



**FORTY SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS  
OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

Abuja, 15 December 2014

**DECISION A/DEC.01/12/14 AMENDING DECISION A/DEC 2/7/85  
ESTABLISHING A TRAVEL CERTIFICATE FOR ECOWAS MEMBER  
STATES**

**THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

**MINDFUL** of Articles 7, 8 and 19 of the ECOWAS Treaty as amended establishing the Authority of Heads of State and Government and defining its composition and functions;

**MINDFUL** of Article 3 of the said Treaty particularly paragraph 2 (d) (iii) which mandates member States to ensure the removal of all obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital and to the right of residence and establishment;

**MINDFUL** of the Supplementary Protocol A/SP2/7/85 on the Code of Conduct of the implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment;

**MINDFUL** of Decision A/DEC.2/7/85 on the Establishment of a travel certificate for ECOWAS States;





**RECALLING** Annex 9 (Chapter 3) on ICAO standards and recommended practices on Travellers Identification and Borders Controls;

**CONSIDERING** that the travel certificate which is being currently used by some Member States is outdated and not in compliance with the International standard travelling document;

**CONSIDERING** that some travel documents of ECOWAS Member States such as passport are biometric and harmonized but the National Identity Cards of Member States are not harmonized;

**AWARE** of the fact that National Identity Cards must be biometric and harmonized for security purposes in the Region;

**CONVINCED** of the need to establish a uniform travel document to facilitate and simplify the movement of community citizens at border crossings of Member States;

**RECALLING** that at its Forty-Fifth Ordinary Session held in Accra, Republic of Ghana on 10 July 2014, Authority, after adopting the establishment of the Biometric Identity Card, stressed the need to take due account of the security implications of its implementation;

**TAKING DUE ACCOUNT** of the recommendations made by the meetings of ECOWAS Ministers of Security held in Niamey, Republic of Niger in February 2014 and ECOWAS Heads of Immigration held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal from 3 to 5 December 2014;

**ON THE RECOMMENDATION** of the Seventy-Third Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers held from 9 to 11 December 2014 in Abuja Federal Republic of Nigeria;





## DECIDES

### **Article 1: AMENDMENT OF PARAGRAPH 1 OF ARTICLE 1**

The provisions of paragraph 1 of article 1 of Decision A/DEC.2/7/85 on the Establishment of a Travel Certificate in ECOWAS Member States shall be amended as follows:

#### **New paragraph 1 of Article 1**

The National Biometric Identity Card is hereby established as a travel document within the ECOWAS Region.

### **Article 2: IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES**

1. The Biometric Identity Card shall be rolled out in Member States by 2016.
2. The Biometric Identity Card shall have the same colour in all ECOWAS Member States.
3. Nationals of each Member State shall undergo biometric census in the host countries. The competent authorities of the countries of origin shall forward the biometric data of their nationals to the competent authorities of the host countries, in strict compliance with personal data protection rules.
4. Police, Customs and Immigration Services shall promptly share information, in line with the West African Police Information System (WAPIS) information sharing mechanism to ensure information sharing among Member States' national police services. WAPIS should be extended to all Member States to facilitate information sharing on criminals.
5. Member States shall introduce a mechanism for monitoring transportation services to ensure people's safety and facilitate passengers' travel.
6. Member States shall sensitize and train border officials on basic health procedures to prevent epidemics and communicable diseases.





**Article 3: MONITORING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

1. In order to ensure the effective implementation of this Decision, the ECOWAS Commission shall set up an ad hoc monitoring and evaluation committee to monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Decision, particularly in relation to security-related issues;
2. An Enabling Regulation shall define the composition and operation of the monitoring and evaluation committee provided for by Paragraph 1 of this Article;

**Article 4: ENTRY INTO FORCE**

This Decision shall enter into force upon signature by the Chairman of the Authority.

**Article 5: PUBLICATION**

This Decision shall be published by the President of the Commission in the Official Journal of the Community within thirty (30) days after signature. It shall also be published by each Member State in its Official Gazette thirty (30) days after notification by the Commission.

**DONE AT ABUJA ON THE 15<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF DECEMBER 2014**

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**H.E. JOHN DRAMANI MAHAMA**

FOR THE AUTHORITY

THE CHAIRMAN