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## GENERAL CONFERENCE

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Item 13 of the provisional agenda

### THE REGIONAL DIMENSION

#### Fifteenth Conference of African Ministers of Industry

Note by the Director-General

Summarizes the outcome of the Fifteenth Conference of African Ministers of Industry.

#### Introduction

1. The Fifteenth Conference of African Ministers of Industry (CAMI) and its subsidiary organ, the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Whole on Industrialization in Africa met in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 25 to 30 October 2001. The main objective of CAMI XV and the Intergovernmental Experts' Meeting was to review the progress made towards the industrialization of the African countries since the last CAMI XIV.

2. In addition, the Conference identified new long-term strategies and mechanisms to promote industrialization to facilitate Africa's participation in the global economy and decided on the reorientation of CAMI.

3. In conjunction with CAMI XV, the third Private Sector Forum was also held from 22 to 24 October 2001. The objective was to promote dialogue between the public and private sector and to facilitate a working partnership between CAMI and various private sector organizations towards the expansion of industrial output in the region.

4. CAMI was attended by representatives of 29 African countries with the participation of 15 Ministers and Vice Ministers. In addition, four European countries attended as observers. A number of subregional and intergovernmental institutions participated in the meeting, including representatives of the private sector and civil society organizations.

5. A new Bureau of the Conference, composed of the following countries was elected:

President	Cameroon (Central Africa)
First Vice-President	South Africa (Southern Africa)
Second Vice-President	Morocco (Northern Africa)
Third Vice-President	Madagascar (East Africa and Indian Ocean)
Rapporteur	Nigeria (West Africa)

6. The Ministers of Industry of Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal were designated members of the Bureau in their respective capacities as Chairperson of the Steering Committee of the Alliance and outgoing President of CAMI in order to provide continuity.

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## I. MAIN CONCLUSIONS

7. The Conference noted the six papers presented:

- Strategies and Mechanisms for the Industrial Development of Africa (UNIDO);
- Sustainability of CAMI (UNIDO);
- Progress report on the Alliance for Africa's Industrialization (UNIDO);
- Opportunities for and challenges of exploiting information and communication technology and e-commerce (ECA);
- Emerging issues in private sector development: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs (ECA);
- Strengthening regional integration in Africa (OAU).

8. After reviewing the discussions of each of the above papers, the Conference endorsed the pertinent recommendations and made the following additional comments:

9. In discussing **strategies and mechanisms for the industrial development of Africa**, it was suggested that consideration be given to the establishment of an African Industrial Development Fund, including venture capital facilities, in order to address the financing needs of African enterprises.

10. The Ministers discussed the **sustainability of CAMI**, and welcomed the proposal of the UNIDO Director-General to have a subregional approach to CAMI activities. To this end, with the support of UNIDO, meetings of CAMI subregions would be organized to articulate common industrial policies and strategies for funds mobilization. They also underlined the crucial role of the Conference as a regional platform for industrial cooperation, dialogue and partnership among African countries.

11. The meeting unanimously insisted on the continuation of CAMI and requested the Joint Secretariat

and the Bureau of CAMI XV to undertake consultations with other relevant bodies, e.g. the African Union, the New Partnership for African Development, the Patrons Group of the Alliance for Africa's Industrialization (AAI).

12. With regard to **opportunities for and challenges of exploiting information and communication technologies and e-commerce in Africa**, it was suggested that the feasibility of setting up an African industrial gateway be examined in order to promote technology diffusion, investment and sharing of best practices.

13. On **competitiveness of SMEs in Africa**, the important role of micro-enterprises in job creation and poverty alleviation was recognized.

14. On **strengthening regional integration in Africa**, the Conference urged the African countries to eliminate all forms of discrimination and technical barriers.

### Resolutions

15. Three main resolutions were adopted by the Conference, the complete text of which is available upon request from the documents distribution counter:

Resolution 1 (XV)	Industrialization of Africa
Resolution 2 (XV)	Sustainability of CAMI/AAI
Resolution 3 (XV)	New strategies and mechanisms for the industrial development of Africa.

### Venue of CAMI XVI

16. The proposal of Madagascar to host CAMI XVI was unanimously accepted by the Conference. A suitable date will be submitted to a forthcoming Bureau meeting.

## II. ACTION REQUIRED OF THE CONFERENCE

17. The Conference may wish to take note of the information provided in the present document.