

1999/37. Europe-Africa permanent link through the Strait of Gibraltar

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1982/57 of 30 July 1982, 1983/62 of 29 July 1983, 1984/75 of 27 July 1984, 1985/70 of 26 July 1985, 1987/69 of 8 July 1987, 1989/119 of 28 July 1989, 1991/74 of 26 July 1991, 1993/60 of 30 July 1993, 1995/48 of 27 July 1995 and 1997/48 of 22 July 1997,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 43/179 of 20 December 1988, by which the Assembly declared the period 1991–2000 the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa,

Referring to resolution 912 (1989) adopted on 1 February 1989 by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe¹⁰¹ regarding measures to encourage the construction of a major traffic artery in south-western Europe and to study thoroughly the possibility of a permanent link through the Strait of Gibraltar,

Referring also to the Barcelona Declaration adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, held at Barcelona, Spain, in November 1995, and to the work programme annexed thereto, aimed at connecting the Mediterranean transport networks to the trans-European transport network so as to ensure their interoperability,

Referring further to the Lisbon Declaration adopted at the Conference on Transport in the Mediterranean, held at Lisbon in January 1997, and to the conclusions of the Pan-European Transport Conference, held at Helsinki in June 1997, on corridors in the Mediterranean incorporating the permanent link,

Taking note of the follow-up report prepared jointly by the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Europe¹⁰² in accordance with resolution 1997/48,

Taking note also of the conclusions of the second and third meetings of the Western Mediterranean Transport Group, held at Rabat in September 1995 and at Madrid in January

1997, respectively, which included the permanent link among the priority corridors in the extension of the trans-European network,

1. *Welcomes* the cooperation on the project for the link through the Strait of Gibraltar established between the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Governments of Morocco and Spain and specialized international organizations;

2. *Also welcomes* the organization, under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Europe, by the International Tunnelling Association, of the workshop held at Rabat in April 1999 on costs of tunnels bored with tunnel-boring machines (TBMs);

3. *Further welcomes* the progress achieved with project studies and especially the deep-sea drilling work, which has provided a decisive impetus to geological and geotechnical knowledge of undersea formations;

4. *Commends* the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Europe on the work done in preparing the project follow-up report requested by the Council in its resolution 1997/48, even though the necessary resources were not forthcoming from the General Assembly;

5. *Renews its invitation* to the competent organizations of the United Nations system, and to non-governmental organizations, including in particular the International Tunnelling Association and the International Union of Railways, to participate in the studies and work on the permanent link through the Strait of Gibraltar;

6. *Also renews its invitation* to the European Commission to consider the possibility of participating in the consolidation of the studies and the development of the project both institutionally and financially;

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretaries of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Europe to continue to take an active part in the follow-up to the project and to report to the Council at its substantive session of 2001;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide formal support and, to the extent that priorities permit, the necessary resources, within the regular budget, to the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Europe to enable them to carry out the activities mentioned above.

¹⁰¹ See Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, fortieth ordinary session (third part), 30 January–3 February 1989, *Texts adopted by the Assembly*, Strasbourg, France, 1989.

¹⁰² E/1999/20, annex.

44th plenary meeting
28 July 1999