

ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF
WEST AFRICAN STATES

COMMUNAUTÉ ECONOMIQUE
DES ETATS DE L'AFRIQUE
DE L'OUEST

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

**Twenty-second Session of the Authority
of Heads of State and Government
Lomé, 9 - 10 December 1999**

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FINAL COMMUNIQUE



**EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
LOME, DECEMBER 1999**

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TWENTY-SECOND ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AUTHORITY - FINAL COMMUNIQUE

1. The Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States held its twenty-second ordinary session in Lome, Togolese Republic, on 9 and 10 December 1999. The meeting was chaired by His Excellency GNASSINGBÉ Eyadema, President of the Togolese Republic, current Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government.
2. Present at the session were the following Heads of State and Government or their duly accredited representatives:
 - His Excellency Mathieu KERÉKOU
President of the Republic of Benin,
 - His Excellency Blaise COMPAORE
President of Faso
Chairman, Council of Ministers of Burkina Faso,
 - His Excellency Henri Konan BEDIE
President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire,
 - His Excellency Flight-Lieutenant Jerry John RAWLINGS
President of the Republic of Ghana,
 - His Excellency Alpha Oumar KONARE
President of the Republic of Mali
 - His Excellency Squadron Leader Daouda Malam WANKE
President of the Council for National Reconciliation
Head of State of the Republic of Niger

- His Excellency Chief Olusegun OBASANJO
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
- His Excellency Abdou DIOUF
President of the Republic of Senegal,
- His Excellency Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan KABBAH
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone,
- His Excellency GNASSINGBE Eyadema
President of the Togolese Republic,
- Honourable Mrs. Isatou NJIE-SAIDY
Vice-President, Secretary of State for Health, Labour, Social
and Women's Affairs
representing the President of the Republic of The Gambia
- Honourable Enoch DOGOLEAH
Vice-President
representing the President of the Republic of Liberia,
- Honourable Alexandre dias MONTEIRO
Minister of Commerce, Industry and Energy
representing the Prime Minister of the Republic of Cape Verde,
- Honourable Zaïnoul Abidin SANOUSSI
Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Presidency
representing the President of the Republic of Guinea,

- Honourable José Pereira BATISTA
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
representing the President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau,
- Honourable Sidi Mohamed Ould BOUBACAR
Minister, Secretary-General at the Presidency
representing the President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

3. The following personalities also attended the twenty-second session:

- His Excellency Dr. K.Y. AMOAKO
Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, (ECA)
- General Louis SYLVAIN-GOMA, Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central Africa (CEAC)
- His Excellency Ambassador Lawrence AGUBUZU
Representing the Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU),
- Professor Ibrahima FALL
Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs
representing the Secretary-General of the United Nations,
- Mr. Koli Kouame
Representing the Secretary-General of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP),

- Mrs. Leopldine KOFFI
President of the West African Women's Association (WAWA).
- Mr Ahmed SRIKAH, Head, Political Affairs and Information
representing the Secretary General of the Arab Maghreb Union
(AMU)

I. FOLLOW-UP TO OAU EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT

4. ECOWAS Heads of State and Government expressed satisfaction at the extremely positive outcome of the extraordinary OAU summit held in Syrte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on the establishment of an African union.
5. They resolved to take every measure necessary to realise the objectives of the African union within the prescribed period.
6. ECOWAS Heads of State and Government expressed the view that the union would constitute an appropriate response to the great challenge which globalisation poses to Africa, inasmuch as only big regional economic integration blocs would be able to win the economic war which has already begun and which will intensify in the future.

II. CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY IN WEST AFRICA

7. Referring to the ECOWAS declaration of political principles, Heads of State praised the installation of a democratically elected government in Nigeria as a major political event which portends renewed hope for peace, security, stability and development in the region. They commended His Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, for his

determined stance towards the attainment of economic growth and development in Nigeria, which is certain to impact favourably on the overall economic performance of West Africa.

8. Heads of State also warmly congratulated the government of Niger on the successful organisation of free, fair and transparent elections which will allow the country to return to the path of democracy.
9. Heads of State also welcomed the election of Mr. Mamadou TANDJA as President-elect of the Republic of Niger, and wished him a successful tenure in office; they expressed their wishes for happiness for the people of Niger. They appealed to the international community to lend every assistance to Niger in its economic recovery.
10. Heads of State and Government commended the return to normal constitutional rule in Guinea-Bissau. They appealed to the international community to provide the country with the assistance its needs to overcome the consequences of the long political crises from which it has just emerged.

III. STRATEGY TO ACCELERATE THE REGIONAL INTEGRATION PROCESS IN WEST AFRICA

11. Heads of State expressed concern at the continuing economic crisis which is adversely affecting the sub-region, despite the fact that some macro-economic indicators have improved in most countries.
12. Considering the development problems that West Africa has to overcome in order to meet the challenges of globalisation, Heads of State reaffirmed their political will to work towards strengthening

- ECOWAS and implementing Community programmes, in order to promote the growth and sustainable development of West African economies.
13. To this end, they endorsed the strategy to accelerate the integration process in ECOWAS, with a view to establishing a single regional market in West Africa based on trade liberalisation, the establishment of a common external tariff, and the harmonisation of the economic and financial policies of Member States.
 14. Heads of State issued an urgent appeal to external development partners to provide every necessary support to ECOWAS for the implementation of this important programme.
 15. Heads of State stressed the need to coordinate the integration programmes of ECOWAS and UEMOA. In this connection, they urged the ECOWAS Executive Secretary and the President of the UEMOA Commission to intensify the existing cooperation ties between the two institutions, with a view to avoiding overlapping and duplication of efforts in the implementation of Community programmes.
 16. Heads of State and Government expressed their appreciation of the remarkable speech delivered by His Excellency, President Olusegun Obasanjo, and decided to adopt it as one of their working documents at this current session.
 17. The Authority noted with satisfaction the undertaking by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to abolish all tariff and non tariff barriers to regional trade and to remove all check points along international highways, with a view to establishing a free trade zone with neighbouring States.

18. All Member States were requested to emulate this laudable example in order to accelerate the implementation of priority ECOWAS programmes. Heads of State acknowledged the need to adopt an approach to integration whereby States could proceed at their own pace. They approved the proposal made by President Obasanjo whereby any group of States from the Community can take concrete and pragmatic steps to accelerate their integration.

IV. MONETARY COOPERATION PROGRAMME

19. Heads of State underlined the need to deepen the process of convergence of macro-economic performance of Member States in order to enhance the credibility of the single monetary zone to be established within the sub-region. To this end, they adopted a set of primary and secondary macro-economic convergence criteria. They however decided to set a ceiling of 5% for inflation while external reserves should be equal to 6 months of imports of goods and services. All Member States are expected to meet these convergence criteria by the year 2003, and the single monetary zone is expected to become effective on the 1st of January 2004, by which time the policy convergence will have been fully achieved.
20. To facilitate the realisation of the convergence programme, Heads of State also endorsed the organs of the multilateral surveillance mechanism for economic and financial policies.

V. FOOD SECURITY

21. In recognition of the importance of agriculture to the socio-economic development of ECOWAS Member States, the Authority directed the
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Executive Secretary to expedite action on the preparation of an appropriate framework for regional food security that would be more suitable for the sub-region. It was decided that a conference of ECOWAS Ministers of Agriculture should be convened to give detailed consideration to the agricultural development strategy to be formulated.

VI. FREE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS AND GOODS

22. Heads of State noted the continued existence of numerous illegal road blocks along West African highways, which impede free movement of persons and the development of intra-Community trade.
23. They appealed to all Member States to take necessary measures to dismantle these road blocks. The Authority decided to establish a permanent Community surveillance system to monitor such road blocks, and investigate ways of removing them. The Secretariat should study the issue, with a view to defining practical modalities for achieving this objective.

VII. FINANCIAL SITUATION OF COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

24. The Authority expressed deep concern at the huge amount of arrears of contributions owed by Member States to the Community Institutions. The ECOWAS Heads of State noted that the speedy implementation of the Community levy would provide a lasting solution to the problem posed by the accumulation of arrears. Consequently, they commended Member States which have already ratified the Protocol on the Community levy, and called on the other States to do so without further delay.

VIII RESTRUCTURING OF THE COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

25. As part of measures to strengthen the operational activities of the Community, Heads of State and Government approved the restructuring of the Executive Secretariat and the transformation of the ECOWAS Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development into a holding company to be known as ECOWAS Investment and Development Bank, with two subsidiaries (ECOWAS Regional Investment Bank and ECOWAS Regional Development Fund).

IX. APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY APPOINTEES

26. The Authority called on Heads of State and Government to respond before 31 January 2000 to the letter sent to them by current Chairman concerning the appointment of the statutory appointees.

X. COMMUNITY COURT OF JUSTICE AND PARLIAMENT

27. Heads of State and Government approved the setting up of the Community Court of Justice. They decided to consult further among themselves on the country to host the headquarters of the Court. They directed the Executive Secretary to take the necessary measures to appoint its judges, in accordance with the provisions of the ECOWAS Treaty.
28. Heads of State and Government also directed the Executive Secretary to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Community Parliament is put in place within the shortest possible time.

XI. CONSOLIDATION OF PEACE IN THE SUB-REGION

i) Sierra Leone

- 29.- The Authority expressed satisfaction at the signing of the Lome Peace Agreement by President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and Corporal Foday Sankoh and its implementation, which has helped to move the peace process forward in Sierra Leone. Heads of State urged the major actors to continue working together for lasting peace in the country. They were urged to encourage the rebels to surrender their arms so that all efforts can be geared towards accelerating the implementation of the disarmament, demobilisation and rehabilitation (DDR) programme.
30. Concerning the situation in Sierra Leone, Heads of State welcomed the decision of the United Nations to deploy a keeping force (UNAMSIL) to that country, and appealed to the international community to provide the necessary assistance to ECOWAS Member States to enable them participate actively in the ECOMOG peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone. They noted with satisfaction the promise of assistance to Mali made by the government of the Netherlands towards its participation in the operation.

ii) Liberia/Guinea

31. Heads of State and Government recommended the immediate implementation of the measures adopted at the extraordinary summit held in Abuja on 16 September 1999 to reduce the tension

between Liberia and Guinea. They directed the Executive Secretary to convene a meeting of Ministers from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea to ensure the implementation of the decisions of the Ad Hoc Committee of Heads of State.

XII. MECHANISM FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION, MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION, PEACE AND SECURITY

32. Heads of State reiterated their resolve to establish the mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution, peace and security for increased cooperation in this area. They therefore approved the relevant draft protocol and designated the following as Member States of the Security and Mediation Council envisaged in the Mechanism:

- Benin
- Cote d'Ivoire
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Liberia
- Mali (Chairman)
- Nigeria
- Senegal
- Togo

33. Heads of State and Government stated the need for vigorous action against the proliferation and illegal circulation of light weapons, and against transborder crime, particularly drug trafficking and money laundering. They therefore adopted a protocol relating to the

mechanism and the decisions relating to the control of money laundering.

34. Heads of State and Government called on all Member States which are expected to host the zonal observation bureaux, namely, Benin, Burkina Faso, The Gambia and Liberia, to take all necessary measures to ensure that the zonal bureaux become operational as soon as possible.
35. Heads of State and Government expressed their gratitude to the European Union for the financial assistance granted to ECOWAS for the establishment of the mechanism for conflict prevention, management, resolution, and peacekeeping.
36. With regard to the establishment of a Council of Elders, the Authority called on Member States to communicate the list of persons who could be appointed as members to the Executive Secretariat by 31 January 2000, to enable the effective establishment of the Council.

XIII. MORATORIUM ON THE IMPORTATION, EXPORTATION AND MANUFACTURE OF LIGHT WEAPONS

37. Heads of State and Government congratulated His Excellency Charles Ghankay Taylor, President of the Republic of Liberia for having carried out the destruction of seized arms in his country.
38. Heads of State and Government expressed satisfaction at the progress made with regard to the implementation of the programme in some Member States. They took a decision to accelerate the

establishment of the national commissions envisaged within the moratorium.

39. Heads of State and Government directed the Executive Secretary to take all necessary measures to implement the different aspects of the action plan adopted under the Moratorium.
40. Heads of State and Government expressed support for the organisation in Mali, in 2000, of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) Ministerial Conference on the control of illicit proliferation of light weapons, as decided by the 35th Conference of Heads of State and Government of the OAU held in Algiers from 8 to 10 July 1999.

XIV EUROPEAN UNION/ACP NEGOTIATIONS

41. ECOWAS Heads of State and Government welcomed the progress made with regard to the renewal of the Lome Convention. They commended the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat for its role in coordinating the different positions of the ECOWAS Member States.
41. Heads of State reaffirmed their resolve to remain united in view of the changes which might emerge in EU/ACP relations at the end of the 8-year transition period agreed recently during negotiations between the two parties.
42. The Authority acknowledged ECOWAS as the most appropriate framework for coordination of relations between West Africa and the European Union. The Chairman of the Authority was requested by his pairs to take measures he may consider necessary to ensure this coordination.

XV. APPEAL TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

43. The Authority issued an urgent appeal to the European Union to lift the sanctions against the Togolese Republic. It was stated that these sanctions have seriously affected the Togolese economy and have increased poverty, retarded economic growth and weakened the country's capacity for sustainable development.
44. The Authority expressed its conviction that the lifting of the sanctions in the shortest possible time will serve the cause of democracy, human rights, social justice and sustainable development in Togo.

XVI ECOWAS ANTHEM

45. Heads of State and Government listened to a rendition of the ECOWAS anthem and expressed satisfaction with the composers. They requested the Executive Secretariat to forward a recording of the anthem to them for a better appreciation of the composition.

XVII. ECOWAS PRIZE FOR EXCELLENCE

46. The Authority of Heads of State and Government instituted the Prize for Excellence which is awarded every two years to an institution which distinguishes itself or to a person who excels in science, culture and agriculture. The Prize for 1999 is awarded for Literature. The Authority awarded the ECOWAS Prize for Excellence for Literature to the two winners:

- Mr. Thierry AKPO, from Senegal, for his novel "La ligne continue"
- Mr. Mohammed SHERIF, from Sierra Leone, for his novel "Secret Fear"

XVII PROMOTION OF YOUTH ACTIVITIES

47. Heads of State and Government recalled the importance the Community attaches to the development of the potential of the youth. In order to strengthen the activities being pursued at the regional level to promote the development of the youth, the Authority directed the Executive Secretariat to provide assistance to the West African Youth Union under the same conditions as already extended to the West African Women's Association.

XIX. DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION FACILITIES IN THE REGION

48. Heads of State and Government directed the Executive Secretary to establish the necessary contact with the promoters of satellite television LC 2 located in Cotonou, with a view to studying the modalities for broadcasting throughout the ECOWAS region.
49. In recognition of the positive role which women play in integration, the Authority directed the Secretariat to study ways of increasing the allowances paid to WAWA.

XX ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

50. Heads of State and Government unanimously confirmed the choice of the Republic of Mali as the next Chairman of the Community for 1999 - 2000.

XXI DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT SUMMIT

51. At the invitation of His Excellency Alpha Oumar KONARE, President of the Republic of Mali, the Authority agreed that its twenty-third ordinary session be held in Bamako in December 2000.

XXII VOTE OF THANKS

52. Heads of State and Government expressed their profound gratitude to the outgoing Chairman, His Excellency Gnassingbe EYADEMA, President of the Togolese Republic, for his exemplary leadership role in the promotion of West African integration. They were particularly grateful for the brotherly welcome extended to them and for the excellent facilities provided during their stay in Togo. The Authority expressed special thanks to President Eyadema for his personal involvement in the search for regional peace and security, and for his efforts at strengthening the Community as a whole. Heads of State commended him for the initiatives he took recently to enhance democracy in his country which he has always served with devotion worthy of praise.

DONE AT LOME THIS 10TH DAY OF DECEMBER 1999

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