



ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

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**SIXTY-FIFTH (65TH) ORDINARY SESSION
OF THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

7th July 2024, Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

1. The Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) held its Sixty-Fifth (65TH) Ordinary Session on 7th July 2024 in Abuja, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, under the Chairmanship of **H.E. Bola Ahmed Tinubu (GCFR), President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria**, and Chairperson of the Authority.

2. The following Heads of State or their duly mandated representatives participated in the Summit:

H.E. **Adama Barrow**, President of the Republic of The Gambia

H.E. **Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo**, President of the Republic of Ghana

H.E. General **Umaro Sissoco Embaló**, President of the Republic of Guinea Bissau

H.E. **Joseph Boakai**, President of the Republic of Liberia

H.E. **Bola Ahmed Tinubu**, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

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H.E. **Bassirou Diomaye Diakhar Faye**, President of the Republic of Senegal

H.E. **Julius Maada Bio**, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

H.E. **Tiémoko Meyliet Koné**, Vice-President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

H.E. **Olushegun Adjadi Bakari**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Benin

H.E. **Dr. Rui A. Figueiredo**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cabo Verde

H.E. **Prof. Robert Dussey**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Togolese Abroad of the Togolese Republic

3. Also attending the Session were:

H.E. **Omar Alieu Touray**, President of ECOWAS Commission;

H.E. **Abdoulaye Diop**, President of the UEMOA Commission;

H.E. **Leonardo Santos Simão**, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).

H.E. Amb. **Bankole Adeoye**, African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security.

4. At the opening ceremony, statements were delivered by **H.E. Omar Alieu Touray**, President of ECOWAS Commission and **H. E. Bola Ahmed Tinubu**, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chair of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, who delivered the opening speech.

5. Thereafter, **H.E. Leonardo Santos Simão**, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for West Africa, and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and **H.E. Amb. Bankole Adeoye**, African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security delivered goodwill messages.

6. The Heads of State and Government took note of the 2024 Interim Report of the President of the ECOWAS Commission on the state of the Community, the Reports of the 52nd Ordinary Meeting of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council and the 92nd Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers.

7. The Authority welcomed the progress achieved in the first half of the year and the relevant recommendations contained therein, which are aimed at deepening the economic and monetary integration process and consolidating political stability, peace and security within the region.

8. With a view to consolidating the achievements recorded in the integration process and sustaining an inclusive region of peace, security and prosperity, the Authority takes the following decisions:

A. REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

On Economic Performance

9. The Authority took note of the global economic context characterised by the lingering geopolitical tensions and the easing of inflationary pressures linked to the tightening of monetary policy by most central banks. Against this backdrop, it welcomes the positive economic outlook for ECOWAS in 2024, with economic growth expected to accelerate to 4.3% and continued fiscal consolidation efforts. Nevertheless, it notes the persistent inflationary pressures and growing public debt ratio in the Region.

10. The Summit invites Member States to continue to implement economic and financial policies conducive to sustainable and inclusive economic growth, with a sound public finance management that will lead to compliance with the macroeconomic convergence criteria.

On the ECOWAS Single Currency

11. To enable the Commission to regularly map out the macroeconomic convergence path for Member States and the Community, the Authority stresses the need for Member States to regularly transmit to the Commission their Multi-Year Convergence Programmes (MYCPs) for the relevant periods. Accordingly, it invites all Member States to prepare and transmit to the Commission their Multi-Year Convergence Programmes for the period 2025-2029 no later than 31st October 2024. The Commission is to provide an update on the transmission of the MYCPs at the next Ordinary Session of the Authority.

12. The Heads of State took note of the conclusions of the second meeting of the High-Level Committee on the Practical Modalities for the creation of the ECO. The Authority, after commending the Committee for the quality of

its report, decides to maintain the Stability and Macroeconomic Convergence Pact among ECOWAS Member States as it stands and further directed the Commission to submit a draft Supplementary Act defining the modalities for the participation of Member States in the Monetary Union at its first Ordinary Session in 2025.

13. Furthermore, the Authority instructs:

- a. the Commission, in conjunction with WAMA, to conduct a cost assessment and identify sources and modalities of financing for the establishment of the institutions needed for the creation of the ECO and submit same at its first Ordinary Session in 2025.
- b. the High-Level Committee to submit a report at its next Ordinary Session.

On Food Security

14. The Authority took note of the concerns raised on the worrisome food crisis in the region and instructs the Commission to take all the necessary measures to support ECOWAS Member States in mitigating the impact on the most vulnerable people. Furthermore, it calls on all the technical and financial partners to rally their support for ECOWAS Member States and jointly tackle the issues of food insecurity and malnutrition in the region.

On Road Transport

15. Noting the excessive damage being caused to Community roads by overloading, the Authority directs Member States to comply with the axle load limits in the new harmonised Community Text (Supplementary Act SA.3/07/22) on overloaded haulage trucks which results in the premature deterioration of roads constructed with Member States limited financial resources.

16. The Authority further directs Road and Transport Ministers in Member States to implement the new Road Safety Policy as adopted by the Authority at its December 2021 Session in Supplementary Act A/SA.4/12/21, towards reducing the number of fatalities by 50% by 2030 as set by the World Health Organisation in the global 2nd Decade of Action on Road Safety

On Air Transport

17. The Authority raises concern about the high cost of Air Travel in the ECOWAS Region which is seen as one of the highest on the continent, and its attendant impact on the development of Tourism, Trade and the free movement of persons and services. The Authority directs Air Transport

Ministers, and Civil Aviation Authorities of Member States to work with the ECOWAS Commission to implement the ECOWAS Common Policy on Aviation Charges, Taxes and Fees, with the aim of using air transport to expedite economic development and deepen the regional integration process.

On obstacles to the Free Movement of Goods

18. The Authority instructs the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS) Task Force with the support of the Commission to accelerate the implementation of measures to facilitate the free movement of persons and goods along the regional corridors.

19. The Authority welcomes the operationalisation of the Interconnected System for the Management of Goods in Transit (SIGMAT) as an efficient tool to secure the movement of goods along the corridors, to fight fraud and to substantially improve the mobilisation of customs revenue and invites all the Member States to use this digital platform. The Commission is directed to provide technical assistance to Member States for the full deployment of SIGMAT.

B. ON PEACE, SECURITY AND DEMOCRACY

On Peace, Security and Governance in the region

20. The Authority commends the laudable efforts being made by Member States and the ECOWAS Commission to consolidate democracy, peace, security, and stability in the region. It notes, in particular, the successful and peaceful elections that took place during the year in Senegal and Togo. The Authority welcomes the peaceful outcome of the dialogue between the All Peoples Congress (APC) and the Government in the Republic of Sierra Leone, a testament to the collective efforts towards peace and stability.

21. The Authority notes the continued challenges to security and stability in the region engendered by terrorism, violent extremism, transnational organised crime, unconstitutional changes of government, misinformation and disinformation sowing distrust and undermining regional values and norms. It expresses concern over the spectre of proxy wars in the region as a consequence of renewed geopolitical and geostrategic competition unfolding in the region.

22. In this regard, the Authority took the following decisions:

On Democracy and Good Governance

23. The authority reaffirms its unflinching commitment to good governance and Constitutional order.
24. The Authority commends the Commission for its diligence in engaging Member States in consultations for the review of the 2001 Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. It directs the Commission to pursue further consultations with Member States, with a view to finalising the revision for consideration at its next session.
25. **On The Gambia**, the Authority urges the Government and stakeholders to expedite the adoption of the new Constitution.
26. **On Ghana**, the Authority takes note of preparations for the 7th December 2024 General Elections and encourages the Government and stakeholders in the electoral process to continue prioritising inclusivity, transparency and consensus-building towards the peaceful conduct of the elections to further strengthen the country's enviable democratic culture and stability. In that regard, the Authority directs the Commission to undertake a pre-election fact-finding mission to Ghana and to accompany initiatives towards enhancing a participatory and peaceful electoral process.
27. **On Guinea Bissau**, the Authority urges the Government to accelerate the process of holding new legislative elections to re-establish the Popular National Assembly and enable the election of members of the National Electoral Commission. It reiterates its call on all political stakeholders to prioritise dialogue and consensus building to enhance social cohesion towards strengthening the country's stability and progress. The Authority instructs the Commission to accompany Guinea Bissau in consolidating democracy, peace, and stability.
28. The Authority congratulates the Government and people of **Senegal** on the peaceful conduct of the 24 March Presidential election. The Authority congratulates **H.E. Bassirou Diomaye Diakhar Faye** on his historic election as President and wishes him a successful tenure. It commends the people and institutions for the remarkable show of resilience and adherence to the country's exemplary democratic traditions.
29. **On Togo**, the Authority takes note of the adoption of a new Constitution by the National Assembly. It congratulates the Government and people for the successful conduct of the Legislative and Regional elections. The Authority encourages the Togolese authorities and stakeholders to continue to prioritise dialogue towards social cohesion and national unity.

30. **On Sierra Leone**, the Authority commends the Government and the All Peoples Congress (APC) for the signing of the '**Agreement for National Unity**' and urges them to commit to implementing it within the stipulated timeframe and persevere in resolving all differences within the agreement's framework. The Authority further urges all stakeholders to commit to the implementation of the Report of the Tripartite Committee and refrain from resorting to violent means to avoid escalating the already tense political situation in the country. It directs the ECOWAS Commission to accompany the Government and people of Sierra Leone in the implementation of the 'Agreement for National Unity' and the recommendations of the Tripartite Committee's Report. It calls on development partners to continue supporting the Government and people of Sierra Leone in consolidating democracy, peace and socio-economic development.

31. On the planned deployment of the **ECOWAS Stabilisation Mission in Sierra Leone**, the Authority welcomes the preparations made so far and directs the Commission and the Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff to expedite the arrangements with Troop Contributing Countries (TCC) towards the deployment of the Mission.

On the fight against terrorism and other security threats

32. The Authority reasserts its commitment to the eradication of terrorism and other threats to the peace, security and stability of the region. In that regard, it welcomes the proposals made by the Ministers of Defence and Finance towards activating a regional force to fight against terrorism, notably the setting up of a 5000-man Force with a start-up of a 1650-man Brigade that could be incrementally scaled up within a specified timeframe. The Authority instructs the President of the Commission to facilitate further consultations on the modalities and options for mobilising internal financial and material resources on a mandatory basis to support the activation of the regional counter-terrorism force, including the convening of a technical meeting of the responsible ministries.

33. The Authority directs the President of the Commission to explore further resource mobilisation opportunities with the African Union Commission, including within the framework of the UNSC Resolution 2917 of 21 December 2023 and the outcome of the jointly facilitated AU-UN-ECOWAS High-Level Panel on Security and Development in the Sahel.

34. The Authority directs the Commission to strengthen synergies and

collaboration with sub-regional initiatives, including the Multinational Joint Task Forces of the Accra Initiative and the Lake Chad Basin.

35. Regarding **maritime security and safety in the region**, the Authority directs the ECOWAS Commission to develop a reinforced regional framework to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and to initiate discussions with external partners to combat IUU fishing and the associated dumping of toxic waste in the Region's maritime domain.

On Peace Support Operations

36. The Authority instructs the Commission to deploy a mission to assess the financial implications of the **ECOWAS Mission in The Gambia and the ECOWAS Stabilisation Support Mission in Guinea Bissau** and to evaluate the current security and political situations in The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau concerning the status and operations of the missions.

37. **On the transition process in Guinea**, the Authority welcomes the relative progress achieved, including the planned holding of a referendum on the Constitution in 2024. It welcomes on-going interactions between the Commission and the transition authorities and commends the Guinean authorities for reaffirming their unflinching membership in the ECOWAS Community. The Authority directs the Commission to dispatch the technical mission to further deepen collaboration with Guinea on the transition. It urges the Transition authorities to prioritise the facilitation of an inclusive inter-Guinean dialogue involving all political stakeholders to ensure a consensual and peaceful transition process.

38. **Regarding the situation with the Alliance des Etats du Sahel (AES)**, the Authority expresses disappointment with the lack of progress in engagements with the authorities of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger and instructs the President of the Commission to facilitate a more vigorous approach in line with the decisions of the Extraordinary Summit of 24th February 2024. In addition, the Authority directs the Commission to develop a forward-looking contingency plan for its consideration regarding all eventualities in relations with the AES countries, taking into account the exigencies of Article 91 of the 1993 ECOWAS Revised Treaty. Furthermore, the Authority instructs the Commission to support all ongoing mediation efforts to put an end to the tensions between the Republic of Benin and the Republic of Niger.

39. The Authority designates **H.E. Bassirou Diomaye Diakhar Faye**,

President of the Republic of Senegal as ECOWAS Facilitator in ECOWAS engagement with the AES (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger) in collaboration with **H.E. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé**, President of the Togolese Republic.

40. The Authority welcomes the offer of H.E. General **Umaro Sissoco Embaló**, President of the Republic of Guinea Bissau to support the engagement, especially with Burkina Faso.

41. The Authority deplores the continued detention and the lifting of the immunity of the former President of the Republic of Niger, **H.E. Mohamed Bazoum** and calls for his unconditional release.

42. To enhance consistency in the application of the provisions of the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, the Authority calls for an enhanced cooperation and collaboration between the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council (MSC) and the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) to ensure synergy on decisions taken at the regional and continental levels. To this end, the Authority welcomes the commencement of regular consultative interactions between the AU PSC and corresponding Organs of the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms.

43. In view of the evolving regional and global political and security dynamics, the Authority directs the Commission to convene a Special Summit on the Future of Regional Integration in West Africa, taking into account the state of governance, peace and security and the regional integration project. Furthermore, the Authority instructs the Commission to facilitate deep reflection on the relationships between electoral processes, democracy, and development, and to undertake measures to scale up efforts to meet the goals of Vision 2050.

C. INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

44. The Authority endorses the conclusions of the 92nd Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers.

On the Community Parliament

45. The Authority welcomes the election of Honourable Memounatou Ibrahima from the Togolese Republic as the first female President of the ECOWAS Parliament.

On Community Levy performance

46. The Authority expresses concern over the recurring issue of non-payment of Community Levy by Member States, which affects the performance of Community Institutions and programmes and urges Member States to honour their Community Levy obligations by ensuring that proceeds collected are remitted to the Commission without delay.

47. In this regard, The Chair of The Authority request a comprehensive briefing on the issue from the President of the Commission, including reminding letters to be addressed to defaulting Member States, and further directs the President of the Commission to engage with the Chair of Council to undertake high-level missions to the concerned Member States for remittances to be made.

On International Cooperation

48. On the African Union Commission elections for statutory positions scheduled for February 2025, The Authority endorsed the candidacy of Ambassador Bankole Adeoye for reelection as the sole male candidate for the region. The Authority also took note of the applications of two female candidates from the Republics of Benin and Ghana.

49. The Authority expresses its appreciation to the ECOWAS' development partners for their continued support toward the attainment of ECOWAS' objectives and interest shown in the development of the West African region.

D. OTHER MATTERS

50. On the proposal for a Special Summit on the future of the Community

After deliberation on the objective of the proposed ECOWAS Special Summit, which includes among others enhancement of the regional Peace and security, good governance and constitutional order as well as deepening the regional integration process, The Authority directs the Commission to work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, Chair of the Council to come up with the format and timeframe.

Tributes and Acknowledgements

51. The Heads of State and Government express their deep gratitude to the President and Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for their

hospitality and the facilities placed at their disposal for the successful holding of the Session

On the election of the Chair of Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS

52. The Heads of State and Government reelected, H.E. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as Chair of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government for another one-year term.

53. The Authority paid warm tribute to H. E. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for his leadership and commitment to the West Africa region, during his past tenure.

Date and venue of next summit

54. The Sixty-Sixth Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government will take place at a date to be determined, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Authority.

Done in Abuja, this 7th day of July 2024

