

CHAPTER TWENTY

DEVELOPMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION SYSTEMS

ARTICLE 139

The Common Market Information System

1. The Member States undertake to co-operate in providing information that would enable them to review the functioning and development of the Common Market and move efficiently in the implementation of the provisions of this Treaty. To this end, the Member States shall:
 - (a) collect and disseminate information on various sectors affecting the Common Market;
 - (b) provide the Secretariat with relevant information to facilitate the proper functioning of the Common Market;
 - (c) adopt an information policy that will include common operating standards, administrative and programming support, hardware and software standards and methodology of linking the Secretariat with the Member States; and

(d) provide to the Secretariat material deemed essential for the operation of an information system.

2. The Member States undertake to improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of information necessary to enhance the achievement of the objectives of the Common Market, especially in respect of:

(a) trade and customs: common external tariff, Rules of Origin, transit facilities, insurance schemes, trade and customs forms and documentation, monetary co-operation;

(b) agricultural development: research, extension and the exchange of technical information and experience;

(c) industrial information: production, requirements for capital, intermediate and consumer goods, industrial manpower development, investment and incentives;

(d) standardisation and quality assurance: national, sub-regional, regional and international standards, techniques, experiences, and consumer protection;

(e) natural resources, energy and the environment:

available technical options, consequences of industrial pollution, environmental control and impact assessment;

- (f) transport and communications: new technical developments in all modes;
- (g) macro-economic policy and planning; national planning concepts, methodology and techniques of the Member States; and
- (h) other areas that are necessary for achieving the programmes of the Common Market.

3. The Secretariat shall provide to the Member States:

- (a) the Common Market's Operational and Progress Reports;
- (b) Research Results, Analytical and Specialised Studies;
- (c) Statistical Series containing numerical nature, production, prices and indices of exports and imports; and
- (d) other publications as may be specified by the organs of the Common Market.

4. The Secretariat shall adopt necessary measures to enable the public and private sector enterprises to be fully aware and informed of the current and potential trade and investment opportunities that exist in the Member States. Steps shall also be taken to rationalise import and sourcing decisions from third countries through the provision of price data, alternative sources of supply and the availability of incentives of an import nature. The Secretariat shall also perform an external relations function through representation for press interviews, meetings and seminars, the production of press releases and newsletters and other general public relations tasks.

ARTICLE 140

Co-operation in Statistical Development

The Member States undertake to co-operate in the field of statistics in order to create an enabling environment for the regular flow of up-to-date, reliable, harmonised and comparable statistical data on various sectors of economic activity, required for an efficient implementation of the objectives of the Common Market. To this end, the Member States shall:

- (a) provide regularly and timely to the Secretariat statistical data that are reliable, harmonised and comparable, through the harmonisation and

adoption of common methodologies, concepts and definitions to be used in collecting and compiling statistics;

- (b) harmonise and adopt common statistical classification to be used in compiling their statistics;
- (c) encourage co-operation among their national statistical offices in the exchange of statistical data covering various sectors of their economic activities such as external trade, agriculture, industry, energy, natural resources, transport, communications, tourism, population, manpower, money and banking, balance of payments, external debt, government finance, prices, purchasing power parities and national accounting investments;
- (d) promote the exchange of skills and personnel and enhance co-operation in statistical training through the use of existing training institutions;
- (e) co-operate in the field of data processing; and
- (f) adopt a Common Market strategy for the implementation of the Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa in the 1990s.

ARTICLE 141

Trade Information

The Member States shall co-operate in increasing the awareness of intra and extra Common Market trade opportunities, provision and exchange of computerised trade information in the region through the support of the sub-region-wide Trade Information Network (TINET), provision of company data, export or import opportunities, tender invitations issued by national authorities for public procurement, statistical profiles of general and specific product groups, restrictive trade practices, non-tariff barriers and others as stated in the TINET's region-wide standards. These standards contain special TINET instructions, ad hoc requests, and standing practices which are subject to change from time to time.

ARTICLE 142

Depository Library

The Member States agree to recognise the status of the library situated at the Secretariat as the official depository library of the Common Market for the storage and retrieval of all documents, regulations, public notices, databases and other documents with regard to national development plans, official gazettes, central bank annuals, periodic reports and other documents as may be determined and notified by the

library from time to time, with respect to the Member State.