatic and economic relations with Pretoria. In the meantime South Africa blithely continues to evade sanctions, the more so as certain countries maintain that such sanctions would be more harmful to the Black population than to the system itself. What contradictions, what shilly-shallying, what veiled complicity we see with regard to Pretoria, perhaps in the name of a solidarity that cannot be openly affirmed!

But let us leave this indictment for the time being, since history never ceases to teach us that a highly motivated people proud of its cause can never be crushed by force of arms.

As we approach the 21st century the economic prospects of Africa are becoming increasingly gloomy, so much so that all international and non-governmental organisations have felt it their duty to rush to the bedside of an Africa suffering from malnutrition, desertification and floods, and wasting away under a debt which is the result of its anaemic economy. Against its wishes, Africa has become a test-tube where theoreticians and economists are conducting experiments that are expected to lead to genuine growth. In many cases it has been necessary to resort to draconian stabilisation and structural adjustment programmes in order to restore overall balance within a hostile world environment which hardly favours the genuine development of Third World countries. This hostility is aggravated by high rates of interest, the instability of the dollar, the chronic budgetary deficit of the United States and the drop in the prices of raw materials of which Africa is the first victim. It may be said that this reaction is merely one of bitterness, that it is only skin-deep, but the reality is there for all to see: the poor are still getting poorer despite a policy of support negotiated with international financial institutions.

In our opinion the items on the agenda of this Conference coincide with the objectives of economic revival and rational utilisation of the resources at our disposal: they are an encouragement to South-South co-operation as a stimulus to North-South co-operation.

As for women's work in Africa, it goes without saying that they must participate in development, since the resolution on equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women workers was adopted in 1985 and the ILO is already engaged in action for the promotion of women by means of technical assistance in various sectors. Like men, women need training for any activity. However, as we all know, the family structure and the weight of tradition in Africa are such that a different approach to the problem is required than in other continents. Any solution chosen must not lead to the disintegration of the family unit on which the entire social structure rests, since the concept of modernity will then risk causing an upheaval which will be counterproductive.

This leads me to the question of rural and urban training, a crucial question which calls upon skills of everyone. Any kind of vocational training should be considered in terms of needs, i.e. the immediate or medium-term needs of the various sectors of a country's economic activity. Accordingly, vocational training must be borne by the economic momentum of a country or by the country's capacity to create the jobs necessary to support its growth. Thus no training should be envisaged unless there are serious prospects of employment, except where retraining is concerned. As I already mentioned at the beginning of my speech, a vocational training policy should be able to assist governments in attaining the objectives they have set themselves, whether under structural adjustment policies worked out with international financial institutions or as part of national development plans. In the case of Madagascar all strategies converge on



the policy of food self-sufficiency by 1990. The division of labour between the State and the economic partners will determine the role of each, even if the attention of all is focused on agriculture.

Thus, vocational training will have an impact on rural areas, where the real struggle for food self-sufficiency takes place. Whether one chooses intensive agricultural mechanisation or assistance to landowners, the problem, in my opinion, remains the same. There may be no other target than rural families, rural workers and workers who voluntarily leave the city and move to the country. Perhaps it would be easier to consider a suitable agricultural training programme, inasmuch as agricultural work, like any other occupation, requires occupational skills, which are the basis for productivity and profit regardless of the setting (smallholding, co-operative, or corporation). There is, therefore, a potential labour market in rural areas; however, there is a lack of precise information and statistics on the basis of which to evaluate real needs. Moreover, there is still some bias as to the intellectual ability of rural populations to benefit from training, in any form.

The transplant of foreign models is never a panacea. At most, these models should be seen as a source of inspiration.

As regards the cities, labour and employment specialists now talk of two sectors, the modern sector and the informal sector, which can be characterised as follows. The modern sector leads to wage employment, while the informal sector leads to self-employment. The modern sector is the only alternative for young people in search of a stable first employment, while the informal sector represents a means for survival.

A reappraisal and readaptation of the informal sector would open the way to a less pejorative approach to a system wrongly considered as a wastebin for those who have dropped out of the classical educational system, and who have no choice but to accept manual labour.

However, the informal sector can also be seen as the training ground for the future managers of small- and medium-sized enterprises and small- and medium-sized industries and, why not, of micro-entrepreneurs, as they are described in Report II. Nevertheless, the complexity of training arises from the development of the informal sector, whether in new products and services, or as regards the ability of workers to adapt to changes in the market. The formulation of an employment policy should therefore provide for this ongoing flexibility, owing to the diversity of the occupations involved (mechanics, tyre repair men, tailors and others still). This obviously raises the question of the costs of such a choice (in terms of personnel, finances and materials), even if the self-employment sector compensates for the modern sector's limited capacity to provide employment. What a dilemma! Many think that the establishment of co-operatives would facilitate the search for a solution to training. But this is simply one opinion among many, since co-operatives, dealt with in Report III, are still moving in fits and starts. The results of the past two decades are disappointing: many co-operatives do not have even a permanent legal status, though most governments claim to support them. To be fully responsive, our debates should view co-operatives in a world environment marked by the debt crisis, the fall of commodity prices and structural adjustment programmes, so that this economic vehicle may be recognised as such by governments, employers, workers and leaders. Once we have established such a framework for our discussion, we shall be able to undertake a succinct study on the impact of co-operatives in the struggle for food self-sufficiency and job creation, for example. However, it is important to acknowledge the right of co-operatives to profit and a fair



remuneration, in order to motivate their members and to place co-operatives on an equal footing with other enterprises, within the framework of healthy economic competition. It appears that the areas of activity of co-operatives are identical to those of competing enterprises; they should therefore have the same resources at their disposal (access to credit, tax regulations, etc.). Governments should formulate policies to stimulate each sector of activity by establishing an order of priority based on well defined criteria, such as job creation and export earnings. The State's disengagement from numerous economic sectors, which is taking place in many countries, does not prevent the State from taking the initiative in economic policy and from monitoring economic activity, without interfering in the management of co-operatives.

I hope that from this Seventh African Regional Conference in Harare will spring proposals that will adequately respond to the needs of our continent as regards the items on our agenda.

(The Conference adjourned at 12.45 p.m.)



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