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Report of the
ECWA Joint Meeting of the Representatives of Arab
Governments and Arab Regional Organizations on the
Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer
and Development of Technology

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I. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

1. The Joint Meeting of the Representatives of Arab Governments and Arab Regional Organizations on the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology was held in Amman between 16-18 September 1978.

Attendance

2. Delegates of the following Arab States attended the Meeting: Bahrain, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates.

3. Representatives of the following Arab regional organizations also participated at the Meeting: Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development; Arab Centre for the Study of Arid Zones and Dry Lands; Arab Labour Organization; Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization; Arab Organization for Standardization and Metrology; Arab Planning Institute; Arab Telecommunications Union; CASTARAB; and the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils.

4. Dr. Hussein Khalaf, Assistant Secretary-General and representative of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, was unable to attend the Meeting because he could not obtain an airplane reservation.

5. Appendix II contains a list of participants at the Meeting.

Opening Addresses

6. The Meeting was opened by Dr. Hanna Odeh, President of the National Planning Council, representing the Government of Jordan. After welcoming the participants, Dr. Odeh recalled the recommendation of the Second Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development (Amman, 12-15 September 1978) which called for the examination of the establishment of the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology and stressed the urgent need for such a Centre. He also affirmed that the establishment of this Centre and the successful performance of its tasks are functions of the provision of the appropriate work climate for its staff and the development of strong ties between it and the national

centres of the Arab countries. He concluded by stating that the fundamental question before the present Meeting was not to determine whether the proposed Centre was beneficial but what its responsibilities, functions and requirements were to be and what practical measures need to be taken to establish it and to secure the elements that would guarantee its success. (The full address is contained in Appendix III).

7. Then Dr. Khair EL-Din Haseeb, representing the Executive Secretary of ECWA delivered his address. He welcomed the participants and thanked the Jordanian Government for generously hosting the Meeting. After alluding to the progress achieved in the establishment of regional centres for the transfer and development of technology in other parts of the world, he referred to the ECWA Resolution passed at its last annual session (May 1977) which called upon the secretariat to prepare a study on the possibility of establishing an Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology to serve all the Arab countries. The secretariat was further instructed to co-ordinate its preparations with the Economic Commission for Africa, to seek the co-operation of all the organizations of the United Nations and Arab regional organizations concerned, and to associate interested Arab governments as closely as possible in the preparation of the study. He then indicated that, in accordance with the Plan of Action it had established, ECWA convened the First Interagency Meeting in Beirut between 24 and 28 October 1977, which was attended by a number of international and Arab national and regional organizations involved in science and technology. At that meeting a Working Paper on the terms of reference of the feasibility study for the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology was discussed. After securing the necessary co-ordination with the Economic Commission for Africa, two field missions visited the Arab countries, including the ones in Africa, to determine the views of their officials on the functions and services of the proposed Centre and to gather the necessary data and information. Dr. Haseeb went on to indicate that following the termination of the work of the two missions and the analysis of their findings, a draft feasibility study was prepared. This study was then discussed at the Second Interagency Meeting which was held in Beirut between 27 February and 1 March 1978 and which was attended by a number of international and Arab national and regional organizations.

The representative of the Executive Secretary then stated that as soon as the meeting ended a revised draft feasibility study was prepared for submission to the present Meeting. He stated that it was decided, following contacts with the Secretariat of the League of Arab States and with the agreement of the Secretary-General of the League, to seek the participation of the Arab Governments at the level of the ministers responsible for science and technology and the Arab regional organizations at the level of their heads of organization, whenever possible. He then affirmed that the Commission, in implementing the Work Plan of the study on the establishment of the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology, endeavoured to associate as many Arab regional organizations and international organizations as possible so as to avoid duplication and repetition of effort in this regard. He further insisted that even though the feasibility study presented before this Meeting was submitted as an official ECWA document, it represented the fruits of the efforts and contributions of all the Arab and international organizations which participated in its preparation alongside the Commission. He indicated, however, that ECWA assumed full responsibility for any fault or shortcoming that might have appeared in the study, while the full credit for positive aspects of the study, as modest as they may be, is to be shared by the Arab and international organizations that contributed to its preparation. Before concluding his address, Dr. Haseeb indicated that the recommendations to emerge from the present Meeting would be transmitted along with the amended feasibility study to the Commission's annual session, to be held in Amman between 2-6 October 1978. The annual session represented ECWA's legislative authority and was the body empowered to decide - to the extent of ECWA's involvement - what further measures would follow. He then concluded by stressing that while ECWA strongly supported the establishment of the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology in the Arab World, it had insisted from the beginning that the prime responsibility for establishing, financing and managing the proposed Centre belonged to the Arab States and the Arab regional organizations. The Commission and the other international organizations of the United Nations would contribute to the Centre whenever asked to do so and to the extent of their abilities. (The full address is contained in Appendix IV).

Election of Officers

8. Dr. Hanna Odeh, President of the National Planning Council of Jordan, was unanimously elected Chairman; Dr. Usamah Al-Khولي, Assistant Director-General of ALECSO, Vice-Chairman; and Dr. Yusef Mursi Hussein, of Egypt, Rapporteur.

Agenda

9. The Meeting adopted the following agenda:
1. Opening of the Meeting.
 2. Election of officers.
 3. Adoption of the Agenda.
 4. Organization of the work of the Meeting.
 5. Presentation of the Revised Draft Feasibility Study for the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology.
 6. Discussion of the Revised Draft Feasibility Study.
 7. Other business.
 8. Adoption of the Report of the Meeting.
 9. Closure of the Meeting.

II. PRESENTATION OF THE REVISED DRAFT FEASIBILITY STUDY (Item 5 on the Agenda)

10. After the Commission's secretariat presented a summary of the stages of preparation for the feasibility study, the Commission's consultant addressed himself to the first steps taken in its preparation. He referred to the First Preparatory Interagency Meeting which the Commission convened in October 1977, the Working Paper which was submitted thereto and its recommendations concerning the terms of reference of the feasibility study. He also referred to the conclusions reached by the meeting, and the outline it established for these terms of reference, which emphasized policy design, documentation, training and co-operation. He then referred to that meeting's decision to send two field missions to visit the Arab countries instead of the one mission that was to be sent initially, and its decisions concerning the duties of the two missions.

11. Next, the heads of the two missions which visited the Arab countries presented a summary description of the investigations that their respective missions conducted during the field trips, which lasted over six weeks and took them through the Arab States of the East and the Maghreb. The representative of UNCTAD then described the composition and structure of the mission in which he participated and reported briefly on United Nations agency participation in the two missions.

12. In the discussion of the duties and the composition of these missions it was noted that the object of the field trips was to explain the background of the idea of establishing the Centre to officials in the Arab countries, to obtain as much information as possible on the status of technology in the different Arab countries, to learn about their needs and to obtain the views of their officials concerning the functions of the Centre and the nature of the technical features that would assure its effectiveness. It was also noted that the two missions endeavoured to collect as much information as possible on the nature and objectives of on-going attempts in each Arab country to raise its scientific and technological standards, including the science and technology involved in the structures and functions of their governmental, private and semi-public institutions and the legislation aimed at that objective.

13. In addition to the conclusions reached by the members of the missions from their interviews with the authorities and with other interested parties in both their official and private capacities, they were also able to obtain useful information from the official reports and documents which were put at their disposal by the authorities. The missions also benefited from the studies and reports published by their participating institutions and organizations.

14. The two missions visited over one hundred institutions in 20 Arab countries and interviewed a total of 203 people representing a variety of specialized bodies involved in planning and implementation. The missions made sure to meet with the legislators of development policy and the officials concerned with education and planning. Meetings were also held with individuals of the private sector who had an interest in the idea and concept of such a Centre.

15. The members of the missions concluded from all their discussions with officials and interested parties that there was a consensus on the need for a regional centre for the transfer and development of technology. The functions and responsibilities recommended for this centre, however, were numerous, varied and diversified, reflecting the nature of the different institutions that were visited. This made it difficult to determine the priorities, even for individual countries. The activities that were recommended for the centre, however, could be summed up as follows: Consulting services to help the Arab countries draw up legislation related to the transfer and development of technology; consulting services to help resolve the problems of technology; technological documentation, information, analysis and distribution services; assistance to countries in the establishment of scientific and technological institutions; and co-ordination and support of the activities of Arab national and regional institutions.

16. A large number of officials expressed opinions on the nature of the proposed Centre, its organizational structure, its working procedures and its management. It was recommended that the Centre ought not to replace existing institutions or other projected regional centres devoted to any specific aspect of the technology transfer process. Other suggestions included the need for co-operation and co-ordination with the specialized national and regional organizations of the Arab World so as to avoid duplication and to promote specialization; the necessity of maintaining the independence of the Centre's organs and its administration from other national, regional and international institutions; the need to provide it with the resources necessary for achieving a high standard of technical and administrative competence; and the need to establish for its supervision a specialized high level Arab body representing the participating Arab countries and institutions.

17. At the termination of the mission's field trip, which lasted around six weeks, its members met in Beirut with the ECWA officers concerned and the Commission's consultant to discuss the two reports. These included individual country reports summarizing the state of technology in each Arab country and describing the experiences of each country in this field, and an aggregate report for each of the two missions. The different subjects were discussed at the level of the whole region in the light of the report of each of the two missions.

18. The floor was given once again to the Commission's consultant who took up the summation of the Revised Feasibility Study on the establishment of the Arab Regional Centre. He directed his comments to the proposed objectives, functions and activities of the Centre, pointing out that these represented the result of the numerous technical meetings and interviews with officials in the Arab countries that were held by the two missions in December 1977. He also stated that the Centre was to act in an advisory capacity to support, encourage and co-ordinate the activities of the different national centres.

19. The consultant then noted that the study classified the activities of the Centre into two major categories. The first category was that of the Permanent Programme, which consisted of activities that would become part and parcel of the Centre's routine operations - such as the programme planning, organization of conferences, research in institution building, preparation of requests for proposals and nomination of consultants. These together would account for 14% of the total activities of the proposed Centre. The second category consisted of activities related to short-term projects carried out in response to services demanded by Arab countries. These could be grouped into five major functions: evaluation of technological policies; seminars and workshops; assisted information transfer; co-operation, co-ordination and integration and development of appropriate technology.

20. The Commission's consultant raised the question of the level of activity of the proposed Centre. He noted that the feasibility study suggested two levels of activity: Level "A" represented the minimal level of activity and service that would still enable the Centre to offer services which may not cover the needs of all the Arab countries. Level "B" represented a wider scope of activities which would permit the Centre to respond to the requests of all the Arab countries in the Centre's fields of operation. Following a thorough presentation, the consultant revealed that level "A" required 100 experts while level "B" called for 250.

21. The consultant then referred to the governance of the proposed Centre which was to consist of a General Assembly and a Governing Board. He also referred to the organizational structure of the proposed Centre in terms of its basic rules and conditions of work, its mode of operation, and the relationships of the proposed regional Centre with other regional and national institutions

of the Arab World and with international organizations. He also referred to the proposed budget and the financial resources of the Centre, which were to depend upon a variety of categories and sources of finance, and specified the minimal levels of financing that would permit the Centre to respond to its expected priority demands. He also specified the factors that had to be taken into consideration when choosing the Centre's location - both the essential and desirable factors. He then listed a number of samples of possible topics for study that could be taken up by the Centre.

22. He concluded by referring to the proposed Action Programme for the Establishment of the Centre, outlining the three phases into which the steps to be taken were to fall.

III. DISCUSSION OF THE FIRST REVISED DRAFT FEASIBILITY STUDY (Item 6 on the Agenda)

General Observations

23. Following the ECWA secretariat's summation of the substance of the Revised Feasibility Study and the clarification of its major items, the participants proceeded to discuss it one item at a time. The following paragraphs present the major points, comments and clarifications voiced in the discussion.

24. The Egyptian delegation supported in principle the establishment of the Centre and stressed the importance of its activities whose aim was to support, vitalize and co-ordinate the activities of the national R&D centres and to co-ordinate their efforts with those of the relevant regional organizations and centres.

25. The representative of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development asserted that the management of the Fund had recommended supporting the idea of establishing the Centre and had decided in principle to participate in its financing.

26. The representative of Democratic Yemen expressed his satisfaction with the presentation and indicated the need for conducting a comprehensive survey of Arab organizations in this area of concern. The purpose was to discover to what extent their activities were comparable and to what extent their functions

overlapped, thereby diminishing the possibility of duplication and the concomitant squandering of financial resources and human capabilities. He also requested that the Centre's objectives be defined with greater precision. The secretariat pointed out that the association of the Arab regional organizations in the preparation of the study and in the discussion of its first draft was done precisely with this purpose in mind and stressed the importance for the Centre to actually exercise the function of co-ordination during its operation.

27. Then the Iraqi delegation expressed concern that the projected size of the Centre was too ambitious and affirmed the need to study its economic returns. It also expressed anxiety about the ambiguity of the Centre's affiliations and the unreasonable nature of the privileges proposed for its staff. It further suggested the idea of establishing a more modest pilot centre for a determined period of time in order to avoid any losses and risks. Commenting on this, the secretariat explained that the choice of the proposed size reflected the opinions and demands of the officials who were interviewed by the two missions that made field trips to the Arab States. It noted further that the details of these demands are contained in an annex of the revised draft feasibility study under consideration. As for the Centre's affiliations, it would be placed under the authority and supervision of the member States. Its modernization and complete building up of its departments and facilities would require a transitional period of three years, during which it would gradually reach its projected level of competence.

28. The Iraqi delegation raised questions concerning the status of the present Meeting and the level of its participants. In referring to the possibility of discussing the feasibility study scientifically and comprehensively, a method which requires the presence of experts, the Iraqi delegation questioned once again the level of representation at the Meeting and whether the representation was at ministerial level and also whether the delegates had the authority to take appropriate decisions if necessary. The delegation further indicated that if the Meeting were at the governmental level, it should have been called and held through the League of Arab States. The secretariat answered that the Meeting was called in agreement with the Secretary-General of the League, at the level of ministers and heads of Arab organizations, whenever possible.

They were invited to offer their opinions on the study so that their recommendations could be presented before the Commission. The secretariat stated further that the purpose of this Meeting and the level of representation therein were stipulated in the Commission's invitation to the Meeting, which was directed to the Arab Governments and to Arab regional organizations. It reaffirmed that invitations were extended after having secured the agreement of the Secretary-General of the League to have the representation whenever possible at the level of ministers responsible for science and technology and at the level of the heads of Arab regional organizations. Accordingly, it was pointed out that the level of representation at the present Meeting and the authority delegated to participants were questions that concerned the various States and organizations. The secretariat reaffirmed that the purpose of the present Meeting was to permit the participants to present their views on the feasibility study before them so that their recommendations could be submitted to the Commission at its next annual session to be held in Amman between 2-6 2-6 October 1978.

29. The representative of ALECSO noted that the Centre as proposed constituted one component of a system of organizations that operate in the area of technology transfer and development and that it would be under the management and control of the Arab States. He described the major function of the Centre as that of rationalizing the technology transfer process.

30. The representative of Qatar stated that his country was awaiting an adequate clarification of the functions, activities and conceptions of the Centre and urged comparison with the recommendations of the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils, as the common objective was to obtain positive results. Such a comparison was necessary because the attempts that began within the framework of the Euro-Arab Dialogue ended with no such results. That was due to the intransigence of the European side which insisted on participating on an equal basis in the management of the Centre proposed within the context of that dialogue.

31. The Iraqi delegation questioned ECWA's authority in inviting countries of the Arab Maghreb to the present Meeting and queried the distribution therein of the document on a technology transfer centre project proposed by the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils. In response, the secretariat asserted that

agreement had been reached with the Economic Commission for Africa for co-operation and co-ordination on that subject, so that the study would cover all the Arab countries and so that the Arab Maghreb countries would have the opportunity to contribute to its preparation. As for the role of the Federation in the present Meeting, it did not differ from that of any other Arab regional organization invited to the Meeting and the document presented by the said Federation was distributed merely to facilitate its examination by the participants, and was not to be considered as an official Meeting document.

32. The Sudanese delegation reported in writing that its country supported and encouraged in principle the idea of the establishment of the Centre and its stated objectives in whatever form the Arab States participating at the present Meeting should decide. It also emphasized the need for co-ordinating the efforts of the proposed Centre with those of other centres in the developing countries and with the African Centre in particular.

33. The delegation of Kuwait expressed its support in principle for the idea of establishing the Centre. It asserted that the study had left many questions unanswered and that it lacked details in a number of subject-areas, such as that of the experiences of other countries in the field of technological development. The ECWA study, which concentrated exclusively on the experiences of the Arab World in the past century, failed to make any reference to the studies conducted by OECD. The secretariat explained that the study concerned the Arab World and its realities and that while the experiences of the other countries and regions of the world differed in their historical timing and in their circumstances, they naturally offered useful lessons which the study took into consideration.

34. Responding to a question on the possibility that the activities of the proposed Centre might duplicate the functions of some of the regional organizations (such as IDCAS), the ECWA secretariat pointed out that the proposed functions of the Centre differed in their nature from those of existing Arab centres. The proposed Centre was to specialize in the design of technological policies and assume responsibility for policy matters related to the nature of technology and its transfer and would thus complement the work of specialized Arab agencies.

35. Responding to a delegate's question concerning the role that national institutions would play in the area of industrialization after the Centre begins to perform its functions in this regard, the secretariat noted that the specialized national institutions were involved in the formulation of industrial plans and policies, leaving the function of project design generally in the hands of foreign organizations. The secretariat hoped that the Centre would help to change the existing situation.

36. The delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stated that it supported the idea of establishing the Centre but that it had questions regarding its nature: Was it to be a consultative body, an information centre, a training centre, a body for the co-ordination of activities of specialized Arab agencies or a technical body in the service of member countries for solving their technical and technological problems? It also stressed the need for taking advantage of the experiences of the United Nations. The secretariat explained that the Centre was to be engaged in many activities for the study and the design of technological policy and in the publication and dissemination of the results of these studies to concerned Arab institutions.

37. Several delegations wanted to know why no assessment had been made of the expected returns and benefits of the Centre. The secretariat stated that these could not be estimated with precision; but that experiences in a number of countries, such as Egypt, did produce returns that were occasionally estimated. The secretariat added that the quick diagnosis of the state of technology and existing services in the Arab World which was conducted in the study clearly justified the decision to give the Centre the consultative role of assisting the Arab countries in rationalizing their technological affairs.

38. The Saudi delegation pointed out that the rationalization required was for the purpose of creating technology using Arab capabilities and not for the purpose of orienting Arab Governments to available technological processes. It advised against the establishment of a large and ambitious Centre and recommended proceeding one step at a time, beginning with an investigation of the functions and performance of the other Arab centres. The secretariat explained that the size and the activities of the Centre were determined by the demands of the member States as recorded by the field missions.

39. The Iraqi delegation wondered if the independence of the Centre in the form proposed would not make it difficult to supervise it, to assess its performance and to make it accountable. The secretariat answered that according to the study the Centre would be responsible to its General Assembly (Council of Governors) which would be composed of representatives of Arab countries and a number of other organizations. In this, the situation of the Centre resembled that of other Arab organizations such as, among others, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

40. In response to the question of the Iraqi delegation as to why the study made no mention of the project of the Federation of Arab Research Councils, the secretariat stated that its ties with the Federation were close and that the Federation had participated in the interagency meeting convened by the Commission for reviewing and revising the ECWA study. Likewise, ECWA had participated in the preparatory seminar for UNCSTD called by the Federation after the issuance of this study. The secretariat explained further that the feasibility study under consideration was prepared before the Federation presented an alternate proposal.

41. During the discussion of the Centre's prospective relationship with the specialized Arab centres, the secretariat asserted that the relationship had per force to be one of co-operation which would most likely be at the Project's level where the different national centres complement each other's activities. As for the actual success of the Centre in exercising this function, this would depend on the competence of its administration.

42. During the discussion of the possibility of calculating the economic returns of research and application projects, the Egyptian delegation referred to the relatively long experience of Egypt in this field, when compared to the respective experiences of the other member countries. It stated that the technology transfer process was far from being perfected and that it was difficult to assess the performance of its institutions despite the possibility of calculating their economic returns. It also mentioned that Egypt was at the point of establishing the Egyptian Institution for the Transfer of Technology and that its structure would probably resemble that described in the present study. It affirmed that there was an economic return of R&D projects, giving as an example four projects conducted by the Academy in which 4 million Egyptian pounds were invested and which generated a return of around 20 million pounds.

43. The Meeting then moved to the discussion of the individual sections of the proposed Centre project as they appeared in the First Revised Draft Feasibility Study.

Objectives of the Centre

44. At the beginning of the discussion of the objectives of the proposed Centre the Iraqi delegation asserted that the stated objectives were too broad to be realized by a single organization. The delegation thought that it would be preferable to concentrate on specific tasks by establishing a documentation and information centre devoted to technological affairs or a centre for the co-ordination of activities of national centres and the dissemination of information on disreputable foreign companies. It also referred to the difficulty the Centre would have in adopting a single technology transfer strategy for the entire Arab World, given that the Arab countries had different development strategies that could not be easily unified at the present time. The delegation said that the Centre was supposed to co-operate with its member States in the development of their capabilities and in strengthening the role of indigenous technology. Its objectives as presently stated, however, would require many times the number of employees working in a single ministry. The Iraqi delegation also referred to the difficulty of maintaining the political neutrality of the proposed Centre in the Arab World because technology serves development, in its social, economic and political dimensions. The ECWA secretariat affirmed that the effectiveness of the proposed Centre and its high standard of competence depended on the ability to isolate it from the everyday political problems of the Arab States, as is generally accepted and adopted by similar Arab centres and organizations.

45. The delegation of Democratic Yemen thought that the stated objectives were not well ordered that they were too general and that it was not clear whether they complemented or overlapped with the plans of the Arab countries. It also seemed that a number of these objectives overlapped with the objectives of several Arab regional organizations.

46. The Kuwaiti delegation seconded these observations and suggested that the list which appeared in section 7.1 on sample topics be used as the basis for adopting and formulating the Centre's objectives. The Iraqi delegation emphasized the need to review the expected activities and the resources available before formulating objectives. The Egyptian delegation suggested that a general definition of the Centre be adopted so that its objectives could be formulated and their ordering amended.

47. The Jordanian delegation commented on this subject by stating that it saw some overlapping between the short-term and the long-term objectives of the Centre, that the short-term objectives should be separated and described with precision and that they should be placed before the long-term objectives and lead into them. It emphasized the importance of short-term objectives 6 and 7 which appeared in the study. It also reaffirmed the role of the Centre as part of a system co-ordinating and co-operating with national and regional centres supporting them and assisting in their establishment. The secretariat explained that the objectives of the Centre had been briefly stated but that the functions and activities enumerated in the study had been expressed in detail so as to clarify the objectives.

48. Commenting on the secretariat's statements concerning the similarity between the objectives of the proposed Centre and the objectives of the project submitted by the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils, which had been taken textually from the Draft Feasibility Study prepared by the Commission before the completion of the study of the Federation, the Iraqi delegation stated that its Government had approved in principle only the establishment of the centre proposed by the Federation; that the Government had not yet approved the Federation's draft study; and that an expert committee had been formed within the Federation for preparing a study of the project for establishing the Centre, in which the Centre's objectives would be spelled out in detail.

49. The Kuwaiti delegation indicated the need for the proposed Centre to support the other institutions that are directly or indirectly involved in the utilization of technology. It also referred to the subject of nominating experts of Arab citizenship or origin and the need to motivate them to return and work in the Arab World. It saw the need for a thorough investigation of the giant international corporations whose activities had been detrimental to the Arab World.

50. The delegate of the Arab Planning Institute felt the need for limiting the size of the Centre before any decision is made to define or set its objectives, and suggested that the Centre embark on its activities in a number of phases.

Functions and Activities of the Centre

51. The Jordanian delegation recommended that a more detailed explanation of the Permanent Programme and the functions of the Centre be presented. It suggested amending the titles of the functions listed under the Permanent Programme, which was considered to embody the minimum level of activity. The delegation emphasized the need for classifying by degree of importance the "projects activities" which it considered to be among the most important tasks of the Centre. The delegation of Democratic Yemen suggested that all the activities of the Permanent Programme and their titles be reduced, while the Kuwaiti delegation expressed the view that these activities were all important and necessary - especially the services related to the nomination of consultants and the preparation of requests for proposals.

52. The delegation of Democratic Yemen recommended the reformulation of the paragraph on the systematic study of contract formulation - which was listed under the title of "Policy Design" - so as to avoid giving the impression of duplicating the work of IDCAS.

53. Responding to queries concerning the reason for not expanding the Permanent Programme, and consequently the routine services of the Centre - especially those related to the two paragraphs entitled "Research on Institution Building" and "The Preparation of Requests for Proposals" - the secretariat explained that despite the importance of these activities, it was necessary to begin modestly at this stage so as to leave room for other activities. It promised that all these activities would be reviewed in the future in the light of the results of practical application and experience. The secretariat also observed that while IDCAS was engaged in a number of similar activities, those activities did not include the basic elements of technology, which was an area wherein the fruitful co-operation of the two centres would be possible in the future.

54. The Egyptian delegation recommended that the function of documentation and information be included among the activities of the Permanent Programme of the Centre.

55. The delegation of the Arab Centre for the Study of Arid Zones and Dry Lands referred to the importance of the five functions listed under "Projects Activities" and which constituted the major part of the Centre's activities. It stated that it was not necessary that they all be started simultaneously with the Permanent Programme. It was possible to set a time schedule with two or more phases, each with its own separate budget set by the Centre's general authority. In this way, both the Projects Activities and Permanent Programme could be implemented simultaneously. Such an approach would promote greater flexibility and efficiency within a reasonable budget.

Level of Activity and Scheduling

56. The delegation of Kuwait indicated that the method of estimating the staff and the manpower requirements for implementing the activities of the Centre - as listed in Tables 3 and 4 appended to the study - needed clarification. The secretariat provided the clarifications requested and insisted that some activities, because of their relative importance, especially to the least developed countries, be maintained at the same scale under both alternative levels of activities. These activities included the nomination of consultants and the preparation of requests for proposals. For this reason, the secretariat explained, the same number of experts was listed under both the "A" level and the "B" level recommendations. Commenting on these remarks, the Kuwaiti delegation suggested that the explanation of these two tables just presented by the secretariat be inserted into the study as an addendum.

Governance of the Centre

57. The Jordanian delegation indicated the need for using more precise Arabic terminology to convey the meaning intended by the study regarding the governance of the Centre.

58. The delegation of Democratic Yemen and the delegation of Iraq questioned the term "external body" which appeared in this section of the study. The secretariat stated that this term referred to the General Assembly and the Governing Board of the proposed Centre distinguishing them from the Centre's Permanent machinery.

Organization and Structure

59. The Saudi delegation stated that since the Feasibility Study under consideration did not offer several alternatives to the proposed centre and since it was possible that this Centre might not be accepted in the form in which the draft was originally submitted, there was no point in discussing its details. The Iraqi delegation supported this opinion and added that the question of administrative structure and rules shall be left to a later stage.

60. Responding to questions on the specialized duties and responsibilities of the members of the General Assembly and the Governing Board of the Centre, the secretariat affirmed the importance of filling them with highly specialized, experienced and skilled nominees. A number of delegations insisted that the administrative structure proposed was presented only for guidance as the entire subject would not be decided upon until the second phase of project implementation as stated in the feasibility study.

61. The Jordanian delegation requested that the Centre be operated by a Governing Board assisted by a General Assembly as well as by the Director directly responsible for its management. Rules of procedure should be drafted distributing responsibilities among these three authorities. In this matter, the document under discussion could be consulted for the scientific materials it contained.

62. The Iraqi delegation indicated that the study adopted the inverted pyramid form of organization and focused on building the apex (the head) without paying due attention to the base or to the relationship between the apex and the base. The study also separated the need for science and for transforming it into technology from the application of technology to socio-economic development, when it concentrated its attention on the technological phase which is only a small link in the development chain.

63. The delegation of Kuwait thought that the idea of having the Centre contract consulting services and miscellaneous activities to professors of Arab universities might affect the standards of university education, especially at universities understaffed in teaching personnel. The Syrian delegation, on the other hand, welcomed the idea as it would help promote scientific and technological interaction between academic institutions and the development

world and sectors. The Egyptian delegation spoke of its country's experiences in this area and the favourable results that accompanied them. The secretariat pointed out that the proposed interaction between the Centre and the university was a welcome phenomenon in communities that favoured the involvement of their universities in social problems and in their assistance in problem solving activities. What was recommended was practised in most advanced societies. The secretariat explained further that co-operation would take place with the Arab universities that had the capabilities for contributing to the co-operative effort which would not be at the expense of the universities' financial resources.

64. Responding to the Kuwaiti delegation's query on the subject of joint projects, the secretariat explained that joint projects provided an opportunity for co-operation between the Centre and relevant Arab organizations. Other aspects of co-operation included the sub-contracting of parts of projects assigned to the Centre to interested and qualified parties in return for payments that covered expenses and that, appropriately, did not involve commercial profit making.

65. The Iraqi and the Kuwaiti delegations referred to the paragraph on Project Design and Integrative Role (page 56), which recommended that the Centre avoid risky projects no matter how important or interesting. The secretariat explained that the topic in question came up in the midst of the discussion on joint projects implemented by the Centre in co-operation with national and regional centres and with Arab universities. The study urged that the Centre should strive to meet project deadlines and should not accept a project unless it could guarantee its successful termination. The purpose was to avoid arousing inter-institutional tension and creating client dissatisfaction and to safeguard the reputation and continuity of the Centre and to maintain public confidence in it and in its standards.

66. In response to queries on the basic role of the Centre made by several delegations, the secretariat stated that the Centre would not be involved in directing or undertaking R&D and would have no authority to direct existing national R&D institutions. Rather it was to constitute a link in the chain of the project implementation process, feeding it with Arab technological capabilities. One of the primary aspirations of the Centre was to develop its own self-sufficiency so as to be able to function in the future without resort to foreign technical expertise.

67. Commenting on this presentation, the Iraqi delegation wondered if this consultative role of the Centre was what the Arab countries needed. It indicated that the report called for the creation of a large centre without having conducted an adequately scientific and quantitative feasibility study concerning the projects and the obligations that would devolve upon this institution and concerning its proposed links with Arab governments and national technology transfer centres. The Centre, furthermore, was not committed to the performance of any specific service. The secretariat indicated that it had already treated these questions during the discussion of the objectives and functions of the proposed Centre.

Budget and Finance

68. The participants considered the contents of this part of the Feasibility Study but did not offer any major comments thereon.

Location of the Centre

69. The Iraqi delegation stated that many of the essential factors the study recommended for consideration in selecting the location of the Centre were impractical. These included political neutrality, freedom of information and non-interference of the host country in the recruitment of personnel. The secretariat responded that the factors referred to by the delegation were mostly based on those generally accorded to United Nations, Arab League and regional organizations in the Arab countries.

70. The secretariat also responded to a number of queries regarding the staff privileges requested and the right of the Centre to own property by pointing out that most of the terms listed were generally included in current agreements between Arab host countries and Arab regional institutions and United Nations organizations. The right of the Centre to own property was common practice in similar situations in many Arab countries. Even the right of the Centre's Arab staff to own property and to take up residence in the host country upon retirement had precedents in a number of Arab countries which offered these privileges to Arab nationals. Since the Centre staff were to be mainly Arabs, it would be beneficial if they enjoyed the same privileges and enjoyed the opportunity to settle down after retirement in the Arab country where the Centre will be established. This privilege would not apply to non-Arabs

serving the Centre as consultants on short-term contracts, who, would not be considered as part of the permanent staff. The Iraqi delegation supported the principle of providing the Centre staff with rights similar to those enjoyed by staff members of the League of Arab States and its affiliated regional organizations, as the terms contained in the report might exclude many Arab countries from the possibility of becoming the host country of the Centre. The Kuwaiti delegation supported this suggestion, as long as the question of the acquisition of real property is subjected to further study.

71. During the discussion of the proposed incentives for the salary scale of the Centre's staff, the secretariat stated that the main point of that section of the study was that competition with Arab organizations and the attraction of their staff through high remuneration was to be avoided. The object was to attract persons who were enthusiastic for the work of the Centre and capable of giving it their best in return for a monetary compensation commensurate with prevalent rates in the Centre's host country and in the Arab region. Thus the primary incentive for working with the Centre should not be a monetary one.

Manpower, Staffing and Consultants and Detailed Budget

72. The delegations made no major comment when these two sections were introduced for discussion.

Draft Work Programme and Samples of Topics for Study

73. Responding to the Iraqi delegation's objection against including the Arab defence industry in the list of sample topics for study because of the region's strategic circumstances, the secretariat noted that the intention was to assess factory performance so as to enable them to dispense with the assistance of foreigners in their development, and not to involve the Centre in questions of defence. The secretariat also affirmed that the sample topics were included as examples for guidance, suggesting therefore various possibilities before the Centre. In this regard the representative of ALECSO pointed out that the Arab World had a shortage of defence industry specialists: at a meeting of the Arab Industries Organization which he had attended, only four of the specialists were Arabs while the rest were foreigners. The Jordanian delegation suggested that the introduction to this section in the Feasibility Study be clarified.

74. The representative of the Arab Telecommunications Union proposed that a topic in the field of communications be placed on the list of sample topics for study.

75. The Kuwaiti delegation suggested the addition of other sample topics including the important subjects of R&D administration whose study had become imperative.

Action Programme for the Establishment of the Centre

76. The secretariat stated that the League of Arab States, as per the recent agreement with the League secretariat, had the prime executive responsibility for calling the meeting that was to appoint a follow-up committee and for convening the official meeting of the representatives of the Arab States and concerned Arab regional organizations for the establishment of the Centre - the meeting that was indicated in phase one of the Action Programme for the establishment of the Centre.

77. The Iraqi delegation raised a question about the study's suggestion of the possibility of locating the offices of the Governing Board in a country other than that where the Centre itself was located - unless the text was referring to meetings of the Board. The secretariat explained that the intention was to give the Governing Board the flexible option of meeting occasionally outside its headquarters and stated that this could be clarified more precisely in the study.

78. The Jordanian delegation expressed its opposition to the idea of contracting with consulting organizations for the purpose of drafting the various rules of procedure of the Centre, job descriptions and the management guidelines.

79. Responding to the Iraqi delegation's question as to why ECWA adopted the present approach to the preparation of this study, the secretariat stated that this approach was adopted by the Arab countries members of ECWA at the Commission's fourth regular session in May 1977, in which they emphasized the need to research the opinions of the Arab States and Arab regional organizations. In pursuing the present approach, the secretariat was implementing the decisions of the Commission.

80. The Kuwaiti delegation expressed a viewpoint on the budget and finance of the Centre stating that there was no need to place funds at the disposal of the Centre, and that the Centre should be financed through periodic budgets. The secretariat responded that it would be normal to deposit the Centre's financial resources in Arab funds for the first phase of the Centre's establishment, before the Governing Board is nominated. The method of financing proposed, however, aimed at securing financial independence for the Centre and freeing it from dependence upon annual allocations. It indicated further that this question was not related to the budget preparation, which remains a basic and indispensable procedure. The Kuwaiti delegate suggested that the Centre adopt the accounting system used by the specialized agencies of the Arab League and the United Nations. The secretariat explained that the feasibility study did not deal with these questions because it considered them to be too detailed for this stage of the operation. The secretariat felt that it would be up to the Governing Board to decide upon the type of accounting system for the Centre once it is established.

Concluding Remarks

81. The Iraqi delegation reaffirmed its opinion that the Centre as presented in the study seemed to be over-protected, non-responsible and imprecise in its status. The study did not give the impression that the Centre would satisfy the requirements of the Arab World and the objectives of the Centre were unrealistic. The Iraqi delegation thought that the study made it clear that the Centre would not undertake R&D production nor supervise this kind of activity, but that it would concentrate its efforts on the design and selection of development programmes, beginning with a comprehensive survey of scientists and national institutions and ending with the Arab defence industry. This contradicted what appeared in other sections of the report to the effect that the Centre would not conduct studies in sensitive or risky areas. The Iraqi delegation concluded by stating that the Commission's Feasibility Study ought to take into account the circumstances of the Arab World and its level of stability, in view of the fact that the study strictly stressed the need to protect the Centre and its staff from political, social, economic and technical influence, thus making it an over-protected, "non-responsible" body.

82. Other delegations expressed the opinion that this item, was unnecessary and ought to be deleted. The secretariat claimed that some of the confusion and misunderstanding concerning parts of this section were due to the imprecision of the Arabic translation from the document's original english text and asserted that as this item was not a summary of the study it could be dispensed with.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING
(Item 8 on the Agenda)

83. The Meeting adopted its Report on 18 September 1978 as well as a Resolution recommending in principle the establishment of the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology, taking into account the First Revised Draft Feasibility Study under consideration, the observations expressed in its regard, and other alternate Arab efforts in this field, in order to arrive at a unified project agreeable to the Arab States. (The full text of the Resolution is given in Appendix I).

V. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING
(Item 9 on the Agenda)

84. Following the concluding remarks of the Chairman of the Meeting, the representative of the Executive Secretary of ECWA, and the representative of ALECSO who spoke on behalf of the Arab regional organizations participating at the Meeting, the Chairman declared the Meeting closed.

APPENDIX I

Resolution on

The Establishment of the Arab Regional Centre for the
Transfer and Development of Technology

The Joint Meeting of the Representatives of Arab Governments and Arab
Regional Organizations on the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and
Development of Technology,

Recalling Resolution 87(IV) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on strengthening the technological capacity of developing countries, Resolution 2034(LXI) of the Economic and Social Council bearing the same title, and Resolution 51(IV) of the Economic Commission for Western Asia, entitled "The Study of the Possibility of Establishing a Western Asia Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology",

Considering the urgent need of the Arab countries for the establishment of the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology,

Taking note of the two interagency meetings held by the Economic Commission for Western Asia (Beirut, 24-28 October 1977 and 27 February - 1 March 1978), the two interagency field missions dispatched (1 November - 18 December 1977) to 20 Arab countries for the purpose of drawing up a feasibility study that reflects the thoughts, needs and suggestions of the Arab countries in the field of the transfer and development of technology,

Taking note of the recommendation of the Economic Commission for Western Asia's Second Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development concerning the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology,

Taking note also of the report entitled "First Revised Draft Feasibility Study for the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology" (E/ECWA/NR/CTT.2/Rev.2), and the observations expressed by the member States and Arab regional organizations in this regard,

Notes with appreciation and satisfaction the participation of Arab governmental and international organizations and bodies and the field missions that visited the Arab countries during the preparation of the study, and

Recommends in principle the establishment of the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology, taking into account the First Revised Draft Feasibility Study under consideration, the observations expressed in its regard, and other alternate Arab efforts in this arena, with the purpose of arriving at a unified project agreed upon by the Arab States.

APPENDIX II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

I. Representatives of Member Countries

Bahrain

Mr. Mohammad A. Ghaffar;
Embassy of Bahrain in Amman.

Democratic Yemen

Mr. Abubakr A. Badeeb;
Deputy Minister for Higher Education,
Ministry of Education.

Mr. Mohammad Gaffar Zain;
President of the University of Aden.

Mr. Adel Abdulla Khalifa;
Director of Arab and International Organizations Department.

Egypt

Mr. Mohamed Kamel;
Director of the National Research Centre.

Mr. Ahmed Sameh Al-Noukrashy;
Director, R & D Department,
Academy of Scientific Research and Technology.

Mr. Youssef Hussein;
Head, Science Policy Research Unit,
Academy of Scientific Research and Technology.

Iraq

Mr. Taha Tayih Al-Naimi;
President,
University of Technology.

Mr. Adil Shakir Al-Tai;
Director General of Cultural Relations,
Ministry of Higher Education,

Mr. Mazin B. Adil;
Department of Industry,
Ministry of Planning.

Jordan

Mr. Hanna Odeh;
President,
National Planning Council.

Mr. Tayseer Abdel Jaber;
Secretary General,
National Planning Council.

Mr. Albert Boutros;
Director General,
Royal Scientific Society.

Mr. Marwan Kamal;
Dean, Faculty of Science,
University of Jordan.

Mr. Munthir Salah;
Director of Computer Department,
Royal Scientific Society.

Mr. Musa M. Abu Maizar;
Director, Planning Department,
National Planning Council.

Mr. Bassam Saket
Director Economic Department,
Royal Scientific Society.

Mr. Abdel B. Durra;
Yarmouk University.

Mr. Talal Akasha;
Yarmouk University.

Mr. Hayel Khasawneh;
Administration Manager,
National Planning Council.

Mr. Ahmed Abu Reesh;
Chief of Public Relations,
Royal Scientific Society.

Mr. Fouad Hassan Manna;
Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Mr. Nabih Nabhani;
Economic Department,
Royal Scientific Society.

Miss Lamy H. Al-Farhan;
National Planning Council.

Mr. Hassan Shawareb;
National Planning Council.

Jordan (cont'd)

Mr. Mohammad Omari;
Royal Scientific Society.

Miss Fadia Kakish;
Royal Scientific Society.

Miss Sana Al-Homsi;
Royal Scientific Society.

Kuwait

Miss Sana Al-Hamoud;
Head of International Relations,
Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research.(KISR).

Mr. Walid Abdul Khaliq Al-Tamimi;
Researcher,
Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR).

Sultanate of Oman

Mr. Ahmed Rashid Al-Shamsi;
Third Secretary,
Embassy of Oman in Jordan.

Qatar

Mr. Mohammad Y. Al-Ali;
Director of Electrical Department,
Ministry of Electricity and Water.

Mr. Ali Hassan Khalaf;
Director of Economic Affairs Department,
Ministry of Economy and Commerce.

Mr. Fathi Mohammad Abu Dayak;
Economist,
Industrial Development Technical Centre.

Mr. Issam Mohammad Jaradat;
Director of the Office of
the Minister of Economy and Commerce.

Saudi Arabia

Mr. Rida Obaid;
Chairman of the Board and Executive Director of
Saudi Arabia National Council for Science and Technology (SANCST).

Mr. Hussain O. Mansour;
Assistant Deputy Minister for National Planning.

Saudi Arabia (cont'd)

Mr. Mohammad S. Al-Kufeidy;
Deputy Director for Technical Co-operation in
the Council of Ministers.

Mr. Mohammad S. Alhabib;
Economic Researcher,
International Economic Relations Department,
Ministry of Finance.

Mr. Taleb Rafik;
Adviser,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Arab Republic of Syria

Mr. Abdul Halim Mansour;
Deputy-Director,
Syrian Centre for Scientific Research and Studies.

Mr. Adib Koulo;
Responsible for the Economics and Administration Section,
Syrian Centre for Scientific Research and Studies.

United Arab Emirates

Mr. Abdulaal Al-Najar;
Deputy Manager,
Ministry of Planning.

Mr. Abdulla Rasheed;
Counsellor of the United Arab Emirates in Amman.

II. Representatives of Arab Countries
not Members of the Commission

Morocco

Mr. Said Ben Bachir;
Secrétaire d'Etat à l'Enseignement Supérieur et
à la Recherche Scientifique.

Sudan

Mr. Mohammad Mahmoud Abou Sin;
Charge d'Affaires,
Embassy of Sudan in Amman.

III. Representatives of Regional Arab Organizations

Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development

Miss Maha Mohammad Shawwa;
Economic Researcher.

Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD)

Mr. Mohamed El Khash;
Director General.

Mr. Ismael H. El-Bagouri;
Head of Section, Soils Division.

Mr. Rifaat Rajab;
Head of Hydrogeology Section.

Arab Labour Organization (ALO)

Mr. Mohamed Lamine Fares;
Chief, Department of Manpower and Training.

Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO)

Mr. Ossama A. El-Kholy;
Assistant Director General.

Mr. Mohamed S. Montassir.

Arab Organization for Standards and Metrology (AOSM)

Mr. Mahmoud E. Khasawneh;
Department of Standards,
Ministry of Industry and Trade.

The Arab Planning Institute

Mr. Abdulhadi Alawadi;
Assistant Expert.

Arab Telecommunications Union

Mr. Mohammad Elwa;
Chief of Technical Department.

CASTARAB

Mr. Mohammed Baghdadi;
Professor.

Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils

Mr. Abdullah Al-Khatib;
Director of Planning and Development Department.

IV. ECWA Secretariat

Mr. Khair El-Din Haseeb;
Chief, Natural Resources, Science and Technology Division.

Mr. Essam Eldin Galal;
ECWA/ACAST Member.

Mr. Ruman Faruqi;
UNCTAD.
Participating in ECWA's field missions.

Mr. Antoine Zahlan;
Consultant.

Mr. Tariq Al-Khudayri;
Regional Adviser.

Mr. Abdel-Aziz El-Sherbini;
Chief, Joint ECWA/FAO Agriculture Division.

Mr. Sadik Kinge;
Chief, Conference Services Section.

Mr. Munir Allahwerdi;
Natural Resources, Science and Technology Division.

Mr. Anthony Tsou;
Natural Resources, Science and Technology Division.

Mrs. Emma Oueichek;
Conference Services Section.

Mr. Louay El- Djoundi;
United Nations Information Service.

Mr. Anthony Shebaya;
Conference Services Section.

Mr. Mouhieddine Soubra;
Natural Resources, Science and Technology Division.

Mrs. Leila Abi-Nader;
Conference Services Section.

Mr. Isam Habbal;
Conference Services Section.

Miss Ban Khayatt;
Natural Resources, Science and Technology Division.

Miss Leila Khammar;
Natural Resources, Science and Technology Division.

Mr. Dimitri Al-Akl;
Conference Services Section.

Miss Sahar Sancel;
Conference Services Section.

Miss Hoda Hussami;
Conference Services Section.

APPENDIX III

ADDRESS BY DR. HANNA ODEH, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF
ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND ARAB REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON THE ARAB REGIONAL
CENTRE FOR THE TRANSFER AND DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY.

Amman, 16 September 1978

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As this Meeting opens I would like to wish you all a warm welcome in the hope that our Meeting here will be graced with success and good fortune. Most of us were participants at the Meeting which closed at a late hour last night - the Second Regional Preparatory Meeting for UNCSTD. That Meeting adopted a number of recommendations which, in one aspect, noted the necessity of completing the institutional structures, at both the national and the regional levels, of the organizations engaged in the field of science and technology. One of these recommendations specifically requested that the establishment of a Regional Arab Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology be examined.

It is well known that the subject of establishing such an Arab Centre has been raised at more than one meeting. It was one of the major projects recommended in the Arab-European dialogue as a model of co-operation in this top priority field of vital importance. His Royal Highness Prince Hassan put forward this concept once again in the form of an Arab-European Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology at the Montreux Meeting of Arab and European businessmen in the spring of this year. The Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils also examined this concept and adopted a definite position in its regard.

The continuing discussion of the establishment of an Arab Centre devoted to the transfer and development of technology reflects, in my view, a consciousness of the critical need for the services that such a centre could provide in its capacity as a planning institution for the transfer and development of technology at the pan-Arab level. It would assume on behalf of the national centres the responsibility for co-ordinating, directing and collating their efforts and feeding them with qualified staff and technical expertise, thus enabling them to concentrate their efforts on activities that are co-ordinated and free of duplication.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I do not wish to anticipate the results of your discussion of the feasibility study of establishing ARCTDT. At this stage, however, I would like to emphasize the urgent need to establish such a centre in the form that is deemed by you to be the most appropriate to the requirements of joint Arab action and to its development. The convening of the present Meeting to review the study prepared by the Secretariat of ECWA was essential to ensure that the establishment of a new joint Arab body is approached with reflection and care and that our efforts are not duplicated and dissipated.

It is worth pointing out that the establishment of this Centre and the successful performance of its fundamental responsibilities are functions of the presence of many factors. Among these factors are the provisions of the appropriate work atmosphere for its staff, and the development of close creative relationships between it and the various national centres, some of which have only recently been established in the past few years. Perhaps the fundamental question posed before this Meeting is not whether this Centre is beneficial or not, but what its functions, responsibilities, and requirements are to be and what practical steps need to be taken to assure its establishment and to secure the elements of its success.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I welcome you once again to Jordan, wishing you a pleasant stay and your Meeting every success and accomplishment. I thank also the Secretariat of ECWA for the preparations it has made for the success of this Meeting.

God bless you.

APPENDIX IV

ADDRESS BY DR. KHAIR EL-DIN HASEEB,
REPRESENTING THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA
AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF
ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND ARAB REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON THE ARAB REGIONAL
CENTRE FOR THE TRANSFER AND DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

Amman, 16 September 1978

Colleagues, Heads of delegation and delegates of the Arab States and Arab Regional
Organizations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this Meeting on behalf of the
Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA). I am
also pleased to have the opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to the
Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for graciously hosting this
Meeting. This Meeting was scheduled to convene in Beirut towards the end of
last April but had to be postponed because of the events in Lebanon.

It may be possible to label the decade of the nineteen-fifties in the Arab
World as the "decade of planning"; for one of the most prominent manifestations
of that period in the Arab World was the growing receptivity to the concept of
planning, the establishment of a number of organizations devoted to it and the
beginnings of the actual application of planning to public affairs. In like
manner it may be possible to describe the decade of the seventies - and
especially the past few years - as the "decade of science and technology"; for
the Arab Region is now witnessing institutional and other developments in this
field that are comparable in great measure to the developments that took place
in the field of planning in the nineteen-fifties.

The significance of this historical comparison lies in the need to benefit
from the positive and negative lessons of the Arab planning experience as we
direct our attention to the subject of science and technology. The hope is that
we shall be in a better position to avoid the negative aspects of that experience
and thereby grant the "science and technology" experiment a better change of
success than that accorded the "planning" experience in the Arab World.

The contemporary concern with the issues of science and technology, combined with the growing importance of the development projects taking place in so many countries of the Arab World, has given greater prominence in the past few years to the need for directing more attention to the subject of the transfer, development and adaptation of technology in the Arab World and for creating institutions on the national and the regional level that are necessary and equal to the challenge. One of these institutions precisely is the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology. ECWA entered this field of endeavour in the steps of other United Nations economic commissions: The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) prepared a feasibility study for the establishment in its area of a regional centre for the transfer and development of technology. The study resulted in the agreement of the states of that region to establish such a centre. The centre was actually established and has been in operation for about one year. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) followed suit by conducting a feasibility study of the same project and concluded on the agreement to establish the African Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology, which too has recently begun its activity.

The annual session of ECWA, which took place in May, 1967, decided, on the basis of a preliminary study conducted by its secretariat, to assign the secretariat the task of preparing a study on the possibility of establishing an Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology to serve all the Arab countries. The Commission instructed the secretariat:

(a) To widen the scope of the study on the proposed centre so as to include all the Arab countries and serve them as a whole; to make arrangements with ECA so as to include in the centre's purview the member Arab States of North Africa. (This was actually done.)

(b) To co-operate with all the relevant United Nations and Arab regional organizations in the implementation of this study.

(c) To endeavour also to involve the Arab countries concerned as intimately as possible in the preparation of this study.

In execution of these instructions, the ECWA secretariat formulated a Plan of Action for the conduct of the study. The Plan of Action embodied the following measures:

1. ECWA was to call for a preparatory interagency meeting in Beirut between 24-28 October, 1977, to which all relevant United Nations and Arab regional organizations and funds would be invited. The purpose of this meeting would be to discuss and agree upon the "terms of reference" of the feasibility study. ECWA was also to prepare a Working Paper for this preparatory meeting.

2. A field mission (or several missions) was then to visit all the Arab countries and arrangements were to be made with ECA regarding the involvement of its member Arab North African States and regarding the exchange of field mission reports on these countries. The field mission was to operate between 1 November 1977 and 12 January 1978. (This period was later postponed to the middle of December 1977, when two missions were actually dispatched instead of one.)

The field mission was to be composed of experts from ECWA and UNCTAD as well as experts from any of the United Nations and Arab regional organizations and funds who had been invited to the interagency preparatory meeting and who were willing to participate in such field missions at their own expense. Depending on the degree of participation of these organizations in the field mission, ECWA was to decide whether to send one mission to cover all the countries involved or to divide it into two missions each covering a certain number of Arab countries.

After it had terminated its visits to the Arab countries, the field mission was to meet with the Commission's consultant in Beirut to discuss and evaluate together the mission's findings.

3. Thereupon, ECWA was to prepare a draft feasibility study on the establishment of an Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology. This study would set forth the basic guidelines for the establishment of this Centre. In addition to the project document, the study was to include recommendations concerning the governance, management, staffing, budget, location, functions and services of the Centre.

4. A second interagency meeting was to be convened by ECWA between 27 February and 1 March 1978 with the same participation as in the first preparatory interagency meeting to discuss the draft feasibility study which would then be revised on the basis of the discussions and recommendations of that meeting.

5. Next, an intergovernmental meeting would be held between 27 and 29 March 1978, to which all the Arab governments would be invited for the purpose of discussing the first revised draft of the feasibility study. ECWA would prepare a second revised draft of the feasibility study on the basis of the deliberations of that meeting.

As a result of the recommendation of the second interagency meeting and the immediate follow-up action represented by the consultations that took place between ECWA and the Secretariat of the League of Arab States, it was decided to hold the meeting at the level of the ministers concerned with science and technology and to enlarge the participation in this meeting so as to include the heads of the relevant Arab regional organizations. It was also decided to change the date of the meeting to 24-26 April, 1978.

6. The feasibility study would then be submitted to ECWA's fifth session, which was scheduled for the third week of April 1978, for discussion and approval. ECWA would, if necessary, revise the feasibility study on the basis of the relevant deliberations of the session.

7. Should the feasibility study be approved by the session, ECWA would invite the approving Arab governments and regional institutions to a meeting to set up the Centre.

8. In addition to and in step with the early phases of this Plan of Action, ECWA was to make the necessary contacts at the highest levels with the governments and regional institutions concerned to obtain some initial commitments from them for financing the Centre once it was approved.

The Plan of Action which was adopted has so far spawned the following activities:

1. ECWA held a first preparatory interagency meeting in Beirut, between 24-28 October, 1977, to which were invited the League of Arab States, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), the Arab Labour Organization (ALO), the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), the Conference of Ministers of Arab States Responsible for the Application of Science and Technology to Development (CASTARAB), the Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU), the Industrial Development Centre for Arab States (IDCAS), the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development, the Islamic Bank, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and the Saudi Fund for Economic Development.

ALECSO, ALO, API (the Arab Planning Institute), CAEU, FAO, IDCAS, ILO, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO and WIPO responded to the invitation and attended the meeting.

The Commission prepared a Working Paper for the first preparatory interagency meeting of October 24-28, 1977, entitled "The Arab Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology".

Discussion and amendment of the recommendations and views presented in the Working Paper are contained in the Report on the Preparatory Interagency Meeting on the Arab Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology, which was distributed to you. The Working Paper was revised accordingly, integrating the new ideas and relevant comments made during the meeting.

2. Two field missions then visited the Arab countries. The necessary arrangements were made whereby ECA would provide ECWA with the mission reports on the five Arab countries covered by an ECA study, and ECWA in turn would provide ECA with the reports on the Arab countries of North Africa covered by the field missions.

The field missions were composed of experts from ECWA as well as experts from ALECSO, CAEU, FAG, ILO, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO and WIPO.

The two missions that visited the Arab countries were expected to accomplish two broad objectives:

(a) To present the concept of an Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology to the officials they meet, and to obtain their views regarding the establishment, the priorities and the functions of such a Centre; and

(b) To acquire useful information (both in written and oral form) on different aspects of the problem as presented in the Working Paper as it emerged from the interagency meeting.

The two field missions started out on 1 November 1977 and completed their task on 20 December 1977. All the Arab countries were visited, with the exception of Somalia, and a total of over 200 people at different levels of responsibility were interviewed.

After terminating their visit to the Arab countries the Commission's two field missions met with the Commission's consultant in Beirut to discuss and evaluate the mission findings with him.

3. A draft feasibility study on the establishment of the Arab Regional Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology was then prepared with the help of the Commission's consultant, taking into consideration the findings and recommendations of the field missions. This study set forth the basic guidelines for the establishment of the Centre, embodying recommendations concerning its prospective governance, management, staffing, budget, location, functions and services.

4. The second interagency meeting called for by ECWA was convened in Beirut between 27 February and 1 March 1978. In addition to the United Nations and Arab regional organizations involved, a number of national science and technology institutions of the Arab countries were invited to this meeting.

The following 22 organizations accepted the invitation and attended the meeting:

United Nations Organizations:

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

Arab Regional Organizations:

Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU), Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils (ACARS), Industrial Development Centre for Arab States (IDCAS) and the Islamic Development Bank.

Arab Governmental Organizations:

Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development, Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (Egypt), Centre for Scientific Research and Studies (Syria), Foundation for Scientific Research (Iraq), National Council for Scientific Research (Lebanon), Royal Scientific Society (Jordan) and the Saudi Fund for Economic Development.

The second interagency meeting discussed the draft feasibility study and recommended its revision in the light of the relevant views and recommendations contained in the Report of the Meeting.

5. A revised feasibility study was prepared shortly after the meeting, taking into consideration its recommendations.

6. The present Meeting comes in implementation of one of the items of the Plan of Action.

For the purpose of this Meeting and on the basis of the contacts made with the Secretariat of the League of Arab States and in agreement with H.E. the Secretary-General of the League, it was decided:

(a) To extend participation in the Meeting to include all relevant Arab regional organizations;

(b) Due to the importance of this Meeting, to request that the Arab Governments' participation be at the level of the ministers concerned with science and technology and that the Arab regional organizations' participation be at the level of the heads of these organizations, whenever possible;

(c) To have the Secretariat of the League of Arab States represented in the meeting by the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs.

The Commission will, if necessary, prepare a second revised draft feasibility study on the basis of the deliberations of the present Meeting.

The second revised draft feasibility study will then be submitted for discussion and approval to ECWA's fifth session between 2 and 6 October 1978. ECWA will, if necessary, revise the draft feasibility study once again on the basis of the deliberations of the session after it is closed.

If the feasibility study is approved by the session, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States will submit the revised feasibility study to the Economic and Social Council of the League for discussion and adoption, after which ECWA, in co-operation with the League, will arrange for, and invite the approving Arab governments and regional institutions to, a meeting to establish the Centre.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My apology for entering into all these details is that I wish to put you into the picture as completely as possible.

As I stated before, the results that will emerge from your Meeting will be referred, along with the revised feasibility study, to ECWA's Annual Session which will be convened next month in Amman between 2-6 October, 1978. This session was to be held in Beirut last April, but was postponed due to the events in that country. Since the Annual Session represents the Commission's legislative authority, it is the body that will decide, as far as ECWA's involvement is concerned, what measures are to follow.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Commission has endeavoured to involve in this study as many interested Arab regional and international organizations as possible in the hope of avoiding as far as possible the duplication and repetition of similar efforts. While the feasibility study in your hands has been submitted officially as an ECMA document, it reflects the fruits of the efforts and contributions of all the Arab and international organizations that participated alongside ECMA in its preparation. While the Commission accepts sole responsibility for any fault or shortcoming that may be embodied in the study, it humbly insists that the credit for the positive elements it contains be attributed to all the Arab and international organizations involved.

In conclusion I would like to assure you that it is one of the Commission's deepest concerns that an Arab Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology be established in the Arab World; this follows upon the Commission's conviction that such a Centre would be of immense importance to the Region. The Commission, however, has been careful to insist from the start, and has made it clear in the draft feasibility study, that its prime role must end with the completion of the preparations for the feasibility study and after the idea of establishing the Centre has been adopted in principle, the feasibility study has been conducted and the constituent meeting has been convened. ECMA is convinced that the actual establishment and management of the proposed Arab Centre for the Transfer and Development of Technology is the prime responsibility of the Arab States and Arab regional organizations. The Commission and the other international organizations of the United Nations will contribute to the Centre to the extent that they are requested and in the measure of their abilities.

We of ECMA attribute great significance to your present meeting and are waiting anxiously for its results. Permit me to welcome you once again and to thank you one and all.

APPENDIX V

DOCUMENTS

<u>Title</u>	<u>Symbol</u>
NOTES TO PARTICIPANTS	E/ECWA/NR/CTT.2/INF.1
PROVISIONAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS	E/ECWA/NR/CTT.2/INF.2
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS	E/ECWA/NR/CTT.2/INF.2/Rev.1
FIRST REVISED DRAFT FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE ARAB REGIONAL CENTRE FOR THE TRANSFER AND DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY	E/ECWA/NR/CTT/2/Rev.2
REPORT OF THE SECOND INTERAGENCY MEETING ON THE ARAB REGIONAL CENTRE FOR THE TRANSFER AND DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY	E/ECWA/NR/CTT/3
PROVISIONAL AGENDA	E/ECWA/NR/CTT/4
AGENDA	E/ECWA/NR/CTT/4/Rev.1
AFRICAN TECHNOLOGY CENTRE OPENS FIRST SESSION IN TANZANIA (Received from the United Nations Information Centre, Dar es Salaam)	E/ECWA/NR/CTT/5
DRAFT REPORT ON THE JOINT MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND ARAB REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON THE ARAB REGIONAL CENTRE FOR THE TRANSFER AND DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY	E/ECWA/NR/CTT.3/L.1
DOCUMENTS	E/ECWA/NR/CTT.3/INF.3