

**Report of the  
Planning Meeting proposing  
a Commonwealth  
Association of Polytechnics  
in Africa**

6-9 December 1977, Nairobi



**Commonwealth Secretariat**

REPORT OF THE PLANNING MEETING  
PROPOSING  
A COMMONWEALTH ASSOCIATION OF POLYTECHNICS IN AFRICA

Nairobi, 6 - 9 December 1977

COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

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## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. That an Association should be formed.
2. That it should be entitled The Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa.
3. That options should be kept open for links or mergers with institutions or associations of institutions in a wider range of countries, for example, non-Commonwealth countries in Africa, or Commonwealth countries outside Africa.
4. That the Association should have the aims and objects set out in paragraph 14 of the report of the Meeting.
5. That "Polytechnics" for the purpose of the Association should be defined as institutions that are post-secondary, are approved by Ministries of Education, and offer 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).
6. That membership of the Association should be open to institutions so defined in the Commonwealth countries of Africa including Mauritius and the Seychelles.
7. That a status of associate member should be considered for selected institutions that do not satisfy the criteria in 5 above.
8. That a constitution for the Association should be drafted by a committee consisting of nine named participants in the Meeting, drawn from nine countries.
9. That the draft constitution should be presented to and adopted by an inaugural meeting of the Association to be held in 1978.
10. That some essential secretariat functions should be performed by the Commonwealth Secretariat until the Association is formally constituted.
11. That as many founder members as possible should be identified by the Commonwealth Secretariat, through governments, and invited to send representatives to the inaugural meeting.
12. That governments should at the same time be asked to consult possible founder members as to their willingness to play host either to the inaugural meeting or to an interim secretariat or to both.
13. That the Commonwealth Secretariat should provide legal advice on the desirable legal status of the Association.
14. That working relations should be established with all relevant organizations, national and international, governmental and non-governmental, especially those funding fellowships, with a view to identifying gaps in provision which the Association might help to fill.

## BACKGROUND

1. In many Commonwealth African countries, polytechnics and other technical institutions began to teach at the technician level only during the sixties and early seventies. It soon became apparent that middle-level education - especially in engineering and technology - was very expensive, that relatively small numbers of technicians in particular categories were required by most of the countries, and that many new problems arose at this level of technician education. All this began to suggest that much closer co-operation between countries and between educational institutions was now needed. Moreover, the possibility of more general educational benefits accruing to them if they shared their experiences and to some extent their resources began to be seen by the polytechnics and comparable post-secondary colleges.

2. The need for co-operation in this area has in consequence been emphasized at Commonwealth Education Conferences and in recent activities of the Commonwealth Secretariat. Publications and surveys of the Education Division have drawn attention to it, as did a Commonwealth regional seminar on "Technical Education and Industry" held in Hong Kong in October 1976. In 1974 the CFTC had convened a regional seminar for Commonwealth African countries, in Nairobi, concerning its education and training programme. This seminar considered a suggestion (among many others) that the feasibility of setting up an association of African technical institutions, analogous to the Association of African Universities, might be explored. It went on to note the Inter-Af Scholarship Programme operated by the AAU and suggested that "a parallel scheme, covering technical and professional training, might contribute significantly to the acceleration of manpower training programmes. If this proposal found favour, the CFTC would be prepared to consider playing a part in the setting up of a small secretariat for the association for an initial period, and providing education and training awards in support of the Association's scholarship programme."

3. During consideration of its report, some of the issues raised at the seminar were clarified. It was not felt that the degree of autonomy of polytechnics and colleges was a critical consideration; several that might be considered eligible for membership of an association had only a small degree of autonomy or none at all, while others had a degree of autonomy comparable with that of typical universities. It was considered that the former could, without prejudice to the association (which would be completely voluntary), join with the concurrence of their governmental authorities; and that most governments would welcome the opportunities provided by such an association for exchanges of information, experience and ideas, and for joint activities.

4. Consideration was also given to a suggestion that the Commonwealth Secretariat through the CFTC already provided adequately for access to other developing countries' technical institutions, and it was concluded that the Secretariat, which places a few students in polytechnics and comparable institutions in developing countries other than their own, could only benefit from the existence of an association which could provide support for this particular function. But the objectives that began to be envisaged for an association, and the common interests of the polytechnics, were seen to range over a far wider set of functions than simply the placement function. (The

AAU was not in the foreseeable future likely to be extending its activities, as had been suggested, to embrace certain technical institutions; and it was recognized that the objectives, interests and priorities of technical institutions were different from, though complementary to, those of universities).

5. The time therefore seemed ripe, in 1976, to place proposals for a regional association before the Seventh Commonwealth Education Conference due to meet in Accra in March 1977. Africa was chosen as the first region for which to propose such an association because of the relatively homogeneous nature and development of the polytechnics and polytechnic-type institutions in Commonwealth African countries. During the 1960s and early 1970s a dozen polytechnics in these countries had either been founded under that title or been renamed polytechnics after being developed out of technical institutes or colleges; and a dozen other institutions operating under other titles had the same role and character as polytechnics. The general pattern is that the smaller countries have only one institution each of polytechnic status, the medium-sized countries two or three, and Nigeria at least a dozen; these are essentially post-secondary institutions, for the education and training of technicians and other middle-level personnel; some of them have a "tail" of craft courses and one or two a "top" of degree courses. The two main considerations that pointed to the need for co-operative action were, first, that few kinds of higher technician are required by any one country in sufficient numbers to make certain educational courses economically viable for that country alone, therefore it would make sense to develop these courses in co-operation with other countries and send a few technicians in specialized areas to those countries; and second, that technician education and training is still in its infancy, and no substantial corpus of knowledge or experience of it exists in ministries or institutions. Polytechnics therefore need outside influences and exchanges among themselves to help them work out the best educational, organizational and administrative arrangements needed to attain their objectives successfully.

6. The Accra Conference had no hesitation in endorsing the proposition that an association of polytechnics in Commonwealth African countries could make a valuable contribution to co-operation in this area; and the Conference report (see paper CAP/77/WP1) set out the relevant recommendations of the Conference and the argument leading up to it. African countries were of course represented on the working committee on technical education which placed its recommendations before the Conference for endorsement; and all Commonwealth African countries subscribed to this endorsement. The recommendation that appeared in the Conference's Summary of Recommendations (page 6 of the Report) reads as follows:

6 (c) A meeting be convened to consider the establishment of an association of polytechnics in Commonwealth African countries.

7. After the Conference, interest in an association for Commonwealth African countries was expressed by or on behalf of a wider range of colleges than had been expected. Also, a suggestion that a pan-Commonwealth association of colleges might be formed at some time in the future was put forward by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, informally, to the Commonwealth Foundation. The Secretariat felt that this longer-term possibility should be brought to the attention of the proposed meeting, and that the ACCC would have interesting experience of its own to offer. The Secretariat also took note of the interest in this project expressed to the Conference by l'Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique and the Economic Commission for Africa, and of the Conference's wish that the possibility be considered of inviting francophone and other non-

Commonwealth institutions to consider involvement in one way or another.

8. The Conference having recommended that the proposed meeting should be convened in Kenya or Nigeria and should consist of the directors or principals of the polytechnics and comparable institutions that might suitably become founder members, the Secretariat approached the Government of Kenya to enquire whether it would be willing to host the meeting, perhaps in association with the Kenya Polytechnic; and both the Government and the Polytechnic readily agreed. The Secretariat felt that, in addition to the directors or principals, governments might well wish to be represented by senior officials, recognizing that polytechnics and colleges are in some cases under direct government control and that governments might later be asked to assist with the funding of the proposed association; and invitations were issued accordingly.

9. All governments of Commonwealth African countries including the governments of Mauritius and the Seychelles were invited to nominate delegates. The institutions which might be represented by their principals or directors were not closely defined; but they had to be essentially post-secondary institutions. The meeting was arranged to take place between 6 and 9 December 1977, at the Kenya Polytechnic, the delegates being accommodated at the Panafric Hotel. Acceptances were received from nine countries - Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho, Swaziland and the Seychelles. In the event the Zambian delegation was unable to attend, as were delegates from Ghana and Mauritius, whose governments had indicated just before the meeting that they would like to be represented; but Uganda, also a late acceptor, was represented by two delegates.

10. Four organizations - UNESCO, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique, and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges - accepted invitations to send observers. The nominee of the last named was unfortunately unable to attend. By virtue of his wide knowledge and experience in this area, the Rev. Dr. George Tolley, Principal of the Sheffield City Polytechnic and Honorary Secretary of the Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education (UK), was invited to assist the meeting as a resource person. A list of participants appears on page 25.

## 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:

- |    |            |   |                   |
|----|------------|---|-------------------|
| 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 accommodating 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.

## APPENDIX 1 (CAP/77/WP1)

### EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE SEVENTH COMMONWEALTH EDUCATION CONFERENCE

43. Many polytechnics, and their principals or directors personally, are far from clear about the curricula, organization and administration needed to attain their objectives successfully, and feel somewhat isolated, especially where they are unique in their countries. Several have suggested some form of association, and it is considered that a viable and useful association can best be achieved in Africa in the first place. An important role might be played by Nigeria, and the relevant authorities in that country are thought likely to welcome Nigerian participation.

44. An Association is proposed for this region in the first place because the ground appears to be ready for it, but without prejudice to the formation of associations in other regions or on a pan-Commonwealth basis. It is noted that during the 1960s and 1970s at least a dozen polytechnics and a number of comparable institutions operating under other titles have been established or developed out of smaller technical institutions in Commonwealth African countries, mainly to provide post-secondary courses for technicians and other middle-level personnel. Most of these institutions confine themselves to traditional diploma courses in mechanical and electrical engineering and building. However, new and more specialized needs are constantly emerging which cannot be met economically without co-operation between countries and between institutions; and there are many problems inherent in the education and training of technicians, who in many countries are a "new breed".

45. Such an Association would help to remove any sense of isolation of individual institutions, particularly in small countries, by enabling them to compare notes and sometimes co-operate actively over their programmes, to effect exchanges of staff and students, and to work together on many other aspects of their educational provision, their organizational and administrative development, and their corporate life. At the same time, it is recognized that the stage has not been reached where the constitution of such an Association could go ahead without further consultation. Moreover, the Conference has been informed of the interest of l'Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique and of the Economic Commission for Africa both in this project and in the staff college project, and the possibility should therefore be considered of inviting francophone and other non-Commonwealth institutions to consider involvement in one way or another; the link that already exists between the Commonwealth Secretariat and those agencies can be utilized to this end. There should also be consultation with relevant teachers associations which have a legitimate interest.

46. The Conference warmly welcomes the proposal that an Association of Polytechnics in Commonwealth Africa be established, and recommends:

- (a) That as a preliminary to any decision to adopt a constitution and proceed with the practical work of setting up an Association of Polytechnics in Commonwealth Africa, the Commonwealth Secretariat in consultation with the governments concerned convene a meeting in Kenya

or Nigeria of the directors or principals of the polytechnics and comparable institutions which might suitably become founder members.

(b) That the Commonwealth Secretariat proceed with consultations with the appropriate authorities about the inclusion of institutions in non-Commonwealth countries.

## APPENDIX 2 (CAP/77/WP2)

### NOTES ON AIMS AND OBJECTS OF SOME EXISTING ASSOCIATIONS

1. Throughout the world, educational institutions have formed themselves into associations for a variety of different purposes: to enable them to fulfil their functions better; to project a better public image; to protect themselves against attacks; and to improve the education they provide through better teaching, better courses, better management, better examinations, better external relations and so on. The following paragraphs constitute a summary of the aims and objects of nine associations that have something in common with a possible association of polytechnics and colleges in Commonwealth African countries. They are:

Britain: Committee of Directors of Polytechnics (CDP).

Britain: Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education (ACFHE).

Britain: Association of Principals of Colleges (APC).

Commonwealth: Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU).

Africa: Association of African Universities (AAU).

Caribbean: Association of Caribbean Universities and Research Institutes (UNICA).

Australia: Australian Conference of Principals of Colleges of Advanced Education (ACPCAE).

Canada: Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC).

Nigeria: Council of Heads of Technological Institutions (CHTI).

2. This does not purport to include all relevant associations in Commonwealth countries. Some associations of universities are conspicuously missing, as it was thought best to concentrate on the non-university sector. The only international associations are associations of universities (though the ACFHE and APC have "overseas" members), and they differ in important respects from national associations, from non-university associations, and from each other - the ACU relates, geographically, only to Commonwealth countries, and the AAU and UNICA only to countries in particular regions. Another important difference among those listed is that some are associations of institutions and others associations of heads of institutions.

#### The Promotion of Common Interests Through Collective Action

3. This is stated, in general terms, as an aim of the CDP and the ACPCAE. The APC "acts together with other educational, industrial, commercial, professional and other bodies on such occasions and in such matters as the Council of the Association shall approve". The ACFHE

exists partly "to facilitate concordant action amongst their governing bodies". The Heads of African Universities established the AAU in an awareness "that many of the problems encountered can be solved by developing a system under which there is effective co-operation and consultation among the institutions concerned".

#### Discussion of Matters of Common Interest

4. In the case of some associations this is stated as the function of providing a forum or, more specifically, arranging seminars and conferences. The CDP says one of its basic objects is: "To provide a forum for discussion of matters of common interest". CPCAE: "To provide a means whereby principals of colleges counsel together on matters of concern to colleges...." ACFHE: "To provide a forum for discussion...." With the more specific aim of providing seminars and conferences, the AAU is enjoined: "(g) To organize, encourage and support seminars and conferences between African university teachers, administrators and others dealing with problems of higher education in Africa". The ACU, in pursuance of its aim to promote contact and co-operation between the universities of the Commonwealth, "organizes conferences in many parts of the world".

#### Representation on Relevant Bodies

5. The CDP states that "representatives of the Committee maintain a dialogue with all relevant bodies, notably central and local government, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, the Research Councils, relevant teacher organizations, and the student unions. CDP members serve in an individual or corporate capacity on a very wide range of national and international committees concerned with education itself or with educational aspects of industry and commerce". The APC "appoints members of the Association to serve upon such educational, professional or other bodies and the governing bodies and committees thereof as the Council of the Association shall by resolution determine". The ACFHE nominates representatives to serve on a very large number of advisory committees of the City and Guilds of London Institute, on the many joint committees for national certificates, and on associations or committees of professions, occupations and industries.

#### The Exchange of Information and Publications

6. This object includes information and publications about the member institutions and for the member institutions; it also includes, in the case of some associations, information and publications about particular areas of education or particular geographical areas (e.g. the Caribbean). The CDP "undertakes a range of corporate activities in the fields of publicity and produces reports and surveys on polytechnic developments". The ACPCAE has among its objects "to collect and disseminate to colleges information on matters of collective interest", and "to collect, compile, disseminate and distribute amongst members and the public, information of common concern to colleges". The APC has among its objects "to prepare, or cause to be prepared, and to make available to such persons and upon such terms as the Council ... shall determine, papers, pamphlets, reports and publications dealing with the work, interests or functions of the Association". UNICA produces a wide range of publications, including a directory of available resources in educational technology, "The Food Supply and the Caribbean Universities", and a Caribbean Educational Bulletin. The AAU has among its purposes "(b) To collect, classify and disseminate information on higher

education and research, particularly in Africa". The ACU "provides information about the universities of the Commonwealth, and about fellowships and scholarships for travel between them, through its publications (especially the Commonwealth Universities Yearbook and two awards guides) and a personal information service". The ACCC's International Office aims "to collect and disseminate information on the international interests and programme expertise of Canadian colleges".

#### The Provision of Common Services

7. The CDP "undertakes a wide variety of statistical surveys to furnish CDP members and outside bodies with comparative data on the 30 polytechnics". The ACU (helped by its location in London) provides a service for recruiting expatriate staff: "It promotes the movement of staff between Commonwealth universities by helping member institutions to fill vacant academic posts"; "in addition to acting as an agent in London for individual member universities on their direct instructions e.g. in relation to staff appointments, it provides general services such as those of its publications and information department". The ACU has a library of 7,000 volumes.

#### The Study of Problems and Needs of Member Institutions

8. The ACPCAE has among its objects "To study the problems and needs of Colleges of Advanced Education, their relations with other educational institutions, with governments, and with the community". The AAU's purposes include "To study and make known the educational and related needs of African university institutions and as far as practicable to co-ordinate the means whereby those needs may be met".

#### The Development of Post-Secondary Education and its Institutions

9. The CHTI has as one of its objectives "policy guidance on technological education". The ACFHE has, as one objective, "To promote the development of further and higher education"; "it is always asked to submit comments to committees and commissions appointed to consider matters which affect the further and higher education system". The ACPCAE is enjoined to consult and liaise with educational bodies within Australia and overseas in the interest of promoting the development of education and in particular post-secondary education. One of CDP's basic objectives is "to contribute to the evolution of policy for the development of the polytechnics within the higher education system".

#### The Development of Syllabuses, Curricula and Examinations

10. One major area of concern of the CHTI is "examinations moderation and certification". The AAU has, as one of its broad purposes, "To promote co-operation among African institutions in curriculum development and in the determination of equivalence of degrees".

#### Staff and Student Exchange

11. The AAU has as one of its purposes "to promote exchanges, contacts and co-operation between university institutions in Africa". The ACU "Promotes the movement of staff between Commonwealth universities...

by a programme of academic exchanges between member institutions in developing countries". The ACCC "facilitates faculty/student/administrative exchanges and travel/study programmes abroad through co-operation with existing programmes and the development on new ones". UNICA "encourages exchange of staff and students".

### The Administration of Scholarship and Fellowship Schemes

12. The AAU sponsors and helps to administer a programme of awards called the Inter-African Universities Scholarship Programme (INTERAF), which provides opportunities for students to study at universities outside their own countries in fields of study that are not readily available at home. The ACU "assists the mobility of students between countries through its administration of a number of scholarship schemes, including the British part of the Commonwealth Scholarship & Fellowship Plan".

### Protection and Promotion of the Professional Status of Members

13. This is applicable only where the members are heads of institutions and not the institutions themselves. The APC has as one of its main objectives, "To communicate with and to inform members of the Association upon all such matters concerning the duties and interests of Principals of Colleges as the Council of the Association may deem expedient, and to take all such action as may be necessary to protect the professional status or interests of any member or of all its members".

14. Other topics mentioned in various statements made by the Associations about aims, objects and major areas of concern include manpower studies, teaching methods, research, sport, student careers, industrial liaison, organization and management of institutions, and staff development.

## APPENDIX 3 (CAP/77/WP3)

### NOTES ON CONSTITUTION, MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCING OF SOME EXISTING ASSOCIATIONS

#### General

1. Of the associations studied for the purposes of this meeting (see CAP/77/WP2) some are national, others Commonwealth, and others regional (African and Caribbean); these last of course include institutions in non-Commonwealth countries. The nature of the associations and their constitutions varies greatly between the three categories; but some features of each may be relevant to our present purposes. National associations may be, in theory at least, the simplest to constitute and easiest to run, as their members will probably have a great deal in common. It is also to be expected that, as between Commonwealth countries in a given region, institutions will be fairly homogeneous, have common characteristics and problems, and find it natural to work together for the promotion of common interests. This may not be so easy if an association embraces either (a) the whole Commonwealth, or (b) a region that includes non-Commonwealth countries; since the institutions themselves are likely to vary widely in character, organization or educational purposes. This will need to be borne in mind when questions of an association covering Africa as a whole or the Commonwealth as a whole are considered.

#### Membership

2. Some of the associations studied are associations of heads of institutions and others are associations of institutions. An example of the former is the Association of Principals of Colleges (Britain). Its membership consists of ordinary members, life members and honorary members; an ordinary member must be a "full-time Principal of a College approved by the Association for this purpose and concerned primarily with students over the age of 16 years". A second example is the Australian Conference of Principals of Colleges of Advanced Education. For the purposes of this Conference, a Principal is defined as "the person who for the time being is the Chief Executive Officer of a College", and a College is defined as "an institution that is or is known as or is funded by the Government of Australia or of a State of Australia as a College of Advanced Education". The Committee of Directors of Polytechnics (Britain) states that "all the directors of the thirty polytechnics designated in England and Wales are in full membership. There are also two observer members, one from Ulster Polytechnic, the other representing a group of the major Central Institutions and Colleges of Technology in Scotland". The membership of the Council of Heads of Technological Institutions in Nigeria is self-explanatory, but the Council's definition of "technological institutions" is not available.

3. In the other category - associations of institutions - the Association of Commonwealth Universities is "a voluntary society, incorporated by Royal Charter whose members are institutions of university standing in the various countries of the Commonwealth" (186 in number, in 1972). The members of the Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education (Britain) are "colleges which provide further and/or higher education in fields related to

the interests of the Association....Applications for membership are made on behalf of governing bodies of colleges; colleges in membership have three representatives of whom one shall be the principal and one is normally the chairman or a member of the governing body" (429 colleges in Britain and 25 overseas are members). The Association of African Universities consists of "universities and institutions of university rank in Africa".

### Definitions

4. National associations should logically provide fewer problems of definition for the purpose of membership than international associations. Nevertheless, very broad definitions of institutions eligible for membership have sometimes had to be used, especially in federal countries whose individual states or provinces have produced "type" colleges of their own. In some cases, colleges of widely varying types belong to the same association; in spite of the variations, the colleges clearly believe that they have enough common interests to benefit from associating together. Thus, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges includes, for example, the "Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology" typical of Ontario but not of the other Provinces; Institutes of Technology; colleges of education; colleges of agriculture; and monotronics. Similarly, the Australian Conference of Principals of Colleges of Advanced Education brings together colleges of which some (in all States) are called Colleges of Advanced Education; one or more in each State are Institutes of Technology; several are teachers' colleges and agricultural colleges; and several, like the Victorian College of Pharmacy and the Cumberland College of Health Sciences are monotronics.

5. Polytechnics in Britain have a particular set of characteristics. Here is the full description of "what they are" by the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics:

The establishment of the Polytechnics in the late 1960s marked a new departure in higher education in this country. They have been created as a result of Government policy...which aims to provide, within Polytechnics, higher education opportunities which are alternative to and complementary with the Universities. In all, there will be 30 Polytechnics...formally designated by the Secretary of State for Education and Science. The name "Polytechnic" does not adequately describe the purpose of these new institutions of higher education. They are not technical institutions. Just as no two Universities are alike, so Polytechnics differ, but they all have certain characteristics in common. These are:

1. They are broadly based academically, offering a wide range of courses in arts, business and social studies, science and technology and art and design.
2. They are large institutions, with large numbers of full-time students, drawn from all over the country, together with some part-time students.
3. Courses offered by Polytechnics are at various levels, catering for different academic abilities: postgraduate; degree courses; diploma and certificate courses at a level lower than that of a degree.
4. They are devoted entirely to courses of higher education.

They are, then, broadly based, comprehensive institutions of higher education.

6. It will be seen that in Britain the term "polytechnic" has quite recently acquired a specialized meaning. In developing countries of the Commonwealth, the characteristic polytechnic often derived from a British colonial model some time before the British definition implied a high proportion of degree courses. Very few if any of the polytechnics to be represented at the meeting run any degree courses at all. Of the eight institutions whose heads are members of the Council of Heads of Technological Institutions in Nigeria, three are called Polytechnics, three are called Colleges of Technology, one is a College of Science and Technology and one an Institute of Management and Technology. All these have common characteristics in that their work is mainly post-secondary, mainly in the area of engineering and technology, and mainly at the technician level. The other African polytechnics and colleges represented at the meeting, some of them the one and only post-secondary institution in their own countries, do not all conform to this pattern; but most of them have as a long-term aim development into something like the characteristic Nigerian or Kenyan polytechnic.

### Structure

7. The bigger associations studied operate through large structures normally consisting of a General Conference or Annual General Meeting, an Executive Board or Council, and a Secretariat. Of the big non-university associations, the ACFHE has a council controlling its affairs which consists of the President, the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Immediate Past Chairman, the Hon. Treasurer, the Hon. Secretary, one representative of each (regional) branch, and six elected members. The APC also has a council, consisting of the officers - the President, the Past Presidents for the two preceding years, the Vice-President (who is also the President elect), the Hon. Treasurer, the Hon. Secretary and two Deputy Hon. Secretaries - plus sixteen Branch representatives (two elected by each Branch) and the representatives of the Association on the Burnham Committee (which determines teachers' salary scales). The smaller Australian CPCAIE has an executive consisting of nine members, which the executive itself may increase to not more than 11 members; not more than two members must be drawn from any one State or Territory of Australia; and they are elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Conference. "The executive shall meet at such times and places as may be determined from time to time by it, and in the absence of any such determination at such times and places as the secretary on the instructions of the Chairman or on the requisition of a member of the executive shall notify the members thereof". In the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics, three standing committees composed exclusively of CDP members advise and make recommendations on particular areas of polytechnic business. In addition there are a number of specialized sub-committees. "Much of the burden of detailed representation on a range of related bodies falls upon the Hon. Officers and Standing Committee Chairman, who also meet as a group".

### Secretariats

8. Secretariats vary in size, depending mainly on the size of the membership; but the provision of special services also affects their size. The larger associations normally have a salaried Secretary-General and subordinate staff, and sometimes a post of Honorary Secretary as well, which appears to vary between an honorific appointment and one involving heavy responsibilities. The Secretariats of the larger associations do not necessarily have any physical connection with an educational institution; the affairs of the smaller associations are sometimes carried out from a room on the campus of one of the members, and little financial provision is needed for overheads. The ACU has a regular secretariat which is necessarily large; in addition to the Secretary-General it has a Senior Assistant

Secretary, two Assistant Secretaries, three Senior Administration Officers and a number of Administration Assistants and Executive Officers. But in addition, "one of the functions assumed by the Association is that of providing the secretariat for any special operation requested by its member universities or by a group of them, subject to the proviso that the cost of such an undertaking, if for the benefit of only part of the membership, should not be a charge on the general funds". The main special secretariat is the one provided for the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK.

9. The Committee of Directors of Polytechnics "has a small full-time Secretariat funded from a sub-section of the Advanced Further Education Pool whereby all Local Authorities contribute to the national cost of the AFE provision in England & Wales. Besides servicing various committees and working parties the Secretariat undertakes a wide variety of statistical surveys to furnish CDP members and outside bodies with comparative data on the 30 polytechnics, and information on the overall contribution of the polytechnics to the national provision of higher education. Among its other business the Secretariat also attends to collective activities on behalf of the polytechnics, e.g. the compilation of an annual Polytechnic Courses Handbook and a courses leaflet, the preparation and placing of corporate advertisements, the printing and distribution to schools and colleges of both a termly magazine and supplies of a standard application form acceptable to all polytechnics".

10. The AAU Secretariat also has a substantial administrative role, serving as a clearing house to match available places in the African universities with priority training requirements of the participating countries, raising and distributing funds through the universities, and providing a channel of communication between universities and governments. The AAU sponsors INTERAF, the Inter-African Universities Scholarship Programme.

### Financing

11. Published information about the financing of the various associations is not very full. The AAU has an annual subscription "fixed in accordance with a scale determined by the General Conference"; and "donations may be accepted for purposes which are consistent with objects of the Association". Paragraph 30 of this Report provides some information about the financing of three UK associations - the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics, and the Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education. In the case of the Australian CPCAE, "the subscription payable by members shall be that fixed from time to time by the Executive". The Income of the ACU is "largely derived from the annual subscriptions (at rates related to their income) of members, Associate Members, and Additional Members, and from their contributions for special purposes. The Association receives no government grant but among the secretariats it provides (see above) are those of certain statutory bodies (e.g. Commonwealth Scholarship Commission) whose expenditure is reimbursed under contract with the relevant government department".

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