INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE POLICIES IN AFRICA

Harare, Zimbabwe, 17-21 March 1998

FINAL REPORT

by

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PART I

GENERAL REPORT

A INTRODUCTION

1. The Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa, which was held in Harare (Zimbabwe) from 17 - 21 March 1997, was the first meeting of its kind involving language specialists attending as governmental experts and doing the preparatory work for and advising relevant government ministers from their countries who were also attending the same conference. This conference has had far greater impact than any of the previous ones on language issues in Africa, partly because of this combination within official delegations at such a high level of representation from almost all the countries on the continent, and partly because the whole conference was well focussed on coming up with something concrete at the end of the day.

2. All African Member States of UNESCO were invited to the conference and altogether 51 out of 54 African countries attended as follows:

> Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Saõ Tomé and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. At the special invitation of UNESCO, India and Switzerland also sent delegates to the conference, while France, Germany and the United Kingdom sent official observers, as did five intergovernmental or international organisations (OAU, ACCT, AVA, British Council and UNESCO itself).

4. The general aim of the Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa (ICLPA) was to draw up strategies and define prospects for the political and technical management of the African linguistic context, with the main outcome expected being a mutually agreed reference framework to be used by each African state to set out a clear and comprehensive national language policy indicating precisely the statuses and functions of the languages in use and the measures proposed to implement that policy.

5. Since such policy at the national level would have to be specific, coherent and realistic, its formulation would have to be preceded by research, much of which had been done across the continent over the years, to determine:

X	which languages are the dominant local languages, inter-community languages or languages used more widely;

X	which languages are used for what and at which levels;

X	what budget is required for further research, for production of materials (especially for teaching), and for the equipment, personnel and structures to be set up to manage this policy.

The language policy itself must:

X	define short-, medium- and long-term goals;

X	take stock of the problems to be resolved;

X	determine the methods and resources to be used, and, in particular, the mechanisms to be set up.

The basis for the strategies laid down must

X	be the linguistic landscape of the country and the region and

X	among the functions to be specified for each of the languages in the particular context must be its use in the exercise of state functions and in relations between the state and its citizens.

6. Implicit in all this is a new openness to, and acceptance of, multilingualism in the nation states themselves, something that has not always been the case in post-colonial Africa. After African countries gained political independence, impassioned controversy arose in both intellectual and political circles as to the status of the different indigenous languages among themselves and vis-à-vis that of the language of the former colonial power. The debate became highly complex when a whole mosaic of languages was involved and, basically, two opposing views emerged. On the one hand, there were those who saw multilingualism as a conflict situation upon which you could not build a united modern nation state, while on the other hand some emphasised the complementarity of the different languages as self-enriching and even pointed out the fact that there is no conflict with a linguistic origin in the history of Africa. After managing multilingualism for centuries prior to the colonial era, the management of the linguistic landscape became a major problem which confronted the new leaders of the post-independence era, no doubt partly because of the artificial borders and different colonial languages that and been imposed over them mainly by the British, French and Portuguese as they carved out territories for themselves and established their own spheres of influence. This is the reason why some African countries hesitated to adopt coherent linguistic policies while others adopted measures, which, as policy, have had to undergo repeated amendment.

7. Over the years, specialists have gradually eliminated all the prejudices which seemed to be an obstacle to the adoption of policies in favour of African languages, which previously included claims that the languages themselves were "poor" and "unsuitable" as vehicles for scientific concepts, and unfounded fears that, where a great many languages existed, recognising and accommodating all of them would lead to disintegration of national unity. The context for multilingual policies is now favourable partly because predominant international trends and perspectives favour:

X	democratization and multi-party systems

X	human rights, including linguistic rights

X	sustainable development involving all sociocultural groups.

The philosophical bases and parameters for plurilingualism which guide current thinking and planning are propounded in the agreements listed below and contain many solemn resolutions and recommendations made over the years by the African states themselves. All of them are quite consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN/UNESCO 1948), which, as far as language issues are concerned, have since been fortified by the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (Barcelona, 1996). Current international trends towards a multi-party system make each adult citizen an elector, thus conferring a privileged role on the language of each electoral constituency. Reliable research data is also now generally more available nationally and it is quite possible to compare situations regionally and internationally. Furthermore, modern equipment is now available (e.g. for desktop publishing) which makes publication of materials of all types both easier and cheaper, something that boosts research, documentation and promotion of languages even for the smaller communities.

8. Today, use of African languages is seen as the best way for ensuring active participation of the African populations in the activities of national life and, in particular, in the planning and management of development projects. Evaluation of development policies has shown that one reason for the failure of development plans is that the populations concerned have not been actively associated with them, and this is so because the plans are drawn up using a language and terminology the populations do not understand. Within this developmental context, multilingualism is increasingly being seen as both an instrument and an indicator of participation and assimilation, serving as a means of helping individuals and communities to enjoy their autonomy to the full, and to control and manage the process of democratisation and decentralisation in which they are involved.

9. Further explanation of this new openness to multilingualism is to be found in the challenges and problems of managing (economic) globalisation in the international context. Along with this globalisation comes the growth of large sub-regional, regional and even continental entities. In this context, multilingualism is set to play a crucial role in the management of interpersonal and intercultural relations.

10. Africa has a long and widespread tradition of handling multilingualism. Often there is complementary distribution of this multilingualism across languages by sectors of activities. Not only is this multilingualism functional or commercial, it also cuts across the whole social fabric. It forms a sociopolitical and sociolinguistic characteristic of most speech communities. If we were to go by strict criteria of definition, there would virtually be no monolingual country, not just in Africa, but in the whole world, given the internal linguistic and cultural diversity of most countries in the world. Homogeneity is a fiction in the linguistic field more than in any other. Consequently, it is on the basis of the actual languages in use, the relations between them, the functions that they perform, the additional tasks that are expected of them and the policy of the society concerned that language plans are defined and implemented. This policy would have to apply to known key sectors, of which education is the critical one, the others being the cultural sector, the mass media, the written press, radio and television.

11. Delegates to the ICLPA came to Harare in March 1997 with full knowledge of the above, having been prepared by a letter of invitation from UNESCO stating the aims of the conference and the Working Document, also circulated by UNESCO, amplifying both the aim and scope of the conference. On their part, delegates to the Experts' Meeting to the

Conference were expected to bring with them comprehensive linguistic profiles of their own countries to be submitted and/or presented during the conference. A special format categorising the information required in facts and figures had been circulated in advance by UNESCO.

B BACKGROUND TO THE CONFERENCE

1. The immediate background to the Harare Conference goes back to 1995 when the General Conference of UNESCO passed Resolution 3.1 requesting the Director General to convene an Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa. This Conference eventually took place from 17-21 March 1997 after close collaboration between UNESCO and the Government of Zimbabwe, which set up a special Task Force (or Organising Committee) in 1996 to prepare for it. Support for the Conference was also forthcoming from the OAU (the Organisation of African Unity) and ACCT (currently: Agence de Francophonie).

2. In August 1994, a UNESCO-sponsored International Conference on Strategies for the Promotion of African Languages was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Among other things, this conference resolved to request the UNESCO representatives present to follow up the idea of organising a continental conference involving both language experts and high-ranking politicians, after it was realised that the productive research and recommendations of the language experts would never have an impact without the commitment of governments to support concrete programmes of action. During that conference, the delegate from Zimbabwe, Dr Herbert Chimhundu of the University of Zimbabwe, had lamented the official neglect of language issues in Africa generally and suggested that perhaps if the experts from different countries could find a forum to compare notes across the continent politicians might take notice, especially in his own country where he felt that, despite the attainment of political independence, the indigenous languages were being increasingly vernacularised. The idea caught on and, when the matter of a possible venue was raised, Dr Chimhundu suggested the University of Zimbabwe where he also offered to set up an organising committee. The UNESCO officials present took the suggestion to organise a continental conference to Paris. At the initiative of a number of African delegations to the 1995 General Conference, a decision was finally made to organise an intergovernmental conference and the Government of Zimbabwe made a bid to host it. Zimbabwe's bid won and then UNESCO and the Government of Zimbabwe entered into an agreement, which made the conference to be held in Harare a political meeting rather than just a meeting of experts.

3. The decision to hold this conference was preceded by over two decades of research, conferences, special seminars and meetings, often under the auspices of UNESCO and (or) the OAU and (or) ACCT. However, research as well as these meetings had failed to translate into concrete programmes of actions, nor did they have much impact on the continent until the mid-1990s, when both the intellectual and ruling elites finally realised that African countries needed specific, coherent and realistic language policies that would enable them to manage their predominantly multilingual situations in a meaningful and profitable way in which their peoples could fully participate in national affairs, especially in light of the process of democratisation that was now under way in most countries.

4. Previously, many recommendations, which had been made at various regional and international conferences were never implemented. However, from about 1995, a new

seriousness of purpose could be observed at increasingly higher official levels and, a year after the Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies (ICLP) was held in Harare, another related UNESCO - sponsored Intergovernmental Conference was held in Stockholm, Sweden, from 30 March to 2 April 1998 on Cultural Policies for Development. This Conference was designed through both plenary sessions and workshops to enable direct interaction between governmental delegates and representatives of civil society, while both groups focussed on practical outcomes rather than solemn declarations and resolutions. Among the five policy objectives adopted in the Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development was "to promote cultural and linguistic diversity in and for the information society". In a sense, this conference reaffirmed the same principles that had also been followed by the ICLP in Harare in 1997.

5. Prior to both the Harare and Stockholm Conferences, a Pan African Seminar had been held in Accra, Ghana, from 26-30 August 1996 specifically on the Problems and Prospects for the use of African National Languages in Education. The seminar noted that many studies had been made in African languages and acknowledged various efforts that had previously been made towards the development of the languages of Africa for their use in education and as tools for both material and cultural uplifting of the African peoples, noting in particular the following agreements that had been made over the years:

X   the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity (1963)
X   the UNESCO Declaration on the Principles of International Cultural Cooperation (1996)
X   the OAU Cultural Charter for Africa (1976)
X   the OAU Lagos Plan of Action (1980)
X   the Declaration on the Cultural Aspects of the Lagos Plan of Action (1985)
X   the OAU Language Plan of Action for Africa (1986).

The Pan African Seminar adopted ten explicit goals and orientations, as well as a series of actions and supportive measures that linked language action in the African states to peace, justice and democracy.

6. A couple of years earlier, an experts' meeting had been held in Conakry, Guinea, from 21-25 September 1981 to define strategies for the promotion of African languages. The observations made during the experts' critical appraisal of linguistic situations and language policies highlighted points that were reiterated in Harare in March 1997, especially:

X   the fact that the language of the former colonial powers still enjoyed privileged status to the detriment of the African languages, which were confined to low status functions such as elementary schooling, literacy training and oral communication,

X   the fact that most African states were yet to formulate clear, coherent policy in support of African languages,

X   the failure of government officials to appreciate the fact that the promotion of African languages is linked to general development, and

X   the failure by both the intellectual and ruling elites to understand or appreciate the link

between African languages and independence in all fields.
The main consequences of all of the above as being the exclusion or marginalisation of most of the population in public life and the lack of financial, human and material resources devoted to the promotion of African languages.

The 1981 meeting defined and emphasised the need to use of African languages in all spheres of life and to fund training, research, publication and distribution of documentation in these languages. Delegates also came up with practical proposals for specific areas of training, research and documentation, as well as cooperation between states that have common languages, noting that hitherto very few efforts had been made to encourage such cooperation.

7. Similar sentiments and objectives had been set out in more general terms in the 1986 OAU's Language Plan of Action for Africa which recognised multilingualism and encouraged every member state to have a clearly defined language policy that not only accommodated but actually prioritised indigenous African languages. The Plan of Action also set out a series of activities and measures that were to be taken at continental, regional and national levels in more general terms but otherwise in pretty much the same manner and spirit as the ICLPA in Harare eleven years later.

8. By the time the Harare Conference was held, there had been a lot of debate and many resolutions, recommendations and plans adopted to promote and use the languages of Africa in all spheres of life, including public life and education, and to recognise and accommodate all of this within a conducive and comprehensive policy framework by appropriate legal provision that would enhance their status and make their promotion possible or easier in many practical ways. To that extent, delegates to the Harare Conference in March 1997 did not set out to re-invent the wheel. Rather, they set out to address once and for all the problem of failure to follow up research and rhetoric with concrete actions, something that had happened again and again in the past.

9. Therefore, what made the Harare Conference more successful and more important than all the previous conferences was the fact that, for the first time ever, academics and other language experts who could formulate the solutions and advise governments were brought together with high-ranking politicians who could make decisions and commit their respective governments to follow up with the desired programme of activities.

C ORGANISATION OF THE CONFERENCE

1. During the last six months prior to the Conference, the Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO regularly convened meetings of the Task Force that made all the necessary preparations on behalf of the Zimbabwean government, leading up to the arrival of the delegates in March 1997.

The Task Force comprised two committees, a Steering Committee and a Technical Committee, as listed below:

<div align="center">Steering Committee</div>

Mr L. Mbuyamba	UNESCO, Harare Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa
Mr D. Dijakovic	UNESCO, Harare Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa
Mrs M.G. Takundwa (Chair)	National Commission for UNESCO
Mr S.S. Chishiri	National Commission for UNESCO
Mr F.H. Musegedi	Ministry of Higher Education
Mrs S. Manyuchi	Ministry of Higher Education
Mr B.C. Chitsike	Ministry of Education, Literature Bureau
Mr F. Matambirofa	Department of African Languages and Literature, University of Zimbabwe
Mr Goredema	Ministry of Home Affairs, National Museums and Monuments

<div align="center">Technical Committee</div>

Mr S. J. Chifunyise	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Sport Recreation and Culture
Dr. H. Chimhundu	Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Zimbabwe
Mr W. B. Gwete	Department of Linguistics, University of Zimbabwe
Mrs Z. Gambahaya	Department of African Languages and Literature, University of Zimbabwe
Mrs C. Kadada	Ministry of Higher Education
Mr Charamba	Ministry of Higher Education
Mr R. H. Chakamba	Ministry of Education, CDU
Mr K. Nkomo	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mr J. D. Mano	Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications
Mr S. S. Chishiri	National Commission for UNESCO
Mr R. T. Maganga	Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs (Department of Policy and Legal Research)
Dr A. B. Shankanga	UNESCO Harare, Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa
Mr D. Dijakovic	UNESCO Harare, Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa

The Steering Committee was responsible for all the logistical arrangements while the Technical Committee was responsible for the substance of the Conference technically, including in particular preparation of the input of Zimbabwe at the conference, which some of them would then attend as part of the host country's official delegation. The two committees held a series of separate and joint meetings to check on each other's progress and to make decisions and, in between those meetings, individual members were assigned tasks during the period leading up to the conference.

2. The Conference itself was held over five days and divided into two parts, starting with the Experts' Meeting from Monday the 17th to Wednesday the 19th, and followed by the Ministers Conference from Thursday the 20th to Friday the 21st of March 1997.

3. During the first working session of the Experts' Meeting after the official opening by the Honourable G. Machinga, Zimbabwe's Minister of Education, Sport and Culture, the rules of procedure and the agenda were adopted, both with some amendments, after which the meeting elected its Bureau as follows:

Main Committee

Chairperson:	Professor Okoth Okombo (Kenya)
Vice Chairperson:	Dr Ahmed Etman (Egypt)
	Mr Gerard Kedrebeogo (Burkina Faso)
	Dr S.M. Beukes (South Africa)
	Antonia Daio (Saõ Tomé et Principe)
Rapporteur General:	Dr H. Chimhundu (Zimbabwe)
Vice-Rapporteur:	Professor Laurent Nkusi (Rwanda)

Credentials Committee

Chairperson:	Mr. Antoine Lipou (Congo)
Vice-Chairpersons:	Ms Georgina Quarshie (Ghana)
	Dr Hailemichael Aregga (Ethiopia)
Members:	Mr Manuel Viega (Cape Verde)
	Mrs Angelika Tjoutuku (Namibia)
	Mr S. J. Chifunyise (Zimbabwe)
	Professor Yousif El Khakifa Abu Bakr (Sudan)

Drafting Committee

Chairperson:	Mr V. Bissoondoyal (Mauritius)
Vice-Chairpersons:	Dr J. Tsonope (Botswana)
	Mr Moussa Diaby (Mali)
Members:	Louis Martin Onguene Essono (Cameroon)
	Dr Ismail Junaidu (Nigeria)
	Mr Najib Ayed (Tunisia)
	Mr E. S. Matteru (Tanzania)
	Professor Mukash Kalel (Zaire)

4. During the first working session of the Ministers' Conference after the Official Opening by the Honourable Dr I. Chombo, Zimbabwe's Minister of Higher Education and Technology, the Rules of Procedure were adopted, a Bureau was elected and the report of the Experts' Meeting was presented. The following were elected to the Bureau of the Minister's Conference:

Main Committee

Chairman:	Zimbabwe
Vice Chairman:	Gabon
Rapporteur General:	Lesotho
Vice-Rapporteur General:	Rwanda

Credentials Committee

Chairman:	Liberia
Members:	Djibouti
	Sudan
	Zimbabwe

Drafting Committee

Chairman:	Mauritius
Members:	Botswana
	Cameroon
	Tanzania.

5. The Experts' Meeting received papers and presentations by delegates from and on specific linguistic contexts and situations, and deliberated on the status and use of African languages across the continent, as well as the appropriateness of various strategies and policy options. They formulated and adopted a document comprising resolutions and recommendations that were passed on for consideration by the Ministers' Conference. The Ministers repeated and amplified the conclusions of the experts, which they amended and formally adopted as the Harare Declaration and Plan of Action with a detailed work plan for implementation by the individual countries and regionally in the short, medium and long terms.

6. At the end of the Ministers' Conference, a Follow-up Committee was elected composed of representatives of the five regions as follows:

X   Lesotho for Southern Africa
X   Tanzania for East Africa
X   Gabon for Central Africa
X   Ghana for West Africa
X   Morocco for North Africa
with Zimbabwe as the host country being declared the sixth member.

D DELIBERATIONS AND OUTCOMES

1. During the Experts' Meeting, several statements and presentations were made outlining the language situation in Africa and research that has been carried out in some African countries, as well as the language situations and policies in India and Switzerland.

2. Delegates agreed that all African countries must be recognised as being multilingual, although some countries such as Lesotho (language: Sesotho) and Rwanda (Kinyarwanda)

were generally cited as monolingual on the basis that they pass the arbitrary threshold of 90 percent as the defining landmark of a monolingual country. The degree of multilingualism varies greatly, with Nigeria reported to have 105 million people who speak 410 languages, 397 of them "minority" languages spoken by 60 percent of the population. Tanzania has 28 million people who speak 120 languages, but a vast majority of Tanzanians use Kiswahili as a lingua franca, a language also used as such in other countries in East and Central Africa. Even the smaller countries also show linguistic diversity. Burkina Faso has about 60 languages for a population of 9 million, half of which speak More, while the 3 million inhabitants of Benin are spread over 58 languages.

3. According to the definition of languages and dialects, there are between 1250 and 2100 languages in Africa, concentrated in an area between Senegal in the West and Ethiopia in the East around what is now referred to as the "Fragmentation Belt". Generally speaking, the distribution of populations speaking the various African languages tends to be regional: that is, the speakers of a particular language are not dispersed but tend to be restricted to well-defined geographical areas. Partly for this reason, even languages with small populations become significant for the purposes of development and use in national life.

4. The Experts' Meeting concluded that the multiplicity of languages in Africa was not a bug bear but a source of enrichment. Thus, the ideal policy should enable the African people to maintain their ethnic identity through the local language or mother tongue, while at the same time they should be allowed to integrate into the national community through the predominant language or through one of the major national languages, while they still interacted with the rest of the world through a language of wider or international communication.

5. Imported languages, particularly those that were imposed during the colonial era, have become an accepted part of the language situation in Africa. Managing this situation judiciously means that conflicting situations between indigenous national languages and the imported languages can be avoided. Delegates agreed with the suggestion that it was necessary to give African languages elbow room in relation to foreign languages because there are some special functions that the imported languages cannot fulfil. In particular, there should be a linguistic coherence between national languages within the education system.

6. In formulating appropriate policies and strategies, delegates noted that there were different typologies both for language situations and for language policies in Africa. Regarding language situations, the typology may be categorised as follows:

> .1 Nations with one African language spoken by the vast majority of the population: (a) as a mother tongue such as Somalia (language: Somali), Lesotho (Sesotho), Rwanda (Kinyarwanda), Swaziland (Siswati), Burundi (Kirundi), Botswana (Setswana); or (b) as a lingua franca, such as Kenya and Tanzania (Kiswahili), the Central African Republic (Sango), Mali (Bambara), Senegal (Wolof), Sudan (Arabic) and Ethiopia (Amharic);

> .2 Nations having a predominant African language, such as Ghana (Akan-Twi), Burkina Faso (More/Mosi), Niger (Hausa), Zimbabwe (Shona), Togo (Ewe), Benin (Ge) and Malawi (Chichewa);

.3 Nations with several dominant African languages in competition, such as Nigeria (Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo), Sierra Leone (Temne, Mende) and Zaire (Kikongo, Lingala, Chiluba, Kiswahili/Kingwana);

.4 Nations having no predominant African language, such as Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Mozambique.

7. The typology of current language policies may be categorised as follows:

.1 Countries which consciously promote one language:
(a) exoglossic, as in the case of Francophone countries (excluding Zaire); Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Bissau (Portuguese); Liberia (English); and
(b) endoglossic, as in the case of Tanzania (Kiswahili), Ethiopia (Amharic), Somalia (Somali) and the Central African Republic (Sango);

.2 (a) Countries having an exoglossic language but with developing endoglossic tendencies: Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Burundi, Rwanda, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland and the Central African Republic (all except Uganda with one African language being promoted at national level);
(b) Countries having an exoglossic language with more than one African language being promoted: Nigeria, Guinea and Zaire;

.3 Countries with an exoglossic language policy, but using indigenous languages in some areas (e.g. first years of primary education, limited local language press and the law courts): Zambia, Zimbabwe and Sierra Leone.

8. The delegates laid particular emphasis on the need for using African languages to accelerate the process of development, considering the fact that, in the majority of African states, less than 20 percent of the population has mastered the former colonial language. The Experts agreed that the African languages constituted a key factor in African economic, social, cultural and political development. Therefore, everything must be done to allow these languages to be used effectively within the democratic process. In this respect, African languages should not be confined to the areas of oral communication, literacy and primary school teaching, but they should also play an important role in other areas of development.

9. For the purposes of development, the delegates noted that the languages of Africa may be categorised as follows:

.1 **Mother tongues**, defined as the languages learnt by children through social interaction with members of the communities to which they are linked by parentage;

.2 **community languages**, defined as the dominant languages used in areas broader than their ethnic boundaries but not having a national scope;

.3 **national languages**, which may be either linguae francae or one or more local

languages decreed for nationwide use throughout a country;

.4 **inter-African Languages**, which are **languages of African intercommunication** used widely across national boundaries, such as Kiswahili in East Africa or Pulaar and Mandinka over much of the central equatorial belt from west to east;

.5 **international languages** such as English, French and Portuguese that are used for communication within and outside Africa.

10. Given the above linguistic landscape, the experts agreed that the debate on strategies and perspectives for harmonious multilinguistic integration should concentrate on an African perspective, the principal actors in general policy formulation, the policy options and implementation strategies.

11. The use of African languages in all aspects of national life captured the attention of the delegates. In this connection, the experts observed and emphasised that:

X   No language is intrinsically developed: it is through usage that development occurs and that a language extends its technical scope.

X   A language that performs several functions inevitably acquires prestige and, once possessed of growing prestige, it gains access to new functions.

X   Creativity has no limits and therefore technicalization and terminological development have no limits.

X   Limited access and restricted roles and functions in the education field adversely affect the development of African languages and their transformation into national languages.

X   Even in the most radical analysis by economists, there is growing recognition of the fact that economic and technological efficiency cannot be dissociated from the cultural context.

X   The shortage of staff and material in mother-tongue teaching, learning and promotion is the result of long-standing discrimination, which can be eliminated.

X   Negative attitudes which downgrade African mother tongues while at the same time favouring imported languages are based on obvious and superficial rationalisations in an attempt to justify imbalances born of injustices rooted in historical circumstances.

12. In view of the above, delegates felt that it was necessary to define a common linguistic policy in a broad sense and, in particular, to define the framework of its political and technical management, and to identify the management tools. The majority of the experts emphasised the need to create adequate structures for linguistic planning on the one hand, and, on the other, the need to train staff. Some of the experts indicated that it was important to find out what the people's attitude was regarding their own languages. Two delegates gave an account of experiments carried out in their own countries in order to make the population more aware of the need to give priority to their own languages, and they indicated the importance of the mass media in the promotion of indigenous languages.

13. The experts underlined the importance of regional and sub-regional cooperation for the development of language policy. Bearing in mind the work carried out under the guidance of UNESCO, which has enabled the identification of common languages, and to ascertain the

situation regarding research on these languages in the different countries in which they are spoken, the delegates invited UNESCO to contribute to the re-invigoration of specialised institutions such as CELTHO, EACROTANAL and CICIBA in order to enable them to carry out their mission as experts. They also strongly recommended the creation of a Pan-African Linguistic Association to bring about regional cooperation in the field of linguistic research.

14. Deploring the fact that often pertinent recommendations proposed at Pan-African meetings that had been supported previously had not been put into practice, the Experts worked out and agreed on concrete proposals for action to implement linguistic policies. They adopted a detailed plan of action with programme of feasible activities to be accomplished within specified time scales. These proposals were submitted to the Conference of Ministers in two documents, one appended to the other as follow:

- X Draft Harare Declaration;
- X Draft Harare Plan of Action.

15. The Conference of Ministers picked up from where the Experts' Meeting had left off, basing their deliberations on the work that had already been done by the specialists. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations, the State representatives and the representatives from several International Organisations made speeches which made clear the cultural, political and social foundations of language policies specific to the African continent, particularly underlining strategies for carrying out proposals and the follow-up mechanism.

16. The OAU representative underlined the new context in which henceforth the formulation of language policy in Africa should be placed. Democratic change, good governance, cultural pluralism and human rights are today the parameters which have to be taken into account in order to guide all developmental policy, particularly policy relating to African languages which support cultural identity. The OAU spokesman underlined that the protection of cultural identities would not result in the isolation of Africans from the rest of the world within the context of growing globalization, as the linguistic problem in Africa had become a central problem, which concerns not only the States but also the general public. He declared that those present should put wheels into motion so that the decisions taken at the conference would be put into effect. For the immediate future, he suggested that a transnational network and language data bank be established, as well as the organisation, under the auspices of the OAU, of a Congress of a Pan-African Association of Linguists.

17. Mrs Lourdes Arizpe, Assistant Director General for Culture, representing the Director-General of UNESCO, stressed the importance of the conference after reminding participants that the respect for linguistic diversity was one of the principal points in the UNESCO Charter. The Assistant Director-General gave an account of the Organisation's efforts in favour of the rehabilitation and promotion of African languages, as well as formulation of linguistic policy likely to give support to cultural identity. Based on research findings and the report of the World Commission for Culture and Development, Mrs Arizpe drew the delegates' attention to the urgent need to formulate linguistic strategies, which take into account the need to complement the vernacular with national or official languages as well as international languages. Realistic and effective language policies must be formulated in a perspective of justice and peace in order to involve all socio-cultural groups in a sustainable developmental policy.

18. His Excellency Dr E. O. Akinluyi, Chairman of the African Group of Ambassadors to UNESCO, pointed out the importance of languages as instruments of development, not only in the cultural domain, but also in connection with the economic, social and political spheres. Taking into account the diversity of languages and cultures on the African continent, and of the desire of states to construct nations, he proclaimed plurilingualism as the only path to follow in order to reconcile legitimate feelings of ethnic identity, national aspirations and community awareness. Referring to the OAU's 1986 Plan of Action, he deplored the fact that the recommendations of African conferences had often not been implemented and hoped that the Governments of African States would clearly show their intention to put into effect the Harare Plan of Action which offers a flexible framework capable of being adapted to the specific tasks which need to be carried out. Finally, he reminded participants that it was urgent for each state to put into practice the recommendations of the conference.

19. After outlining the linguistic situation in Africa, where indigenous languages and colonial languages co-exist, the Honourable Dr I Chombo, the Minister of Higher Education in Zimbabwe who closed the conference, pleaded for plurilingualism. He stated that it was necessary to re-examine linguistic policy with a view to developing African languages at both national and regional levels by giving them the status of working languages in economic, political and social spheres. This strategy must at the same time enable the promotion of national unity, peace and stability. The policy must also facilitate communication between African States, not only through colonial languages, but also through African languages that are spoken in several countries. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to give status to all languages in each country by clearly defining those which are considered official, national without being official, local, and languages used for liturgies and for other purposes, without in any way wishing to abandon English, Portuguese and French, which are for Africa the languages of international communication at both national and pan-African levels, as well as at local and regional levels.

20. On the basis of ideas expressed in these speeches, which repeated and amplified the conclusions of the Meeting of Experts, the conference examined, amended and formally adopted the Harare Declaration and the Plan of Action, which formed an integral part of the detailed work-plan for implementation of the adopted policy. In order to ensure that the decisions taken at Harare would be carried out, the conference designated a Follow-up Committee, which was composed in accordance with the suggestions of representatives from each of the five geographical regions plus Zimbabwe as the host country (see Part I. C, paragraph 6, above). Professor O. Okombo of Kenya, who had chaired the Experts' Meeting, and Professor P. Ntahombaye of Burundi, were appointed in a personal capacity as members of the secretariat of the Follow-up Committee.

21. Therefore, the three major outcomes of the Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa were

    X   the Harare Declaration
    X   the Plan of Action and Programme of Implementation
    X   the Follow-up Committee.

The full text of the Harare Declaration and Plan of Action are reproduced in part IV of this publication.

PART II

THE EXPERTS' MEETING

A INTRODUCTION

1. All the working sessions of the Experts' meeting were held in plenary over a period of three days from Monday 17th March to Wednesday 19th March 1997. Discussions revolved around presentations and comments by delegates on:

X   specific linguistic situations within the wider context the management of multilingualism within the twin process of development and democratisation;

X   the role, status, use and promotion of African languages in situations currently dominated by foreign or imported former colonial languages;

X   a global vision and the perspectives and strategies appropriate in a development context.

2. Delegates spent a considerable amount of time discussing how to come up with a flexible framework for common linguistic policies and the structures for planning and implementation, cooperation and collaboration at sub-regional and regional levels:

X   in language research and development,

X   through the use and promotion of inter-African languages,

X   through professional associations such as the Pan African Association of Linguists,

X   by organising linguistic conferences, congresses and summits through, for instance, the Pan African Congress of Linguists,

X   through specialised language research institutions within the different sub-regions such as CELTHO, EACROTANAL and CICIBA.

3. As they crystalised, the ideas the experts came up with were captured by the rapporteurs and drafting committee for inclusion, as a set of proposals, in the Draft Harare Declaration and Draft Harare Plan of Action that the Experts presented on the fourth and fifth days for consideration by the Conference of Ministers.

B OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

1. During the Official Opening of the Conference, the preliminary welcome remarks were made by Mrs Margaret Takundwa, the Acting Secretary General of the Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO, who had been Chairperson of the Zimbabwe Organising Committee which was the task force that had made the preparations for the conference. Mrs Takundwa then introduced the Chairman for the Opening Session, Dr Michael Mambo, the Secretary for Higher Education and Deputy Chairman of the National Commission for UNESCO in Zimbabwe.

2. In his welcome remarks, Dr Mambo acknowledged especially the assistance that   the Zimbabwe Organising Committee had received from the UNESCO Sub - regional Office in Harare and then invited the first speaker to take the floor.

3. The first speaker was Mr Doumbia, who was representing the Secretary General of the "Agence de Cooperation Culturelle et Technique" (ACCT). Mr Doumbia outlined the aims and objectives of the conference and its background in relation to the cooperation programmes of ACCT in the promotion and development of African languages.

4. Then followed the main speaker in this session, Dr A.B. Shankanga of the UNESCO Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa in Harare. Dr Shankanga acknowledged and thanked all those who had been actively supportive of this conference: the host country and the Government of Zimbabwe for the host arrangements; the African Group of Ambassadors to UNESCO for logistical support; the OAU and ACCT for support and participation through representation by experts in African languages; experts from countries in other continents where special measures had had to be instituted to address issues in multilingual national contexts who had come to share their valuable experiences; and the experts designated by their respectable governments to represent them at the conference. Most of these governmental experts, he noted, were outstanding scholars with many years of research experience in linguistics, language policy and planning, curricular design in African languages, basic education and other relevant areas. Many of them had also been associated with UNESCO-sponsored activities and conferences on African languages.

5. This latest conference, however, was different both in its organisation and scope. It was a major event for the African continent, taking place as it was on the eve of the twenty first century when there was no longer any doubt about the capacity of African languages to perform a full range of functions and to serve as media for expressing abstract thought and modern concepts, even in areas of science and technology. Because of their expertise and professional backgrounds, delegates to the conference were familiar with the debate on the language question in Africa, whether in the national context or in the regional or global settings. Issues from both the research and the debate, which were pertinent to the conference currently being held, included:

X   language and education,
X   language and politics,
X   cultural - linguistic pluralism and the nation - state dimension,
X   language and citizens' participation in the democratic process,
X   language and citizens' participation in socio-cultural, economic, scientific and technological development,
X   languages and the culture of peace, now also a pertinent issue in many parts of the world.

6. Post-colonial research and the intensifying debate involving scholars, politicians and the community at large showed that the language issue now occupied a central place. Recommendations on how to deal with language issues had been directed at individual nations and groups of countries sharing the same or similar situations or experiences.

7. The current conference was not just another occasion to engage in debate of a general nature on what factors might have contributed to the absence of sustained efforts to promote African languages, or the difficulties encountered in adopting or implementing a language policy act at the national level. The task of analysing the problem had already been

accomplished through research, reflection and discussion in many countries around the world. Rather the current conference was intended to provide an opportunity for governmental and other experts to recommend policy options for African member states. Therefore, the task of the Experts' Meeting's was to formulate proposals for realistic policy frameworks with reference in particular to the following fundamental questions:

.1 (a)   To ensure that citizens without knowledge or proficiency in the languages of the former colonial masters, where these have been retained as the official languages, have equal opportunities to participate fully in activities of national life;

.1 (b)   the likelihood that those with little or no mastery of such official languages will feel or actually be excluded from the mainstream of national life, as facility in such languages is increasingly perceived as a symbol of or a means to success;

.2   the fact that exercise of democratic and other fundamental rights of citizens is seriously undermined by the fact that these official languages are the languages of legislation, justice, administration, commerce, education and the mass media, while at the same time it is acknowledged that no more that 15-20 percent of the population in the majority of African countries have the minimum level of proficiency in the official languages inherited from the former colonial powers;

.3   how multilingualism and multiculturalism can be used as forces for democracy, nation - building and unity in diversity through empowering individual communities and nation states to foster development;

.4   the use of language as a sharpened tool for achieving shared goals through communication and culture in the global village, the global civil society and the supra - technological society of the twenty - first century.

8. In a sentence, the challenge presented for the Experts' Meeting by Dr Shankanka was to draw up policy scenarios that would answer these questions, which were also highlighted in the Working Document previously circulated to the delegates for the conference. As the session's Chairman remarked, Dr Shankanka's address placed the conference in focus by defining the problems and tasks at hand, having previously been enabled to take stock of our language situation nationally and as a continent through conferences in which UNESCO had played a catalytic role.

9. Thus the stage having been set, the Guest of Honour, the Honourable G. Machinga, Zimbabwe's Minister of Education, Sports and Culture, officially opened the Conference. In his opening address, Mr Machinga reiterated welcome remarks and thanks made previously, and acknowledged the fact that the question of language in Africa had been discussed before in many fora sponsored by both UNESCO and the OAU, a fact that underlined the importance of both current and continuing debates. Therefore, the expectation now was that the current conference would not only deliberate on the complexities of the language situation in Africa, but also actually formulate strategies and

recommendations for governments to arrive at workable and implementable policy frameworks for their own countries.

10. Historical circumstances and linguistic diversity made the set assignment difficult, yet it had to be done because the importance of one's own language in thought processes, the understanding of concepts and in communication generally was now acknowledged universally. Therefore, the Experts' Meeting was expected to:

X   review current language policies and problems,

X   examine the role, status and promotion of African languages in politics and in economic and administrative affairs,

X   guide the Ministers' Conference towards launching a path as regards language policy in Africa and the setting up of an appropriate structure for the articulation of language policies and programmes.

C FIRST WORKING SESSION

1. The Chairman of the first working session of the Experts' Meeting, Ambassador S. Chigwedere, the Secretary for Education in Zimbabwe, swiftly guided the delegates through the business as per agenda, which comprised three items:

X   Adoption of the Rules of Procedure
X   Election of the Bureau of the Experts' Meeting
X   Adoption of the Agenda of the Experts' Meeting.

2. The bulk of the business during this session was procedural routine, but the following points arising from it may be highlighted:

.1   In UNESCO terms, the Harare ICLPA was a Category 2 Conference, with the participants for such an important conference designated by the competent authorities of their governments.

.2   Apart from subsidiary bodies elected by the Expert's Meeting to coordinate and service the meeting, all the sessions were to be plenary and public.

.3   English and French were the designated official languages of the whole conference, but speakers were free to use any other languages, provided that they made the necessary arrangements for the translation of their speeches into one of the working languages.

.4   Following specific requests by individual delegates and general discussion by the meeting, UNESCO noted the need to add or make arrangements for Portuguese and Arabic in similar meetings in the future.

.5 Towards the end of the session, its Chairman, Ambassador Chigwedere, handed over the Chairmanship to Professor Okombo of Kenya, who had been duly elected as Chairman of the Experts' Meeting.

.6 Professor Okombo then guided the meeting through adoption of the agenda for the experts meeting and the programme for the Conference as a whole.

.7 The delegates accepted proposals by Zimbabwe and Burundi to amend the agenda in order to reflect the desired shift in focus from prospects to policies, in order to gear the meeting towards coming up with a clear policy position right from the outset.

D SECOND WORKING SESSION

1. The second session of the Experts' Meeting was devoted to the agenda item, "Brief Overview of the Language Situation in Africa," and started with a keynote address by Dr Herbert Chimhundu in his capacity as Chairman of the Zimbabwean delegation to the conference. He emphasised the need to give the meeting clear direction from the outset by outlining the major issues so that the experts started with a common understanding of the purpose of their meeting, the African linguistic situation, current trends and perspectives and the expected outcomes from their three-day meeting.

2. On the purpose of the conference, Dr Chimhundu explained that the whole conference was more than just academic, noting that extensive research had already been done, and numerous resolutions and recommendations had been adopted at various fora. What was needed now was concrete action by the African states, being informed and guided by the experiences they would be sharing, to actually design language policies that they would implement nationally and regionally. Therefore, the three - day Experts' Meeting was expected to produce a set of clear and comprehensive recommendations that would assist the Ministers' Conference to make definite decisions on policy guidelines for the political and technical management of multilingual situations of varying complexity within the framework of workable policy alternatives.

3. Dr Chimhundu noted that the African linguistic situation was extremely complex, with multilingualism as the norm, and only a small minority of the African states having clear and comprehensive language policies. Even fewer had written such language policies into their constitutions, while, in the vast majority of cases, language policies were either non- existent or only implicit from scattered pieces of legislation and/or from conventional practice.

4. It was generally accepted that the starting point for formulating a meaningful language policy was a complete understanding of the linguistic situation on the ground in terms of how many languages were spoken, where and by how many people; their roles, statuses and patterns of use; the state of publishing and availability of written materials in them; their use in the media; and access by their speakers to both print and electronic media. For this reason, actual statistics on these aspects had been compiled separately as submissions made beforehand by the conference participants and from other sources. Still, research had to be on-going, especially at universities, where relevant departments and institutes can contribute

significantly to the development of African languages and, through them, contribute to the fuller development of the human resource potential through which all other forms of development can be realised. Language must be linked with development. Hence there is a need not only to set up linguistic normative bodies (language councils, boards or academies), but also to establish language research centres or institutes, as well as language promotion and service units or departments in government ministries.

5. At the political level, broad agendas and policy guidelines for language and culture in Africa had already been drawn up by the OAU in the <u>Cultural Charter for Africa</u> (1976) and the <u>Language Plan of Action for Africa</u> (1986). At the regional level, the time had now come for action rather than rhetoric about the need to promote and to consolidate the status of African languages in official and formal domains, and to adopt some of the regional linguae francae and official working languages, especially Kiswahili as per the OAU decision of 1986 to add it to English, French, Portuguese and Arabic. At the nation-state level, the time had now come for African governments to heed the advice of experts and to make the necessary decisions and legislation required to formulate and implement policy on the statuses, roles and uses of the languages spoken within their borders, and to create effective linguistic normative bodies to direct and oversee the standardisation, promotion and development of local languages.

6. The concrete actions proposed above would be in line with current trends and perspectives, both regionally and internationally. While some African countries (e.g. South Africa) had already gone a step ahead, there were clear indications that an increasing number (including Zimbabwe) were now ready to follow suit. Citizens' debates were now raging linking language and culture with development, empowerment and democracy, thus adding new dimensions to earlier debates that tended only to emphasise pride, identity and decolonisation of the mind. The link between language and democracy translates into multilingualism and recognition of linguistic rights as human rights, as these were now recognised and promoted by UNESCO. Internationally, the debate on language and empowerment through access to information and grassroots participation and leadership had culminated in the signing of the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights in Barcelona, Spain, on 6 June 1996.

7. The week - long ICLPA was expected to:

> .1   Use pre-prepared national linguistic profiles and position papers to take stock of the current situation concerning the use and status of African languages;

> .2   refer to the <u>Working Document</u> previously circulated by UNESCO to draw up and adopt a document to serve as a reference framework for the political and technical management of a language policy;

> .3   issue a declaration committing each member state to draw up a comprehensive national language policy;

> .4   draw up a plan of action, including a timetable for implementation;

> .5   cover in the declaration and plan of action the broad aims and specific objectives indicated in the UNESCO <u>Working Document</u> with reference to

the whole of Africa and, in particular, with respect to:

    X   the typology of language contexts and situations,

    X   the typology of language policies and practices,

    X   categorization of languages based on predominant patterns of use, and

    X   specific areas such as education, the media and administration;

.6   cover the whole range of aspects to be treated in the process of formulating and implementing comprehensive language policies, viz:

    X   clearly define the status of all the languages in use,

    X   define short, medium and long term goals for the development, promotion and use of languages,

    X   determine the methods and resources to be used in achieving the stated goals as well as targets and problems to be solved,

    X   make specific provisions for language use, development and promotion in crucial sectors such as education, law and the media,

    X   state language requirements for citizenship, formal training and work in various other sectors.

8. In the discussion following the address by Dr Chimhundu, the experts acknowledged that language policy is ultimately a political decision that can only be taken by central government. Linguists and other language workers and stakeholders can only advise and lobby, but ultimately the formulation and implementation of policy on the official statuses, roles and uses of languages within a nation state has to be done through legislation. In this regard, delegates highlighted the fact that, in many countries on the continent, local languages continued to receive very little official attention.

9. A delegate gave as an example of concrete action, the creation in April 1996 of the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB), which had been established by Parliament as a statutory body to monitor language policy development and implementation. He suggested that the PANSALB could be taken as a model of an important mechanism by the conference.

10. Delegates agreed that the question of language was now also tied up to the process of democratisation. Democratising language policy meant not just replacing one language with another, but responding to the real needs of the people. In practice, this meant promoting multilingualism in many African countries. It was emphasised that a country cannot develop its human resource base to full potential without the languages of the people.

11. The delegate from Lesotho pointed out that Lesotho, which along with a few other countries had long been regarded as being linguistically homogenous, was in fact not so. Lesotho had a national language, which was spoken and understood by almost everyone in the country, but it also had a number of minority languages, which were yet to be recognised.

12. The meeting discussed minority language groups and their languages at some length. One delegate suggested that the guidelines to be drawn up should emphasise policies relating to minority languages as well as the research aspect because it was only through research that the language situation could be described precisely.

13. The meeting also agreed that there was a need to decide how to tackle negative attitudes towards the use of African languages.

E THIRD WORKING SESSION

1. During their third working session, the experts discussed experiences of multilingualism in a few countries. Reports on Ethiopia, Zambia and South Africa were actually presented during the session. These are summarised in section F below, together with nine other reports that were submitted as written papers from Cameroon, Senegal, Niger, Togo, Mozambique, Swaziland, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. Together these twelve country profiles give a good picture of the multilingual situation across the continent.

2. In the discussion that followed the presentations, the experts agreed that what they were concerned with was language policy rather than language provision. According to the meeting, language policy is the practising of the agreed process of formulating a policy. Language provision, on the other hand, is just a statement on paper or in the country's constitution about the statuses of the country's various languages without necessarily looking at whether the agreed points were put in practice or not.

3. The meeting also agreed that, although they could not design or prescribe a policy that would apply to all the countries, they were supposed to come up with policy guidelines, which would then be presented to the ministers' meeting. They agreed that the policies should aim at producing intellectuals that are competent both locally (nationally) and internationally. The meeting emphasised the need to start research in earnest on African languages. This was considered useful as it would contribute to human civilisation.

4. A paper was also presented to the meeting by a delegate from Congo. The presenter highlighted the fact that the experts were meeting not as a conference on linguistic matters only, but that the agenda was to build a dream of Africa through language policies. He also highlighted the fact that language policies for Africa should be those that help in the process of democratising Africa that accept pluralism and also promote regional co-operation in Africa. He argued that, in formulating such policies, the language users should also be involved. The presenter noted that present policies would affect future generations. Thus, when formulating them, people should remember that they were building something for the future. The delegate also noted that the term language policy went hand in hand with language planning, and thus, it should be given a time framework.

5. On implementing the policy, the presenter argued that people should think about resources, both human and material, that are needed for making sure that policy guidelines are realised. He also noted that, for a policy to be implemented, there is need for a strategy of implementation.

F SELECTED COUNTRY PROFILES

1. South Africa

1.1 South Africa has a population of 43 million and it has a new constitution, which provides for 11 official languages, as well as the promotion of other languages, referred to as heritage languages. These heritage languages include indigenous languages like the Khoisan languages, languages such as German and French, as well as languages for religious purposes like Hindi and Tamil. Sign language is also mentioned in the constitution. The constitution states that the language plan for South Africa should address the various language issues in terms of the constitutional provisions and needs of the people. One of the important aims of PANSALB is the setting up of research programmes and projects to promote the use of historically marginalized languages in the country.

1.2 For the Department of Education, there were two relevant issues, that is, language of teaching and learning, as well as language taught as a subject. The second issue is relevant to the discussion in that the current thinking is that the learner concentrates on one language up to Grade 2 or 3 and from there onwards adds another language throughout schooling but preferably ends up in Grade 12 with 4 languages. These languages should be languages of choice throughout. The second issue is that of the language of learning and teaching. Currently the majority if not all the schools in South Africa uses either English or Afrikaans. The ideal situation is that each and every learner should ultimately enjoy education in his or her language, but in the short term the department provides for some interim measures.

1.3 The department is currently busy developing guidelines in this regard, trying to spell out what should be done by practical means. For example, if there are 45 learners in a grade this should be a sustainable number, but, if there are less than 45, then in any school it is difficult to try and provide for them. So there should be more than that. If there are less than 45, then at district level or regional level those learners are provided for.

2. Ethiopia

2.1 Ethiopia has a population of over 50 million people and it is a linguistically diverse country. It has more than 80 languages, and many more dialects are realised in everyday communication. Ethiopia is inhabited by 4 major ethnic and linguistic families, namely Cushitic consisting of 22 languages, Semitic with 12, Omotic and Nilo-Saharan both with 18.

2.2 Amharic has been declared the working language at the federal level, while other ethnic languages served as working languages in their respective regions.

2.3 The sociolinguistic status of the languages is reflected by a new policy decision governing the use of languages from primary school level. Different regions are in the process of designing and implementing teaching materials through translation from Amharic into the respective languages.

3. Zambia

It was reported that Zambia has 7 regional languages that are taught in schools from Grade 1 to secondary level and then beyond up to university. One major problem they have is that, although the government always says it is committed to the development of Zambian languages, there is no funding. Government was not providing funding for the development of these languages, but on the other hand it funds a colonial language, English in this case.

4. Cameroon

4.1 Cameroon is a country with 13,5 million inhabitants, whose official languages are English and French. There were 50 main languages in Cameroon. They have large numbers of speakers, but none comprises more than 50% of the population. The most widely spoken language besides English or French is Pidgin English, which is used in three-quarters of the country. The problem with this usage is that Pidgin English carries no cultural identity. The actual socio-linguistic situation is different from the one officially proclaimed by the authorities. On 8 September 1996, Literacy Day, it was officially noted that 48 % of the population does not know how to read or write in English or French.

4.2 Earlier (in 1983) 248 language units were identified. Moreover, estimates of the number of languages identified vary between 250 and 272. There are less than 300 but more than 250. Classification by phylum means that there is the Nilo-Saharan phylum, the Afro-Asiatic phylum and the Niger-Kordofan phylum. Some Cameroon languages are disappearing. There are nine vehicular languages, five of which are important and four of which are less widely used.

4.3 For judicial purposes, only English and French are used. If defendants speak in their mother tongue, an interpreter is employed. This also applied to the legislature, where members of parliament speak in either English or French. In regional administration, officials are also obliged to use one of the official languages. For election campaigns, on the other hand, candidates use local languages to address the public and brochures are produced in languages best understood by voters. At secondary school level, French or English are the languages of instruction, whereas Cameroon languages are used for teaching for the first three years of primary school. Some secondary schools offer national languages as subjects of study. On 27 May 1995, the Government announced that a new law would be presented to parliament whereby national languages would be taught in schools. This matter is currently before the National Assembly.

4.4 It must be said that few of the 248 languages have been standardised. At present, 20 have been standardised and 73 others are to be standardised to in the near future. Of the 6 universities in the country, two are interested in teaching national languages. National languages are used in the teaching of adult literacy. Advertising only uses French and English, except for two enterprises, which advertised in national languages. There are some publications and some radio programmes in national languages, but the majority are in the official languages.

5. Senegal

5.1 The most recent population census in Senegal counted 7,900,000 inhabitants. The

constitution stipulated that French is the official language of the country. A law passed on 28 September 1978 declared that there are 6 national languages: Diola, Malinke, Poular, Serere, Soninke and Wolof. Standardisation of these languages has taken place in recent years.

5.2 French is used in the legislature, but the use of national languages has been authorised and even encouraged since the election of non-French-speaking parliamentarians since 1978. French is the official language of the judiciary, but interpreters are frequently employed to interpret to and from national languages. French is also the language of executive and regional administrations since Senegal opted for decentralisation. However, other languages would be used more widely in the future. In the area of education, pre-school teaching takes place in national languages, with the first two years of school being conducted in the mother tongue and French being introduced in the third year. In August 1995, a conference on education emphasised the urgency of introducing national languages at school. A plan has since been drawn up by the Ministry with this objective in mind. French and optional Arabic are the languages in primary school. At secondary school, French and English are obligatory and other foreign languages are available as subjects, together with one national language. The University of Dakar has a solid tradition of research and teaching national languages. Since 1971, literacy programmes have involved national languages.

5.3 Arabic has an important place as a medium of religious and cultural practices, as well as a teaching medium in Koranic schools. In commerce, communication is dominated by national languages. In specialised areas such as advertising, however, the reverse is the case, and French is used most frequently. In the area of mass communication, national languages are used much less than French by the press, whereas national languages are used to a greater degree in radio and television.

5.4 Senegal's situation is less complex than many other African countries and, therefore, offers more possibilities for linguistic management. National languages are playing a more important role in all sectors, thanks to literacy campaigns and numerous initiatives taken by the Department responsible for Basic Education and National Languages. Government's policy in this regard is based on a concept of plurilingualism.

6. Niger

6.1 Since 1960, French has been Niger's official language and since 1963 national languages have been used in development. Education takes place in French, as do administrative functions and all sectors of modern life. There are 10 national languages. National languages are used by 80% of the population, which can not communicate in French.

6.2 Literacy projects begin by using Hausa and extend programmes to include 6 other languages. Formal education is in French. Since 1976, experimental teaching has been using national languages as a means to acquire French. In training colleges national languages are also taught. At the Department of Linguistics at the University, teaching of some Niger languages takes place.

6.3 The legislature uses French, together with Hausa and Zarma. 86% of radio broadcasting takes place in national languages. Newspapers are only published in French. National languages may be used more widely in all areas if certain obstacles to their development are

removed. Linguistic research is negligible because of lack of funding. National languages are not used in the administration of the country. However, communication between the authorities and the people take place more and more frequently in local languages, where French is not understood.

6.4 There is no judicial framework to give national languages proper status. This situation needs to be amended. Niger has a multilingual context and linguistic management should take into account vehicularity, population influence and socio-economic impact. National languages should be protected and promoted. This requires standardisation of all national languages other than Hausa and Arabic, which are already in a state of development. This constitution adopted on 26 December 1992 stipulates that all communities in Niger are free to use their own languages. For 15 years there has been an attempt to use 5 national languages in education. Linguistic management would be facilitated if Hausa and Zarma are given specific status as national languages. Training could take place in these two languages and they could be taught as subjects in secondary schools. After several decades, one of these languages could become the official language together with French. The other languages are used at present for basic acquisition of knowledge at the primary school level. They are also widely used in literacy campaigns, on the radio and television.

6.5 The National Centre for Linguistic Management is the only body, which can respond to the language issue in Niger.

7. Togo

7.1 Togo has a population of 4 200 000 which speaks approximately 40 languages and dialects. The two national languages are Ewe in the South and Kabye in the North. Because of its colonial history, Togo has had German, English and French as official languages. There is no official policy for linguistic management in Togo, in spite of some acts being passed in favour of the promotion of languages in education and other areas.

7.2 A Department of Literacy and Community Development has been established in the Ministry of Social Affairs. Four languages are used in literacy teaching. Since 1979, knowledge of French plus one national language has been a criterion for election to the National Assembly. In education and training, national languages and French have been complementary since 1975.

7.3 In the area of linguistic management, a great deal has been achieved, but much remains to be done. There is a shortage of qualified teachers, for example, due to lack of means. There is a mentality, which needs to be overcome, which sees the promotion of national languages as a waste of time and money by the Government, because they are not perceived as taking into account the scientific realities of the modern world. National languages should be used in all areas of life, including formal teaching, mass media and advertising. In 1992, it was proposed that the National Assembly adopt a charter to set up an institute of national languages in order to define policy and pursue research.

7.4 In education, French is the language used for teaching; national languages are subjects. In the future, however, it is intended that national languages be the medium for teaching and that French be defined as a foreign language. Exchanges are envisaged between African institutes

in a sub-region, which use the same languages. Training of trainers and researchers is essential. National languages should intervene in the political, educational, cultural, social and economic life of the continent's communities.

8. Mozambique

8.1 Mozambique is a multi-lingual country. According to the last census of 1980, Mozambique has 24 indigenous languages in co-existence with Portuguese. Almost every Mozambican, that is, 98.8% of the country's population, claims to know one of the 24 indigenous languages as a native language. Among native Mozambicans, 75.6% claim to be exclusive speakers of at least one of the indigenous languages, thus claiming that they do not know Portuguese. Those who are bilingual in at least one of the indigenous languages and Portuguese constitute 23.3% of the population. Portuguese is thus spoken by 24.4% of the population.

8.2 Indigenous languages are used primarily for communication among family members, especially in rural areas. The indigenous language spoken is taken as a social indicator of one's ethnic identity. Indigenous languages are also used in religious activities, radio and television broadcasting, literacy campaigns and political mobilisation. The major radio station in Mozambique offers programmes in some of the indigenous languages.

8.3 Indigenous languages are also making their way into formal education, where they have been experimented with in primary school classes and literacy classes for women. These languages enjoy national status in Mozambique, but do not have official status. Portuguese, on the other hand, has official status but no national status. Portuguese is used in official activities and it has attained the status of being the language of national unity. It is thus primarily used in all state functions, in government institutions and in formal education.

8.4 Portuguese has, however, also become a primary language in the home environment between close relatives, in informal conversations, in the streets and at the market. It has also been recognised as being the language of the urban elite.

9. Swaziland

9.1 Swaziland is a country with less than one million people. It has one national language, Siswati, which has also been known as the ethnic language of Swaziland. English is the main official language, with Siswati being classified as an official language, but in practice its official status has remained questionable. English enjoys more official status than Siswati, which has been relegated to being merely a language of communication among Siswati speakers.

9.2 English has official status in education, where it is a medium of instruction from Grade 3 onwards. For a student to have passed his examinations, he should have passed or obtained a credit in English. There is thus no recognition of Siswati in the education system of Swaziland. English is a compulsory subject in the school curriculum, and in most cases students end up shunning their mother tongue and prefer to study English, French or Portuguese.

9.3 For business transactions, commercial advertisements, labels, posters and leaflets, English is the language that is used. English is used in legislation, in the judicial system and in administration.

9.4 Swaziland does not have print media in Siswati, so English dominates in this area. Siswati is officially used in the broadcast media where there is a broadcast channel in Siswati the whole day, with English being broadcast on another channel. Siswati is thus used mainly for informal communication, for its official status is still theory, not practice.

10. Burkina Faso

10.1 Burkina Faso, a West African country, has an estimated population of 10, 495 823 in 1995 and an average population density of about 33.5 people per square kilometre. It has 59 "ethnic languages". The term "ethnic language" refers to the fact that each of the 50 languages is spoken by a distinct ethnic group which, in general, has its own territory, its own history and traditions. All these languages are officially recognised as national languages and are used primarily for communication within each ethnic group. However, none of them has been standardised.

10.2 Out of the 59 languages in Burkina Faso, only 20 had been fairly described and are currently being used for adult literacy. However, these and all the others are mostly used for oral rather than for written communication.

10.3 French is Burkina Faso's official language. It is, however, important to note that not more than 10% of the country's population have a good command of standard French. It is the language of government, the judicial system, administration and the national system as a whole. It is also the language of formal education at all levels of the educational system and is the sole medium of instruction from primary up to university.

10.4 Based on the 1985 census of Burkina Faso's population, the following are the estimates (in percentage of the country's total population) of the demographic size of some of this country's languages: Bisa (2.71%), Bobo (2.23%), Bwamu (1.59%), Dagara (1.75%), Dafing (1.85%), Fulfulde (9.04%), Gulmancema (5.07%), Jula (4.01%) Lobiri (1.49%), Lyele (2.43%), Moore (53.12%), Nuni (1.19%), San (2.05%), Senufo (0.99%) and Tamaashaq (0.82%). These are the languages that are used for news, educational and cultural broadcasts on the national "Radio Rurale". Of these, only Fulfulde, Jula and Moore are used on national television.

10.4 For religious purposes people resort to the districts' or provinces' local languages, except for the western provinces where Jula (the regional lingua franca) is used for evangelisation.

11. Nigeria

11.1 Nigeria has a population of more than 86 million people. The languages spoken by the majority of these people are Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, which are Nigeria's national languages. In addition to the national languages, Nigeria has more than 400 "minority languages".

11.2 English is the country's official language. It is the language for administration, that is, it

is the language for the executive, and for mailings to foreign, regional or local governments. However, for provincial or local (town) level administration and at election campaign meetings, English, Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo are used. These four languages are also used in parliament, as well as in the writing and promulgation of law. In the judicial system, the authorised languages are English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba although English is ordinarily used.

11.3 In the education system, mother tongues and languages of the immediate community are used in nursery and primary school, with English introduced later in the primary phase. English is used at secondary school as well as in institutions of higher learning, for example, universities. For adult literacy, Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, mother tongues and English are used. At the primary school level, English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are languages that could be taught. At the secondary school level, English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are compulsory languages for teaching. At universities, English, Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Arabic and French can be taught but all are optional.

11.4 English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are the languages that are used in business, that is, in commercial advertisements, administrative posters, labelling, instruction manuals and commercial printed matter. These four languages are also used in the written press, while in addition to them Edo, Kanuri, Fulfulde, Izon, Efik, Tiv, Arabic, Swahili, French and languages of the immediate community are used on the radio. On television Hausa, Igbo, English, Yoruba and languages of the immediate community are used.

12. Zimbabwe

12.1 Zimbabwe has an estimated population of about 11.9 million. Shona and Ndebele are the national languages and these constitute 75% and 16.5% of the population respectively. English is the official language and has importance as a language of wider communication, and as the language used in legislation, the judicial system and administration.

12.2 The minority languages of Zimbabwe included Kalanga, Tonga (Hwange, Binga), Nyanja/Chewa, Nambya, Changani, Venda, Sotho, Chikunda/Sena, Tshwawo, Doma, Xhosa, Tonga (Mudzi), Tswana, Hwesa and Barwe. Among these, Kalanga, Tonga, Venda, Changani, Nambya (Dombe) and Chewa (Nyanja) held official minority language status. These languages are officially recognised and can be used as media for instruction as well as being taught in the first three years of primary school.

12.3 There is no official language policy as such but it appears that a combination of English and one of the local languages is used to prepare for formal schooling. The national languages and English are used officially in the first three years of primary school. Minority languages are taught in their respective areas and are replaced by the predominant national language from Grade 4 onwards. In secondary schools and institutions of higher learning, English is used except when teaching the national languages.

12.4 English, Shona and Ndebele are used in the written press and on television and in radio broadcasting, but English is dominant on television and on two of the four radio channels. Venda, Chewa, Nyanja, Kalanga, Changani and Tonga are also used on radio.

G EXPERIENCES OF MULTILINGUALISM IN THE WORLD

1. For the purposes of comparison, brief presentations were also made on experiences of multilingualism from other continents.

2.1 In Latin America the debate on language pluralism is still on. Movements are demanding the use of their own languages for different purposes in these countries. The problem faced by each country is how to bring in indigenous languages in bilingual education for the first two years in primary school. In other regions, indigenous languages have remained marginalized.

2.2 In Peru, bilingual education is well developed. Indigenous languages are introduced at all levels in the education system.

3.1 India has a complex system of managing multilingualism. According to the 1961 census, there were 1651 mother tongues, 18 of which were major languages. Each language has different regional variations, which also have to be developed. Some of the languages have no writing scripts. Government collaborates with and advises the states in the different areas. The Indian government allows each state to choose an official language to use in its area. Therefore, people were able to make applications, representations and all other interactions in any language.

3.2 India also has translation centres and national academies of literature, which encourages creative writing in all Indian languages. The country has a language policy related to the languages to be used in education and the development of languages. Every child at the high school level is literate in at least three languages.

3.3 Urban school and mother tongues: if a class has more than 10 children who speak the same mother tongue, those children are taught in that language, while the other languages are taught as second languages. After the third grade, the children are then taught in the second language. The mother tongue is a variety of the first language.

H RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

1. After the first three sessions, which were all held on the first day, the Experts' Meeting continued as open working sessions without strictly adhering to the wording and order of items as listed on the agenda. Instead, the delegates opted to concentrate on discussion and preparations of recommendations to be included by the drafting committee in the two documents the experts were preparing for the Ministers' Conference. This decision was made after the fourth session during which the Chairman of the Experts' Meeting, Professor Okombo, delivered an address entitled "Statement of the Vision of Africa". Professor Okombo's address guided the remainder of the meeting on guidelines for policy, strategies, and regional as well as sub-regional cooperation.

2. Language policies in Africa should be guided by an African dream, which involved:
- X   democratisation of political or social institutions,
- X   development conceived in many ways--justice, fairness, equal right to monetary aid, human rights,

X   acceptance of pluralism as a way of life,

X   regional cooperation,

X   retention of the African identity,

X   development of a confident and proud personality,

X   Africa without 'situations' (of conflict),

X   democracy and creation of peace promoting languages,

X   a flexible general policy which allows each community to use its language while integrating into a wider society,

X   defining key terms, e.g. "strategies", "indigenisation" and "policy",

X   linguistically empowered citizens to operate at all levels, i.e. regional, national and international,

X   definition of skills and competencies required.

3. Regarding policy and strategies for implementation:

X   We should lead our governments in making official statements, stating what guidelines Africa must adopt and the steps to be taken to implement the policies.

X   Human and material resources should be made available for implementing the defined steps, taking into account the functional loads of languages.

X   We should develop a standard language typology.

X   We should determine how many languages there are for each country:
         What is each one used for?
         Who uses them and for what?
         What attitudes do people have about using them?
         What media is used to transmit the information?

X   We should train teachers of the languages.

X   There is need to establish the legal status of each language.

X   We should produce a declaration making clear statements and provide a timetable for action.

X   African countries must develop language databases with monitoring done initially by a body within each country.

X   There is the need to prescribe follow-up processes or an institution to help countries develop and implement their language policies and also to monitor progress and advise individual countries.

X   Research is required to strengthen the language position.

4. The process of implementation should involve:

X   regional cooperation (especially for cross-border languages),

X   developing regional/sub-regional languages,

X   reactivating the OAU Plan of Action and adding a fifth working language

X   making all people concerned in implementing language policies aware of the policies,

X   having Francophone countries teaching English and Anglophone countries teaching French in their countries

X   where necessary in order to develop an African language, looking beyond the

> African languages themselves,
>
> X   giving economic value to our languages,
>
> X   having a central language planning service or institute in each country (a formal body charged with language issues, such as translation and terminologies),
>
> X   having rewards and incentive mechanisms to encourage innovation.

5. Four general guidelines for policy formulation were stated as follows:

> .1 There is a need to establish a Language Policy Drafting Committee for each country.
>
> .2 There is a need to produce a clear Language Policy Document for each country.
>
> .3 Language plans must operate at national, regional and international levels.
>
> .4 Language guidelines should be formulated through legislation, i.e. an Act of Parliament.

6. Delegates recommended that the Drafting Committee should give definitions of the terms 'language policy' and 'strategy' as a preamble to the document. The Vision of Africa, as had been discussed, was endorsed by the delegates.

7. The delegates recommended that one of the objectives should be to produce a linguistically empowered citizen who was able to operate at all levels of developmental activities locally, nationally and internationally. Reference was made to the OAU's Language Plan of Action for Africa, which defined this person as someone who was confident and fluent in his community, internal region, the nation and the international dimension. The same document also suggested that each region should develop a language of its choice as a lingua franca. The vision, as adopted by the delegates, was that a nation should have an official language, which nationals can use for communication amongst themselves and also for use in formal occasions such as conferences and parliamentary sessions.

8. It was also recommended that a comprehensive assessment of each country be made in terms of human, financial, material and technical resources, before the language question is addressed in order to assess whether it is feasible in each country. Delegates suggested that by the time of the next meeting, all countries should have achieved at least one of the recommendations. It was also suggested that there be a follow-up committee to follow up on the activities of each country and to offer advice as well as to make sure that what was discussed during the conference was being implemented.

9. Africa's problems were said to be attitudinal, material, professional and political. It was thus recommended that a future be created for African languages especially in the area of employment. Governments would then come in professionally by training teachers in African languages. Another strategy would be to write newspapers in African languages. On the political aspect, government would be urged to support the policies morally, financially and administratively and also by according the languages status. Delegates noted that African countries needed to be assisted educationally and linguistically in order to be able to carry out

these resolutions. It was also recommended that there was need for the promotion of African languages as well as their adoption to be linguae francae for African people. Delegates also recommended that national languages be made examinable at all levels.

10. Delegates recommended that a Language Planning Board be set up in each country to work out language policy and the detailed programmes for the policy and strategies needed to implement these policies. It was also recommended that consultation be done with the speakers of the languages and that a constitution be drafted enshrining the languages used by the people in individual countries. Delegates were of the opinion that, without a constitution that empowered a people linguistically, no language policy could succeed. It was recommended that the policy statement of each country should state the function that each language will perform.

11. Delegates suggested that the framework adopted should be one of functional multilingualism. This referred to a policy of rotation of languages on a clearly defined basis. The framework avoids language domination because all languages will be used on a rotational basis. Delegates cited the example of the Pan-African Project for Training and Educational Materials Production in African Languages (PATPAL), which was concerned with the prospect and use of African languages in education. Its objectives were to use African languages as a media of instruction, to train professionals at all levels in African languages and to develop the effective distribution of materials in African languages. Delegates recommended that such a project be implemented at national levels. They felt that it was the responsibility of competent national teams already involved in the development and teaching of African languages. Delegates proposed that the project be adopted by the conference as one of the concrete strategies for cooperation in African language policy implementation. Organisations such as the OAU, UNESCO, UNICEF and NGOs might then be called upon to sponsor the implementation of the project.

12. Countries generally regarded as monolingual were urged to work towards multilingualism and to develop the languages they have to a functional level for them to be useful to their speakers.

13. The use of more locally produced programmes and translation of foreign programmes in the local media was also recommended, as were special training programmes for announcers.

14. It was also recommended that another strategy would be to put all African languages into writing systems, as well as carrying out a linguistic description of each language, and standardise its writing.

15. Regional cooperation was encouraged across borders, for instance, in the sharing of teaching material between the Tonga and Chewa speaking countries.

16. Delegates also recommended that there be set up an appropriate system of communication and coordination to ensure solidarity at continental levels among decision makers and professionals.

17. Materials production (for instance, textbooks and teachers' guides) was also encouraged in the languages spoken in individual countries and in cross-border languages.

I OFFICIAL CLOSING OF THE EXPERTS' MEETING

1. In a special address before the closing session, the Assistant Director General for Culture, Mrs L. Arizpe, made a brief presentation of the Report of UNESCO's Commission on Culture, during which she highlighted the need for co-operation between African governments and peoples, as well as the need for people to protect their identity, since all forms of development should be put into the context of a people's cultural needs. The report was later discussed by the experts, assessing how African languages could fit into this report. The delegates hailed the report.

2. During review discussions preceding the official closure of the Experts' Meeting, the delegates had time to reiterate and amplify some of the major recommendations in the quest for desired goals to be achieved within the vision they had defined for Africa. These major recommendations to the Ministers' Conference are listed as paragraphs 3 to 8 below.

3. Each country should produce a language policy document where every language spoken in the country can find its place. This language policy should be flexible enough to allow each community to use its language side-by-side with other languages. The development of languages used for wider communication, that is, those that are at the local, regional and international levels, would be facilitated by a policy formulating institution or body that should be established in each country. The experts also agreed that such a policy should be sanctioned by legislative action.

4. In choosing which policy option a country can take, the experts agreed on certain procedural recommendations. They agreed that each country or region should formulate its policy on the basis of established use and informed awareness of its language situation, but within a general framework leading to a common vision. To achieve such a policy the people who formulate it should, as a pre-requisite, determine the correct typology of a country's linguistic situation and also define the status of the country's various languages, taking into account the functions of each language and the media in which it is used. The policy formulators should also establish the number of languages and language families spoken in a given country, along with the number of people who use a particular language and their attitude towards it.

5. The experts also advised that the policy formulators should consult all interested individuals and groups of people in the process of formulating and implementing language policies. This should be coupled with organised follow-up and monitoring activities at national and regional levels, in cooperation with organisations such as UNESCO, the OAU and ACCT.

6. It was also recommended that, in view of language policy needs at the Pan-African level, governments should make clear policy statements, programmes of tasks and time-tables for implementation. They should acknowledge the fact that the language issue cuts across all sectors of a nation and thus should use language experts in formulating relevant language policies and also defining the steps for implementation. Governments should also help in developing human, material and technological resources in implementing defined steps. Another recommendation was that African governments should re-activate the Language Plan of Action for Africa and implement the decision taken in 1986 to make Kiswahili one of the

working languages of the OAU. The governments could also adopt the Pan-African Project for Training and Educational Materials Production in African Languages (PATPAL), as well as the charter from the Accra meeting of 1996 on Language in Education.

7. At the regional level, it was recommended that governments should monitor relevant policies and provide for follow-up activities facilitated by international organisations such as UNESCO and OAU. Governments should also co-operate on matters of policy and resources for the development of cross-border languages, as well as regional/sub regional languages. In addition, governments should also strengthen inter-African co-operation by having international languages taught across zones of dominance as well as revitalising African language research institutions and facilitating the formation and continued existence of the Pan-African Association of Linguists.

8. At the government level, African governments were advised to train language practitioners in various professions and to produce teaching and learning resources, including those required for second language teaching/learning and those for scientific and technological activities. Governments were advised to develop language databases and/or language banks at national and regional levels, as well as create channels for exchange of information and expertise on language matters. This could be done in conjunction with the establishment of a central language planning service or institute to serve as a formal body responsible for language issues such as translation services and compilation of terminology lists. It was also recommended that governments should give value to the languages by specifying language requirements for specific areas like education, training, employment and citizenship.

9. The Zimbabwean Minister of Information, Posts and Telecommunications, the Honourable J. Mujuru, officially closed the Experts Meeting. In her closing remarks, Mrs Mujuru stressed the need to use African languages for effective communication, especially on matters concerning development, since foreign languages cannot help all that much in the process of a nation's development. She also noted the importance of language as a medium of effective communication and as a powerful tool for change and development. In line with this, she urged all to recognise the need to have a clearly defined language policy that caters for indigenous languages - a policy that relates well to each nation's political and cultural values. The Minister noted that language is also important for identity, and that one can only express and explain himself/herself culturally through his/her local language. This is why there is a need to accord indigenous African languages their rightful status.

10. In her speech, Mrs Mujuru encouraged governments to support and promote their respective local languages and cultures rather than foreign ones. She denounced cultural imperialism through the use of colonial languages and encouraged people to be proud of their mother languages. In her concluding remarks, Mrs Mujuru thanked UNESCO, OAU, ACCT and other organisations for providing resources for the successful organisation of the Conference.

PART III

MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

A INTRODUCTION

1. After the Official Opening of the Ministers' Conference on Thursday 20 March 1997, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations had their first working session during which they elected their Bureau and adopted the Rules of Procedure. Speeches were made that reiterated and amplified the sentiments and conclusions of the Experts' Meeting, leading to the adoption on Friday 21 March 1997 of the Harare Declaration and Plan of Action for its implementation, and finally, to the setting up of a Follow-up Committee with one member country from each of the five regions of the continent and the founding of a two-member secretariat.

2. In response to the experts' advice and recommendations, the ministers' meeting made a commitment to undertake the necessary preparations for language policies, taking into account the people's needs in each country. The ministers also undertook to enhance, in each country, the participation of people from all sectors of life. Subsequently, the ministers' meeting invited international organisations, especially those working in the areas of co-operation, education and culture, along with financial organisations and institutions to support African states to achieve development by means of sound language policies. The ministers appealed to regional African institutions to give increased support both to national language policies and to regional integration. African institutions were also called upon to co-operate with all concerned in Africa and throughout the world in restoring the African identity through the development of African languages. The meeting also encouraged institutions and research departments involved in the teaching of African languages to intensify their activities in order to play a pivotal role in the effort to achieve the development of Africa.

3. The ministers' meeting also appealed to UNESCO to facilitate regular meetings of government experts in order to evaluate how far the decisions and resolutions taken by this conference have been implemented. In response to this appeal, the UNESCO representative advised the ministers' meeting that, since recommendations made in previous meetings were not implemented, it would be wise to have short-term recommendations that could be taken to bodies like UNESCO for quicker implementation.

B OFFICIAL OPENING

1. The Opening Session of the Ministers' Conference was chaired by the Honourable G. Machinga, Zimbabwe's Minister of Education, Sport and Culture. In his welcome remarks, Minister Machinga acknowledged the presence of the Honourable Dr I. Chombo, Zimbabwe's Minister of Higher Education and Technology, who was the Guest of Honour (in place of His Excellency R. G. Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe); His Excellency Dr Akinluyi, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO and Chairman of the African Group of Ambassadors in Paris; Mr Diouff, Director from the Division of Education, Science

and Culture and representative of the OAU; and Mrs Arizpe, UNESCO's Assistant Director General for Culture (representing the Director General of UNESCO). He also extended an invitation to all the delegates to tour and experience the life and culture of Zimbabwe.

2. His Excellency Dr Akinluyi then followed with an address in which he noted UNESCO's consistent support for the examination of language issues in partnership with Africa, since UNESCO's membership was significantly swollen by newly independent African states. He noted that Africa and UNESCO had now enjoyed for three decades an alliance in pursuit of international cooperation for the establishment of peace through education, science and culture. UNESCO recognises the cultural dimension for the planning and extension of development strategies, and emphasizes the importance of language and culture: language is the most important vehicle of culture, while culture provides the context for all forms of development. Hence the organisation of the current conference, whose major purpose is the creation of well thought-out policies so that the language treasures of the continent can be exploited systematically in the development process.

3. Dr Akinluyi congratulated UNESCO for the two-tiered arrangement, which allowed debate and dialogue to take place at the tier of language experts and at the tier of government ministers. He observed that the Experts' Meeting had had very productive multi-faceted deliberations, pooling together their experiences from within and outside the continent, and he emphasised that UNESCO's follow-ups on the recommended plurilinguistic mechanisms and procedures should be swift. In this regard, he made five important generalisations emphasising:
- X the need for a clear dichotomy between policy and practice, and between planning and implementation;
- X the need to view national languages as essential components and instruments of development;
- X the link between language and peace, and between place and development: peace was secured by accommodating inalienable linguistic rights (There can be no development without peace and there can be no peace without development);
- X that plurilingual or multilingual policies must start by recognising that the mother tongue should be accorded due importance in the matrix of considerations;
- X the need to prioritise work towards the production of a Thesaurus Linguarum Africanarum (a treasury of African languages).

4. In view of past failures to follow-up on studies and recommendations regarding implementation, what is now of paramount importance is political will by member states to implement recommendations pertaining to their own progress and to shift the emphasis from conferences, seminars and symposia which can not and shall not be mistaken for substantive progress. Such political will needs to be translated into action on recommendations by Africa, about Africa, to Africa and for Africa. Books and articles or papers in libraries provide a lot of evidence that enough research, discussion and documentation has been done, and the current conference must now provide Africa with:
- X guidelines for policy, planning and practice
- X frameworks that are flexible and adaptable to the situation in each country,
- X an irreducible minimum of actions today and an agenda for tomorrow,
- X a quantum leap in multilingual endeavours,
- X an effective and timely follow-up mechanism.

5. In pursuit of all of this, the Ministers' Conference was urged to underscore the importance of multilingualism, not only as a critical factor in development, but also as a potent tool for unity in diversity.

6. In response, the OAU Representative, Mr Diouff, re-iterated similar sentiments and the major points that came out of the Experts' Meeting, relating them to earlier efforts and agreements within the OAU itself, the work of various agencies in Africa and the long-standing cooperation between the OAU and UNESCO. Now, more than ever before, there is real likelihood that resolutions and recommendations will be translated into concrete action in the areas of language and culture.

7. In her own address, Mrs Arizpe acknowledged the Director General of UNESCO Mr Federico Mayor's personal interest in the language issue and the importance he attached to it. She observed that the timing of the current conference was right in view of:

.1 "The present trend of evolution of the African continent where a democratic approach is progressively established";

.2 General acceptance of "the need to abandon highly centralised systems for decentralisation of decision-making to local communities";

.3 The consensus that was reached that "a coherent strategy is the only way to put an end to repetitive and uncoordinated seminars and meetings, and to useless studies and publications".

8. The Assistant Director General noted that, over the years, the question of language has become an integral part of UNESCO's programmes, in line with Article 1 of its Constitution which condemns all forms of discrimination based on language, among other things. At first, UNESCO put an emphasis on languages as teaching tools while the study of vernacular languages and language variation were basically issues for academics. After independence, the language problem became a national issue, particularly with reference to the mother tongue, which was seen and accepted as the medium for free access to education, information, and in national development in general as well as a national vehicle for cultural authenticity. Mrs Arizpe noted that these issues were highlighted as African participation in UNESCO increased in the sectors of culture, education and the social sciences. She reiterated the truth of Amadu Hampate BA's famous statement: "In Africa, when an old man dies a library burns down."

9. Since the 1960s, UNESCO has taken a series of actions and made a number of achievements in the field of languages, notably:

X a series of conferences on the development of education in Africa,
X studies of oral traditions,
X promotion of African languages as a media of instruction and for adult, continuing and/or lifelong education,
X cultural policies, culminating in the 1975 Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Africa, whose recommendations included the reinstatement

and promotion of African languages "as irreplaceable media of social communication and the carriers of cultural inheritance for various communities",

X the Conakry Conference of 1981, which was a landmark in that it provided an overview of the status and functions of African languages and concluded that, as far as language policy was concerned, the situation was still the same twenty years after independence,

X the Addis Ababa Meeting of 1994, which was similar but examined the global linguistic landscape in which the language of the former colonial power still had a role while the central role would be reserved for African languages.

10. Given this background, the Harare Conference of 1997 is, therefore, the culmination of a process that started decades before. The global landscape today makes it necessary for people of all continents to speak and use at least three languages: a local language, a national language and an international language. Mrs Arizpe referred to the UNESCO Report entitled Our Cultural Diversity in which the guiding principle was strongly stated as evolving global ethics together with a commitment to cultural pluralism. She concluded that:

X "a culture of peace requires a balance of knowledge, and use of regional and vernacular languages as cooperation for development can become the main focus of our actions"; and that

X "cultural pluralism, including linguistic pluralism, is the way forward towards the next century."

11. Therefore, the Harare Conference is a major event which will be considered in the future as a major milestone in the development of the African continent, and not just another conference to be added to the list of previous ones.

12. Mrs Arizpe pledged UNESCO's support, in cooperation with the OAU, ACCT and other partners, to assist in the implementation of decisions of the Ministers' Conference, which would be based on the recommendations of the Experts' Meeting.

13. The Honourable Dr I. Chombo, Minister of Higher Education in Zimbabwe, then officially opened the Minister' Conference. In his address, Minister Chombo illustrated the reality of multilingualism by referring to the number of languages in a few African countries, and he then stressed the need for clear language policies to promote unity, peace and stability in the midst of multilingualism. He stressed the need to promote the use of inter-African languages within the regions and sub-regions, in addition to the given international languages, and suggested that the African languages should also be used in OAU and other international conferences. African language use is important for sociopolitical and economic development of the African people because originality and creativity comes naturally in the mother tongue:

"People think and dream in their own languages and express themselves fully in them."

Therefore, there is a need to recognise, study and further document this multilingual reality by, for instance, drawing up an African linguistic atlas and specialised terminologies. Dr Chombo noted that there is no language that failed to express the reality that faced it. It is time everyone accepts the fact that multilingualism is enriching - it does not necessarily lead to the breaking up of states into tiny warring principalities.

C PRESENTATION OF THE EXPERTS' REPORT

1. During their first working session, the Ministers had adopted the Rules of Procedure and elected a Bureau for their Conference. Subsequent to that, a special session of the Experts' Meeting reconvened to formally adopt the Final Draft Report to be presented to the Conference of Ministers.

2. During the presentation of the Report, the Chairman of the Experts' Meeting explained that, in considering the overall language situation, the experts had:

> X   given reports on language situations from different countries;
>
> X   shared views on their perceptions of the general situation from their professional experiences;
>
> X   shared experiences from different professional perspectives as specialists in language studies, educationists, researchers and administrators in various, capacities; and then
>
> X   eventually came up with a comprehensive set of recommendations to present to the Ministers to add, drop and amend as they wished, after which the document would become the official Harare Declaration.

D THE HARARE DECLARATION AND PLAN OF ACTION

1. Through their adoption of the Harare Declaration and Plan of Action, Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the 51 African states attending the ICLPA totally committed themselves to correcting previous anomalies by adopting policy measures that were consistent with a new vision for Africa within the broader context of democratisation across the continent. The starting point was recognition of the richness of linguistic diversity and the adoption of multilingual policies to accommodate, promote and develop mother tongues as well as community, national and inter-African languages, alongside the international languages, in order to:

> X   enhance the participation of all citizens in all aspects of national life;
>
> X   promote a view of development that is broader than merely economic and allows for the African not only to grow but also to operate effectively at all levels from local through regional to international;
>
> X   assume a proper cultural identity in an environment that encourages peaceful co-existence and in societies that recognise linguistic rights as human rights within a broader context of justice, fairness and equity for all;
>
> X   maximise creativity and resourcefulness of the African people through optimal use of their own languages;
>
> X   develop the African languages themselves to the extent that they will be used in all forms of discourse, including scientific and technological, as part of the cognitive preparation for Africans to face the challenges of the next millennium.

2. Each country is thus expected to formulate and legislate for the implementation of a comprehensive national language policy based on the principles of pluralism and unity in diversity, so that each community will use its own language side-by-side with other languages while integrating with the wider society. In this way, every language spoken in the country will find its own place, and policy formulation and monitoring bodies will have to be set up to oversee all of this. Within this general framework leading to a common vision of Africa, each country or region will formulate its own policy based on established needs and the prevailing linguistic situation after thorough research and consultations. Follow-up and monitoring activities will need to be organised at national and regional levels in conjunction with such organisations as UNESCO, the OAU and ACCT.

3. Various strategies were adopted for implementation of language policies at the Pan-African, regional and national levels.

4. At the Pan-African level, governments individually and collectively committed themselves not only to formulate appropriate language policies, but also to define steps for their implementation following clear timetables, and to seek and or provide the necessary human, material and technological resources. Through the Harare Declaration, African governments also agreed to re-activate previous commitments made:

  X   through the 1986 Language Plan of Action for Africa to make Kiswahili one of the working languages of the OAU;
  X   by adopting PATPAL (the Pan-African Project for Training and Educational Materials Production in African Languages);
  X   to request, through the OAU, adoption of the decisions and conclusions of the Accra meeting on Language in Education (1996).

5. At the regional level the African governments committed themselves to:

  X   monitoring policies and implementation programmes in collaboration with international organisations such as the OAU and UNESCO;
  X   developing inter-African languages and sharing resources for the same;
  X   strengthening cooperation by teaching international languages across their regions of dominance; and
  X   establishing and/or revitalising African language research institutions and the Pan African Association of Linguists and other regional linguistic associations.

6. At nation-state level, governments will individually and collectively:

  X   train language practitioners in the various professions;
  X   produce, share and exchange language materials, information and expertise;
  X   establish language policy monitoring, research and service bodies charged with the task of developing terminologies and language banks and providing services such as translation and translator training;
  X   provide incentives by specifying language requirements in key domains such as education, training, employment and citizenship that would give practical

forms of value to the African languages.

7. Among the <u>commitments and appeals</u> made by the African governments are:

    X   the continued use of language experts in policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and reviewing through periodic meetings; and

    X   an open invitation to international organisations, especially UNESCO, to assist African states to implement the programme of action to which they committed themselves by adopting the Harare Declaration.

8. The 51 African governments attending the conference adopted a Plan of Action by which they would implement dynamic language policies through a series of actions with specified objectives, targeted results and time frames, as well as appropriate bodies to take the responsibility at regional, sub-regional and national levels. Altogether ten categories of activities were identified for implementation in the short, medium and long terms:

.1   The most immediate task assigned to each state is to formulate a language policy during 1998-1999 in order to start rehabilitating its national languages. The policy will explicitly define the status and functions of each of the languages spoken in each country.

.2   During 1998-2000, implementation of this policy should be followed up in each country by developing a language management plan in the key sectors of politics, administration, education and literacy.

.3   Also during 1998-2000, all countries should set up the necessary political, technical, pedagogical and other structures for the implementation and direction of the Action Plan.

.4   In order to clearly define the typology of African languages, UNESCO, OAU, ACCT and other partners will be requested to facilitate and/or assist with the compilation during 2000-2002 of a complete inventory of African languages and language areas to be published in the form of a language atlas for Africa.

.5   During the period 1999-2001, existing regional and sub-regional structures and institutions such as CICIBA, EACROTANAL and CELTHO will be revitalised with the assistance of international partners so that these structures and institutions can be actively involved in the rehabilitation and promotion of national and trans-national languages in Africa.

.6   As an on-going activity, member states and cooperating organisations will promote the reading environment through intensive production of linguistic tools and didactic materials in the local sub-regional and regional languages.

.7   IDEM has been assigned the responsibility to see to it that these same languages will be taught and used as media for instruction in the medium to long term.

.8   At the same tine, individual countries and collaborating sub-regional, regional

and international organisations will conduct extensive literacy campaigns and get their populations to be educated in the various African languages to the level where they can not only read them but also use them in other subjects and careers.

.9 African organisations (OAU, ACCT) and international organisations (UNESCO) would, in the short term, create a Pan African Association of Linguists to contribute to the promotion of African languages while, in the medium to long terms, they will set up dynamic networks for multi-sectoral cooperation in order to promote transnational languages as tools for inter-African cooperation.

.10 Every two years, African countries and their sub-regional and regional organisations would evaluate implementation of the Action Plan, with the assistance of UNESCO, OAU and other partners, in order to ensure proper coordination of the activities and to measure their impact.

E CLOSING SESSION

1. Among the highlights of the closing session were congratulatory remarks by Mrs Arizpe, who stressed the fact that an extremely important document for posterity had been reached by consensus. She described the Harare Declaration as "a most important vehicle, which will be analysed exhaustively by the Ministers and will become an intellectual, ethical and political vehicle which we can use to help African countries to become what they have set for themselves".

2. The closing session was chaired by the Honourable Dr I. Chombo. Brief addresses were delivered, first by the Secretary General of the Pan African Writers Association (PAWA), Mr Okai of Ghana, followed by HE Dr Akinluyi, Mr Diouff and Dr Shankanka, before the Guest of Honour, the Honourable Dr W.P.M Mangwende, Minister of Sport, Recreation and Culture in Zimbabwe, delivered his closing address. Finally, a vote of thanks was given by the Honourable Professor D. Mkandawire, the Minister of Education for Malawi.

3. Mr Okai explained that PAWA is an organisation of all the writers' associations on the continent, on behalf of which he congratulated the ICLPA as a logical and timely follow-up to the UNESCO Conference on the promotion and use of African languages in a multilingual environment held in Addis Ababa, which he had attended in 1994. In his view, ICLPA's unique and historic essence is that it is seeking to lay the basis for the most revolutionary and quite overdue movement for the cultural emancipation of the African people who have been marginalised for far too long in self-government and self-determination, as hitherto most decision - making has been taking place above their heads and in languages other than their own. Now the first important step has been taken in a thousand mile journey towards the cultural condition of just and humane togetherness. The writers will carry out the campaign to attain the spiritual environment of the African society. PAWA's constitution prioritises the task of taking of all the necessary steps and setting programmes to ensure that the African languages come into their own and come back into people's lives. PAWA pledges to collaborate with other organisations such as UNESCO and OAU to achieve all this for the good of the African personality.

4. Dr Akinluyi added that ICLPA's concerns focuses on one of the basic issues underpinning the Peres De Cuellar Report on Culture and Development in the 21st Century:

> The most durable way to accommodate ethnic diversity is to create a sense of the nation as a civic community rooted in values that can be shared by all ethnic components of the national society. Such a sense of community is best achieved if the concept of nation is freed from ethnic exclusivity.

5. Plurilingualism is a key towards the attainment of that goal. The current conference shows Africa's resolve to ensure that its linguistic and cultural diversity can and should be allowed to constitute levels of self - actualisation, collective progress and national strength.

6. The Harare Declaration was produced in a week of concentrated unidirectional effort targeted towards fashioning strategies for linguistic pluralism and cultural reinstatement. The CARDINAL PROPERTIES OF THE DECLARATION are that:

X   the document is flexible enough for adoption by member states for urgent and practical implementation mutatis mutandis;

X   its PLAN OF ACTION is a new unique feature deliberately endowed with circumscribed objectives and a phased approach to facilitate achievability;

X   the time - frame or timetable affixed to it makes implementation meaningful and beneficial;

X   it contains an irreducible minimum of actions for today and an agenda for tomorrow;

X   it clearly stipulates the complementing bodies, i.e. who does what.

7. The ICLPA is yet another conference and declaration but hopefully the last in the series of cognate conferences and seminars before adoption by each member state of a structured approach in terms of implementation, monitoring and funding.

8. On funding, Dr Akinluyi:

X   urged the member states themselves to make more money available for this project rather than merely looking to UNESCO;

X   reminded delegates that UNESCO is not a fund but a catalyst and facilitator whose support will depend on well articulated submissions supported by evidence of significant progress; and

X   explained that applications can also be made for funds through the participation programme and submitted through the national commissions.

9. Dr Akinluyi quoted President Ahmed Sekou Touré, 1981, from the Promotion of African Languages for the "Horizon 2000 Project" to underscore the importance of the week's proceedings and ultimate implementation:

> All languages, whatever they may be, are the product of the people's creative genius. An individual does not create a language. It is the absolute need to

translate a message from one man to another that necessitates the existence of language as a means to that end. The more languages an individual has, therefore, the more subtle variations there are in his creativity. Language has never set men against one another but opposing interests do.

10. Dr Akinluyi congratulated governmental experts for their success and achievements during the earlier part of the week. They have emerged as a group of high-powered technicians who must now perceive themselves as a component of an intra-African network of specialists who must continue to consult one another formally and informally:

> Their work does not end here. It is just beginning. The Herculian task before you should not be done in isolation.

He also congratulated the Ministers' Conference for coming up with the Harare Declaration as a combined action symbolising the preparedness of the 51 out of 54 African States present to urgently implement the agreed agenda and to provide support and funding for it.

11. Finally, he thanked UNESCO, the OAU, ACCT and all the delegates, including non-African, for their support and participation. Now the Africa group in UNESCO must ensure that the gains made in Harare are not lost but adopted as part of UNESCO policy through the Executive Board and through the General Conference's participation. The follow-ups must be vigorous and general across the continent because "cultural liberation, of which language is a key factor, is a logical follow-up to political emancipation". The OAU must address the former with the same vigour as it may successfully achieve the political emancipation for its member states.

12. Mr Diouff and Dr Shankanka followed up with addresses that echoed the same sentiments and fortified the same commitments. It was noted that UNESCO conferences, seminars, meetings, symposia and other such gatherings can be classified in 8 categories indicative of their relative importance and the extent to which the involvement or views of their governments are represented or involved, or whether the particular meeting is intended as an academic platform for scholars, thinkers or researchers, i.e. experts giving views or offering advice in a personal capacity. The ICLPA was assigned Category 2 status, after the General Conference of UNESCO, which was a Category I meeting. Therefore, UNESCO attached great importance to the current meeting.

13. The results were very pleasing in that:

X   A significant number, 51 out of 54 African countries participating, were represented at the Ministerial level, while all the others had high ranking officials and experts attending.
X   The level and quality of the debate was very high because of the combination of a high level of expertise and the informed positions of those participating.
X   The Conference was well covered by both the local and international media.
X   The Conference enhanced the perception of language issues in Africa and renewed the resolve to do something about those issues.
X   There was an outcome in terms of a practical agenda for action.
X   UNESCO's role had now been strengthened as it continued to work with

individual governments and other development agencies in this area, particularly in instituting procedures, mechanisms and processes for developing an integrated, interdisciplinary and holistic policy framework.

X A task force sub - committee was set up to do the necessary follow - ups.

14. The proposal was made and adopted that, as part of the follow-up action, the conference authorities, participating states or preferably the host country make a statement at the next session of the General Conference to report on the outcomes of this conference, with other participating countries also highlighting the conclusions of the Conference at that forum, both in plenary session and in the commissions.

15. General appreciation was expressed for the participation and contributions of distinguished ministers, participants, OAU, ACCT and bureau members, service staff, interpreters and all the other facilitators, especially the host government.

16. In his closing address, Dr Mangwende spoke about the impact of the high-powered deliberations of the week which had come at a most opportune time for Zimbabwe when the debate on the role and functions of the indigenous languages in the overall development of the country features prominently, in parliament and in the media. The ICLPA has provided Zimbabweans with direction and put the country, along with all of the other participating countries, in a better position to solve the language problem.

17. Speaker after speaker highlighted the general concerns of Africa and emphasised the need to use local and national languages officially and in the decision-making process, in promoting development, understanding, pluralism and as well as co-existing. The guidelines so clearly articulated by the Conference must now be implemented urgently by charting a new vision and by removing all policies and practices that denigrate the languages of Africa. In all this, Africa will need to cooperate as a region to mobilise human, technical and financial resources in the formulation of effective language policies and language development strategies. Hopefully future meetings will preoccupy themselves with how well member states have implemented the policies agreed upon in Harare and will not engage in further debate at the theoretical level.

18. On behalf of the Conference and of the Government of Zimbabwe, Dr Mangwende concluded his closing address by thanking the UNESCO Director General through Assistant Director General Mrs Arizpe; the UNESCO Regional Office for preparations and guidance through the meetings; the outstanding contributions and intervention of the ministers, indicative of the African countries' commitment; the enthusiastic participation and professional outputs of the experts; and the OAU, ACCT and other organisations for their support, which has all led to the resounding success of the Conference.

19. In the Vote of Thanks, the Honourable Professor Mkandawire thanked UNESCO for initiating and successfully organising the Conference and acknowledged UNESCO's commitment to the central issue of languages in Africa, going back to the early 1950s when a committee of experts recommended that school instruction should be carried out in the mother tongue even while most of the continent was still under colonial rule. Now UNESCO has enabled Africa to revisit the important issue of language when conditions are more favourable for successful implementation by the member states. The support of the OAU and ACC and their contribution to the debate and participation at the Conference were also fully appreciated.

20. For the future, it is hoped that the comprehensive guidelines adopted at the end of this

conference will help African governments to formulate realistic language policies, implementation of which would be treated as a matter of urgency because the causal relationship between sensible language policies on one hand and sustainable development and the preservation of democracy on the other have been demonstrated. Dr Mkandawire was encouraged in this belief by the large representation of governments at the conference. He concluded his remarks by congratulating and thanking the host government and all the organisations and people who had contributed in one way or another to the success of the conference.

PART IV

THE HARARE DECLARATION

INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS ON LANGUAGE POLICIES IN AFRICA, HARARE 20-21 MARCH 1997

HARARE DECLARATION

<u>Preamble</u>

We, Ministers and Heads of Delegations representing African states at the Intergovernmental Conference of Ministers on Language Policies in Africa, organised by UNESCO with the co-operation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Francophone Agency (ACCT) through the support of the Republic of Zimbabwe, having given due consideration to the views and recommendations of 51 government experts who met in Harare from 17 to 19 March 1997;

GUIDED

By the 28th session of the General Conference of UNESCO and the OAU Language Plan of Action for Africa;

COGNISANT

Of the richness of the linguistic diversity in Africa and its potential as a resource for all types of development;

CONVINCED

Of the necessity and urgency for African States to adopt clear policies for the use and development of mother tongues as well as community languages, national, inter-African and international languages;

 CONVINCED FURTHER

That the optimal use of African languages is a prerequisite for maximising African creativity and resourcefulness in development activities;

AWARE

That the language policies introduced since independence have generally favoured the colonial languages by setting up language structures that confer a monopoly of official status to the languages of the former colonial powers;
FURTHER AWARE

That most of the recommendations previously made to correct this situation have not been implemented;

CONSIDERING

That only very few African states have clear and comprehensive language policies and that even fewer have enshrined the stipulations of such policies in their constitutions;

RECOGNISING

That language policy decisions are actually political decisions that can only be taken by national governments;

HEREBY DECLARE

Our total commitment to the realisation of the following policy measures designed to correct the anomalies outlined above.

1. VISION FOR AFRICA

Although linguistic in nature, these commitments should be construed within the broader context of democratisation in Africa. The policy measures stated below are based on our continental vision of the Africa we aspire to have, namely:

(a)   a democratic Africa that seeks to enhance the active participation of all citizens in all institutions – social, economic, political, et cetera;

(b)   a democratic Africa where development is not construed in narrow economic goals but instead in terms of a culturally valued way of living together; and within a broader context of justice, fairness and equity for all; respect for linguistic rights as human rights, including those of minorities;

(c)   in broader terms, Africa that acknowledges its ethno-linguistic pluralism and accepts this as a normal way of life and as a rich resource for development and progress;

d)   a democratic Africa that seeks to promote peaceful coexistence of people in a society where pluralism does not entail replacement of one language or identity by another, but instead promotes complementarity of functions as well as co-operation and a sense of common destiny;

(e)   Africa where democratisation in a pluralistic context seeks to produce through sound and explicit language policies Africans who are able to operate effectively at local levels as well as at regional and international levels;

(f)   a democratic Africa that provides the environment for the promotion and preservation of an African identity as well as the cultivation of a proud and confident African personality;

(g)   Africa where scientific and technological discourse is conducted in the national languages as part of our cognitive preparation for facing the challenges of the next millennium.

2.   GUIDELINES FOR POLICY FORMULATION

(a)   All African language policies should be those that enhance the chances of attaining the vision of Africa portrayed above.

(b)   Each country should produce a clear Language Policy Document, within which every language spoken in the country can find its place.

(c)   Guidelines for policy formulation should be sanctioned by legislative action.

(d)   Every country's policy framework should be flexible enough to allow each community to use its language side-by-side with other languages while integrating with the wider society, within an empowering language policy that caters for communication at local, regional and international levels.

(e)   A language policy-formulating and monitoring institution/body should be established in each country.

3.   POLICY OPTIONS

Each country/region should formulate its own policy on the basis of established needs and an informed awareness of its prevailing linguistic situation, as well the language equipment of its citizens but within a general framework leading to a common vision. Such a policy should be arrived at by:

(a)   determining the correct typology of a country's language situation, and defining the statuses of the country's various languages, taking into account their functions and the media (oral, written, electronic, etc.) in which they are used;

(b)   establishing how many languages and language families there are in a given country, as well as what each is used for, who uses them, and people's attitudes towards them;

(c)   involving all concerned individuals and/or groups of individuals in the formulation and implementation of language policies;

(d)   organising follow-up and monitoring activities at national and regional levels in conjunction with such organisations as UNESCO, the OAU and ACCT.

4.   STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

4.1   Pan-African level

In view of the policy needs stated above, African governments should individually and collectively:

(a)   make declarations expressing clear policy statements, programme of tasks, and time-tables for implementation;

(b)   acknowledge the fact that the language issue cuts across all sectors of national life;

(c)   make use of language experts in formulating relevant language policies, state the guidelines Africa must adopt, and define the steps for their implementation;

(d)   take into account and help develop human, material and technological resources in implementing the defined steps;

(e)   re-activate the Language Plan for Africa and implement the decision taken in 1986 to make Kiswahili one of the working languages of the OAU;

(f)   adopt the Pan-African Project for Training and Educational Materials Production in African Languages (PATPAL);

(g)   request the OAU to take the necessary steps to ensure the adoption of the decisions and conclusions of the Accra meeting on Language in Education.

4.2   Regional level

At the regional level governments should:

(a)   monitor policies and provide follow-up activities facilitated by international organisations, such as UNESCO and [the] OAU;

(b)   co-operate on matters of policy and resources for cross-border languages;

(c)   develop regional/sub-regional languages;

(d)   strengthen inter-African co-operation by having international languages taught across their zones of dominance;

(e)   revitalise African language research institutions, and facilitate the formation and continued existence of the Pan-African Association of Linguists.

4.3   Government level

African governments should individually and collectively:

(a)   train language practitioners in the various professions and produce teaching and learning resources including those required for second-language teaching/learning;

(b)   develop language databases and/or language banks at national and regional levels, as well as create channels for exchange of information and expertise on language matters;

(c)   establish a central language planning service or institute to serve as a formal body charged with the responsibility for language issues such as translation services and compilation of terminologies;

(d)   give economic and other practical forms of value to the languages by specifying language requirements for specific domains such as education, training, employment, and citizenship.

5.   COMMITMENTS AND APPEALS

In the furtherance of the policy objectives stated above, we, individually and collectively:

(a)   commit ourselves to undertake as soon as possible the adequate preparation of language policies, taking into account the fundamental aspirations of our populations, the modern technological environment as well as the requirements of international life in our time;

(b)   undertake to enhance the participation of all our national communities in the public life of our countries by guaranteeing them a hearing in whatever language they use to express their thoughts and feelings concerning public matters;

(c)   urge all our citizens responsible for public, para-public and private institutions in the area of political, administrative and social life in our countries to recognise the fundamental need to respect the right of every human being to use the language of his or her choice;

(d)   invite all international organisations, especially those involved in the areas of co-operation, education and culture, as well as financial organisations and institutions to give their support to the efforts and the determination of our states to achieve development by means of dynamic language policies;

(e)   appeal to regional African institutions to give increased support both to national language policies and to regional integration;

(f)   encourage institutions and research departments involved in the initiation into and teaching of African languages to intensify and reinforce their activities in order to play a catalytic role in the global effort to achieve the development of Africa;

(g)   appeal to all concerned in Africa and throughout the world to engage in a clear and forthright co-operation, with respect for the integrity of African identity and the

harmonious promotion of human values and dignity as given expression in African languages;

(h)   appeal to UNESCO to facilitate periodic meetings of government experts in order to evaluate how far the decisions and resolutions taken by this Conference have been implemented.

PLAN OF ACTION

The Plan proposes actions at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. It states the nature of each action as well as its objectives, targeted results, time frame and implementing bodies.

No.	ACTIVITY	OBJECTIVE	RESULT TARGETED	TIME FRAME	IMPLEMENTING BODIES
1	Defining language policies	Rehabilitating national languages	A precise, consistent language policy for each country (status, function)	Short term (1998–1999)	Each state
2	Language management plan	Implementation of the language policy	Typology and use of national languages in the various spheres of activities (politics, administration, education, literacy)	Short and medium term (1998–2000)	Each country
3	Setting up national structures	Creation and revitalisation of operational policy and technical structures for the implementation and direction of the Action Plan	The existence of functional structures (political, technical, pedagogical, etc.)	Short and medium term (1998–2000)	All countries
4	Language Atlas of Africa	Typology of African languages	An exhaustive inventory of all African languages and language areas	Medium term (2000–2002)	UNESCO, OAU, ACCT, other partners
5	Revitalising regional and sub-regional structures (CICIBA, EACROTANAL, CELTHO, etc.)	Effective involvement in the promotion of African languages	Rehabilitation of national and transnational languages	Medium and long term (1999–2010)	Regional and sub-regional institutions and partners
6	Producing linguistic and didactic tools	Intensive production of linguistic tools and didactic material	The promotion of a reading environment in local, sub-regional and regional languages	Short, medium and long term	Countries, regional and sub-regional organisations, UNESCO and partners
7	Teaching of local, sub-regional and regional languages	Using these languages as media of instruction and teaching them	The mastery of knowledge and know-how, and the development of skills and identity [through these languages] by the actors involved in language reform and the target groups […]	Medium and long term	IDEM
8	Literacy	The conduct of extensive literacy campaigns	Populations educated (in reading, writing, arithmetic, in the various African languages)	Medium and long term	Countries, sub-regional and regional organisations, UNESCO, the OAU and other partners

No.	ACTIVITY	OBJECTIVE	RESULT TARGETED	TIME FRAME	IMPLEMENTING BODIES
9	Regional and sub-regional co-operation congress of the Pan-African Association of Linguistics	• The promotion of national and transnational languages as tools for inter-African co-operation • Create a pan-African association	• The promotion of dynamic networks for multisectoral co-operation through transnational languages • Contribute individually and collectively to the promotion of African languages	• Medium and long term • Short term	• Countries, sub-regional and regional organisations, UNESCO, the OAU and other partners • The OAU, UNESCO and ACCT
10	Follow-up and evaluation	Ensuring proper co-ordination of the activities and measuring their impact	Implementation of the language management plan and Action Plan	Biennial	Countries, sub-regional and regional organisations, UNESCO, the OAU and other partners

PART V

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS ON LANGUAGE POLICY IN AFRICA

LANGUAGE PLAN OF ACTION FOR AFRICA (1986)

PREAMBLE

We Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Unity meeting in our Twenty-second ordinary Session, in Addis Ababa, from 28 to 30 July 1986,

GUIDED

By the Organisation of African Unity Charter
By the Pan-African Cultural Manifesto of Algiers (1969),
By the Inter -Governmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Africa organised by UNESCO in Accra 1975 in co-operation with the organisation of African Unity,
By the Cultural Charter for Africa, with Special reference to Part I Article 1 (a) and (b), Article 2 (a) , Part III Article 6 1 (a) and 2 (b) , and Part V Articles 17-19,
By the OAU Lagos Plan of Action (1980) for the Economic Development of Africa,
By the Final Report (27th April, 1982) of UNESCO's Meeting of Experts on the "Definition of a Strategy for Promotion of African Languages":

Convinced that language is at the heart of a people's culture and further convinced that, in, accordance with the provisions of the cultural Charter for Africa, the Cultural advancement of the African peoples and the acceleration of their economic and social development will not be possible without harnessing in a practical manner indigenous African languages in that advancement and development;

Convinced that, as in other spheres of her national life, Africa needs to assert her independence and identity in the field of language

Aware that, up to the present, the majority of Member States have not taken the necessary practical steps to accord their indigenous languages their rightful official role as provided for by the Cultural Charter for Africa, the Lagos Plan of Action and other related resolutions of the organisation of African Unity,

Recognising that each sovereign state has the right to devise a language policy that reflects the agricultural and socio-economic realities of its country, which is consonant or in close harmony with the needs and aspirations of its people

Convinced that the adoption and practical promotion of African languages as the official languages of the state is dependent primarily and as a matter of absolute imperative

on the political will and determination of each sovereign state;

<u>Convinced</u> that the adoption and practical promotion of African languages as the official languages of the state are certain to have great advantages over the use of non-indigenous languages in democratising the process of formal education and involvement of the African populations in the political, cultural and economic affairs of their country;

<u>Aware</u> that, illiteracy is an obstacle to the economic, cultural and social development of African countries and that mass literacy campaigns cannot succeed without the use of indigenous African languages;

<u>Aware</u> that in recognition of the ever-growing interdependence and interaction at all levels of human endeavour and brotherhood of man, communication with the outside world beyond the boundaries of the African continent is inevitable and ought to be provided for or reflected in the language policies to be devised and implemented by each sovereign state;

<u>Convinced</u> that the promotion of African languages, especially those, which transcend national frontiers, is a vital factor in the cause of African unity;

<u>Recognising</u> that, within Africa itself, the existence side by side in almost all African countries of several languages is a major fact of life and the knowledge that, because of this, multilingualism (i. e. the mastery and use of several languages by individual for purposes of daily communication) is an equally dominant social feature of life in these countries, should induce Member States to make the promotion of multilingualism in their countries a prime consideration in the evolution of an appropriate language policy;

<u>Agree</u> to adopt the Language Plan of Action for Africa as set out below:

PART I

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

The aims and objectives of this Plan of Action are as follows:

a) To encourage each and every Member State to have a clearly defined language policy;

b) To ensure that all languages within the boundaries of Member States are recognised and accepted as a source of mutual enrichment;

c) To liberate the African peoples from undue reliance on the utilisation of non-indigenous languages as the dominant, official languages of the state in favour of the gradual take over of appropriate and carefully selected indigenous African Languages in this domain;

d) To ensure that African languages, by appropriate legal provision and practical promotions, assume their rightful role as the means of official communication in the public affairs of each Member State in replacement of European languages which have hitherto played this role;

e) To encourage the increased use of African languages as vehicles of instruction at all educational levels;

f) To ensure that all the secrets of the political and socio-economic system of each Member State is mobilised in such a manner that they play their due part in ensuring that the African languages(s) prescribed as official language(s) assume their intended role in the shortest time possible;

g) To foster and promote national, regional and continental linguistic unity in Africa in the context of the multilingualism prevailing in most African countries.

PART II

PRIORITIES

a) Policy formulation
Whether at the national, regional or continental levels, the selection and prescription without undue delay of certain viable national, regional or continental indigenous African languages as the official languages to be used for the formal official functions of the State, regional grouping or the OAU.

b) Implementation and Promotion
The subsequent implementation of the language policy adopted and the incorporation of the official African languages in the political, educational, social, cultural and economic lives of the people.

c) Modernisation
The modernisation as necessary and by any means required of the indigenous African Languages selected and prescribed as official languages.

d) Mobilisation of resources
The mobilisation of financial, human and other resources and all relevant public and private relevant institutions in the practical promotion of the chosen official languages.

PART III

PROGRAMME OF ACTION (METHODS AND MEANS)

In order to fulfil the objectives set out in Part I, the African States solemnly subscribe to the following programme of action:

a) At continental level and as a concrete expression and demonstration of the OAU's seriousness of purpose, the adoption without undue delay by the Organisation of African

Unity and the regional associations, Organisations or institutions affiliated to it of viable indigenous African languages as working language;

b) To encourage regional associations, organisations or institutions already accorded or those applying for observer status to the OAU to adopt indigenous African working languages as their working languages;

c) At regional level, the adoption by regional groupings of viable, regional indigenous African languages as official or working languages;

d) At national level, the imperative need for each OAU Member State to consider it necessary and primary that it formulates with the minimum of delay a language policy that places an indigenous African language or languages spoken and in active use by its peoples at the centre of its socio-economic development;

e) In order to fulfil the objective in (d), the need by each Member State to establish a national language council, where none exists, or to strengthen it, where one already exists, as a national sounding board for the formulation of an appropriate national language policy;

f) The absolute necessity that each Member State, as a matter of supreme practical importance, follows up the formulation of an appropriate national language policy with an adequate and sustained allocation of the necessary financial and material resources to ensure that the language or languages prescribed as official language(s) achieve(s) a level of modernisation that meets the needs of administering a modern state;

g) In recognition of the negative estimation in which indigenous African Languages are generally held in Africa by the general public, the necessity for each Member State, as part of its national programme of promoting those African languages duly prescribed as official languages, to mount a sustained campaign of educating or re-educating the national population about the inherent or potential practical utility of African languages to counter the present widespread negative attitudes in Africa towards these languages;

h) In recognition that the formal national education system plays a key role in the practical use of any language, the need for each member State to ensure that all the sectors (i. e. primary, secondary and tertiary) of the national education system are pressed as appropriate in the service of the practical promotion of the indigenous language(s) selected and prescribed as (an) official language(s);

i) Aware that African universities, research institutes and other institutions concerned with the study and promotion of African Languages have a unique role to play in strengthening the role these languages play in the daily lives of the African peoples, the need for these institutions to strike a proper balance in future between the scientific study of the African language and their actual use and practical promotion;

j) In connection with (i) above, the need for each Member State to render its national universities and other research and related institutions a primary instrument for the practical promotions of African languages as regards such critical promotional activities as the compilation of technical and general dictionaries, the writing of textbooks on useful subjects,

the training of teachers of language translators, interpreters, broadcasters and journalists, the production of useful books and other types of literature relevant to the lives of the contemporary African and the up-dating of vocabulary in African languages;

k) In recognition of the fact that to impact formal or other types of knowledge the vehicle of instruction or communication should be a language familiar to the learner, the absolute necessity that each Member State should, as an essential part of this educational policy, prescribe as media or vehicles of instruction those indigenous African Languages that best and most effectively facilitate the learning process;

l) In recognition of the singularly strategic role widespread literacy among the national population plays in the socio-economic development of a country, and recognising further that literacy education will be greatly facilitated and speeded up if languages familiar to the national population are employed, the advisability of using indigenous African languages as media of instruction in national literacy campaigns mounted by Member States.

Done in Addis Ababa, 30 July 1986.

RESOLUTION ON THE LANGUAGE PLAN OF ACTION FOR AFRICA

The Conference of African Ministers of Culture meeting in its First Ordinary Session in Port Louis, Mauritius, from 14 to 15 April 1986,

Recalling the provisions of the Cultural Charter for Africa concerning the promotion of African languages,

Convinced of the irreplaceable role they play in the preservation, development and dissemination of African Cultures,

Further convinced that the promotion of these languages contribute to the Assertion of the cultural identity, the strengthening of national independence and the building of African Unity,

> 1. ADOPTS the language Plan of Action for Africa prepared by the meeting of Experts convened by the Inter-African Bureau of Languages (OAU/IBL) in Kampala, Uganda, in June 1985, and attached hereto
>
> 2. RECOMMENDS the member States to draw inspirations from it for their policies and programmes of development of African Languages;
>
> 3. FURTHER RECOMMENDS the experts concerned to establish a Pan-African Language Association.

**PANAFRICAN SEMINAR ON
"THE PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF THE
USE OF AFRICAN NATIONAL LANGUAGES
IN EDUCATION"**

**ACCRA - GHANA
FROM AUGUST 26 - 30, 1996**

**CHARTER
For the promotion and use of African Languages in Education
AUGUST, 1996**

C O N T E N T S
PREAMBLE
I. PRINCIPLES
II. GOALS AND ORIENTATIONS
III. ACTIONS
IV. SUPPORTIVE MEASURES
V. CONCLUSION

**DRAFT CHARTER
FOR THE PROMOTION OF AFRICAN
LANGUAGES IN EDUCATION**

PREAMBLE

1.   Whereas, for over one hundred and fifty years, efforts have been ongoing, both by Africans themselves and others, for interested persons and institutions, towards the development of the languages of Africa for use in education and as tools for both the material and the cultural uplift of the African peoples; as evidenced by the following agreements, among others:

-        The Charter of the Organisation of African Unity (1963)
-        The UNESCO Declaration on the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation (1966)
-        The OAU Cultural Charter for Africa (1976)
-        The OAU Lagos Plan of Action (1980)
-        The Declaration on the cultural Aspects of the Lagos Plan of Action (1985)
    -    The OAU Language Plan of Action for Africa (1986)

2. And whereas these efforts have continued throughout the years and very significant contributions have been made through African language studies and promotion to the determination of linguistic universals and to human understanding and development in general;

3. Whereas today there is widespread recognition of the importance of African languages not

just for the above purposes, but even more so, as key factors in the total social and economic emancipation and the cultural and spiritual advancement of the African peoples;

4. Whereas there is now near total awareness of the value of education using the African languages for the purpose; and all but a few of the African states are now committed to the fullest possible use of their languages in education;

5. Noting however that despite the achievements in this respect, more remains in fact to be achieved than ever before, and that the task is all the more urgent, in view of the continuing socio-economic crises that have beset the African nations over the past 15 years;

6. Noting, in addition, the need for the languages of the people as a means of grassroots communication, and also as a key factor in the rehabilitation of populations uprooted and displaced as a result of civil wars in many of the African countries;

7. Noting the important role of the study and knowledge of languages in the achievement of peace and mutual understanding not only between nations but also and primarily between groups and peoples within nations, and its pertinence particularly for the war-torn countries of Africa;

8. Aware that the benefits of the languages involvement, as indicated above, cannot be derived through the use of foreign languages, but only by making full use of the languages of the African peoples themselves, and especially within the perspective of achieving the objective of "Education for All".

9. Aware also that languages, throughout the world, have always been crucial to the development of personality and the attainment of both group and national consciousness as well as in the development of group and national culture;

10. Aware of the universal principle that the learner learns best in his mother tongue or most familiar language, but that this principle has for long been flouted throughout Africa, must to the detriment of African education;

11. Aware, in addition, of the continuing need to correct negative attitudes towards language teaching and learning in Africa;

I. PRINCIPLES

We, the African Ministers and those Responsible for Education in the African States, assembled here in Accra in the Republic of Ghana from 26 to 30 August, 1996.

Taking into account the fact that the African countries are in the process of development and that education is a priority among their strategies for this development;

Taking into account also that education very largely depends on the communication of knowledge, and that language is indispensable for this communication of knowledge.

We must solemnly affirm as follows:

1. The dignity and worth of each and every one of our mother tongue languages, and their complete inevitability as instruments of African education, culture and personality development;

2. The premier place of these languages as instruments of national communication from the grassroots, and therefore of all national economic and social development;

3. That full literacy in and a full understanding of these national languages is a human right to be attained within a multilingual educational system appropriate to the socio-economic and socio-linguistic situation of a country. In this respect, we affirm also:

> The right of every African to literacy and education in his mother tongue, this being defined as the language native to the individual or the prevailing language of his immediate community;
> The right to a familiarity with, and as perfect an understanding as possible of the Lingua Francas and other major languages of his or her country, for the sake of unity, co-operation, mutual development, and the free flow of information within the nation;

> The right of the African peoples to use their languages for all purposes of inter-country subregional and regional development, without prejudice to the acquisition and use of selected foreign languages for such purposes as those of religion; international business; and international understanding.
> The right to linguistic empowerment of all Africans, to enable them fully to join the processes of democracy in their countries.

4. The need for specific actions to be taken by African governments and their agents towards the exercise, enjoyment, preservation and protection of these rights.

II. GOALS AND ORIENTATIONS

The main goal of this charter is the promotion of the use of African languages in all normal and specialised situations and functions. Actions for the purpose will be oriented towards the following:

1. National awareness campaigns for the removal of prejudices and the development of positive attitudes towards African mother tongue teaching and learning and community and national usage;

2. The use of the national lingua francas and major community languages for all national business and administration, as well as in all other spheres of national life, be it information; national debates and legislation; theatre, music or other entertainment;

3. Quality education both formal and non-formal in the community language at levels, and the acquisition of the national lingua francas, without prejudice to the learning and use of the international languages of national adoption;

4. Mass literacy of every language group in its own language, and of every community in its prevailing language.

5. Mass literacy of every community in the national lingua franca or lingua francas, as well as in the major community languages of the country;

6. Full media use of the languages in newspapers and journals radio and television, and the development of rural language journalism towards this end;

7. The preservation of the oral traditions as well as the rapid development of national literatures in the languages;

8. The development of national language book publishing and the development and regulation of the national book trade for the purpose;

9. The development of local language translation and of translation personnel and their training, so as to facilitate the free flow of information among the various language groups within the nation;

10. The development of a realistic planned and phased programme for the achievement of the above goals, in the light of the resources that are available or that can be made available to the nation.

III. ACTIONS

The following actions will be necessary, where they have not been already taken:

1. Language mapping, to identify the languages of a country, their extent and their first and second language speaker populations; as well as other linguistic research, resulting in descriptions of all the languages and the provision of modem grammars and dictionaries;

2. For maximum success, the sensitisation of all agents and others concerned in the development of mother tongue languages, by means of public meetings, use of the meetings seminar and workshops, the theatre and other such means.

3. The adoption of clear national language policies for the development. A policy would include all the languages of a country, whether major languages, minority groups, spell out the role and status of every language, which languages are to be adopted for nation-wide communication, which for zonal communication, and which for literacy among its native speakers.

4. The setting up of institutions for research and the motivation, direction and co-ordination of all or specific aspects of the language action, such as national language academies, language associations; as well as the strength ensuing of university and other institutions for teaching and training.

5. The development of institutional arrangements for the preparation of syllabuses and

curricula, for the conduct of examinations and other such evaluative activities, and for the certification both of teachers as well as of students leaving educational institutions for entry into the work force.

6. The training of journalists, translators and educational and literacy personnel, as well as literary critics to encourage and monitor the production of ethnic literature.

7. A determination of which languages are to be taught as subject or used as medium of instruction in the national education system and at what levels without prejudice to the learning of the international languages of a country's adoption.

8. The provision of libraries with easy access to mother tongue books; the provision of magazines, book, information bulletins and government handouts, and an abundance of post-literacy and continuing education materials, all free or at low cost, for encouraging of the reading habit.

9. The setting up of efficient management and co-ordination structures and mechanisms for the language action within Ministries of Education, these structures and mechanisms being concerned with co-ordinating also the involvement of partners in the educational action, as well as with supervision and monitoring and evaluation.

10. The effective co-ordination and management of both the literacy and the basic education effort as part of the same programme and this with respect to content and methodology development; training and staff deployment and career structure; and the use of spaces, facilities and equipment.

11. Mobilisation and training of teachers and literacy personnel for teaching of and in the mother tongue languages, upgrading of their teacher status, and providing incentives for their work.

12. Encouragement and development of local production, through private publishing, printing and other such enterprises for the provision of both pupils, teachers and general materials for mother tongue education. These actions would include also the translation into the mother tongues and publishing of high quality literature from other African sources or from international sources world-wide.

IV. SUPPORTIVE MEASURES

As regards supportive measures, the following will be necessary where they have not yet been undertaken:

1. The Organisation of funds for phased programme for the language action, both from national revenue as well as from non-government sources;

2. The increase of the contribution of governments towards their national language programmes;

3. In view of the magnitude of the language action, the mobilisation of private sources as

well as language communities themselves within the nation for financial and other support for the development and use of their own language.

4. Legislation as necessary for adoption of the national language policy, and immediately and freedom from bureaucracy in its implementation;

5. Legislation also for guaranteeing the use of mother tongue languages as the primary instruments for government business and administration within our countries;

6. The encouragement of partners in the pursuit of the language action, both through international and bilateral co-operation and NGO's and the planned and co-ordinated utilisation of their efforts;

7. The involvement of national linguists and language specialists in all policy matters involving languages, both national languages and the foreign languages of adoption;

8. The constant review, monitoring and updating of the language policy provisions;

9. Legal measures for regulation of the book trade especially in favour of mother tongue books; protection of copyright; and action against plagiarism, book piracy and other kinds of copyright infringement;

10. The strict observance of international conventions mandating exemptions from customs duties and taxes for paper supplies and printing materials for the production of educational books;

11. Inter-African co-operation, and other co-operation as relevant, in such matters as:

> the standardisation, as far as possible, of orthographies of common language, so as to ensure easier access to educational and especially reading materials,

> exchange of expertise as necessary in language and mother tongue education,

> the provision of paper and the setting up of paper industries.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we recognise and appreciate the role of UNESCO, since its inception and continuing to date, and of the OAU and other international and bilateral agencies and NGO's in the language action through research, stimulation, provision of technical and material support, and assistance with funding, in favour of the language action in the African states, and we fully recommend that this role should continue and that the Organisation should provide itself with suitable personnel for the purpose.

Finally, as a necessary prerequisite for the African language action, and as much as lies in our power, we would not tire in our efforts to guarantee individual and collective freedoms, in the peaceful, just and democratic societies towards which all Africa is now working.

PART VI

EXPERTS' CONTRIBUTIONS

**Keynote address by Dr Herbert Chimhundu
of the Zimbabwe delegation to
the Experts' Meeting of the
Intergovernmental Conference on African language policies
held in
HARARE, ZIMBABWE
17 - 21 MARCH 1997**

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues and Friends. . .

1. PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

The main reason I am addressing you now is to get the Experts' Meeting properly focused from the outset, in order to ensure that both the agenda we are adopting today and our deliberations up to Wednesday will yield the expected outcomes and make the task of the Ministers and Heads of Delegations easier on Thursday and Friday. Therefore, in my address, I will concentrate on the aims, objectives and expected outcomes of the whole five-day Intergovernmental Conference as these were understood by the Zimbabwean Task Force and Technical Committee in which I served during the past six months that we have been preparing for this conference. During this period, the Task Force worked in very close liaison with the Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO and the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and most especially with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Sport, Recreation and Culture, as well as the Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications. Therefore, those of us who are in the Zimbabwean Delegation feel that we are in a very good position to interpret the intended thrust of this conference.

First it is important to emphasise that, as is indicated by the title "Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa" this is not just another academic conference. Although language policies must be guided by research, which may be both theoretical and empirical, our primary concerns and our discussions during the course of the week should be informed and guided by the experiences which we will be sharing about our own national language situations, policies and practices. Hopefully, as we compare notes in this way, we will not only define strategies for the management of multilingual situations of varied

complexity, but we will also actually design alternative language policy frameworks which our countries can implement nationally or regionally.

In other words, we now need to come up with something more concrete and more practical from all the linguistic research and conferencing that has been going on since 1976 when the Organisation of African Unity adopted the **Cultural Charter for Africa** and subsequently followed this up in 1986 with the **Language Plan of Action for Africa**. The numerous resolutions and recommendations that have been adopted at various fora during the last twenty years or so, and the many practical steps that have been taken by several countries on the continent, have convinced the sponsors and organisers of this conference that most African countries are now ready to formulate and seriously implement clear language policies that will provide the necessary conducive framework for the development, promotion and use of community, national and regional languages for various purposes. Therefore, this meeting of language experts is expected to produce a report with clear recommendations that will assist the Ministers' Conference to make appropriate decisions on policy guidelines for the political and technical management of the African linguistic context within the framework of workable policy alternatives.

In the case of Zimbabwe, for example, it is pleasing to note that serious attention has now been turned to language issues, and that the national debate on language, culture and development is expected to intensify after this conference, and to culminate in the formulation and adoption of a comprehensive national language policy. Zimbabwe, like other countries also represented here today, is keen to learn from the experiences of those countries in Africa which already have such policies and have already set up strong linguistic normative bodies.

2. THE AFRICAN LINGUISTIC SITUATION

The starting point for any meaningful language policy has to be a complete understanding of the situation on the ground in terms of the number of languages spoken, the sizes of the speech communities and their geographical distribution; patterns of use, roles and statuses of these languages; the state of publishing and the availability of written materials in those languages; their use in both the print and electronic media or access by their speakers to the mass media; as well as the existence or otherwise of an explicit and comprehensive national language policy.

At the continental level, we can start with five generalisations that are valid:
1. The African linguistic situation is extremely complex, characterised as it is by multilingualism which varies considerably in degree from estimates of 410 languages in Nigeria and 206 in Zaire to reports of only one each in Lesotho and Swaziland.
2. A minority of African states has clear and comprehensive language policies, and only very few have actually written such policies into their national constitutions.
3. In the majority of cases, language policies are either non-existent or only implicit from an examination of scattered pieces of legislation as defining instruments, or from observation of conventional practice or requirements in particular sectors such as education, training and justice.
4. Whether these are explicit or implicit, language policies vary considerably across the continent.
5. The matter of adopting regional linguae francae as official or working languages appears to have been shelved since the OAU made a decision in 1986, which was never implemented, to add Swahili to English, French, Portuguese and Arabic.

In the Southern African region, Botswana and South Africa have already formally addressed language issues, and Mozambique is reported to be preparing to follow suit. Botswana previously had only the Setswana Language Council, but this is now subsumed under the Botswana Languages Council as the umbrella body which has powers to make decisions and is taken seriously. In practice, however, Botswana has adopted the dominant language as the official language. So have Lesotho, Swaziland, Tanzania and Malawi, although Malawi seems to be shifting towards a multilingual solution and has already set up a Centre for Language Studies at its national university to aid this process.

The establishment of a similar language research centre has been suggested here in Zimbabwe by the existing language committees. For its part, the University of Zimbabwe has strongly supported major research projects such as ALLEX, the African Languages Lexical Project, which is primarily engaged in dictionary making. Addressing participants at the Fifth ALLEX Planning and Training Workshop about two months ago, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe said:

> ...We need to strengthen the Department of African Languages and Literature at this university, and through it contribute to the development of our national languages and, through them, contribute to a fuller development of our human resource potential, through which all other forms of development, including economic development, can then be realised. We have to link language with development.

It has also been reported that Mozambique may be moving towards a multilingual solution appropriate to its own linguistic diversity by recognising eighteen languages for official use in its regions, while South Africa has already recognised eleven for the same reasons. South Africa has gone further in its policy programme and, under the auspices of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, has set up three services. The first is the State Language Services, which deals mainly with translation. The second is the National Terminology Services, which is creating a national term bank, particularly to enhance the functional capacity of the nine newly recognised languages, i. e. African languages. The third is the establishment and management of the National Lexicography Units, by amending and broadening the provisions of an Act of 1975 so that monolingual dictionary projects can now be commissioned for all the official languages, in addition to Afrikaans and English. However, in many other countries on the continent, African languages continue to be downgraded and hardly receive any official attention, despite the occasional rhetoric about the need to develop African Languages to the level of working languages and to advanced subject status, and despite the existence of suitable guidelines in the form of the OAU's **Cultural Charter for Africa** and **Language Plan of Action for Africa**.

3. CURRENT TRENDS AND PERSPECTIVES

Within the context of any particular nation, language policy is actually a political decision that can only be taken by central government. Linguists and other language workers and stakeholders can only advise and lobby, but ultimately the formulation and implementation of policy on the official statuses, roles and uses of languages within a nation state have to be done through legislation. For example, it takes an act of parliament to create an effective linguistic normative body with authority and power that the community will respect. It is such a body that would then be in a position to direct and oversee the standardisation, promotion and development of the local languages within the framework of a comprehensive language policy.

Being fully aware of this, and as part of its preparations for this conference, the Zimbabwe Government has been consulting widely. Its delegation to this meeting comprises representatives of various ministries and institutions, which are considered to be stakeholders in language policy formulation or in the teaching, research and promotion of national languages. A Technical Committee has already produced a Position Paper, which was first circulated widely for comment in the months preceding the conference. Reactions to this paper were studied by the Technical Committee and incorporated where appropriate.

It is already quite clear that Zimbabwe is now preparing to move towards a comprehensive language policy, although this policy is still to be formulated. Clear indications to this effect have been included in the Position Paper, as well as in two Government White Papers, which were circulated last year by the Ministry of Sport, Recreation and Culture on National Cultural Policy and on Policy on the Music Industry in Zimbabwe. When the Ministry of Education revived the Shona and Ndebele Language Committees earlier in 1996, official policy statements were made and publicised to the effect that government now wanted to combine these committees and to set up, through an Act of Parliament, a National Language Council which would be given the powers necessary for the purpose of effectively monitoring the form, development and use of the local or national languages. A citizens' debate on language and culture, and their links with development and, in particular, indigenisation of the economy, is now very much alive, and it seems to be having a greater impact than earlier debates on the same issues that tended to emphasise national pride and identity only.

Why is it important or necessary to mention all of this? I must stress that I am merely using our experiences and expectations in Zimbabwe as examples to illustrate what this intergovernmental conference is all about. Notice that we are no longer merely talking about decolonisation of the mind or about national pride and identity. These are givens. We are now emphasising development, empowerment and democracy. In my considered view, development of the national languages is quite consistent with the national goals set out in such programmes as economic indigenisation and Vision 2020, because it is part of empowerment which is facilitated through access to information, grassroots participation and grassroots leadership. Thus the question of language is also tied up with democratisation as a process, for freedom and democracy are least likely to be enjoyed in a foreign language.

In the wider background, there has also been the international debate on language and democracy, which culminated in the signing of the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights in Barcelona on 6 June 1996. Essentially what the 52 articles of this long and complex document do in four languages (Catalan, Spanish, French and English) is to prescribe multilingualism and recognition of linguistic rights as human rights.

As a matter of fact, these principles are consistent with the aims, objectives and principles of the OAU's **Language Plan of Action for Africa**, which we have already referred to and which was signed by the Heads of State and Government at the end of the Twenty Second Ordinary Session on 30 July 1986. Among other things, this document encouraged "each and every member state to have a clearly defined language policy".

Democratising language policy is not just a matter of replacing one language by another. Rather, it is a matter of responding to the real needs of the people. In practice, this would mean promoting multilingualism in many African countries. For instance, how can you guarantee democracy when the law of the land is not understood in the language of the people? How do you abide by what you do not know? How can you use information to which you have no access or to which you only have limited access? How can you fully participate in anything, or compete, or learn effectively or be creative in a language in which you are not

fully proficient or literate? Above all, how can a country develop its human resource base to full potential without the languages of the people?

4. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

To conclude my address, let me enumerate the outcomes expected from this week-long conference. Basing our deliberations on pre-prepared national linguistic profiles and national position papers, our Experts' Meeting is expected to come up with a report which will contain clear and practical recommendations that are consistent with the broad aims and specific objectives that are indicated in the **WORKING DOCUMENT** that has been circulated for this conference by **UNESCO**. This document outlines the following, with reference to the whole of Africa:

1.　　A typology of language contexts and situations with four categories;
2.　　A typology of language policies and practices with three categories;
3.　　Language categorisation for the purposes of development based on five patterns of use that are predominant, ranging from local mother tongues to international languages; and
4.　　Experiences, problems and the pros and cons of all of the above, with particular reference to specific areas or sectors, notably:
　　a) Politics and administration;
　　b) Development;
　　c) Education;
　　d) The written press;
　　e) Radio; and
　　f) Television.

Our meeting must look at all these areas, compare notes on the basis of our national linguistic situations and policy positions, and then come up with concrete suggestions and recommendations on viable options for the formulation of policies and strategies which can be used during the Ministers' Conference on Thursday and Friday.

　　If we succeed in our own assigned tasks, we must then expect the Ministers' Conference to issue a declaration and policy guidelines which individual countries can follow up with a view to formulating comprehensive and workable national language policies. Such a policy is one that would do the following:

　　a) Clearly define the status of all the languages in use;
　　b) Define short, medium and long term goals for the development, promotion and use of languages;
　　c) Determine the methods and resources to be used in achieving the stated goals as well as targets and problems to be solved;
　　d) Make specific provisions for language use, development and promotion in crucial sectors such as education, law and the media; and
　　e) Set language requirements for citizenship, formal training and work in various other sectors.

In short, it is expected that this conference will take stock of the current situation concerning the use and status of African languages, as well as examine and adopt a document to serve as a reference framework for the political and technical management of a language policy.

Notes from Address by Professor O. Okombo (Kenya)
Chairman of the Experts' Meeting
on the topic

STRATEGIES AND POLICIES: MULTILINGUALISM, MANAGEMENT AND APPROPRIATE INTEGRATION

What are we here for?

X To contribute to the current African debate on the kind of Africa that we want: for ourselves, for our children, and for our grandchildren.

X Our contribution is expected to be in the area of language:

i) What policies should guide language use in our various countries? and

ii) What practical measures should be taken to ensure that those policies work?

What is the current thinking about the Africa that we want?

X The kinds of recommendations that we make for language policies in Africa and the strategies for the implementation of those policies must fit in the picture of the Africa that we want.

X Today, the dominant themes in the thinking about Africa include the following:

The democratisation of our social and political institutions,

the participation of all our peoples in making decisions about things that affect their lives,

development perceived not only in terms of economic factors, but also in such social factors and justice and equity,

respect for human rights, both at individual and community levels (including the rights of minorities),

acceptance of pluralism as a way of life, and the creation of a culture of peaceful co-existence in a pluralistic society,

the promotion of regional co-operation among African states,

the retention of our African identity and the development of a proud and confident African personality.

The questions to ask ourselves at this meeting

X What language policies will facilitate the realisation of this vision of Africa?

X How can those language polices be implemented?

X What time scale, what resource allocations, what functional loads for the various languages, in what ways are the various languages to be made ready for their decided functions, and who will have the responsibility of seeing to it that everything goes according to plan?

How do we approach this task?

X The task of making recommendations for language policies and the strategies for their implementation must start with a factual assessment of the African language situations as they exist now: How many languages are there, what are they used for, what are people's

attitudes to them, in what media are they used, et cetera? This assessment leads to a typology of language situations of the kind hat are displayed in the Working Document.

X   The next task is a categorisation of languages in terms of function in a manner that is sensitive to the uniqueness of each situation, always remembering that one and the same language can belong to more than one category, e. g. for some people the same language may be
- a mother tongue
- a community language
- a national language, and
- a language of African intercommunication (this would be the case for a mother tongue speaker of Kiswahili).

This is the kind of categorisation found in the working document.

What must we do today and tomorrow?
As the experts gathered to do the groundwork for the conference of Ministers, we must by the end of the day tomorrow have a document outlining:
1. What vision of African language policies must fit into;
2. What every country must do to understand its own language situation;
3. What policy options are compatible with the various African language situations;
4. What implementation of management question every country must answer as a way of determining the strategy for realising its chosen language policy.

PART VII

EXTRACTS FROM SELECTED SPEECHES

Address by
Dr A. B. Shankanga

(Director, UNESCO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare) at the opening session of the Experts' Meeting (17 March 1997)

...Until not too long ago, there have been people who doubted the capacity of African languages to serve as media for expressing abstract thought; and that concepts relating to life in today's world, in particular as regards science and technology, cannot be effectively conveyed through the medium of African languages. I do not propose to go into any detail about the debate on the language question in Africa as everyone in the room has experienced the issue in one form or another; whether in the national context, regional or global setting. Research and reflection have been promoted on such aspects of the issue as language and education; language, politics, cultural/linguistic pluralism and the nation-state dimension; language and the citizen's participation in the democratic process, and in the socio-cultural, economic, scientific and technological development. In many parts of the world today, language and the culture of peace would be a very pertinent concept to examine as we grapple with the challenge of constructing the defences of peace in the minds of men, women, children and youth.

For more than 50 years, and especially since the attainment of independence by African States, the language issue has been the subject of intense and passionate discussion by politicians, researchers, experts and members of the community at large. The range of academic research and university dissertations produced over the years is an indication that the issue occupies a central place in our lives. Recommendations on how to deal with the linguistic landscape have been directed at individual countries, and also for consideration by groups of countries sharing the same language or experiencing similar linguistic situations.

As suggested in the Working Document, this Conference should not be seen as yet another occasion to engage in debate of a general nature on what factors may have contributed to the absence of sustained efforts to promote African languages, or the difficulties encountered in adopting or implementing a language policy at national level. The impressive work in the research and academic arena, conducted in countries around the world, suggests that the task of analysing the problems inherent in the language question has been accomplished. This Conference is intended as an opportunity for governmental and other experts to recommend policy options for the African Member States. The task before the Expert Meeting, in particular, must be to formulate proposals for realistic policy frameworks with reference to a number of fundamental questions, arising from the research and other experiences as discussed earlier. I wish to highlight the following:

- In situations where the language of the former colonial power is the official language, what measures will ensure that those citizens who have little or no

mastery of the official language have equal opportunities to participate fully in activities of national life? The more facility in the official language is perceived as a symbol of, or a means to, success in national life, the greater is the possibility that those who have no mastery of that language will feel excluded from the mainstream of national life itself.

- The exercise of democratic and other fundamental rights and obligations of citizens must be seriously affected by the fact that the official language is the language of legislation, justice, administration, commerce, education and mass media. It is estimated that no more than 15% - 20% of the population in the majority of African countries have the minimum level of proficiency in the official languages, largely the languages of the former colonial powers;

- How can multilingualism and multiculturalism be used as forces for democracy and nation-building and national unity? How can a situation of diversity of language, dialects and ethnic groupings be used to release energies and empower individual communities and nation-states to foster development?

Finally, ... communication and culture in the global village, the global civil society, and the supra-technological society of the 21st century, will rely increasingly on language as a sharpened tool for achieving shared goals, for development and reducing poverty and deprivation, and, above all, for enhancing peace and unity, within countries, between countries, and globally...

Address by the

Honourable Minister of Education, Mr G. Machinga,

on the occasion of the official opening of the Experts' Meeting of the

Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa

(17 March 1997)

...I am informed that the question of language in Africa has been the subject of discussion previously in many fora sponsored by UNESCO and by the Organisation of African Unity, a fact that underlines the importance of the theme of the current debate to which such an prominent gathering of experts and eminent scholars as yourselves have come to make a contribution to.

I am informed that you will be deliberating on the complexities of the language situations in Africa with a view to formulating strategy and making recommendations that will assist our countries, with their own particular situations, to arrive at workable and implementable policy frameworks. Our languages have been relegated to the background because of our historical situations. Yet we all know the importance of own language in thought processes, the understanding of concepts and in communication. Yet given our very

complex linguistic situations, how shall we define meaningful policy? This is the problem which I hope in the three days allocated to the experts meeting you will tackle thoroughly to come up with useful recommendations for the ministers' meeting that follows thereafter. A great responsibility is therefore thrust upon you in that your recommendations will constitute a landmark in our thinking as Africans as to which direction we ought to take vis-à-vis the question of language, given the complexities of our differing situations. However I am confident you will rise to the challenge and produce appropriate solutions and strategies.

I am informed also that your discussions will contribute towards the production of a language atlas, which I believe will be a very useful tool for us Africans to chart new paths in the area of policy formulation and in empirically defining our situation to ourselves. I am also given to understand that part of your discussions will focus on current language policies and practices in Africa and the problems encountered in and created by these current policies and that you will also examine the role, status and promotion of African languages in politics, economic and administrative affairs. The task is complex yet necessary. This is because language is an important and critical factor of development whose potential contribution should be fully utilised to maximum effect…

Speech by the Minister of Information, Posts and Telecommunications,

the Honourable Joyce Mujuru,

during the Experts' Meeting of the

Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa

(19 MARCH, 1997)

...The use of African languages is a burning issue in Africa including Zimbabwe where our parliament has been debating this topic extensively for a very long time.

The use of African languages is the best way of ensuring active participation by the local people in national development programmes and projects affecting their livelihood. Failure of development programmes has been found to occur where there is a communication breakdown arising mostly because the plans would have been drawn up using a language and terminology, which local populations do not understand.

The management of the linguistic 'landscape' is one of the major challenges, which our African leaders are confronted with at independence. Often politicians and intellectuals are locked in debate over the status of different ethnic languages in order to come up with an official national language. This controversy can only be lessened if there is a clearly defined language policy.

Years after our independence, the languages of our former colonial powers remain the official national languages. The colonial education systems we inherited have contributed to this status quo. Instruction is in foreign languages.

Nowadays our children cannot speak their mother or natural languages fluently but can communicate eloquently in a foreign language. The mother language is perceived as inferior and associated with the undereducated poor in the 'ghettos' and in the rural areas. It is important therefore, that parents encourage their children to be proud of their mother

languages.

In Zimbabwe, as in many other African countries, you find that, as a more sophisticated and wealth urban society develops, so does the usage of English or other colonial language.

.... My Ministry's main task is to communicate government policies and plans to the general public, in the hope of maintaining dialogue between government and the people. In the absence of information human progress would be impeded. The emerging communication and information technologies provide a powerful means of transforming our societies and language plays no mean part.

Language is a very important medium of communicating messages and ideas, of influencing behavioural changes, of either building or destroying cultures and moral values. Language is indeed a powerful medium in the social and economic development of humanity. And yet it is ironic that African governments have ignored their indigenous languages for so long.

This historic conference on African languages has come at an opportune time. We have all along promoted foreign languages at the expense of our own local languages, which reflect the dynamism and rich diversity of our traditions and cultures. African or indigenous culture should not be seen to be subservient to other foreign cultures. Our African languages help create a distinct identity for the African continent as a whole and we should be proud of that. Our biggest challenge therefore, is to develop and promote our local languages in order to stem the tide of foreign cultural invasion and the intrusion of alien values. For it is through our own languages that we can express and explain our national and ethnic cultures. And this can come to pass when we have instituted coherent national language policies.

I trust that this very important gathering has come up with a comprehensive set of recommendations which will assist our governments in developing future-oriented African language policies, which relate in very basic ways to our political and cultural values.

I hope you were able to ask yourselves what state of our societies we do envisage with formal African language policies?

What cherishable values of our societies do we want to promote as African nations, exploiting the communication opportunities, both existing and potential, arising from our implementation of African language policy to help us achieve our national objectives? How can a national language policy promote our culture, cultivate a deep sense of patriotism and create distinct national identities? I am sure that these and many other questions were entertained during your deliberations.

... The status of the language can be judged from its use in all fields of everyday life but also from the extent to which it is used by those for which it is not the first means of communication. In any event, communication and use are crucial to the very existence of any language. It is therefore legitimate for linguistic communities to assert their aspirations, calling for the realisation of the objectives of having indigenous languages accorded the status they deserve.

I am informed ... that the deliberations of this meeting are going to be presented to the ministers meeting. The conclusions of the Conference will go a long way towards assisting our governments in drawing up and implementing language policies in our respective countries since the language question is a developmental issue.

Address at the Opening Session of the Conference of Ministers

by H. E. Ambassador E. Oluwasegun Akinluyi

(Chairman of the Africa Group of Ambassadors in UNESCO)

Thursday 20 March 1997

It is a great pleasure and an honour for me to be here with you today, as part of this international intergovernmental gathering, devoted to the important question of Language Policies in Africa.

It is not an accident that this meeting should be taking place under the aegis of UNESCO - an organisation, which has always striven to be in partnership with Africa. Ever since in the 1960's, its membership was significantly swollen by the emergence of newly independent African States, which, without exception, cast their lot with UNESCO in their search for international co-operation, for the establishment of peace through Education, Science and Culture.

For the last three decades, and again, often through its organs and activities, UNESCO has endeavoured to be a dependable ally to many of its African Member States in their efforts to develop their societies. This is how, in partnership, UNESCO and several of its African Member States have worked together for the recognition of the importance of the cultural dimension in the planning and execution of development strategies. I believe it is true to say that it is due, in a large measure to that collaboration and the support of other Member States of like minds, that today we can say that at last the international community at large has now accepted that development strategies that limit themselves to economic aspects and fail to take culture into consideration are almost certain to fail.

Our gathering here today, which is convened to deal with the question of that most important vehicle of culture-language, can only be considered a logical and important action which emanates from the central role of Culture in development, and the crucial place of language in the fulfilment of that role. A major purport of this Conference is about the creation of well thought-out language policies that will, in a systematic way, lead to the optimum exploitation of the language treasures of the continent, to the greatest advantage. Our inventory of the existing situation, our critical examination of their weaknesses and strengths and the great opportunity of exchanging views and information will help us arrive at the best reasoned and thought-out conclusions and recommendations, addressed to our individual Member States that are united by language and culture. In this endeavour, we have been blessed with the fruits of the labour of our experts and specialists who have been taking a very deep and careful look at the pertinent issues.

...On behalf of the fifty three nation Africa Group in UNESCO, I bring felicitations and very best wishes to this Conference. The Africa Group, apart from endeavouring to contribute assiduously to the vibrancy of UNESCO, strives with resolve and commitment to consider and promote Afro-centric issues and interests within the areas of competence of UNESCO. It is also our policy to be more pro-active than re-active.

Indeed, a number of us, including my humble self, belong to the Executive Board, to which the quintessence of these deliberations will ultimately be forwarded. We are also well represented at several other intergovernmental bodies within the Organisation.

It is noteworthy that in UNESCO, Africa is the only region which has a department created specifically to cater for its needs. This new Department, headed by a Deputy Director

General, himself an African (and incidentally a former Prime Minister) has constituted a major focus of our liaison with the organisation. I was recently at the OAU Headquarters in Addis Ababa during a UNESCO - OAU promotion of greater synergy in the interest of Africa, with the nascent department as a focal point.

...In the last three days, I have been privileged as an observer to witness the proceedings of the governmental experts which was a prelude to this Conference. The multi-faceted deliberations and recommendations which are now distilled and put before the Conference have indeed been arrived at after pooling together experiences both within and outside the continent. Some experiences have been shared. We have learnt or have been reminded, that pluri-linguistic mechanisms and procedures in our countries are in varying stages of evolution. However, I crave your indulgence to proffer a few general observations:

- that a dichotomy should be clearly made between policy and practice; stated intention in the constitution, on the one hand, and implementation per se. Both elements need to be accorded due importance.
- that national languages should be construed as an essential component of, and a leverage for development.
- that the inescapable symbiosis between development and peace should be underscored: i.e. there can be no development without peace and, there can be no peace without development. National languages, as an inalienable right, constitute a part of development - development of the integrity (the wholeness) of the personality and they equip it to cope with the demands of the community, the nation and beyond. We all exist in a global village and there should be no exclusivity or insularity of germane considerations.
- that, in the context of language, multi or pluri should be recognised as presupposing mono. Accordingly the starting point, the MOTHER TONGUE should be continuously accorded due importance in the matrix of considerations.
- that ultimately or contemporaneously, we should inter alia, work towards the codification and publication of a Thesaurus Linguarum Africanarum (A treasury of African languages).

Finally, permit me, as it were, to tell a tale out of court. In reading the antecedents to this Conference one takes note of the number of similar previous conferences on the same issue. One comes to the inescapable conclusion that there is a bulk of recommendations still waiting to be implemented. There has been a bulk of residual items wittingly or unwittingly carried over from decade to decade. The 1986 Plan of Action is just one case in point.

What all this indicates, inter alia, is that lectures, seminars, symposia and conferences may be considered as mosaics in the pavement of progress, but they cannot and should not be mistaken for substantive progress per se. What is, in fact, recurrently mentioned in UNESCO is the need for POLITICAL WILL in Member States to implement recommendations pertaining to their own progress. In the case that is before you, these are recommendations made by Africa, about Africa to Africa and for Africa. They therefore stand every chance of success and implementation.

... The libraries of the world are replete with papers, and books, not only about what Africa says it needs, but also what the rest of the world deems that it needs. What we now need is ACTION, substantive and vibrant action, to combat the plethora of needs that beset us. Our salvation, under God, lies in our own hands.

Linguistically, the crux and upshot of this Conference will represent what Africa today says that it wants:

- We need guidelines for policy, planning, and practice; frameworks flexible and adaptable to situations in each country.
- We need an irreducible minimum of actions for TODAY and agenda for TOMORROW.
- We need a quantum leap in our multi and pluri-linguistic endeavours.

Above all
- We need an effective and timely follow up mechanism.

It is our duty, individually and collectively, to ourselves and to posterity, to ensure that whatever is being planned in grandeur does not falter in execution.

The Africa Group wishes the Honourable Ministers all the best not only in their deliberations, but also in the follow-up operations. We stand with you in your readiness to further promote the enthronement of our cultural riches and in your resolve to underscore multilingualism not only as a critical factor in development, but also as a potent tool for Unity in Diversity...

Address by Mrs L Arizpe,

Assistant Director General, Sector of Culture,

representing the Director-General of UNESCO at the

Opening Ceremony of the Intergovernmental Conference on

Language Policies in Africa, Harare (Zimbabwe)

20 March 1997

... Mr Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO would have liked to personally take part in this Conference. Due to his other important duties, he asked me to represent him and to convey to you his warmest greetings. Those who know him know the importance he attaches to the language issue.

Let me first of all pay due tribute to the government of Zimbabwe which, at the last session of the general conference, took the initiative not only to invite UNESCO to hold this Conference but also in accepting generously to host it here in Harare. This initiative of Zimbabwe comes at the right time in the present trend of the evolution of the African continent where a democratic approach is progressively established and the need to abandon highly centralised systems for decentralisation of decision to local communities generally accepted. This initiative is also an appropriate response to the scholars who were rightly convinced that without a precise and realistic language policy they could not achieve much in their research and studies. They had reached a consensus that a coherent strategy was the only way to put an end to repetitive and uncoordinated seminars, and meetings and to useless studies and publications.

One can ask why UNESCO is concerned about the language issue. Article 1 of its constitution condemns all discriminations based among other things on language. On the basis of this principle, UNESCO developed since its foundation various programmes and activities in the field of languages. In the first period, emphasis was put on the language as teaching tools. The concepts of vernacular languages, dialects, national, ethnic or tribal languages were largely debated by specialists. With the independence of many countries especially in Africa the problem of language and mother tongue in particular became a

national issue. The language problem was progressively seen as a right to free access to education and to the participation of ad citizen to the development of their country as well as a national vehicle for cultural authenticity.

The participation of delegates from newly independent countries to the various sessions of the Executive Board and the General Conference gave a new impetus to UNESCO's Programme mainly in the sectors of culture, education and social sciences. The brilliant interventions of Joseph KI-ZERBO and Amadou Hampate BA are still remembered. They particularly contributed to launch programmes concerning African languages and oral traditions as well as the general history of Africa. You surely know this famous statement Hampate Ba made at that period "In Africa, when an old man dies, a library burns down". From that period, the problems of languages are an integral part of UNESCO's programmes.

It would be too long to give even a brief description of UNESCO's achievements in the field of languages. Let me just single out some major actions, which highlight what has been achieved so far. In the 1960s UNESCO launched a series of Conferences on the development of education in Africa. These conferences were originally attended by Ministers of Education, but since 1978 ministers responsible for economic planning were also invited for obvious reasons of co-ordinating education development with economic planning. One of such conferences was held here in Harare in 1982. In 1972, the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a "Ten year plan for the systematic study of oral traditions and the promotion of African languages as a medium of instruction and instrument of life-long education". This plan was an attempt to organise coherent strategy of actions ranging from methodology for collecting and using oral data and the promotion of African languages to adult education, participation of the people in cultural life and their contribution to it.

The decade 1970-1980 has been dedicated to conferences on cultural policies. The concepts of cultural identity, cultural identity and national unity, cultural authenticity, cultural co-operation among many others were debated. As means of communication and vehicle of culture, a language symposium organised in Accra (Ghana) in 1975 made the following statement concerning the language problem:

> The conference unanimously agreed that the safeguarding of cultural reinstatement and promotion of African languages as the irreplaceable media of social communication and the carriers of the cultural inheritance of the various communities. This rehabilitation of African languages will also require their scientific and objective study and their incorporation into the educational social administrative and political systems of states. The delegates acknowledged the vitally important role of and the responsibility incumbent on, the public authorities in this connection.

It went on

> Regional languages continued to be a powerful means of communication and co-operation, transcending frontiers...
>
> In addition, widely spoken transactional languages should be promoted, though the study and safeguarding of minority languages should also not be neglected...

At the request of individual states or of a group of countries, UNESCO has made various interventions in finding appropriate solutions to practical or technical problems.

I would like before concluding this chapter, to mention two meetings of experts, which seem to me to be closely connected with this conference. The common specific characteristics of the two meetings is that they go beyond the linguistic, pedagogical or cultural aspect of the language in considering the status and functions of language in all

sectors of national life.

The first meeting which was organised in Conakry (Guinea) in 1981 under the title of "The definition of a strategy for the promotion of African languages" made a survey, which provides an overview of the status and functions of African languages twenty years after the independence of African countries. The conclusion of the experts was that the situation as far as the language policy was concerned was in most cases the same as before the independence. They made an appeal to all concerned African governments, OAU, UNESCO to organise a conference on language policy in order to engage African populations in the development process. One of the major achievements of the meeting was the identification of languages common to various countries with number of speakers, status and functions in each country.

The meeting of experts held in Addis Ababa in 1995 could be considered as a continuation of the Conakry meeting with some minor differences. Instead of putting emphasis on African languages, the Addis Ababa meeting examined the global linguistic landscape considering that even the language of the former colonial power is integrated in that landscape. Moreover contrary to global survey produced in Conakry, the Addis Ababa meeting insisted on the preparation of a detailed survey for each country. This survey should indicate the official status and the functions in public sector of each of the language spoken in a country. We had hoped to publish these data for this conference. It however has been impossible for different reasons:

Some data have been received very recently, others need to be revised, others have not yet been received. The presence of the experts here provides the opportunity to finalise each survey in order to have a comprehensive publication.

Like in Conakry, the Addis Ababa meeting insisted on the central role, which should be played by African languages. In-depth discussions have been conducted on the role of African languages in education, mass media, in social promotion, in democracy, in nation building, in inter African and international co-operation. Their conclusion is that it is important today to review the role, which African languages should play in Africa's development process at the dawn of third millennium. Hence the appeal to African governments and their partners to organise a conference on a political level in order to solve this problem of language policy which naturally is of political nature.

... My objective was to show you that this conference is the culmination of a process, which started some decades ago. My intention was also to draw your attention on the various appeals received from scholars and all those involved in development programmes in Africa on the urgent need to adopt a clear language policy and as far as possible to give African languages the official status and functions they deserve. Many Africans, not only scholars, but also ordinary people who, due to the language barrier, cannot be fully involved in development of their countries are anxiously looking for the Harare decisions.

After three days of hard work, the governmental experts have prepared a report with decisions and recommendations submitted to the scrutiny of the conference of Ministers. UNESCO is looking forward to the decisions of the conference. I would like to assure you that as in the past, UNESCO with its partners is prepared to shoulder your efforts in implementing the decisions of this conference. For us in UNESCO this is not a conference which will be added on the list of many other conferences and meetings. We are onvinced that this conference is a major event, which in the development of the African continent will be considered as a major milestone. As in the past, UNESCO will be joined by its partners. I am happy to state that in implementing the activities and programmes mentioned earlier, UNESCO has always worked hand in hand with the Organisation of African Unity...

In concluding my address I would like to quote a Sicilian poet whose message can

guide our deliberations:

> ”Put a people in chains, strip them, plug up their mouths, they are still free. Take away their job, their passport, the table they eat on, the bed they sleep in, they are still rich.
>
> A people becomes poor and enslaved when they are robbed of the tongue left them by their ancestors: they are lost forever” (Ignazio Buttitta: "Lingua e Dealetu”).

Speech by Dr I. M. C. Chombo

Chairman of the National Commission for UNESCO,

on the occasion of the official opening of the Ministers' Meeting of the

Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa

(20 March 1997)

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..the subject of Language Policies in Africa is one that has many ramifications given the complexities of the language situation in this vast continent. Most African countries are multilingual. The main features of this multi-lingualism is the existence of a number of indigenous languages side by side with one or more languages of former colonial powers. The main colonial languages are English, French and Portuguese. Let me illustrate this situation by referring to four African countries:

a) <u>Angola</u> - Angola has no less than 11 languages among which are to be counted:

        Umbundu

        Kimbundu

        Kikongo

        Lunda-Chokwe

        Nyangela and

        Portuguese

b) <u>Guinea</u> - Guinea has no less than 21 languages. Some of the main ones are:

        Pulaar

        Maninka

        Susu

        French

c) <u>Kenya</u>: Kenya has no less than 40 languages, among which are:

        Gikuyu

        Dholuo (Luo)

        Kiswahili

        Luhya and

        English

d) <u>Zimbabwe</u>: our own country, Zimbabwe, has three official languages - English, Ndebele

and Shona, and a number of other languages.[1]

There is need for Africa to re-examine its language policies with the view of rationalising and adopting decisive national language policies that promote unity, peace and stability in the midst of multi-lingualism.

There is need to facilitate interstate communication not only in former colonial languages but also in some indigenous African languages that are spoken by large populations that straddle states.

In multi-lingual situations, it is necessary for countries to spell out in terms that are not ambiguous, those languages, which are to be regarded as:

i) official;

ii) national without being official;

iii) local, and as

iv) languages for specific use, for example, for religious worship.

Clearly stated policies will enable African governments to allocate more resources to the development of official languages and use these languages in official communications. For the purposes of social and economic development of the continent, local languages will also receive attention.

At this juncture, may I make the following observation. I have often listened to people who call themselves authorities in local languages address the communities whose languages they claim to know in some former colonial languages and get some people to translate these languages to local ones. Is this not shameful? Some ministers are also guilty of this. This is why Africa is stagnating. I do not advocate that we should abandon English, French and Portuguese in Africa. These languages are a <u>sine qua non</u>, particularly in international fora such as the present one. However, indigenous languages, especially those with a wider circulation should be explored with the objective of using them in international conferences organised by the Organisation of African Unity and other bodies.

In his <u>opening address to the Colloquium of the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture</u> in Lagos in 1977, the then head of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, expressed what I am saying in these words:

> It is my hope that your inquiries will identify the mental and material obstacles in the way of a change of course in the direction of self-sustainable and original productivity. You must give Attention to the question of the medium in which your thought process is encapsulated. Have we lost our tongues forever must we think and work in the languages of Europe for ever? Must the choice of fashionable, acceptable or admissible research topics and areas be dictated to us by another culturally dominant group? Must we measure the quality of our performance by standards that are foreign? How much do we delude ourselves in the pursuit of acceptability?[2]

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[1]Source: Sow, Alfa I. and Abdulaziz, M. H. "Language and Social Change". In Mazrui, A (ed). 1993. *General History of Africa*. London: Heineman, pp. 533-548.

[2]Source: Iwara, A. U. and Mveng, E. eds. 1977. *Colloquium on Black civilization and culture*, Lagos, pp. 20-21.

Now, let us examine ourselves. Do we, indeed, use our own languages for the socio-political and economic development of the peoples of Africa. The world outside Africa, especially the western world, has long recognised the potency of local languages. This is why it abandoned Latin in favour of what are now termed Romance languages. People think and dream in their own languages and express themselves fully in them. Is it, indeed, not too much to demand originality and creativity from a person who is a toddler in a particular language? This is exactly what we do when, in an attempt to galvanise our nationals into activity, we drum messages into their ears in tones that are incomprehensible to them.

Let us develop our languages territorially and extra-territorially, promote them, accord them recognition and status, use them in social, political and economic arenas and accept that multi-lingualism is enriching without breaking our states into tiny waring principalities. There is, indeed, that danger, if every language, even those that command less than 1 percent in large populations of, say 30 million, claim the same official status as those that command larger percentages. I also admit that a minority language may claim official recognition in proportion to its importance as a language of international communication such as English in many states in Africa. Therefore, every case needs close scrutiny. Parochialism cannot be embraced.

In the face of recurrent droughts, the world economic recession, high level of inflation, rapid migration of population from rural to urban areas, the shrinking world in which there are competitive global economies, Africa needs to develop strategies, which will enable her to avoid stagnation. Language is the most important tool for development and the language which appeals most to the totality of any individual is that which he or she knows best, that is, the mother tongue.

I have spoken at length on languages and language policies. May I now be permitted to turn to UNESCO and express our thanks and appreciation for all that this organisation has done for African languages through its activities and sponsorship. UNESCO has over the decades, promoted research and communication in African languages. I need only mention the following:

(A) 1962: under the world programme for combating illiteracy, UNESCO encouraged the use of African languages in adult education programmes.

(B) 1966: that year UNESCO staged a linguistic conference in Bamako. This conference laid down the standardised transcription of some African languages in West Africa.

(C) 1968: that year UNESCO was involved in "the preparation, adoption and implementation of the ten-year plan for the systematic study of oral tradition and the promotion of African languages as vehicles of culture and instruments of life-long education" (Sow and Abdulaziz, op. cit. p. 532).

The list is endless. Here I want to add that UNESCO is also to be congratulated on funding the General History of Africa, edited by Ali Mazrui, a history in volumes which I am informed UNESCO intends to have translated into some of the languages of Africa such as Arabic, Kiswahili, Hausa and others. May I dare say that I hope this history will also be rendered into Shona and Ndebele, the two official Zimbabwean African languages....

We all look to you to accomplish your task and give us a language map of Africa, which reflects the present situation of the continent. Experts have been working on this since Monday, 17 March, 1997. We know that you will do our continent great pride and honour and when you return to Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Malawi, Zambia, Nigeria, Togo, Ethiopia and to many other countries represented here, you will sing our song of African languages.

May I urge you to march forward, develop the languages of Africa through research and application to the problems that face us. I see no cogent reason, for example, for our failure to use our languages as media of instruction in our secondary schools and even our universities. The untutored may object that they lack a technical vocabulary but, as I am well informed by all linguists, there is no language that fails to express the reality that faces it. We shall all, therefore, receive with great eagerness and high expectations the documents that contain your decision, which we shall be glad to examine and take into account when formulating our language policies...

Address at the Closing Session of the Conference of Ministers

by H. E. Ambassador E. Oluwasegun Akinluyi

(Chairman of the Africa Group of Ambassadors in UNESCO)

Friday 21 March 1997

....From the tenor of the discussions in the last five days it is clear that all are consensed on one of the basic issues underpinning the Perez de Cuellar report on Culture and Development in the 21st Century:

> The most durable way to accommodate ethnic diversity is to create a sense of the nation as a civic community, rooted in values that can be shared by all ethnic components of the national society. Such a sense of community is best achieved if the concept of NATION is freed from ethnic exclusivity.

I hold that plurilingualism, which is what we have been trying to promote at this Conference, is a key avenue to the attainment of that goal.

Discussions here have demonstrated:

> - that we refuse to contribute to the marginalisation of the Development Paradigm
> - that we believe in the cultural dimension of development and
> - that Africa is resolved to ensure that its linguistic and cultural diversities **can** and **should** be enabled to constitute levers for individual actualisation, collective progress and national strength.

We have come to the end of a concentrated period of uni-directional efforts targeted, once again, at fashioning strategies for the promotion of linguistic pluralism and cultural reinstatement.

There is hardly any doubt that within the limitation imposed upon us by time, significant strides have been taken to produce a document flexible enough for adoption by member states, for urgent and practical implementation.

A Declaration such as this signifies that co-declarants have consensed to move positively in the same direction.

We may also point out some cardinal properties that appear to confer a welcome dimension on the document before us today:

i. It is flexible enough for implementation in each member state, mutatis mutandis.

ii. Unlike its predecessors, the plan of action is deliberately endowed with circumscribed objectives and a phased approach, to facilitate achievability.

iii. A time frame is also affixed, to make implementation meaningful and beneficial.

iv. Indeed, it appears to respond to some of the appeals made in my intervention yesterday. Inter alia, it contains "an irreducible minimum of Actions for today and Agenda for tomorrow".

v. It also clearly stipulates the implementing bodies.

... this is
- yet another home grown document,
- yet another set of recommendations,
- yet another declaration.

It is the last in a series of cognate conference and seminars. What is now urgently required in each member state is a structured approach in terms of <u>implementation</u>, <u>monitoring</u> and <u>funding</u>. With regard to funding, I wish to advert our minds to the following observations:

i. UNESCO while continuing to assist vibrantly within the constraints infused by competing claims on limited funds, would expect each member-state to make more money available for this project.

ii. It must be remembered that UNESCO is not a FUND; it is a catalyst and a facilitator. Assistance by UNESCO will continue to depend upon well-articulated submissions, supported by evidence of well co-ordinated and significant progress.

iii. Applications may also be made for funds through the Participation Programme, submitted by our National Commissions.

... in underscoring the importance of these proceedings and especially of ultimate implementation, one recalls the words of President Ahmed SEKOU TOURE in 1981 during the promotion of African languages for the Horizon 2000 project:

All languages whatever they may be, are the product of the people's creative genius. An individual does not create a language; it is the absolute need to transmit a message from one man to another that necessitates the existence of language as a means to that end. The more languages a nation has, therefore, the more subtle variations there are in its creativity. Language has never set men against one another; but opposing interests do.

We congratulate the governmental experts, who in the last few days have worked tirelessly and have emerged as a group of high-powered technicians. We advise them to perceive themselves as a vital component of an intra African network of specialists, and therefore seek

to consult one another formally or informally. Their work does not end here. The Herculean task before you should not be done in isolation.

As for our respected Ministers, we warmly congratulate you and construe your participation and declaration as symbolising your preparedness to render your national machineries optimally functional for the urgent implementation of the outlined agenda, and to provide the much needed funds for the implementation of these laudable recommendations...

-Let us remember that Cultural Liberation of which language as a key factor, is a logical follow-up to political emancipation. We have no doubt that the OAU will address the subject of cultural liberation with the same unremitting vigour with which it successfully secured political emancipation for some of our member states.

-Let us remember that participation in this declaration confers on it the attribute of being voluntarily compulsory, the potency of being mandatory. But voluntarism becomes dangerous when delay in implementation is likely, as in this case, to be deleterious.

- Let us leave here with renewed vigour for substantive strides on this crucial theatre of activity.

- Let us open new vistas for research, documentation and teaching:
    - in schools
    - in communities and
    - via the media

-Let it be said of all, when we depart from the scene:
    They went far beyond conferences and seminars;
    They also implemented, with far reaching positive results and multiplier effects for national development

Indeed,
    lives of great men (and women) all remind us, that we can make our lives sublime, and departing, leave behind us, footprints on the sands of time...

Statement by Dr A. B. Shankanga, Director,

UNESCO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare

at the closing ceremony

(21 March 1997)

In UNESCO conferences, meetings, workshops, symposia and related gatherings, are classified in eight categories. These categories indicate the extent to which people whose contributions represent Government policy positions are involved or whether the particular meeting is intended as a platform for scholars, thinkers, researchers, otherwise collectively known as experts to deliberate and offer their opinion and advice in their personal capacity. The Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa was assigned Category II status. The General Conference of UNESCO is a Category I meeting. I mention this to highlight the nature of the significance that UNESCO attached to the holding of this Conference.

My colleagues from UNESCO who with myself have been privileged to be involved

in the organisation of the Conference are very impressed first, by the level of representation. Fifty-one of the 54 countries on the African continent sent high-ranking governmental experts and senior officials and a significant number of these countries were represented at Ministerial level. Second, we are impressed by the level and quality of the debate. Not many Conferences benefit from such a combination of high-level expertise and policy informed positions of those participating as we have experienced at this Conference.

The international media, both African and external to the continent, followed the discussions at the Conference with keen interest.

I think I speak for all of us when I say that we leave here today with an enhanced perception of the language issues in Africa and a renewed resolve to do something about those issues. ... We commend the quality of the discussion, and in particular its outcome in terms of the practical Agenda for Action that the Conference has just recommended to the Governments of Africa. The concrete plan of action and the degree of commitment expressed for those measures at this Conference, can only strengthen UNESCO's role as it works with Governments, in collaboration with other development agencies, in this area, particularly in the institution of procedures and mechanisms and processes for developing integrated, inter-disciplinary and holistic policy frameworks. We very much welcome the agreement to establish a regional Task Force to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference, in particular the Plan of Action.

... I wish to propose, as part of the follow-up, that the Conference authorises one of the participating countries, ideally the host country, to make a statement at the next session of the General Conference to report on the outcome of this Conference. The conclusions of this Conference should also be highlighted in the statements of the other delegations to the General Conference, both in plenary and in the relevant Programme Commissions, in particular those concerning with Culture, Education and Social Science programmes...

Vote of Thanks

The Honourable Professor D. Mkandawire,

Minister of Education,

Republic of Malawi

What is our hope for the future?
It is our hope that the comprehensive guidelines, which have been adopted this evening in the Harare declaration will serve their purpose of helping our African governments formulate realistic language policies. We hope that the implementation of these guidelines will be treated as a matter of urgency because of the casual relationship between good national language policies, on one hand, and sustainable development and the preservation of democracy, on the other.

Given the large governmental representation at this conference and the lively discussions which have taken place and the recognition of the importance of African languages in our nations, we are hopeful and optimistic that governments represented here will be urged seriously and expeditiously to formulate comprehensive language policies that encourage the full participation of their citizens as enunciated in the Harare declaration.

Address by The Honourable Minister of Sport,

Recreation and Culture,

Dr W. P. M. Mangwende (MP),

on the official closing of the Inter-governmental

Conference on Language Policies in Africa, 21 March, 1997

The need to establish the necessary integrating links in the search for practical language policies for a new Africa cannot be over emphasised. The sentiments expressed by, speaker after speaker are a true testimony of Africa's concern in that regard. I am confident, therefore, that these concerns will be carefully scrutinised by all those responsible for language policy formulation, policy options and implementation strategies.

...I am pleased to note that the need to use local and national languages in the decision making process and the use of local languages in promoting understanding, pluralism and co-existence has featured prominently in the deliberations of this conference. What remains, therefore, is to ensure a systematic and urgent implementation of the language policy guidelines so well defined by this conference.

Having accomplished this decisive break-through in charting a clear path in language development in Africa, we must move forward by ensuring the removal of all policies and practices that denigrated the languages of Africa.

... you have rightly stated that Africa needs a new vision. I believe that the time to chart that vision is now. What we urgently need is a critical reassessment of ourselves, our development policies, and in this case, our language policies in order to effectively use all our local languages in the development process and in the expression of a truly African personality.

We cannot look elsewhere to achieve these cherished goals. There is therefore the need to co-operate as a region in mobilising the available resources, human, technical and Financial, in the formulation of effective language policies and language development strategies.

I am confident, that the next time we shall meet as African ministers to discuss the issue of languages, we shall preoccupy ourselves with the critical evaluation of how well we will have implemented the recommendations we have made here. We do not have the resources to engage in further debate on concepts, principles, options and strategies on this issue. Neither do we have, the time to postpone the implementation of the African language plan of action and the programme of action we have adopted here today. There is no doubt in my mind, and indeed in the minds of my colleagues present here that we Have the capacity to realise that our people expect us to carrying out the tasks we have set ourselves to achieve.

The deliberations of the last few days have exerted full impact on all of us and will, most undoubtedly, make an indelible impression on the entire African continent and beyond. Speaking for Zimbabwe, I can say this conference has come at a most opportune time. This is at a time when the debate on the role and functions of indigenous languages in the overall development of Zimbabwe has featured prominently in the Zimbabwean parliament and the

media. The conference therefore leaves us the richer and better able to articulate and find solutions to our language policy problems. It is my hope that the interaction that the conference has afforded us, both as language experts and ministers will greatly enhance the individual states' ability to produce clear and comprehensive national language policies and harmonise human, financial and other resources for that development.

PART VIII

PARTICIPATION

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED AT
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON
LANGUAGE POLICIES IN AFRICA

1   Algeria
2   Angola
3   Benin
4   Botswana
5   Burkina Faso
6   Burundi
7   Cameroon
8   Cape Verde
9   Central African Republic
10   Chad
11   Comoros
12   Congo
13   Côte d'Ivoire
14   Djibouti
15   Egypt
16   Equatorial Guinea
17   Eritrea
18   Ethiopia
19   Gabon
20   Gambia
21   Ghana
22   Guinea
23   Guinea Bissau
24   Kenya
25   Lesotho
26   Liberia
27   Madagascar
28   Malawi
29   Mali
30   Mauritania
31   Mauritius
32   Morocco
33   Mozambique
34   Namibia
35   Niger
36   Nigeria
37   Rwanda
38   Saõ Tomé and Principe
39   Senegal

40	Seychelles
41	Sierra Leone
42	South Africa
43	Sudan
44	Swaziland
45	Tanzania
46	Togo
47	Tunisia
48	Uganda
49	Zaire
50	Zambia
51	Zimbabwe

Overseas Observers

1 France
2 Germany
3 Holy Sea
4 India
5 Switzerland

Observer

Zimbabwe

International organisations

1 ACCT
2 OAU
3 UNESCO
4 AVA
5 British Council

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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
Conference intergouvernementale sur les politiques linguistiques en Afrique
Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa
Harare (Zimbabwe)
17-21 March 1997
Liste des participants.
List of participants

La liste des participants est reproduite dans l'ordre alphabetique français des pays.
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PART IX
PROGRAMME
OF
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE POLICIES IN AFRICA

INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE POLICIES IN AFRICA

Final Draft Programme

HARARE

Holiday Inn Crown Plaza

Monomotapa Hotel

17-21 MARCH 1997

Chairman: Dr. Mambo (Deputy Chairman, UNESCO National Commision)

09h00 - 10h00	Opening of the Experts' Meeting Statement by ACCT Representative Statement by Dr. A.B. Shankanga, UNESCO Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa Official Opening by Honourable G. Machinga, Minister of Education, Zimbabwe

10h00 - 10h30 Tea/Coffee Break

Chairman: Ambassador Chigwedere

10h30 - 13h00	Adoption of rules of procedure Election of President, Vice-President and Rapporteur Adoption of the agenda of the Experts' Meeting

Chairman of Session: Member of Bureau

1. Brief overview of the actual use of African languages today
Multilingualism in Africa today: some typologies and their use on the operational plan (health, justice, education, communication, politics)

13h00 - 15h00	Lunch break
15h00 - 16h00	Brief overview of the actual use of African languages today (continued) 2. Assessment of Policies and practices
16h00 - 17h00	Tea/Coffee break
17h00 - 18h00	3. Experiences of multilingualism in the world
18h00	Reception by UNESCO in the UNESCO Office

Tuesday 18 March 1997

09h00 - 10h00	Strategies and perspectives: Multilingualism, management and appropriate integration Fundamental debate on the problems of African languages in the development process. For a use of African Languages in all national activities: (political, technical and institutional)
10h00 - 10h15	Tea/Coffee break

10h15 -13h00	Strategies and perspectives (continued)
13h00 - 15h00	Lunch break
15h00 - 18h00	Regional and sub-regional cooperation Concrete suggestions for the implementation of linguistic strategies

Wednesday 19 March 1997

09h00 - 10h00	Adoption of the Report, Recommendations and Resolutions to be submitted to the Conference
10h00 - 10h15	Tea/Coffee Break
10h15 - 13h00	Adoption of the Report (continued)

Closing Ceremony

Chairman: Honourable Dr S. Ndlovu, MP, Deputy Minister of Higher Education
Guest of Honour: Honourable Mrs J. Mujuru, MP, Minister of Information, Posts and Telecommunications

Thursday 20 March 1997

09h00 - 10h30	Official Opening of the Conference of the Ministers

Chairman: Hon. Dr I Chombo, Minister of Higher Education
Guest of Honour: HE R. G. Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe

- X Cultural Performances
- X Welcome by the Chairman
- X Address by the Chairman of the Group of Ambassadors at UNESCO Paris: HE Dr E. O. Akinluyi (Ambassador/Permanent Delegate for Nigeria)
- X Address by OAU Representative: Mr M. Diouf, Director, Division of Education, Science and Culture
- X Address by Mrs. L. Arizpe, Assistant Director General for Culture, UNESCO Representative of the Director General
- X Cultural Performances
- X Official Opening by H E the President
- X Presentation of Delegates
- X End of Ceremony

10h30 - 11h00	Tea/Coffee Break

11h00 - 12h00
- X Election of Bureau
- X Adoption of Programme

X   Adoption of Rules of Procedure

13h00 - 15h00   Reception by the Minister of Higher Education, Monomotapa
                             Hotel, Pool Deck

15h00 - 16h30   Presentation of the experts' report

16h30 - 17h00   Tea/Coffee break

17h00 - 18h00   Discussion of the experts' report

Friday 21 March 1997

09h30 - 11h00   Discussion of the experts' report (cont'd)

12h30 - 15h00   Lunch break

15h00 - 16h30   Adoption of the final report and resolutions

16h30 - 17h00   Tea/Coffee break

17h00 - 18h00   Closing Ceremony

                         Chairman:Member of Bureau
   X   Adoption of the Harare Declaration
   X   Remarks by the ACCT Representative: Mr Doumbia, Programme Specialist
   X   Remarks by the Chairman of the Africa Group of Ambassadors at UNESCO Paris:
       HE. Dr E. O. Akinluyi (Ambassador/Permanent Delegate for Nigeria)
   X   Remarks by the OAU Representative: Mr M. Diouf, Director,
   X   Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
   X   Statement by Dr. A. B. Shankanga, UNESCO Sub-regional Office for Southern
       Africa
   X   Vote of Thanks
   X   Official Closing by Honourable Dr W. P. Mangwende, MP, Minister of Sports,
       Recreation and Culture
   X   Cultural Performance

19h00   Reception by His Worship, the Mayor of Harare, Mr S.
                             Tawengwa at the Town House

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa
Harare (Zimbabwe)
(17-21 March 1997)

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA
OF THE GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS CONFERENCE
(17-19 March 1997)

I. Opening of the Conference

II. Organization of work
- Election of Bureau
- Adoption of agenda and timetable of work

III. Overview of the present use of African languages
1. Multilingualism in Africa today: some typologies and their uses (health, justice, education, communication, politics, and so forth)
2. Critical evaluation of language policies and practices
3. Presentation of experiences of some multilingual countries, outside Africa

IV. Strategies and prospects: The smooth, integrated management of multilingualism
1. Dimensions of African languages in the development process
2. Towards the use of African languages in all paths of national life: political, technical and institutional
3. Regional and sub-regional co-operation to prepare language prospects
4. Specific proposals to put language projects into effect

V. Adoption of Final Report and Recommendations
VI. Closure of the conference

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Intergovernmental Conference on Language policies in Africa
Harare (Zimbabwe)
(17-21 March 1997)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE MINISTERS CONFERENCE
(20 - 21 March 1997)

1.   Opening of the Conference
2.   Organisation of work.
3.   Adoption of the rules of procedure
4.   Examination and adoption of the Report prepared by the governmental experts
5.   Adoption of the Harare Declaration
6.   Closure of the Conference

CULTURAL ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE OFFICIAL PROGRAMMES, INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE POLICIES IN AFRICA

1. 17 March 1997: Reception by UNESCO

Savuka Dance Drama Troupe   Isitshikitsha Dance - a celebratory dance performed for thanksgiving for good rains and good harvests.
The dance is performed in the Matabeleland area in Western Zimbabwe.

Mhembero Traditional Dance Group
Mbira music and dance - performed to placate the ancestors. The dance is dominant in the Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.
Mbakumba Dance - a harvest dance performed for thanksgiving for a good harvest. The dance originates in the Masvingo Province of Zimbabwe.

2. 20 March 1997: Official opening ceremony

a) **Frontline Institute choir**   (The choir is composed of students from Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Malawi, Zambia, South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Denmark).
- National Anthem of Zimbabwe
- Song 'Sinto me orgulhoso' (I am proud to be African)

b) **Chirikure Chirikure**   Poem - 'Language'
   (an acclaimed dub-poet)

3. 20 March 1997: Reception by Minister of Higher Education

Ethnomusicology programme - Marimba group:
Marimba (Xylophone) music

4. 21 March 1997: Closing ceremony

Ihawu Lesizwe Cultural Group   Imbube Traditional folk music performed for recreational purposes. This is dominant in Matabeleland North and South Provinces.