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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Note verbale dated 24 July 1990 from the Charge d'affaires a.i. of
the Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania to the
United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Charge d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to forward herewith a letter dated 6 July 1990 from the Honourable Benjamin Mkapa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (see annex) submitting resolution 691 (XXV) in the three working languages of the Economic Commission for Africa (see **appendix I**) together with the African Charter for **Popular** Participation in Development and Transformation (see **appendix II**), adopted at the twenty-fifth session of the Commission and sixteenth meeting of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic Planning and Development, for its presentation to the General Assembly of the United Nations at its forty-fifth session.

* A/45/150 and Corr. 1.

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ANNEX

Letter dated 6 July 1990 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the United Republic of Tanzania to the Secretary-General

I have the pleasure to inform you that the twenty-fifth session of the Commission and sixteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic Planning and Development which has just ended in Tripoli, Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, adopted resolution 691 (XXV) recommending that the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania submits the "African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation" to the **forty-fifth** regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

As you are aware, this document was elaborated and adopted at the International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa which was held in Arusha, the United Republic of Tanzania, from 12 to 16 February 1990. I would like to **emphasize** that the initiative for the development of the Charter emanated from non-governmental organisations, grass-roots and African Governments, and was unanimously adopted by the 500 participants in the Conference drawn from a wide range of African people's **organizations**. All the participants were concerned about the serious deterioration in socio-economic conditions in African countries especially during the last decade of the **1980s**. They **recognized** that the lack of progress in achieving developmental goals set by the countries partly arises from the lack of full appreciation of the role popular participation plays in the process of recovery and development. This concern led to the participants' adoption of the present Charter.

On **behalf** of the Chairman of the Conference, Professor Kighoma **Malima**, Vice-Chairman of the Planning Commission and Minister of State in the Office of the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, I have the great pleasure to submit to you officially the "African Charter for Popular Participation in the Development and Transformation" in the three working languages of ECA, together with resolution 691 (**XXV**) referred to earlier,

(**Signed**) B. W. **MKAPA**, MP
Minister of Foreign Affairs of
the United Republic of Tanzania

APPENDIX I

Resolution 691 (XXV) adopted at the twenty-fifth session of the Commission and sixteenth meeting of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic Planning and Development at its 267th meeting on 19 May 1990

691 (XXV). The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution S-13/2 on **the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990** (UN-PAAERD),

Recalling also resolution 664 (XXIV) of the twenty-fourth session of the Commission and fifteenth meeting of the Conference of Ministers on the **International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa,**

Aware of the fact that people have a fundamental right to participate fully in the making of policy decisions which affect their lives at all levels,

Noting with interest the decisions and recommendations arrived at by the International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa, held from 12 to 16 February 1990 in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, and in particular resolution 2 of the same name whose operative paragraphs resolve inter alia that the eleventh day of February each year should be proclaimed Popular Participation Day in Africa,

1. Expresses its appreciation to the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for generously hosting the **Conference;**
2. Adopts the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (Arusha 1990) as a statement of the strategy that should be incorporated in development policies adopted by African Governments with a view to promoting popular participation **in** development and by encouraging people and their organizations to undertake self-reliant development **initiatives;**
3. Recommends that the Government of the United Republic of **Tanzania** should submit the present Charter **to** the forty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and the fifty-second session of the Council of Ministers of the OAU and twenty-sixth session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU;

4. **Requests** the Executive Secretary of **ECA** and the Secretary-General of the **Organization of African Unity** to disseminate the contents of the **Charter** widely, and to **set up a mechanism for** implementing and monitoring the follow-up of activities contained in the Charter at subregional and regional levels and submit regular annual reports to the ECA Conference of Ministers and appropriate organs of the **Organization** of African Unity.

267th meeting
19 May 1990

APPENDIX II

**African Charter for Popular Participation in Development
and Transformation**

(Arusha 1990)

PREAMBLE

1. The International Conference on Popular Participation in the **Recovery and Development Process** in Africa was held, in Arusha, the United Republic of **Tanzania** from 12 to 16 February 1990, as a rare collaborative effort between African people's **organizations**, the African **Governments**, non-governmental organisations and the United Nations **agencies**, in the **search** for a collective understanding of the role of popular participation in the development and transformation of the region. It was also an occasion to articulate and give **renewed** focus to the concepts of democratic development, people's solidarity and creativity and self-reliance and to formulate policy recommendations for national Governments, popular organisations and the international **community** in order to strengthen participatory processes and patterns of development. It was the third in a series of major international **conferences organised** by the Economic Commission for Africa in collaboration with the rest of the United Nations system to contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD). It came as a sequel to the Abuja International Conference on Africa: The Challenge of Economic Recovery and Accelerated Development held in 1987, and the 1988 Khartoum International Conference on the Human Dimension of Africa's Economic Recovery and Development. It is important to note that the initiative for this **Conference came from** the submission of the **NGOs** to the **Ad Hoc** Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the mid-term review and assessment of the implementation of UN-PAAERD in September 1988.

2. The **Conference** was **organized** under the auspices of the United Nations **Inter-Agency Task Force** on the Follow-up on the Implementation of the UN-PAAERD at the Regional Level (UN-IATF) and with the full support and **warm** hospitality of the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania. The **ECA Conference** of Ministers responsible for Economic Development and Planning adopted resolution 664 (XXIV) at its twenty-fourth session in which it supported this Conference and urged member States of the Commission, the **international** community, **NGOs** and the United Nations system to support and **actively** participate in it. The Conference was attended by over 500 participants from a wide range of African people's organisations - including, in particular, non-governmental, grass-roots, peasant, women and youth organisations and associations, trade unions and others - as well as representatives of African Governments, agencies of the United Nations system, non-African non-governmental organisations, **regional**, subregional and intergovernmental organisations, bilateral donors, **multilateral organizations** as well as specialists, both from within and outside Africa. The conference was opened by H.E. **Aki Hassan Mwinyi**, President of the United Republic of Tanzania. Opening statements were also made by the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, the representative of the Secretary-General of the **Organization of African Unity**,

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the Secretary-General of the **Organization** of African Trade Union Unity and representatives of the Non-Governmental **Organizations**, African Women's **Organizations** and the Pan African Youth **Movement**. The Conference would like to put on record its appreciation for the full support and warm hospitality of the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania.

3. The Conference was organised out of concern for the serious deterioration in the human and economic conditions in Africa in the decade of the 1980s, the recognition of the lack of progress in achieving popular participation and the lack of full appreciation of the role popular participation plays in the process of recovery and development.

4. The objectives of the Conference were to:

(a) **Recognize** the role of people's participation in Africa's recovery and development efforts;

(b) **Sensitize** national Governments and the international community to the dimensions, dynamics, processes and potential of a development approach rooted in popular initiatives and self-reliant efforts:

(c) Identify obstacles to people's participation in development and define appropriate approaches to the promotion of popular participation in policy **formulation**, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes ;

(d) Recommend actions to be taken by Governments, the United Nations **system** as well as the public and private donor agencies in building an enabling environment for authentic popular participation in the development process and encourage people and their organisations to undertake self-reliant development initiatives;

(e) Facilitate the exchange of information, experience and knowledge **for** mutual support among people and their organizationsr and,

(f) Propose indicators for the monitoring of progress in facilitating people's participation in Africa's development.

5. We, the **people**, engaged in debate and dialogue on the issues involved over the span of five plenary sessions and 15 workshops during the five-day-long International Conference. In the light of our deliberations, we have decided to place on record our collective analysis, conclusions, policy recommendations and action proposals for the consideration of the people, the African Governments and the international community.

I. ASSERTING THE ROLE OF POPULAR PARTICIPATION

6. We are united in our conviction that the crisis currently engulfing Africa, is **not** only an economic crisis but also a human, legal, political and social crisis. It is a crisis of **unprecedented** and unacceptable proportions manifested not only in abysmal declines in economic indicators and trends, but **more** tragically and glaringly **in** the suffering, hardship and impoverishment of the vast majority of African people. **At** the same time, the political **context** of socio-economic development has been **characterized**, in many instances, by an over-centralization of power and impediments to the effective participation of the overwhelming **majority** of **the** people in social, political and economic development. As a result, **the** motivation of the majority of African people and their **organizations** to contribute their best to the development process, and to the betterment of their own well-being as well as their say in national development has been severely constrained and curtailed and their collective and individual creativity has been undervalued and **underutilized**.

7. **We** affirm that nations cannot be built without the popular support and full participation of the people, nor can the economic **crisis** be resolved and the human and economic conditions improved without the **full** and effective contribution, creativity and popular enthusiasm of the vast majority of the **people**. After all, it is to the people that the very benefits of development should and must **accrue**. We are convinced that neither **can** Africa's perpetual economic **crisis** be **overcome**, **nor** can a bright future for Africa and its people see the light of day unless the structures, pattern and political **context** of the process of socio-economic development **are** appropriately altered.

8. We, therefore, have no doubt that at the heart of **Africa's** development objectives must lie the ultimate and overriding goal of human-centred development that ensures the overall well-being of the people through sustained **improvement** in their living standards and the full and effective participation of the people in charting their development policies, programmes and processes **and** contributing to their realisation. We furthermore observe that given the current world political and economic situation, Africa is becoming further marginalized in world affairs, both geo-politically and economically. African countries must realise that, more than *ever* before, their greatest **resource** is their people and that it is through their active and full participation that Africa can surmount the difficulties that lie ahead.

9. We are convinced that to achieve the above objective will require a redirection of resources to satisfy, in the first place, the critical needs of the people, to achieve economic and social justice and to **emphasize** self-reliance on the one hand, and, **on** the other hand, to empower the people to determine the direction and content of development, and to effectively contribute to the enhancement of production and productivity that are required. Rearing this in mind and having carefully analysed the structure of the African **economies**, the root causes of the repeated economic crisis and the strategies and programmes that have hitherto been applied to deal with them, we are convinced that Africa has no alternative but to urgently and immediately embark upon the task of transforming the structure of its economies to achieve long-term self-sustained growth and

development that is both human centred and participatory *in* nature. Furthermore, **Africa's grave** environmental and ecological crisis cannot be solved in the absence of a process of sustainable development which commands the full support and participation of the people. We believe in this context that the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment **Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP)** - which was endorsed by the twenty-fifth Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the **Organization** of African Unity (OAU) held **in** July 1989, and by the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned countries held in Belgrade in September 1989 and by the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations **which** invited the international community, including multilateral, financial and development institutions, to consider the framework as a basis **for** constructive dialogue and fruitful consultation - **offers** the best framework for such an approach. We also wish **in** this **regard** to put on record our disapproval of all economic **programmes**, such as orthodox Structural Adjustment Programmes, which undermine the human condition and disregard the potential and role of popular participation in self-sustaining development.

10. In our sincere view, popular participation is both a means and an end. **As** an instrument of development, popular participation provides the driving force for **collective** commitment for the determination of people-based development processes and willingness by the people to undertake sacrifices and expend their social energies for its execution. As an end in itself, popular participation is the fundamental right of the people to fully and effectively participate **in** the determination **of** the decisions which affect their lives at all levels and at all **times**.

II. PROMOTING POPULAR PARTICIPATION

11. We believe strongly that popular participation is, in essence, the empowerment **of** the people to effectively involve themselves in creating the structures and in designing policies and programmes that serve the interests of all as well as to effectively contribute to the development process and share equitably in its benefits. Therefore, there must be **an** opening up **of** political process to accommodate freedom of opinions, tolerate differences, accept consensus on issues as well as ensure the effective participation of the people and their **organizations** and associations. This requires action on the part of all, first and foremost **of** the people themselves. But equally important are the actions **of** the State and the international community, to create the necessary conditions for such an empowerment and facilitate effective popular participation in societal and economic life. This requires that the political system evolve to allow for democracy and full participation by all sections of our societies.

12. In view of the critical contribution made by women to African societies and economies and the extreme subordination and discrimination suffered by women in Africa, it is the consensus of the participants that the attainment of equal rights by women in social, economic and political spheres must become a central feature **of** **a** democratic and participatory pattern **of** development. Further, it is the consensus **of** this conference that the attainment of women's full participation must

be given **highest** priority by society **a** a whole and **African Governments in** particular. This right should be fought *for* and defended by society, African Non-Governmental **Organizations** and Voluntary Development **Organizations** as well **as** by **non-African** Non-Governmental **Organizations** and Voluntary Development Organisations, Governments and the United Nations system *in* due recognition of the primary role being played by women now and on the course to recovery **and transformation of Africa** for better quality **of** life.

People's role

13. We want to emphasize the basic fact that the **role** of the people and their popular organisations is central to the **realization** of popular participation. They have to be fully involved, committed and indeed, **seize** the initiative. In this regard, it is essential that they establish independent people's **organizations** at various levels that are genuinely **grass-root**, voluntary, democratically administered and self-reliant and that are rooted in the tradition and culture **of** the society so *as* to ensure community empowerment and **self-development**. Consultative machinery at various levels should be established with governments on various aspects *of* democratic participation. It is crucial that the people and their popular organisations should develop links across national borders to promote co-operation and interrelationships **on** subregional, regional, South-South and South-North **bases**. This is necessary **for** sharing lessons of experience, developing people's solidarity and raising political consciousness **on democratic participation**.

14. In view of the vital and central role played by women in family well-being and maintenance, their special commitment to the survival, protection and development **of** children, **as** well as survival of society and their important role in the process **of** African recovery and **reconstruction**, special emphasis should be put by all the people in terms **of** eliminating biases particularly with respect to the reduction of the burden on women and taking positive action to ensure their full equality and effective participation in the development process.

15. Having **said** this, we must underscore that popular participation begins and must be earnestly **practiced** at the family level, because home is the **base** for development. It must also be practised at the **work** place, and in all organisations, and in all walks of life.

Role of African Governments

16. We strongly believe that popular participation is dependent on the nature *of* the State itself and ability of Government to respond to popular demand. Since African Governments have a critical role to play in the promotion of popular participation, they have to yield space to the people, without which popular participation will be difficult to achieve. Too often, the social base of power and decision-making are too narrow. Hence the **urgsnt** need to broaden **these**; to galvanise and tap the people's energy and commitment; and to promote political **acc** accountability by the State to the people. **This** makes it imperative **that** a **new** partnership between African Governments and the people in the common interest of societal and accelerated socio-economic development should be established without delay. This new partnership must not only recognise the importance **of gender**

issues but must take action to ensure women's involvement at all levels of decision-making. In particular Governments should set themselves specific targets **for the** appointment of women in senior policy and management posts in all sectors **of government.**

17. We believe that for people **to** participate meaningfully in their self-development, their **freedom to** express themselves and their freedom from fear must be guaranteed. This can only be assured through the extension and protection **of people's basic** human rights and we urge all Governments to vigorously implement **the African Charter on** Human and People's Rights **and** the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights **of** the Child, the ILO Convention No. 87 **concerning Freedom of** Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and the Convention on the Elimination of *All* Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

18. We also believe that one of the key conditions **for** ensuring people's **participation throughout** the continent is the bringing to **an end** of all wars and **armed** conflicts. The millions of African refugees and displaced persons are those with least opportunity to participate in the determination **of** their future. We urge Governments and **all** parties to **Africa's** conflicts, domestic and external, to seek peaceful means of **resolving** their differences and of establishing peace **throughout** Africa. In **situations of armed conflicts**, we uphold the right **of** civilians to food and other basic necessities **and** emphasise that the international community **must** exercise its **moral** authority to ensure that this right is protected.

19. We cannot overemphasise the benefits that can be reaped if, with the elimination **of** internal strife **or** inter-country conflicts, the resources spent on defence were to be redirected to productive activities and social services to the people. **As** rightly noted in the African Alternative **Framework** to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation, "**it** is not difficult to imagine what it would mean to social welfare in Africa, with all its positive **multiplier** effects, if **a saving** can **be achieved** in defence spending and non-productive expenditures". We believe that our Governments can **make** such **savings** and we call upon them to do so urgently.

20. We are, however, aware **of** certain situations, particularly, **for** the front-line States which continue to **face** the **destabilization** acts of apartheid South Africa. This **destabilization** results in a debilitating diversion of resources that would otherwise have been used to **meet** critical basic needs of the people in these countries.

Role of the international community

21. We call on the international community to examine its own record **on** popular participation, and hereafter to support indigenous efforts which promote the emergence **of** a democratic environment and facilitate the people's effective **participation** and empowerment in the political life of their countries.

22. We also call on the **United Nations system** to intensify its effort to promote the application of justice in international economic relations, the defence of human rights, the maintenance of peace and the achievement of disarmament and to

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assist African countries and people's **organizations** with the development of human and economic resources. We also call on the United Nations system to implement its own decision to have at least 30 per **cent** of senior positions held by women. Special efforts are needed to ensure that African women are adequately represented at senior levels in United Nations agencies, particularly those operating in Africa.

III. POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT

23. On the basis of the foregoing, we lay down the following basic strategies, modalities and actions for effective participation *in* development.

A. At the level of Governments

1. African Governments **must** adopt development strategies, approaches and **programmes**, the content and parameters of which are in line with the interest and aspirations of the people **and** which incorporate, rather than alienate, **African** values and economic, social, cultural, political and environmental realities.
2. We strongly urge **African** Governments to promote the formulation and implementation of national development programmes within the framework of the aforesaid aspirations, interests and realities, which develop as a result **of** a popular participatory process, and which aim at the transformation of the African economies to achieve self-reliant and self-sustaining people-centred development based **on** popular participation and democratic consensus.
3. In implementing these endogenous **and** people-centred development strategies, an enabling environment must be created to facilitate broad-based participation, on a decentralised basis, in the development process. Such an enabling environment is an essential pre-requisite for the stimulation of initiatives and creativity and for enhancing output and productivity by actions such as:
 - (i) extending more economic power to the people through the equitable distribution of income, support for their productive capacity **through** enhanced access to productive inputs, such as land, credit, technology, etc., and in such a manner as to reflect the central *role* played by women in the economy!
 - (ii) promoting mass literacy and skills training in particular and development **of** human resources in general;
 - (iii) greater participation and consensus-building in the formulation and implementation of economic and social policies at all levels, ... including the identification and elimination of laws and bureaucratic procedures that pose obstacles to people's participation;

- (iv) increasing employment opportunities for the rural and urban poor, expanding opportunities **for** them to contribute to the generation of output and enhanced productivity levels and creating better marketing conditions for the benefit of the producers; and,
 - (v) strengthening communication capacities for rural development, mass literacy, etc.
4. Small-scale indigenous entrepreneurship and producers co-operatives, as forms of productive participatory development, should be promoted and actions should be taken to increase their **productivity**.
 5. Intensifying the efforts to achieve subregional and regional economic co-operation and integration and increased intra-African trade.

B. At the level of the **people** and their **organizations**

To foster participation and democratic development, the people and their organizations should:

1. Establish autonomous grass-roots organiaations to promote participatory self-reliant development and increase the output and productivity of the **masses**.
2. Develop their capacity to participate effectively in debates on economic policy and development issues. This requires building people's capacity to formulate and analyse development programmes and approaches.
3. Promote education, literacy skill training and human resource development as a means of enhancing popular participation.
4. Shake off lethargy and traditional beliefs that are impediments to development, especially the customs and cultural practices that undermine the status of women in society, while recognising and valuing those beliefs and practices that contribute to development. Rural and urban people's organizations, such as workers, peasants, women, youth, students etc., should be encouraged to initiate and implement strategies to strengthen their productive power and **meet** their basic needs.
5. Concerted efforts should be made to change prevailing attitudes towards the disabled so as to integrate them and bring them into the mainstream of development,
6. Create and enhance networks and collaborative relationships among peoples' organisations. This will have the effect of social involvement capable of inducing social change.
7. People's organisations should support strongly and participate in the efforts to promote effective subregional and regional economic co-operation and integration and intra-African trade.

C. At the level of the international community

We also call on the international community to support popular participation in Africa by:

1. Supporting African countries in their **drive to** internalise the development and transformation process. **The** IMF, World Bank and other **bilateral** and multilateral donors **are urged to accept** and support African initiatives to **conceptualize**, formulate and implement **endogeneously** designed development and transformation programmes.
2. Directing technical assistance programmes, first and foremost, to the strengthening of national capabilities for policy analysis and the design and **implementation** of economic *reform* and development programmes.
3. **Fostering** the democratisation of development in African countries by supporting the decentralisation of development **processes**, the active participation of the people and their organisations **in** the formulation of development strategies and economic **reform** programmes and open **debate** and consensus-building processes on development and *reform* issues.
4. Allowing *for* the release of resources **for** development on a participatory basis which will require the reversal of the net outflow of financial resources from *Africa* **to** the multilateral financial institutions and donor countries and their use **for** development purposes and *for* the benefit of the people.
5. Reducing drastically the stock of *Africa's* debt and **debt-servicing** obligations and providing a long-term period of moratorium **on** remaining debt-servicing obligations in order to release resources *for* financing development and transformation on a participatory basis.
6. Ensuring that the human dimension is central to adjustment programmes which must be compatible with the objectives and aspirations of the African people and with African **realities** and must be conceived and designed internally by African countries **as** part and parcel of the long-term objectives and framework of development and transformation,
7. Supporting African **NGOs**, grass-roots **organizations**, women's and youth organizations and trade unions in activities such as training, networking and other programme activities, as well as the documentation, and wide dissemination of their experiences.

D. At the level of NGOs and voluntary development organizations

The African and non-African **NGOs** and voluntary development organisations have an important role *in* supporting recovery and development efforts and popular participation initiatives and organizations in **Africa**. They are urged to take the following actions:

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1. African **NGOs** and voluntary development **organizations and their** partners should be fully participatory, democratic and accountable.
2. African **NGOs**, voluntary development organisations and grass-roots **organizations** should develop and/or strengthen institutional structures at the regional, subregional and national levels, such as **FAVDO**, to bring them together.
3. African **NGOs** and voluntary development **organizations** should broaden the dissemination of successful African popular participation and grass-root experiences throughout the continent and the exchange of experience **thereon to create a multiplier effect and sensitize** policy-makers.
4. The International Conference on Popular Participation is clear in its recognition of the value of the contribution of grass-roots **organizations** and **NGOs** to Africa's development and demonstrates that effective dialogue between Governments, **NGOs** and **grass-roots organizations** is essential and valuable. This Conference recommends that national fore be established to enable honest and open dialogue between African Governments, **grass-roots organisations** and **NGOs** in order that the experience of **grass-roots** participatory development informs national policy-making.
5. Non-African **NGOs** and voluntary development **organizations** should give increased support and target their operations within the framework of **national economic strategies** and reform programmes aimed at transforming **the structures** of the African economies with a view to internalising the **development** process and ensuring its sustainability with a **particular** focus on the human dimension and people's participation.
6. Non-African **NGOs and** voluntary development **organizations** should give due recognition to African **NGOs** and participatory, self-reliant development initiatives launched by African **grass-root** organisations.
7. Non-African **NGOs and** voluntary development **organizations** should utilise African expertise to the maximum **extent possible with** regard to their development work in **Africa** and advocacy and campaigning work at the international level.
8. Non-African **NGOs** should strengthen their advocacy work internationally and in their home **countries** and with regard to bilateral donors and the multilateral system, closely monitoring their response to the African crisis and holding donor governments and agencies accountable for their policies and actions. In particular, non-African and African **NGOs** should formulate a programme of action geared towards their fullest participation in the end-term review of UN-PAAERD.
9. Co-operation and dialogue between African and Non-African **NGOs** and voluntary development **organizations** should be strengthened to increase the effectiveness of their interventions at the community level and the building of greater understanding on the part of international public opinion **of** the real causes of the African socio-economic crisis and the **actions** that are needed to deal with its root causes.

10. **Non-African NGOs** acknowledge that their **influence as donors is often** detrimental to **ensuring** genuine partnership with African **NGOs**, voluntary development organisations and grass-roots organisations and **affects** the enabling environment for popular participation. In that context co-operation in all its forms must be transparent and reflect African priorities.
11. **African** and non-African **NGOs** and voluntary development organisations should, in addition to **their** traditional humanitarian activities, increasingly provide support for the productive capacities of the African **poor and for** promoting environmentally sound patterns of local development.

E. A t l e v e l o f t h e

1. The national and regional media should make every **effort** to fight for and defend their freedom at all cost, and make special effort to champion the cause **of** popular participation and publicise **activities and** programmes thereof and generally provide access for the dissemination of information and education **programmes** on popular participation.
2. Combining their indigenous communication systems with appropriate use of modern low-cost communications technology, African communities and **NGOs**, **voluntary** development organisations and trade unions **and other** mass organisations must **strengthen** their communication capacities **for** development. Regional and national **NGOs** should participate **in** the assessment **of** Africa's Development Support Communication Needs **to be** carried out under the auspices **of** the United Nations Steering Committee and the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on UN-PAAERD.

F . At the level of women's organizations

In ensuring that the participation **of** women in the development process is advanced and strengthened, popular women's organisations should:

1. Continue to strengthen their capacity as builders **of** confidence **among women**.
2. Strive **for** the attainment **of** policies and programmes that reflect and recognise women's roles as producers, mothers, active community mobilisers and custodians of culture.
3. Work to ensure the full understanding of men, in particular, and the society, in general, of women's role in the **recovery** and transformation **of** Africa so that men and women together might articulate and pursue appropriate **courses** of action,
- . Implement measures to reduce the burden carried by women through:
 - (a) advocating to the society at large, including central and local government levels, the importance of task sharing in the home and community, especially in the areas ☐ water and wood fetching, child

rearing etc.; (b) promoting the establishment and proper functioning of community-based day care centres in all communities; and, (c) striving to attain economic equality by advocating the rights of women to land and greater access to credit.

5. Women's **organizations** should be democratic, autonomous and **accountable organizations**.

G. At the level of organized labour

Trade Unions should:

1. **Be democratic, voluntary**, autonomous and accountable organizations.
2. **Initiate, animate and** promote mass literacy and training programmes.
3. Organise **and mobilize rural workers in accordance with** ILO **Convention 141, which African Governments** are strongly urged to ratify.
4. Defend trade **union rights, in** particular the right to strike.
5. Assist **in the formation** of workers' co-operatives.
6. Assist **in** organising **the** unemployed **for** productive activities, such as the establishment of **small-** and medium-scale enterprises.
7. Give special attention to effective **and** democratic participation **of** women members at all levels **of** trade unions.
8. Promote work place democracy through the call for the protection of workers' rights to **freedom of association**, collective bargaining and participatory management.

H. At the level of youth and students and their organizations

Considering the centrality **Of** the youth and students in Africa's **population** and the recovery and development **process**, the following **actions** should be taken!

1. Preparation and adoption **of** an African Charter on Youth and Student Rights to include the right to **organize**, education, employment and **free** and public expression.
2. The full democratic participation of youth and students in **African** society requires immediate steps by Government, popular organisations, parents and the youth themselves to eliminate the **major** impediments to youth participation, such as frequent bans on youth and student organizations, police brutality against unarmed protesting students, detention and harassment on **campuses**, dismissal from studies and the frequent and arbitrary closure **of** educational institutions.

3. Youth, students, Governments and the international community must **join** forces **urgently to combat growing drug trafficking and drug abuse. We also urge Governments to sign and** ratify the International Convention on the Illicit Trafficking of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.
4. The advancement of youth participation in **development also requires the protection** of Africa's minors against forced military service, whether in national or insurgent/rebel groups.
5. African youth and students should organise national autonomous associations to **participate** in and contribute to development activities and programmes such as literacy, reafforestation, **agriculture** and environmental protection.
6. Student and youth organisations must also strive to be **democratic, accountable, voluntary and** autonomous and should co-ordinate **their** activities with **workers', women's** and **peasant organisations**.
7. National youth and student organisations should take urgent steps to strengthen and further democratise existing pan-African **youth and student** organisations to make them play their roles more effectively in Africa's development process.

IV. MONITORING POPULAR PARTICIPATION

24. **We proclaim** the urgent necessity to involve the people in **monitoring** popular **participation** in Africa on the basis of agreed indicators and we propose the use of the following indicators, which are not necessarily exhaustive, for measuring the progress in the implementation of the recommendations **of the Charter**.

1. The literacy rate, which is an index of the capacity **for** mass participation in public debate, decision-making and **general** development processes.
2. Freedom of association, especially political association, and presence of democratic institutions, such as political parties, trade unions, people's grass-roots organisations and professional associations, and the guarantee of constitutional rights.
3. Representation of the people and their **organizations** in national bodies.
4. The rule of law and social and economic justice, including equitable distribution of income and the creation of full employment opportunities.
5. Protection of the ecological, human and legal environment.
6. **Press** and media freedom to facilitate **public** debate on major issues.

7. Number and scope of grass-roots organisations with effective participation in development activities, producers and consumers co-operatives and community projects.
8. Extent of implementation of the **Abuja** Declaration on Women (1989) in each country.
9. Political accountability of leadership at all levels measured by the use of checks and balances.
10. Decentralisation of decision-making processes and institutions.

25. We are convinced of the imperative necessity to follow-up and monitor the implementation of this Charter and to report periodically thereon on progress achieved as well as problems encountered. We accordingly recommend that at the national level a follow-up mechanism on which representatives at high level of Government, trade unions, women's organisations, **NGOs**, voluntary development organisations, grass-roots and youth and student **organizations** will **be** members.

26. At the regional level, we propose a joint **OAU/ECA** Regional Monitoring Machinery on which also, in addition to representatives of these two organisations will be representatives of the network of organisations named **above**. This regional monitoring group will submit biennial progress reports on the implementation of the Charter to the ECA Conference of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU.

CONCLUSION

27. This Conference has taken place during a period when the world continues to witness tumultuous changes in Eastern Europe. Even more dramatically, this Conference has taken place during the very week when Nelson Mandela's release has **exhilarated** all of Africa, and galvanised the **international** community.

28. There is an inescapable thread of continuity between those events and our Conference; it is the power of people to effect momentous change. At no other time in the post-war period has popular participation had so astonishing and profound an impact.

29; History and experience both teach that this world never works in compartments. The forces of freedom and **democracy** are contagious. Inevitably, and irresistibly, popular participation **will have** a vital role to play on **the** **continent** of Africa, and play that role we will.

30. It is manifestly unacceptable that development and transformation in **Africa** can proceed without the full participation of its people. It is manifestly unacceptable that the people and their **organizations** be excluded from the decision-making process. It is manifestly unacceptable that popular **participation** be seen as anything less than the centerpiece in the struggle to achieve economic and social justice for all.

/...

31. In promoting popular participation, it is necessary to **recognize** that a new partnership and compact **must** be forged among all the ACTORS in the process of social, political and **economic change**. Without this collective **commitment**, popular participation is neither possible **nor** capable of producing results. We, therefore, pledge to work together in this new partnership to promote full and effective participation by the **masses** together with **Governments** in the **recovery** and development process in Africa.

32. We, the people here assembled, have no illusion that the Charter will **be** embraced overnight by all of those to **whom it 's** directed. But we are confident that this document is an indispensable step on the road to everything we would wish for the people of Africa.

Done at Arusha, The United
Republic of Tanzania
16 February 1990
