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ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES

FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE AUTHORITY OF
HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

ABUJA, 4 - 6 JULY, 1991

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) held its Fourteenth Ordinary Session in Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria from 4 to 6 July, 1991 under the Chairmanship of His Excellency Alhaji Sir Dawda Kairaba JAWARA, President of the Republic of The Gambia.

2. Present at the Summit were the following Heads of State and Government or their duly accredited representatives :

- His Excellency Nicéphore Dieudonné SOGLO,
President of the Republic of BENIN
- His Excellency Captain Blaise COMPAORE,
President of FASC,
Head of Government
BURKINA FASO
- His Excellency Alhaji Sir Dawda Kairaba JAWARA,
President of the Republic of THE GAMBIA
- His Excellency General Lansana CONTE,
Chairman of the Transitional Council for
National Recovery,
President of the Republic of GUINEA
- His Excellency General Joao Bernardo VIEIRA,
President of the Council of the State
of the Republic of GUINEA BISSAU,
- His Excellency Dr. Amos C. SAWYER,
President of the Interim Government of
National Unity of the
Republic of LIBERIA

- His Excellency Lt-Col Amadou Toumani TOURE,
Chairman of the People's Redemption
Transitional Committee
Head of State of the Republic of MALI
- His Excellency General Ibrahim Badamasi BABANGIDA,
President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of
the Federal Republic of NIGERIA
- His Excellency Abdou DIOUF,
President of the Republic of SENEGAL
- His Excellency Major-General Dr. Joseph Saidu MOMOH,
President of the Republic of SIERRA LEONE
- Honourable Carlos Wananon de Carvalho VEIGA,
Prime Minister and Minister of Defence,
representing the
President of the Republic of CAPE VERDE
- Honourable Mahamidou ALIOU,
Prime Minister, representing the
President of the Republic of NIGER
- Honourable Essy AMARA,
Minister of Foreign Affairs, representing the
President of COTE D'IVOIRE
- Honourable Alhaji Mahama IBDRISU,
Member of the Provisional National
Defence Council (PNDC), representing the
Head of State of the Republic of GHANA

- Honourable Sidi Mohamed Ould BOUBACAR,
Minister of Finance, representing the
President of the Islamic Republic of MAURITANIA
- Honourable Bitokotipou YAGNININ,
Attorney-General and Minister of Justice,
representing the
President of the TOGOLESE Republic

3. Attending the Fourteenth Session as observers were :

- The Secretary-General of the Organisation of
African Unity (OAU)
- The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission
for Africa (ECA)
- The Executive Secretary of the West African Clearing
House (WACH)
- The President of the Federation of West African
Chambers of Commerce (FWACC)
- The President of the West African Women's
Association (WAWA)
- The Executive Secretary of the African Groundnut
Council (AGC)
- The President of the West African Development Bank
(BOAD)
- The President of the Federation of West African
Manufacturers' Associations (FEWAMA)

- The Governor of the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO)
- The Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- The Representative of the African Development Bank (ADB)
- The Representative of the West African Economic Community (CEAO)
- The Representative of ECOBANK
- The Representative of the Pan-African News Agency (PANA)
- The Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- The Representative of the World Bank
- The Representative of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- The Representative of the European Economic Community (EEC)
- The Representative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- The Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

- And a large number of High Commissioners and Ambassadors accredited to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

COMMISSIONING OF THE COMMUNITY HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

4. The Fourteenth Session of the Authority was preceded by the formal commissioning in the morning of 4th July, 1991, of the new Executive Secretariat and Conference Complex of the ECOWAS Headquarters at Asokoro in Abuja. In his address before commissioning the Complex, the Chairman of the Authority, His Excellency Alhaji Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, President of the Republic of The Gambia expressed the immense pride and satisfaction of the entire Community for this achievement. The Chairman of the Authority stated that the magnificent ultra-modern edifice would be a source of inspiration to all Community citizens to strive harder towards the realisation of West African integration.

THE WEST AFRICAN ECONOMY

5. The Authority of Heads of State and Government, in its review of the economic situation in West Africa, noted that the 1990 growth rate of the sub-regional economy estimated at 3.5 per cent was only slightly higher than that of population growth. This modest economic performance was due mainly to the freak rise in export prices of crude oil during the second half of 1990. Generally, fragility continued to characterise the economies of member States. Grave concern was expressed by the Authority over the fact that current total output was still well below the 1980 level of production, when the effects of the world economic crisis began to be severely felt. Setting

this slow pace of economic recovery in West Africa against the inexorable rise in population, the inevitable result of continued deterioration in the standard of living of the average West African was generally acknowledged.

6. The Authority was particularly concerned that the economic situation had remained difficult in spite of the austere reform measures applied over the years by all Member States and the enormous socio-economic sacrifices their citizens have had to make. The Authority noted that, despite its earlier appeal to West African creditors for absolute debt reduction, the external debt of the sub-region had continued to grow, and had exceeded \$70 billion at the end of 1990. It was, therefore, stressed that unless ECOWAS Member States, most of whom are least developed, were granted substantial debt relief, their efforts at economic recovery would continue to yield minimal results.

7. The Authority acknowledged that, in order to overcome the economic difficulties of Member States, remunerative prices must be obtained for their agricultural, mineral and other raw material exports. Without this, no real economic development could be achieved by the Member States of the sub-region in particular and Africa in general. The Authority therefore appealed for collective action by the Member States of the sub-region so that together they could fight for remunerative prices for their raw materials.

8. The Heads of State and Government expressed their satisfaction that, in line with the previous recommendation of the Authority, a number of Member States in 1990 had adopted longer-term development programmes. The Authority welcomed the proposal by ECOWAS Ministers of Planning and Finance to review

national structural adjustment programmes for the purpose of ensuring that regional and long-term aspects of economic reforms were incorporated in future programmes. The Heads of State and Government also welcomed the growing acceptance by the international multilateral institutions of the need to support regional cooperation initiatives. The Authority consequently directed the Community Institutions to ensure that assistance from these sources contribute meaningfully to the regional integration and development process.

REVIEW OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

9. The Authority considered the many dramatic and fundamental changes taking place in the international political and economic landscape, particularly the replacement of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe by democratically elected governments, and the introduction of market-oriented economies.

10. The Heads of State and Government also considered the wave of popular expressions of demands for political pluralism sweeping throughout Africa. They noted that an increasing number of countries were now accepting political pluralism and were making necessary adjustments to the body politic to accommodate change. The Authority further acknowledged the renewed preoccupation everywhere with the reassertion of the fundamental and inalienable rights and freedoms of the individual. In the face of all these developments, the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their common belief in these principles and agreed to subscribe to a Declaration of Political Principles which is annexed to this Communiqué.

IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY ACTS AND DECISIONS

11. The Authority reviewed the West African integration process, particularly the activities of the Community during the past year. It expressed satisfaction that substantial progress had been achieved over the year with regard to the ratification of ECOWAS Protocols and Conventions. In this regard, it noted that 23 out of 25 Protocols had definitively entered into force, having received the requisite number of ratifications. The Authority commended the Member States which had ratified all the Protocols and Conventions of the Community and urged those which had not yet completed the process, to endeavour to do so without further delay.

12. The Authority, however, expressed its general dissatisfaction at the slow pace of implementation of Community Acts and Decisions at the national level. Special concern was expressed over the persistence of the problems impeding the implementation of ECOWAS cooperation programmes in Member States, particularly such Community priority programmes as the trade liberalization scheme, trade related programmes and the immigration programmes. Heads of State and Government therefore decided that all Member States should take urgent action to accelerate the implementation of these programmes. The Authority also urged that the highest national priority should be accorded to regional integration and that the necessary national legislative and administrative action be taken to give effect to Community Acts and Decisions. It was agreed that each Member State should report at the next Summit meeting of the Authority on the level of implementation of Community Acts and Decisions at the national level.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MEMBER STATES

13. After an assessment of the degree of compliance with its decision on the re-scheduled payment of Member States' financial contributions, the Authority commended the effort made during the year to clear outstanding arrears for 1990.

While recognising the budgetary difficulties facing the Governments of Member States, the Authority urged all Member States to endeavour to settle all their outstanding arrears of contributions to the institutions of the Community in order to avoid the application of sanctions.

REVITALISATION AND STRENGTHENING OF ECOWAS

(a) Rationalisation of West African IOs

14. The Authority re-affirmed its decision to rationalise the institutional arrangements for the integration of West Africa. To this end, the Authority designated ECOWAS as the single economic community in West Africa for the purpose of regional integration and the realisation of the objectives of the African Economic Community. Consequently, the Authority requested the highest decision-making body of each West African inter-governmental organisation (ISO) to re-affirm its commitment to ECOWAS as the single economic community for West Africa and to direct their respective Chief Executives to work in close collaboration with the ECOWAS Executive Secretary to achieve the objectives of the rationalisation exercise.

15. The Authority directed that a study involving both ECOWAS and the other West African IOs be conducted to formulate a pragmatic and realistic plan of rationalisation. The Heads of State and Government agreed to progressively renounce, in accordance with the said plan, the pursuit of the

realisation of the economic community objectives within any other West African IGOs. Member States solemnly undertook to employ all measures necessary within such IGOs to give substance and practical meaning to this renunciation.

(b) Review of the ECOMAS Treaty

16. The Authority took note of the report that the Committee of Eminent Persons set up to review the ECOMAS Treaty had been constituted and that, under the Chairmanship of General Dr. Yakubu GOWON, it had started its work in Abuja on May 26, 1991. The Authority directed that every effort should be made by the Committee to submit the results of its work to the Authority's Session in 1992.

(c) Implementation of the Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence

17. The Authority reaffirmed that peace and stability were essential to progress in regional economic integration efforts. Recalling therefore that the Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence signed in Freetown in 1981 had envisaged a defence mechanism, the Authority mandated the Executive Secretary to implement it after obtaining the necessary financial provision from the Council of Ministers when it meets at the end of this year.

(d) Meetings of ECOMAS Foreign Ministers

18. In recognition of the growing need to address the political dimensions of regional integration, the Authority decided that a meeting of ECOMAS Ministers of Foreign Affairs be held as and when necessary. The Authority directed that

ECOWAS Foreign ministers should report regularly through the Council of Ministers on political issues and on relations among Member States and between the Community and the rest of the world. The Authority called on Member States to ensure that they are always represented on the Council of Ministers by two ministers. The Executive Secretary was requested to bring the matter of the composition of the Council of Ministers to the attention of the Committee of Eminent Persons for the Review of the ECOWAS Treaty.

(e) Enhancement of the Financial Resources of the
ECOWAS Fund

19. Recalling its earlier decisions on the enhancement of the financial resources of the ECOWAS Fund, the Authority agreed that the initial work on this matter be undertaken by the Fund, involving the preparation of the promotional project document, the evaluation of the assets of the Fund and the preparation of new legal texts basing itself on the AOCs Report and the earlier decisions of Council and the Authority. It was also agreed that the Ad Hoc Ministerial Committee should supervise this exercise.

THE LIBERIAN SITUATION

(a) Standing Mediation Committee

20. The Authority took note of the report presented by the Chairman of the Standing Mediation Committee and commended the members for their tireless and painstaking efforts to bring peace and normalcy to Liberia, and for the immense sacrifices they were making on behalf of the Community, both in human and material terms. The Authority also commended the men in ECOMOG for their effective peace-keeping role in Liberia in the face of great odds and difficulties.

(b) The Yamoussokro Meeting

21. The Authority received a report on a meeting held in Yamoussokro on 29 and 30 June 1991 by the Heads of State and Government of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Nigeria and Togo at the invitation of His Excellency Felix Houphouët-Boigny, President of Côte d'Ivoire. The Authority paid homage to President Houphouët-Boigny for his initiative and expressed the hope that the spirit of reconciliation born out of the Yamoussokro meeting would make it possible for a final solution to be found to the Liberian crisis and for lasting peace to be re-established for the welfare of the peoples of the sub-region in particular and Africa in general.

22. The Authority welcomed the establishment by the Yamoussokro Meeting of a Five-Member Committee comprising the Heads of State of Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Togo under the Chairmanship of His Excellency President Houphouët-Boigny as an adjunct to the Standing Mediation Committee. The Authority agreed that this Five-Member Committee would work within the framework of the ECOWAS Peace Plan and in this regard commended to it the established practice of the Standing Mediation Committee in inviting the countries neighbouring Liberia to its meetings.

23. The Five-Member Committee would have as its mandate the monitoring of the non-violation of the cease-fire as well as the electoral process leading to the holding of presidential and general elections in Liberia within six months.

24. To this end, the Authority endorsed the request made by the Yamoussokro Meeting to Mr. Jimmy Carter, former President of the United States, for the assistance of the International Negotiations Network (INN) in monitoring the electoral process. It was also agreed that the Interim Government of

Liberia and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia should undertake to maintain security in the respective zones under their control until the beginning of the electoral process.

25. The Authority stressed the need for the Five-Member Committee to ensure that a proper environment conducive to the holding of free and fair elections is firmly established in Liberia before the elections are held; such environment includes the effective supervision and control of the armed forces belonging to each of the parties, the facilitation of the repatriation and resettlement of Liberian refugees prior to the elections, and the effective restoration of conditions necessary to guarantee free movement of persons and unfettered campaigning by the political parties. Considering that the elections are envisaged to be held within a period of six months, the Authority requested the Committee of Five to do everything possible to expedite the creation of these necessary conditions. Recalling the fact that the All-Liberian National Conference had agreed on the composition of the Interim Elections Commission, the Authority requested the Interim Government of Liberia to expedite the constitution of the Commission to enable it commence its work.

26. The Authority reaffirmed its belief in the need for other ECOWAS Member States to respond without further delay to the appeal made at its Extraordinary Session in Bamako by contributing troops to strengthen the capacity of ECOMOG so that it could more effectively discharge its peace-keeping functions and responsibilities in Liberia.

(c) ECOWAS Observer Group for the Liberian Elections

27. As a contribution of the Community towards guaranteeing democratic free and fair elections in Liberia, the Authority

established an ECOWAS Observer Group for the proposed Liberian elections. Each ECOWAS Member State was invited to nominate a representative to the Group and to meet the cost involved.

(d) Establishment of Special Fund for Liberian Elections Commission

28. The Authority took note of the creation of an Interim Electoral Commission by the All-Liberian National Conference held in Monrovia in March, 1991. It was considered necessary that the Electoral Commission should enjoy independence and freedom necessary to assure its integrity and inspire public confidence. The Authority therefore established a Special Emergency Fund for the Interim Elections Commission for Liberia. The resources of the Fund would be derived from voluntary contributions and would be administered by the Interim Elections Commission of Liberia. The Authority strongly urged Member States and other African countries, to contribute to the Fund. A special appeal was also made to donor institutions and governments outside Africa to make generous contributions to this Fund.

(e) Establishment of an ECOWAS Trust Fund for Liberia

29. The Authority recognised the enormous task of reconstruction that the Republic of Liberia has to undertake as a result of the total collapse of its economic and social infrastructure. In order to assist the people of Liberia in this formidable task of reconstruction, the Authority established an ECOWAS Trust Fund for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Liberia. The resources of the Trust Fund would be generated through voluntary contributions. The Authority appealed for generous contributions from all Member States and other African countries as well as from the rest of the international community.

AGGRESSION AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

30. The Authority condemned the recent violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Sierra Leone and all Member States were exhorted to give every necessary assistance - financial, human and material - to the Government and people of Sierra Leone in their effort to repulse the invasion and preserve the territorial integrity of their fatherland.

ADOPTION OF STATUTES OF COMMUNITY COURT OF JUSTICE

31. The Authority acknowledged that the scope and degree of regional integration ECOWAS had embarked on now required the setting up of a Community Court of Justice. Heads of State and Government therefore decided to approve the Protocol setting up the Community Court of Justice and directed the Executive Secretary to take the necessary steps to make the Court operational.

GRANTING OF OBSERVER STATUS

32. The Authority recognised the Association of African Jurists and the Federation of West African manufacturers' Associations and granted them the status of observer within the Institutions of the Community.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

33. The Authority elected the Republic of Senegal as Chairman for the year 1991/1992.

DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

34. The Authority accepted the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Senegal to hold its Fifteenth Ordinary Session in Dakar in 1992.

VOTE OF THANKS

35. The Authority warmly commended and expressed its deep appreciation to the outgoing Chairman, His Excellency Alhaji Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, President of the Republic of The Gambia for so successfully directing the affairs of the Community during the year 1990/1991. The Authority paid a special tribute to President Jawara for the personal concern shown and his untiring effort at restoring peace in Liberia.

36. The Authority expressed its sincere gratitude to His Excellency General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and to the entire Nigerian Government and people for the very warm and authentic African welcome extended to all delegations and for the excellent facilities made available to ensure the success of its meetings.

DONE AT ABUJA THIS 6TH DAY OF JULY, 1991.