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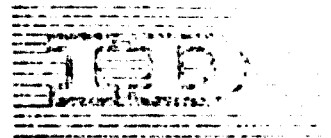
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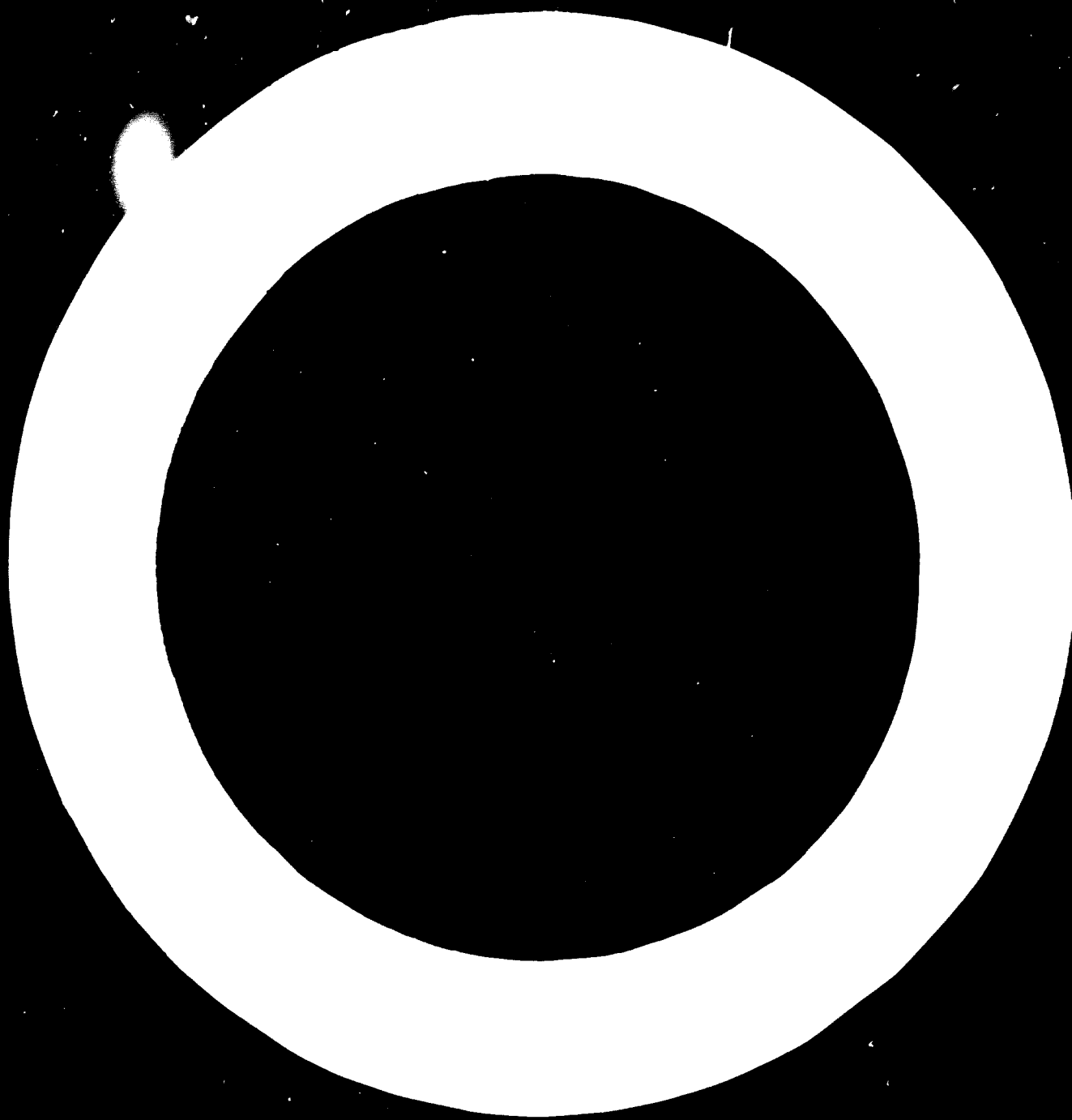
REGIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT 1/

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Regional Cooperation for Development

Objectives

1.- In a major policy decision, the Council, at its last Session held at Tangier in July 1968, approved the proposals of the Secretary-General: (a) for the re-orientation of AFRASEC policy and programme towards intensive deconcentration of activities, and (b) for the setting up of suitable sub-regional structures in consultation with constituent members to promote open-end and sub-regional cooperation for development. The objectives sought were expressly to:-

- (a) ensure adequate participation by member countries in the general activities of AFRASEC;
- (b) stimulate industrial and trade collaboration at the regional level; and
- (c) relieve the pressure on the Centre caused by unprecedented increase in activities.

2.- This approval was the last of a series of earlier Conference resolutions and Council directives and decisions. It marked an inevitable stage in the progress of AFRASEC towards the status of a fully operational organisation. This point is elucidated in Part II of the Report of the Secretary-General to the present Conference, which traces the evolution of AFRASEC since its inception. Three phases have been identified, of which the third, namely, "Regional Cooperation for Development", completes the process of growth and the attainment of that status.

Urgency.

3.- The Centre has lost no time in conducting consultation and drawing up an overall integrated programme for the effective implementation of the Council's decision. Meanwhile, it is noted that a number of highly relevant factors have either emerged or become more acutely pressing, and thus rendered the more imperative an endeavour to expedite action. There is, first, the campaign which AFRAC has initiated some three years ago for the recognition of the indispensable role of its members in the economic and social development of their respective countries. It has gathered increasing momentum and already brought about concrete results. Its thesis is now readily accepted; though such acceptance involves serious reciprocal commitments. Two cases in point may be cited: the Resolution of the Athens International Symposium⁽¹⁾ on Industrialisation (December 1967) and the ILO Resolution⁽²⁾ (June 1968). In each case, the acknowledgement of the indispensable role of chambers of commerce and industry and similar institutions, and the recognition of the need to enlist their services are accompanied by purposeful recommendations to the organisation concerned to respond favourably to requests by these institutions for technical assistance in order to improve their efficiency. Although these resolutions are formally binding on them, the organisations can only act adequately if their efforts are reciprocated.

(1) See Doc: CC/VI/I-1/5

(2) See Doc: CC/VI/C-2/2-1

4.- Secondly, appreciation of the great potentials which AFRASAC members possess and which enhance the value of their contribution to the economic and social development in their respective countries, have been demonstrated on many occasions, particularly during and after the recent Conference on the Development of Small Industries (Cairo, March 1968). On that occasion, Afro-Asian and non-Afro-Asian participants alike pledged their support of and cooperation in the implementation of the conclusions reached. Expectations ran very high for a rapid follow-up. To delay meaningful action and, therefore, disappoint these expectations, will serve no useful purpose; on the contrary, it may even cause irreparable damage to the prospects of AFRASAC.

5.- Thirdly, most international organisations with which AFRASAC cooperates are now well advanced in planning their programmes for the Second UN Development Decade due to commence in 1971. As they all recognise the need to enlist the services of AFRASAC members, it is imperative to act expeditiously in order to have these services properly organised and readily available when requested.

6.- Finally, the demand for AFRASAC cooperation has so rapidly increased in recent months, causing heavy strain on its regular resources, that a breaking-point is threatened unless something is done quickly. This is perhaps the most pressing consideration that compels accelerated readjustment of AFRASAC procedure and activities. The Centre has, as it were, been overtaken by the forces of expansion which it has, itself, endeavoured to generate. The situation is becoming

Increasingly untenable. It calls for very careful assessment. For this reason, it is fully analysed in a special report on item 2-2 of the Conference Agenda.

Overall Approach

7.- Conceptually, AFRASEC Regional Cooperation for Development aims at: (a) encouraging the growth of institutional arrangements in trade, industry and agriculture so as to ensure adequate contribution to national efforts for social and economic development; and (b) fostering sub-regional, regional and international technical cooperation. These aims are inspired by lessons from practical experience and study. They have already been approved by the Council. They must, therefore, be accepted as the principal targets of an overall approach.

8.- In the search for such an approach, the Centre has been guided by the deliberations of the Council at its last two sessions, as well as those of the Vth Conference. It has also made extensive inquiries and undertaken equally extensive consultations. As a result, it is now in a position to submit for the consideration of the VIth Conference, an integrated programme most of whose components have, in fact, been approved at previous sessions of the Council.

9.- Clearly, an appropriate programme of action must be based on a realistic assessment of the status and capabilities of individual members constituting the Organisation. This assessment has been made in a reasonable manner, and its findings appear fairly

accurate? Weaknesses exist, but are remediable. One of the surest remedies is opportunity to be active. Due to the ceaseless efforts of the Centre in pursuance of previous Conference resolutions and Council decisions, unlimited opportunities have now become available to all AFRASEC members, through their association with technical assistance projects undertaken in their respective countries by international and regional agencies and organisations.

New Functions

10.-- Broadly speaking, AFRASEC constituent members will be able to assist, where possible and as appropriate, national governments in designing and executing programmes of technical cooperation, mainly through:-

- (i) furnishing business information, data and advice, as well as undertaking ad hoc feasibility studies;
- (ii) making better and more widely known to the business community and to other interested sections of the population, the aims and expected benefits of technical assistance programmes;
- (iii) encouraging wider and better use of resources available for technical cooperation, as well as (a) identifying the necessary expertise to be imported and (b) defining the qualifications of the experts to be recruited;
- (iv) helping the technicians and experts engaged in technical cooperation projects to arrive at better and more realistic solutions of environmental problems;
- (v) encouraging the spread of sound knowledge and

- (vi) proper understanding of the industrialisation process among indigenous business communities; mobilising national talents and skills and the training of businessmen and industrialists to enable them to discharge their responsibilities and fulfil their obligations;
- (vii) promoting cooperation between management and labour with a view to improving industrial relations; and
- (viii) assisting in the evaluation of the results of technical cooperation projects.

Developmental Programme

11.- It will be idle to deny that many of the above-mentioned services are beyond the present reach and capabilities of most of the newly established Afro-Asian chambers of commerce and industry. An urgent need thus exists for a developmental programme to help redress the situation. The Centre has designed such a programme and is confident that its application will attract the necessary encouragement and stimulate the material help required. The principal components of this programme may be itemised thus:-

- (i) exchange of managerial skills between national chambers of commerce and industry;
- (ii) training the personnel of these chambers either in their own or in a neighbouring country;
- (iii) lending of advisers and training experts by one national chamber to another;
- (iv) exchange of visits between officers and board members of different national chambers;
- (v) coordinating the activities of professional associations under the auspices of the national chamber;

- (vi) enlarging the scope of the activities of these chambers particularly through associating them with the implementation of programmes of international technical assistance; and
- (vii) establishing close and regular liaison with regional organisations and agencies.

Liaison Officers

12.- As already explained, the re-orientation of AFRASEC policy and procedure requires an overall integrated approach. Action at the national level, as now proposed, is a pre-requisite to sequential arrangements at regional and international levels: yet it will be neither complete nor efficacious without well-established communication procedures with the Centre and/or the regional coordinators designated for the purpose. Hence the need for the services of a country liaison officer who must be a person of standing and authority. He is expected to organise and supervise:

- (i) regular liaison with local persons and institutions interested in technical cooperation, keeping them informed of the relevant material communicated to him by the AFRASEC Centre direct or through a regional coordinator;
- (ii) preparation of requests for technical assistance on behalf of the AFRASEC member concerned;
- (iii) responding to requests by AFRASEC Centre or regional coordinator for local studies in furtherance of regional and international cooperation;

- (iv) despatch to AFRASEC Centre of communications which may interest other members;
- (v) maintenance of a proper filing system so as to ensure the satisfactory performance of functions referred to in the preceding items (i) to (iv);
- (vi) setting programmes for foreign visitors, to cover such items as:-
 - (a) arrangements for scheduled visits to local persons and institutions;
 - (b) list of competent persons to meet, together with useful information on them, i.e. titles, addresses, etc.;
 - (c) background information concerning such local circumstances and conditions in readily understandable form as may be helpful to the visitor;
 - (d) information to be elicited from visitors as feedback;
- (vii) briefing missions going abroad, and processing their reports.

Sub-Regions

13.- In designing a suitable structure to enable national chambers of commerce and industry and similar institutions to undertake local activities, opportunities are created to enable chambers in neighbouring countries not only to establish regular liaison and benefit from the exchange of experience, but also to stimulate their members to participate in joint ventures. Although

AFRASEC has always used its best endeavours to promote collaboration between its members wherever they are situated, it has, simultaneously, encouraged zonal cooperation between neighbouring countries provided it does not become a closed circuit or be mutually exclusive with the wider Afro-Asian cooperation.

14.- At any rate, the main theme of the present Conference is: "Regional Cooperation for Development" in Afro-Asian countries. A preliminary task is to attempt a convenient demarcation of the sub-regions. For obvious reasons, the demarcation must be flexible and capable of readjustment in the light of experience and the outcome of individual consultations. With this in view, it is proposed to divide AFRASEC region into seven sub-regions and to designate for each one a coordinator:-

- (i) Central and S.E. Asia - India, Ceylon, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, Nepal, Cambodia, Indonesia.
- (ii) Near East - Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan.
- (iii) Middle East - Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain.
- (iv) North-East Africa - Somalia, Sudan and E.A.R.
- (v) North Africa - Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya.
- (vi) East Africa - Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania.
- (vii) West and Central Africa - Dahomey, Gabon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Upper Volta, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Mauritania.

Countries that are not included in this scheme will be temporarily served from the Centre until other arrangements are made for them.

Regional Coordinators

15.- The next important step is to attempt a working definition of the functions of the coordinators. Again, the same proviso of flexibility and adaptability must be stressed. The Secretary-General has been in consultation with certain constituent members with a view to designating regional coordinators; they include India, Pakistan, Iraq, Ethiopia, Morocco, Liberia and Senegal. He hopes to make his recommendations at a later date after completing his consultations.

16.- Clearly, the functions of the coordinators must be related to the conditions obtaining in their sub-regions. In making the following suggestions, the Secretary-General must emphasise that the scope has been set very wide in the hope that it will be eventually covered. Thus, the regional coordinators will be requested, wherever appropriate, to undertake:-

- (i) reporting on major events and developments in their respective areas with special reference to:-
 - (a) the requirements of member federations of chambers in respect of technical assistance and other forms of aid which AFRASEC Centre may be able to help procure;
 - (b) suggestions and recommendations for action to be initiated by the Centre for the benefit of member countries;

- (c) problems and difficulties encountered in the implementation of past AFRASEC Conference resolutions and Council decisions;
- (ii) specific tasks for the promotion of AFRASEC sectoral collaboration, especially in the preparation of feasibility studies, arrangements for sectoral meetings and their follow-up;
- (iii) arrangements for trade missions and visits both to countries within the region and to other regions;
- (iv) organizing, internationally assisted or sponsored seminars, research and similar activities for the promotion of the common interests and cooperation of the sub-regions;
- (v) providing specific expertise or consultancy services including feasibility studies and expert assignments;
- (vi) organizing schemes of sub-contracting technical assistance projects;
- (vii) ensuring adequate representation of business and industrial interests at major international meetings to which AFRASEC is invited.

17.- This enumeration of the proposed functions of regional coordinators also helps to identify the areas of their competence. Broadly speaking, these functions, which the Centre has been performing or is now expected to perform, fit into four main areas:-

- (a) promotion and liaison;
- (b) research;

- (c) coordination; and
- (d) consultancy services.

Functional relationship with Centre

16.- Clearly, the performance of these functions must proceed with due regard to the conditions obtaining in each sub-region and according to the capabilities, resources and organisational set-up available to the individual regional coordinator. At any rate, the Centre must now be streamlined and its working readjusted to the new schemes of things so as to render its performance consonant with that of the regional coordinators. On both sides, the functions to be undertaken are similar, whilst the coordinators each cover his designated sub-region. In more precise terms, the Centre will share its activities with regional coordinators and operate through them in respect of activities carried out within the sub-regions, whilst the coordinators work through the Centre in regard to activities outside each sub-region.

17.- In the light of these considerations, the Centre will be responsible for the organisation of four groups of functions, namely:-

- (a) international promotion and liaison;
- (b) inter-regional research;
- (c) inter-regional coordination; and
- (d) international consultancy services in conjunction with the regional coordinators.

Little change is needed in the structure of the Centre. The modification required is procedural.

20.- For obvious reasons, a separate administrative and financial machinery has to be designed for the consultancy services which the Centre may organise in

conjunction with the regional coordinators since these services must be self-financing. Consultancy services are tasks involving commercial transactions which cannot be properly incorporated in the ordinary budget of AFRASFC. They also entail field operations that require special arrangements to be made with local and regional authorities. It will be neither proper nor politic for AFRASFC, as a supra-regional body, to get enmeshed by temporary gains.

21.- Fortunately, the incorporation of consultancy services in AFRASFC Regional Cooperation for Development will be greatly facilitated by the establishment of the Afro-Asian Centre for Information and Consultancy Services. It is recalled that the principal recommendation of the AFRASFC Small Industries Conference has called for the immediate setting up of such a Centre. Indeed, preliminary consultations have been completed. A separate report on the proposed Centre is submitted under Item 2-4 of the Conference Agenda.

Financial Implications

22.- It is evident that the application of the integrated programme of AFRASFC Regional Cooperation for Development will require a great deal of financial adjustments as well as tapping new sources of finance. It is necessary to reiterate that, in most cases, that application can only be made gradually - the pace depending on relevant conditions obtaining in each sub-region. The Secretary-General has had the matter under very serious consideration throughout the

preparations of proposals for the new programme. In order to ensure adequate financing, the Secretary-General will submit, through the Standing Budgetary Committee, proposals to meet the new financial demands. These proposals embody:-

- (a) re-allocation of 50% of the membership subscription to the sub-regions;
- (b) expansion of membership through admission of national organisations and firms interested in the expanded activities of AFRASEC;
- (c) a fund-raising campaign for donations;
- (d) receipts from services, principally:-
 - (i) feasibility studies;
 - (ii) consultancy;
 - (iii) sub-contracting

Post-Conference Measures

23.- Two major tasks lie ahead for the implementation of AFRASEC programme for Regional Cooperation for Development. The first task is to transfer the relevant experience from the Centre to the regional coordinators. It is noted that, for reasons which have been fully elucidated in the "Evaluation Report"^(I), the activities of the Centre during the last ten years have been too closely identified with the personal efforts of the present Secretary-General. Forces of circumstances have dictated

(I) Doc: CCN/VI/I-1/Ib.

this course. Yet the result has come to reflect a very vulnerable situation that must not be allowed to continue, especially in view of the new operational opportunities now available to AFRASSEC and its members. It will be incompatible with the whole concept and purpose of Regional Cooperation for Development to carry on as hitherto.

24.- Yet, the transfer of experience accumulated during ten years is no simple undertaking. It must be initiated at once in the hope that it will be completed within a few months. It entails the following actions:

- (a) re-allocation of functions between the Centre and the regional coordinators;
- (b) documentary and personal briefing of the regional coordinators by the Secretary-General;
- (c) associating regional coordinators with the activities of international organizations.

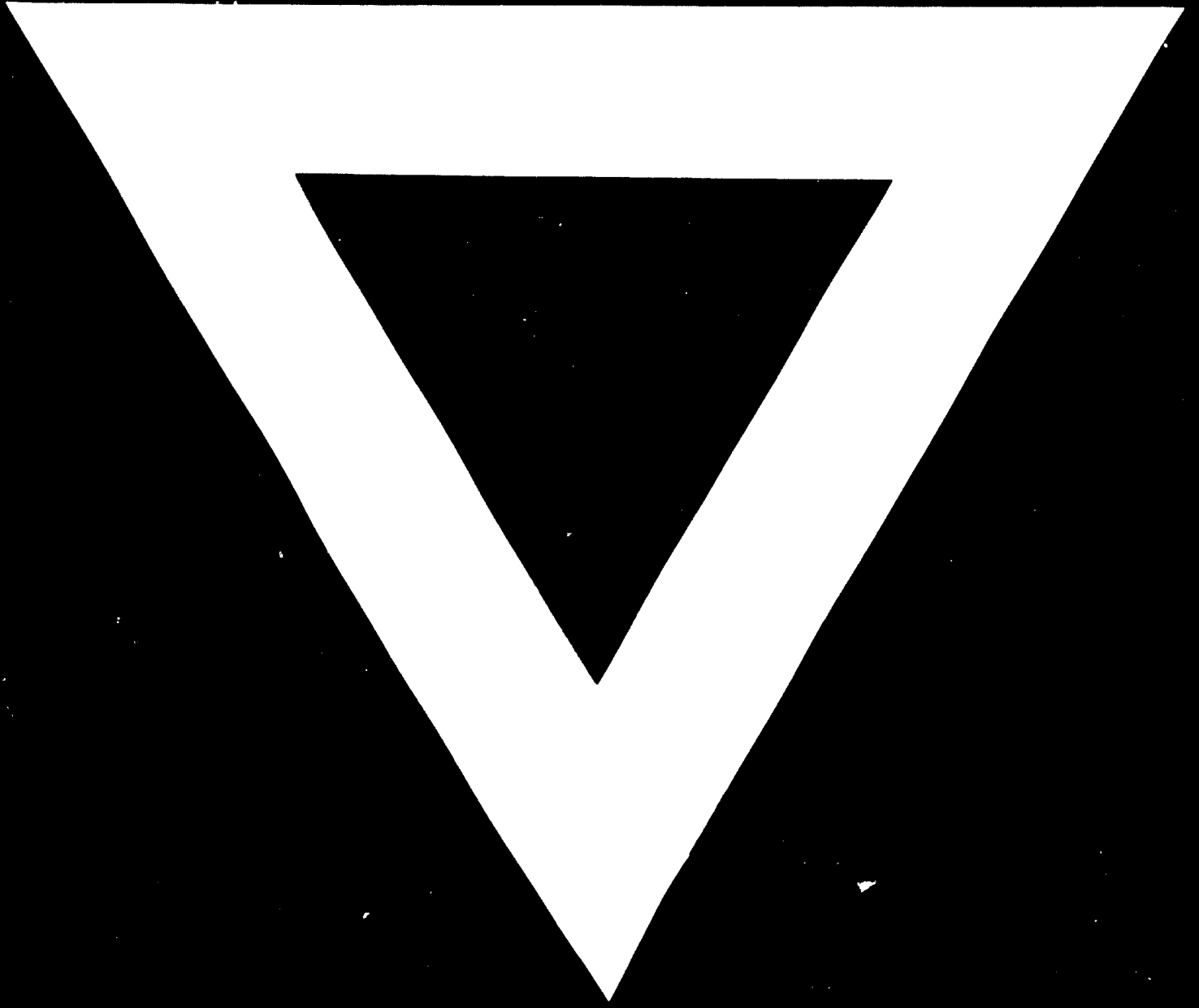
25.- The second major task relates to the association of regional coordinators with the establishment and working of the new Afro-Asian Centre for Information and Consultancy Services. As already explained, the matter is reported on in Doc: ECU/VII/2-17. In parenthesis, this association must cover all field operations, including studies, recruitment of experts and sub-contracting.

26.- It is hoped that immediately after the formal designation of the coordinators, they will meet, during the Conference, to consider their work programme. The Centre will place at their disposal all the available

material to enable them jointly to chart an appropriate course.

27.- Finally, it cannot be too greatly emphasized that the work of the coordinators is vital to the proper functioning and ultimate success of AFRASEC Regional Cooperation for Development. They have heavy responsibilities to discharge, in the service of the two great continents of Africa and Asia.





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