



**NINTH MEETING OF THE ADMINISTRATION
AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Abuja, 11 - 13 May 2011

**OPENING ADDRESS
BY H. E. JAMES VICTOR GBEHO
PRESIDENT OF THE ECOWAS COMMISSION**

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Ninth Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee of ECOWAS holding from the 11 – 13 May 2011 at the Headquarters of ECOWAS Commission.

This meeting, as you are aware, is one in a series of mid-year statutory meetings that customarily begins with your meeting followed by sessions of the Council of Ministers and the Authority of Heads of State and Government.

This meeting is not traditionally a budget session but in compliance with Article 69 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, you are also charged with the responsibility of considering all other issues that deal with the administration and personnel management of Institutions of the Community.

The meeting also affords you the opportunity to obtain progress reports on tasks that may have been assigned to any Community Institution. Of course, your Committee may quite often have to consider extra budgetary requests over important issues that are unforeseen and cannot be accommodated in the already approved budgetary allocations of Institutions.

The agenda for this particular meeting consists of vital issues concerning a variety of subjects.

The aftermath of the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire has given rise to serious humanitarian conditions that have left thousands of ECOWAS citizens homeless and without any means of sustenance. After official assessments made at the level the Humanitarian Affairs Directorate of the Commission, in collaboration with

other aid Agencies, the Commission is obliged to assist in extending humanitarian assistance to Côte d'Ivoire and other affected States. The Commission is therefore of the view that supplementary budgets are required to discharge this responsibility. You will be required to urgently assess the proposals for your wise counsel.

Your Committee will also be expected to consider administrative matters relating to GIABA, and the management and development of key assets of the Community which subject will be presented to you in a report of the meeting of the ad hoc Ministerial Committee on the construction of the Headquarters of the Community Institutions that was held this week.

In carrying on your duties related to supplementary budgets, however, I consider it my honest responsibility

to convey to you the concern of the ECOWAS Heads of State for the low absorption capacity of Departments, partially due to the recent unrealistic exponential growth in budgets.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

All ECOWAS Institutions will necessarily provide your meeting with progress reports on tasks assigned to them including information on staff welfare, and other vital community projects in the area of trade and investment. I wish to request you to be diligent in their examination so as to improve governance all around.

Let me assure you that the Commission is here to provide every possible assistance to enable you discharge your duties as efficiently as possible.

I thank you for honouring our invitation to attend this meeting. I also trust that you will make very useful recommendations to aid the Council of Ministers in the discharge of its own responsibilities towards the Community.

I thank you for your kind attention.