

DELIBERATIONS OF THE MEETING

11. After receiving and discussing background information, the meeting was asked first to reach a decision as to whether an Association should be established. Many arguments in favour were voiced by delegates, and none against. The meeting recognized that the formation of an international Association presupposed that there was an international dimension to the interests of the members, and agreed that this dimension was certainly present for the providers of non-university tertiary education. It agreed, secondly, that an Association would help to promote a better understanding of the role and needs of technical education; and thirdly, that it would encourage co-operation over the economical use of resources and so make a real contribution to development. After further discussion, it was unanimously resolved "that this meeting recognizes the need for a Commonwealth association of polytechnics in Africa and calls for its early establishment."

WHAT KIND OF AN ASSOCIATION?

12. In order to arrive at conclusions about the nature of the Association it wished to establish, the meeting was invited first to consider its desirable aims and objects. It had before it a Secretariat paper CAP/77/WP2, "Notes on aims and objects of some existing associations". This paper included a summary of the aims and objects of nine associations that had something in common with a possible "CAPA". Some of these associations were national, others international and others regional; they included three university associations. An important difference among those listed was that some were associations of institutions and others were associations of heads of institutions. The meeting was particularly fortunate in having Dr. Tolley present to guide it, since he had been involved as an officer or honorary officer in the formation or the running of all three of the British national associations.

13. Eleven possible aims and objects summarized in the Secretariat paper were:

- (1) Promotion of common interests through collective action.
- (2) Discussion of matters of common concern.
- (3) Representation on relevant bodies.
- (4) Exchange of information and publications.
- (5) Provision of common services.
- (6) Study of problems and needs of member institutions.
- (7) Development of post-secondary education and its institutions.
- (8) Development of syllabuses, curricula and examinations.

- (9) Staff and student exchange.
- (10) Administration of scholarships and fellowships scheme(s)
- (11) Protection and promotion of members' status.

In addition, the various associations that were looked at had mentioned various other topics as being of major concern to them, including manpower studies, teaching methods, research, sport, student careers and counselling, industrial liaison, the organization and management of institutions, and staff development.

14. In order to focus the attention of participants on a specific and not too ambitious range of aims and objects which would include as much as possible of the foregoing, the Secretariat submitted as an addendum to CAP/77/WP2 "a set of aims and objects suggested by the Commonwealth Secretariat." There was considerable discussion about priorities, in terms not so much of what should be done first, but of what it was realistic to attempt. It was felt that in some respects the summarized aims and objects of the nine associations were too long, and the Secretariat's addendum too short. In particular, it was felt that a reference should be included to the possible role of the Association in relation to national and industrial development. The meeting agreed to make minor amendments to the set of aims and objects in the Secretariat's addendum and to make additions which had the effect of developing it to read as follows:

- (1) To stimulate exchanges of experience and ideas by providing a forum for discussion of matters of common interest and arranging meetings, conferences and seminars.
- (2) To study and improve the content and methods of teaching in polytechnics and comparable institutions and in particular the associated curricula, syllabuses and examinations; also to study and improve the organization and management of such institutions.
- (3) To disseminate information and publications about matters of interest to member institutions, about the member institutions themselves, and about education in particular subject areas.
- (4) To facilitate the movement of students and trainees between member institutions and between countries, especially for courses not available in their own countries, and, if so agreed, to administer or help to administer a programme of fellowships; also to facilitate exchanges of students and of staff.
- (5) To study in co-operation with governments and industry the problems and needs of technical and vocational education aimed at national and industrial development, and in particular to study manpower and training needs associated with such development and with the transfer and development of technology.
- (6) To provide for member institutions such common services, for example a documentation or teaching equipment centre, as may from time to time be agreed.
- (7) To collaborate in any other ways agreed by member institutions to advance their common educational interests.

These aims and objects were unanimously adopted by the meeting.

Membership and Definitions

15. The meeting next considered the possible membership of the proposed Association, relating its discussion to sections 2 and 3 of the paper CAP/77/WP3. It was pointed out that membership had three different aspects: which countries' institutions?; what type(s) of institution?; and, the institutions themselves, or their principals? Before discussing these questions the meeting learned that the Commonwealth Secretariat, through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation, would probably be in a position to offer some initial financial help for an Association of institutions yet to be defined in Commonwealth African countries; and that it might also be willing to give continuing help in the form of fellowships if the Association when formed should launch a programme of fellowships between Commonwealth African countries. The meeting was reminded that the proposals in this connection of the Seventh Commonwealth Education Conference in Accra were made in the context of technician institutions and not in that of craft and trade institutions. The point was made that a fundamental criterion for membership was community of interest; delegates would no doubt wish to decide what particular activities of what particular category or categories of colleges most justified their associating together.

16. Statements were made during the discussion by the observers on behalf of UNESCO, the ECA, and the Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique. Dr. Kahr said that UNESCO had much experience in forming associations both international and regional; and that UNESCO would wish to be associated with the association now proposed, feeling that in the long run it might become an association wider than the Commonwealth; he hoped that the meeting would draw on UNESCO experience; and there might be ways in which UNESCO could later help financially. Mr. Edokpayi, for the ECA, also expressed great interest in the proposal, considering it to be well in line with accepted African development strategy, that is to say development through co-operation. But he pointed out that in Africa there were, in addition to fourteen Commonwealth countries, some 20 to 24 francophone countries and about ten others. There were, he thought, strong arguments in favour of a pan-African association; true, there was something of a language barrier, but this might yield gradually. He was happy about the Commonwealth initiative, but expressed the hope that the Commonwealth Association would be flexible and would keep the door open for wider membership, and that the possibility of a pan-African Association would be explored as soon as practicable.

17. Mrs. Gingras told the meeting that the Agence, which was founded in 1970, had functions in relation to francophone countries which were similar to those of the Commonwealth Secretariat in relation to Commonwealth countries. It embraced 28 French-speaking countries, 19 of them in Africa. The Agence was much interested in the proposed Association, but wished to consult its members about the possibility of setting up a similar association and would then look at how this would relate with a Commonwealth association in the formation of a pan-African association.

18. In the absence of an observer representing the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (which covers a variety of post-secondary institutions), it was reported that this Association hoped that there would eventually be a pan-Commonwealth Association of Colleges, which might include the members of an African Regional Association.

19. The meeting agreed that it would be consistent with the conclusions it had reached so far that the Association it wished to establish would be an association of institutions and not of principals, though it would probably

be their principals who would normally represent them at meetings and on other occasions.

20. The consensus of the meeting was that the Association of polytechnics and comparable colleges to be formed in accordance with its Resolution (para. 11) should be entitled at least for the time being The Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (hereafter CAPA), and that the options should be kept open for links or mergers with institutions or associations of insitutions in a wider range of countries, for example, non-Commonwealth countries in Africa, or Commonwealth countries outside Africa.

21. There was considerable discussion aimed at defining the institutions eligible for membership. No one wished it to be restricted to institutions bearing the name "polytechnic", but there was general agreement that there would be danger in extending it too generally, for example to agricultural colleges or teachers' colleges. However, in the total field of higher technical and vocational education, it was felt that colleges of other types had valuable contributions to make and ought not to be excluded from some sort of relationship, and that a category of associate membership ought therefore to be considered.

22. The meeting finally decided that the eligibility of polytechnics and comparable institutions for full membership should be determined by the criteria (a) that they were post-secondary, (b) that they operated under the aegis of an appropriate Ministry, and (c) that they offered courses of a technical, vocational and general nature with a substantial commitment to technician work in more than one discipline (or to higher technician work in a country where there are two levels of certification for technicians).

23. It was agreed that criteria for eligibility for an associate membership should be considered at a later stage.

Constitution

24. The meeting took into consideration the paragraphs of its working paper CAP/77/WP3 relating to constitutional matters; and took note of the characteristic structures of the 11 associations that the Secretariat had examined in this connection. It was suggested that the meeting should adopt guidelines sufficiently precise to enable the Secretariat to draft a constitution in detail, but the meeting felt that it would be more satisfactory if the matter could be dealt with at greater leisure by a constitution drafting committee; and agreed after some discussion that such a committee consisting of one member from each of the nine delegations present, with a quorum of five, should be set up, and should meet in an African country as early as possible in 1978. It also agreed that the question whether the services of an adviser or a consultant would be needed should be left to the Secretariat.

25. The following were invited and agreed to be members:

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| 1. | Kenya | - | Mr. P.G. King'ori |
| 2. | Lesotho | - | Mr. M.T. Tlebere |
| 3. | Malawi | - | Mr. J. Oulton |
| 4. | Nigeria | - | Dr. O.A. Ajayi |
| 5. | Seychelles | - | Mrs. M. Choppy |

6.	Sierra Leone	-	Mr. H.J. Jenkins
7.	Swaziland	-	Mr. S.B. Dube
8.	Tanzania	-	Mr. O.H. Bwanakheri
9.	Uganda	-	Mr. N. Balyamujura

Dr. Ajayi (Nigeria) was appointed chairman. The meeting recognized that the drafting committee must produce a working constitution that would enable the Association to function in practice and must therefore include financial arrangements.

Finance

26. The meeting was conscious of the danger of launching an Association as soon as funds were in sight for meeting initial costs and for paying modest overheads for an indefinite period; and without the assurance that the Association would be able to attract additional funds for a programme of constructive activities.

27. A promise of help in the initial stages had been received from the Commonwealth Secretariat, which felt it appropriate, through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation, to provide some financial support to help get the Association under way. In announcing this the Secretariat had made it clear that there was no question of its bearing the full cost of the Association's administrative and programme budgets, or of its agreeing to be the sole source of external funding. The Secretariat's view was that the aim should be to involve participating countries and donor agencies, bilateral and multilateral, in the overall funding.

28. The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation was prepared to provide support for a meeting to inaugurate the Association; to consider supporting an appointment in the Association's secretariat on either an honorarium or a part-time or full-time basis for a period of two years; and to fund bursaries for technician courses in Commonwealth African countries other than the students' own. (The suggestion was that up to £25,000 might be available in the first year for this purpose and £50,000 in the second year; the position would then be reviewed in the light of the demand for bursaries and the resources available to the CFTC).

29. The meeting received these offers of assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat gratefully, and proceeded to consider other possibilities for financing overheads and the programme of the Association on a continuing basis. It noted the information in paragraph 6 of the paper CAP/77/WP3, which revealed a variety of different ways of financing comparable associations. The general basis was a subscription from each member institution, and subscriptions were normally small where there were large numbers of member institutions. The meeting bore in mind that CAPA might have only about 30-40 members in the first place, and perhaps some associate members. The cost of a single meeting in Africa might well be several times a subscription income for a whole year and there was therefore a need to look for funds additional to such income.

30. The meeting invited Dr. Tolley to report the experience of certain associations in the United Kingdom which he had served as an officer. He gave valuable information, here summarized, about the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), the Committee of Directors of Poly-

technics (CDP), and the Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education (ACFHE).

(i) The secretariat of the CVCP operates on a substantial scale and is financed by contributions of a few thousand pounds annually from each university. Premises are provided by the University of London. Travel costs to meetings are borne by individual members of the Committee and their universities.

(ii) The secretariat of the CDP operates on a much smaller scale than that of the CVCP. Finance for the secretariat of five to seven staff is provided from central national funds of the Advanced Further Education Pool. The annual budget is agreed between the CDP and the administrators of the Pool. Travel costs to meetings are met by the Directors themselves from their own polytechnic budgets. There is also some income from the sale of publications.

(iii) The ACFHE has a much larger number of institutions in membership than the two other bodies referred to and is an association of colleges, not of heads of colleges. The 500 or so colleges in membership each pay £20 annual subscription. This income is used to finance two conferences annually and to pay travel and subsistence costs of Council members. There is also a relatively substantial income from the sale of publications.

31. The meeting noted some relevant aids to economical operation, for example the sale of publications (which might not be an early development) and the secretariat's location in an institution which does not charge rent. However, the main expense associated more with an African than with a U.K. association would be that of long-distance travelling. The meeting noted that its own costs (borne by the CFTC) of coming together from all parts of Africa and being accommodated in Nairobi might amount to as much as £9,000. In Nigeria where distances were quite substantial the cost of meetings of the Council of Heads of Technological Institutions was stated to be borne by each institution; there was a rotating secretariat and each institution in turn bore the costs of running it. If governments, as well as individual member institutions, could be persuaded to contribute towards the costs of overheads, of travelling and of projects, the financial commitment of both could be kept down to a realistic level. It was stated that at least one government would almost certainly follow its normal practice of providing travelling expenses for delegates.

32. It was agreed that the most immediate and practical contribution that could be offered by governments and/or prospective founder members would be to play host either to the inaugural meeting or to an interim secretariat or to both. The possibility that UNESCO might like to set up some relationship with the Association and contribute towards some of the expenses was noted with gratitude.

33. Technical questions arose about the raising and banking of funds for an international organization in Africa. It was agreed that the experience of the AAU might provide some useful guidance, and it was noted that the ECA, though not a funding organization, had been involved in launching African associations that might offer precedents.

34. In concluding its sessions to consider "what kind of an association", the meeting touched on the Association's legal status, and organizations were noted that could be looked at in this connection, some of them established or operated under the auspices of UNESCO, the East African

Community, the ECA, or the Commonwealth Secretariat; also the AAU itself. It was felt that legal incorporation would probably not prove necessary and the constitution would suffice; the laws of a host country would always have to be complied with. The meeting recommended that the Commonwealth Secretariat should provide legal advice on the desirable legal status of the Association.

INAUGURAL ARRANGEMENTS AND INTERIM SECRETARIAT

35. Having noted that the Commonwealth Secretariat could assist with the cost of an inaugural meeting some time in the second half of 1978, the meeting proceeded to consider who should be invited to it and who should perform initial secretarial functions. Since there would be in the first place a need for considerable consultation with governments, it was thought appropriate that secretarial functions should be performed by the Commonwealth Secretariat initially, but for as short a time as possible, since the Secretariat would not be close enough to the needs and priorities to respond to them quickly. The meeting thought it desirable on all grounds that the Association's secretariat should be located as soon as possible in one of the member institutions, and agreed to ask the Commonwealth Secretariat, when it circulated the report of the present meeting to governments, to seek volunteers from among possible founder members for accomodating the Association's secretariat, either initially or permanently, and volunteers for playing host to the inaugural meeting.

36. The meeting agreed to ask the committee drafting the constitution to decide the details of the inauguration. However, it warmly welcomed suggestions by Mr. Edökpayi, drawing upon the experience of ECA in helping to organize similar inaugurations, about the format of the meeting. He suggested that the meeting, on the first day, should be informal and devoted mainly to discussing the draft constitution, and getting it ready for the formal meeting. Members would also want to have consultations among themselves to consider, *inter alia*, prospective members. On the second day the formal inauguration meeting would take place, and there would be a motion to adopt the constitution, followed by its signing by the founder members. On the third day, members would elect the officers and possibly an executive committee. On the fourth day the first general meeting of the Association would be held, and might last a further day, during which a programme, activities, projects, etc. would be discussed. Finally the first meeting of the executive committee would take place.

37. This suggested format met with general approval. Possible variants were also suggested; for example that the adoption of the constitution should take place on the first day and the Annual General Meeting on the second, so that the rest of the time could be used to discuss the business of the Association. It was also suggested that the inauguration might be the occasion for a keynote address on some such topic as the role of the polytechnics in national development.

38. The meeting took the view that, as on the present occasion, government officials should be invited to participate, to help secure the support of ministries.

39. Discussion of the inauguration again raised the question of founder membership, and it was agreed that the help of governments would be

needed to complete a list of institutions considered eligible. The meeting was content that the Commonwealth Secretariat should use the guidelines provided by the meeting's conclusions on membership to reach decisions, after receiving the necessary information and advice from governments, as to which institutions should be represented at the meeting and the signing of the constitution.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

40. The meeting noted that the relations of the more autonomous colleges with their governments could be regarded as "external relations", which would not be the case for fully governmental institutions. However that might be, the representation of governments at the present meeting and at the inaugural meeting would help to attract the support and confidence of governments and ensure close and cordial relations. The point was made that relationships with other educational institutions would depend on the spectrum covered by the membership; but there would be a need for close relations with other categories of technical and post-secondary institution and with universities and university associations.

41. The meeting was delighted to learn that UNESCO would wish to establish a relationship with the Association. It expected that much advantage would be derived from keeping in close touch with UNESCO, and with the ECA and l'Agence; with the British, Canadian, Australian and Nigerian associations already looked at; with the various engineering bodies (national, regional and Commonwealth); with the ILO, UNIDO, and the OAU; with specialist African associations including two currently projected by the ECA (namely the African Regional Centre for the Development, Adaptation and Transfer of Technology, and the African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research); and with all relevant donor organizations.

42. Among the most important relationships the meeting rated those with organizations having an interest in the operation of fellowship programmes; and for this purpose there would be a need to look closely at the AAU model and that of the Association of Commonwealth Universities. The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation was already in a position to fund movements for education and training between Commonwealth developing countries, and the Association could perhaps help administer a CFTC-funded programme which would intensify activity in the polytechnic area; but the Fund had made it clear that it would not wish to be the sole provider of finance for fellowships, and it would be appropriate if there were other donors, both international and bilateral. The meeting recognized that certain courses could only be run economically on a Commonwealth regional basis and that exchanges through fellowships could contribute to the elimination of uneconomic duplication.

IMMEDIATE NEEDS AND INITIAL PROGRAMME

43. The meeting concluded its deliberations with an informal discussion about immediate needs and an initial programme, taken together. It did not wish to make formal recommendations which might tie the hands of the inaugural meeting. However, much emphasis was placed by delegates on co-operation over staff development; there was felt to be a serious lack of facilities for the pre-service and in-service training of teachers and other staff for polytechnics, and the recommendation of the Seventh Commonwealth Education Conference for some kind of technical education staff college facilities in Africa was noted with satisfaction. In general terms, there was agreed to be real scope for improving teaching through effective co-operative action, including exchanges of staff, both between developing countries and between developing countries and developed countries; in the latter case the point was made that the developed countries could benefit in terms of the development of their own staff, and the links that were forged would be of mutual value.

44. The meeting recognized that the immediate needs that could be catered for in any initial programme must lie within the agreed aims and objects but that not all these aims and objects could, initially, be pursued at the same time. Fields for priority action or study were thought likely to include curricula and syllabuses; inter-visiting; building and equipping institutions; and fellowships. The last in particular could be given a high priority in the knowledge that at least some fellowships could be funded immediately by the CFTC. In this connection, the point was made that placements of fellows in the industry of other countries might often be as useful as placements in their educational institutions. In general, it was agreed that the initial programme should be so structured that it could be seen by members and governments to be related to the agreed aims and objects; to constitute a reasonable set of activities; and to give the most weight to those needs that were of the greatest general interest.