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ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES

THIRTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
ABUJA, 3 - 5 DECEMBER, 1992

CONTINUED PROGRESS DEPENDS ON SUSTAINED EFFORT

INTERIM REPORT OF THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY,
DR. ABASS BUNDU

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
LAGOS,
NOVEMBER 1992

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CHAPTER -

INTRODUCTION

This is the eighth and last report that I shall be making to the Council of Ministers. During the four years that I have served as the Executive Secretary, the Community has witnessed quite a few significant changes.

2. When I assumed office in February 1989, I found that contributions from Member States were on the whole not forthcoming; past protocols and conventions remained unratified; Community policies and programmes were not being implemented by Member States; and the regional integration process was at a low ebb. This disturbing discovery naturally led me to propose to the Authority at its Ouagadougou session in 1989 (my first ECOWAS Summit) to launch a revitalisation and reorientation drive so as to make regional integration the focal point of economic development in Member States.

3. Throughout my tenure, I have sought to execute the 1989 Ouagadougou mandate of the Authority - to infuse dynamism into the West African integration process. To be sure, the record of ratification has improved remarkably; all technical requirements were completed to make possible the launching of the ECOWAS trade liberalisation scheme; national policy-makers have come to accept to consult among themselves and to adopt the regional approach to domestic economic management; the rate of default in Member States'

contribution has been checked; and there has also been an improvement in the implementation of a number of Community programmes.

4. Even this modest success would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of the different actors on the West African integration scene. This is the appropriate moment for me to express my deep gratitude for the understanding shown and for the encouragement, advice and assistance given by those dedicated West Africans. Our Heads of State and Government have shown the necessary political will and commitment, and this has been a source of inspiration and encouragement throughout the four years I have served the Community. During the past four months, the current Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority, His Excellence Mr. Nicéphore Dieudonné SOGLO, President of the Republic of Benin, has followed the tradition of his predecessors by inserting ECOWAS on his agenda.

5. The burden of defending ECOWAS policies at the national level and overseeing the implementation of Community programmes falls on members of this Council. Honourable Ministers have had other weighty issues under their portfolios, yet they were able to make sure that ECOWAS matters were attended to promptly. I am indeed grateful to all Council members. I should like to thank particularly the Chairman, the Honourable Minister of Finance of the Republic of Benin who has been performing with grace and competence the ECOWAS functions he assumed last July. I am also grateful to all government officials, especially those in charge of the national ECOWAS Units whose responsibility it has been to give technical advice and to interpret ECOWAS regional policies and translate them into national action plans. I am equally grateful to the West African Business community for the interest shown in ECOWAS activities and its readiness to participate in our common regional endeavour.

6. The regional integration efforts of ECOWAS have been supported and supplemented along the years by our many external development partners. The Community owes a big debt of gratitude to the United Nations Organisation and its specialised agencies, the World Bank and IMF, EEC, Commonwealth, ADB, OPEC Fund, IDB, BADEA, Kuwaiti Fund, as well as the governments of France, Italy, U.S., Canada, Germany and Britain.

7. Lastly, I should like to express my appreciation to my colleagues who are in the service of the Community. The officials of the Community Institutions have been working under difficult conditions and this makes their dedication and commitment all the more admirable. I thank in particular my fellow Statutory Appointees for their cooperation and support; I believe they have all served our Community to the best of their ability. Since all of them would also be leaving the service of the Community within the next twelve months, I should like to express, on behalf of the Institutions of the Community and on my own personal behalf, our sincere gratitude to all of them.

8. Regional integration in West Africa has been advancing at a rather modest pace. Many vital regional issues have remained unresolved and continue to pose a serious challenge to all of us. In Liberia, the resoration of peace and democracy, and the reconstruction of the national economy, are matters that affect regional security and stability. The results of all our regional cooperation and integration efferorts would best be reflected in a free flow of goods and services across national borders, and yet the Community is stumbling badly on the trade liberalisation scheme. For similar reasons, the laudable decision of the Authority to reationalise the institutional arrangement to governing regional integration in West Africa is in the process of being translated into reality. Although much has been said about promoting the

integration of the regional production base, a lot remains to be achieved in concrete terms.

9. There is no doubt that Member States have sacrificed scarce resources to keep ECOWAS alive and enable it record some progress. I believe that Member States would benefit much more, individually and collectively, from their participation in regional integration if certain attitudes change and the basic problems facing West African integration are addressed with sincerity and seriousness. An opportunity to make a start on this is being offered through the ECOWAS Treaty review. West African countries have no better alternative approach to the development of their economies than regional integration and the proposals of the Committee of Eminent persons point the way forward to a more effective regional integration arrangement.

10. The 1993 annual statutory meeting would be an occasion to resolve the institutional rationalisation issue and it is hoped that proposals of the independent consultant engaged to conduct the study would be discussed dispassionately and with objectivity.

11. It should not be forgotten that, in the field of regional integration, there is the challenge of the creation of the African Economic Community that West Africa and all the other regions have to contend with. Unless an effort is made to overcome the many integration problems of West Africa, this region could easily lag behind the others in the march towards an integrated African economy. Fortunately, there has been a growing awareness in West Africa of the importance of regional integration and I am certain the momentum would be maintained to ensure even greater success in the years ahead.

12. This a relatively short report which covers, in Charper II, a brief survey of economic issues of major concern to West Africa; in chapter III, the functioning of the Community Institutions during the past six months; in Chapter IV, the draft 1993 Work Programme of the Institutions being presented for the consideration and approval of Council, and in Chapter V, some concluding remarks.

C H A P T E R I I

THE WEST AFRICAN ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

I - INTRODUCTION

13. A comprehensive presentation of the economic situation of the region was made some four months ago in my last Annual Report. Since then, there has not been any significant change in the West African economic environment. In this Interim Report, therefore, I should like to draw attention to some of the topical economic issues the international community is pre-occupied with and which are of particular interest to Member States.

CURRENT PERFORMANCE OF WORLD ECONOMY

14. The world has continued to face substantial economic difficulties and there is little chance of early strong recovery. The rather weak economic activity in the major industrial countries is a source of serious concern for the open economy of West Africa. The on-going efforts of the industrial countries to re-establish vigorous growth in their economies have been hampered by budget deficits, and the effect of these and other factors on exchange rates and interest rates. There is continued need for these countries to tackle the structural rigidities and distortions in their economies in order to promote a revival in business and consumer confidence.

15. The annual joint meetings of the World Bank and the IMF in September 1992 was marked by the substantial increase in the membership of the Bretton Wood's institutions, occasioned by the admission of the former Soviet Union Republics and other emerging Eastern European countries. This constituted a formal extension to the global forum of the problems associated with the re-construction of the economies of these countries. ECOWAS Member States would have to fight any further marginalisation of the West African economy resulting from the participation of the donor community and the international financial market in that re-construction exercise and the integration of the former centrally-planned economies into the world capitalist system.

International Trade Negotiations

16. In its 1992 edition of the 'Human Development Report' the UNDP reckons that only as little as 7% of world trade is conducted in full compliance with GATT principles. There is no doubt then that much more needs to be done to improve the international trade environment and contribute to the recovery of the global economy. The Uruguay Round of trade negotiations under GATT has been a protracted and frustrating exercise, both for developed and developing countries. There have been painful delays in achieving a successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round. The negotiations are currently threatened with total collapse because of the failure of the United States of America and the countries of the European Economic Community to reach an agreement on the reduction of agricultural subsidies. Indeed, the negotiations have generated so much friction that a global trade war could break out involving increased resort to the subsidisation of exports and the extension of barriers to trade.

17. The negotiation of commodity agreements does not present a better picture. Recent negotiations within the framework of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) failed to produce an agreement that takes adequate account of the interests of the timber-exporting countries. Meanwhile, the international commodities market has continued to experience depressed prices. The cumulative effect is the adverse terms of trade which commodity-exporting countries have to live with. This has particularly been the case in recent years for the cocoa and coffee exporting Member States; what is worse, there is no end of this disturbing situation in sight. This is an issue that calls for the attention of the Community and its Member States.

Debt and Development Finance

18. The price-induced shortfalls in export earnings being experienced by Member States could not have occurred at a worse moment. After a decade of stabilisation and recovery measures, there is need to resume the development process. Export trade is by far the main source of finance available to Member States for development activities and for servicing their massive external debts. Yet annual export earnings fall below normal import requirements and Member States, on average, have to set aside more than 30% of the same export earnings to meet their debt service obligations.

19. The indebtedness of developing countries has remained on the international agenda. At this year's Franco-African Summit, there was the announcement of the establishment of a fund by France to assist certain indebted states with their debt obligations. The meeting of Ministers of Finance of Commonwealth countries in September 1992 stressed the need to secure full implementation of the Trinidad and Tobago Terms for the poorest

developing countries. One appreciates gestures such as the French assistance of \$46 million in July 1992 to an ECOWAS Member State (which has a \$14 billion external debt) needed to meet an immediate World Bank debt obligation in order to avoid suspension. It would, however, be much more constructive and better appreciated if a definitive solution were to be found to the external debt which keeps rising because Member States do not have the capacity to re-pay. Until the debt overhang is removed, no sustainable economic development would be possible.

20. One of the primary objectives of structural adjustment programmes is to make the national economies attractive to private investors (both indigenous and foreign). As public sector involvement in the economy is reduced, Member States expect private capital to play a leading role in the development of the national economy. There has been little or no response from foreign private capital, whether in the form of commercial loans or direct investments. The many factors which account for the negligible new private capital investments in Member States must be addressed urgently, so that appropriate measures could be adopted to remedy the situation.

21. It is planned that, within the framework of the ECOWAS regional consultative mechanism which brings together Ministers of Planning and Finance, the Community would encourage discussion of these economic issues of common concern to Member States. A regional approach to these issues would prove a more effective means of solving our perennial development problems.

C H A P T E R I I I

FUNCTIONING OF THE COMMUNITY

I. INTRODUCTION

22. This Chapter gives an account of the activities undertaken by the Community and Member States since the July 1992 annual statutory meetings. These activities were based on the approved 1992 Community Work Programme, as modified by decisions taken by the ECOWAS authorities at the 1992 annual meetings. The Chapter has three main sections, namely:

- Socio-economic cooperation programmes
- Administrative and institutional issues
- Regional Peace and Security.

II. SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRAMMES

23. It should be recalled that the main focus of the entire Community Work Programme is on the development of intra-Community trade and the enhancement of regional interaction. In the field of socio-economic cooperation, the programmes adopted by the Community centre on the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade and trade-related support activities. A brief account of progress made on the different components of the socio-economic cooperation programmes is set out below.

i) Trade Liberalisation Scheme

24. A special meeting of national officials was held in Dakar at the beginning of June 1992 to review the single trade liberalisation scheme. The purpose of the meeting was to propose ways of improving the chances of success of the scheme. That meeting led to the adoption of decisions in July 1992 by the ECOWAS authorities, changing certain elements of the scheme and also the application procedure. The modifications included fixing the indigenous capital ownership criterion at a single rate of 25% (instead of the earlier graduation from 20% to 51%). The priority industrial product category was abolished; there is now no product classification into priority and non-priority industrial goods. The period for reducing tariffs on all Community-originating industrial products to zero has been fixed at 10 years for the Group I Member States, 8 years for Group II and 6 years for Group III. The application procedure has also been simplified considerably.

25. During the review period, the Secretariat participated in sensitisation and public enlightenment seminars organised on the trade liberalisation scheme in Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. These seminars were well attended by economic operators and various groups of Government officials; the remaining Member States would be covered during the last quarter of this year or early next year. It is intended that subsequent national seminars would be given a more open participation so that many different segments of the population could be reached.

Revised ECOWAS Customs Nomenclature

26. During the period under review, the Secretariat finalised the draft ECOWAS Customs Nomenclature based on the Harmonised System of the Customs Cooperation Council. A meeting of Customs officials of Member States was held from 13 to 24 October, 1992 to consider the draft text. The meeting adopted the text after some amendment and recommended its adoption by Council. It was also proposed that the CEA0 version should be studied and necessary modifications made to the new ECOWAS draft to ensure compatibility.

ECOWAS Common External Tariff

27. Study groups have been established in all Member States to facilitate the preparatory work involved in the formulation of the Common External Tariff. The study groups were invited during the review period to submit information on national policies relating to protection of industrial establishments, and on customs and fiscal policies. The Secretariat requires this information to prepare a format for taking an inventory of product protection mechanisms being operated by Member States. The response to this request has been rather poor and the Secretariat plans to undertake missions with UNCTAD personnel to collect this information in Member States.

Minimum Agenda for Action

28. During the 1992 annual statutory meetings in July, the Authority adopted the Minimum Agenda for Action which is a one-year programme of priority activities to be undertaken by all Member States in the fields of trade, customs, immigration and

monetary cooperation. The principle involved in the adoption of a minimum agenda is for Member States to concentrate attention, at any given period, on the implementation of a set of key components of inter-related Community programmes. The Secretariat has been preparing for the monitoring of the application of the Minimum Agenda which calls for:

- the printing and utilisation of ECOWAS customs and immigration forms;
- removal of check-points along international highways;
- simplification of immigration procedures at the entry and exit points;
- creation and operation of transit counters to expedite customs procedures;
- removal of non-tariff barriers to intra-Community trade;
- promotion of the use of national currencies in intra-Community transactions, including travels.

29. The attention of all Member States is hereby drawn to the time limits set for the implementation of the Agenda.

ECOWAS Trade Publications

30. Under the ITC-sponsored trade promotion project, the Community is preparing a number of trade publications. The draft of an ECOWAS Trade Directory is being finalised. The directory covers the three products (wood, paper and pharmaceuticals) for which market surveys have been conducted. A Handbook on legal, financial and economic framework is also under preparation. This first edition covers Nigeria and would serve as a model for subsequent editions to be published on the other Member States.

Buyer/Seller Meeting on Pharmaceuticals

31. In continuation of the Buyer/Seller meetings, the Secretariat organised a meeting in Cotonou from 21 to 26 September, 1992 which brought together buyers and sellers of pharmaceutical products. The meeting was quite well attended and generated a lot of interest; \$4 million worth of orders were negotiated and a strong request was made to the Secretariat to establish an information system for promoting trade in pharmaceutical products in the region.

First ECOWAS Trade Fairs

32. During the review period, offers made by certain Member States to host the first edition of ECOWAS Trade Fair were examined by a sub-committee composed of Benin, Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone. Its recommendation that Senegal should host the first ECOWAS Fair was accepted by the main Consultative and Coordination Committee. It is also recommended that Ghana should host the second edition.

ii) Immigration Programme

33. The Community's cooperation programme in the field of immigration is based on the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment, adopted in 1979. Apart from the elimination of legislative and administrative obstacles encountered by Community citizens in Member States other than their own, the programme aims at the harmonisation of immigration documents. Already, an ECOWAS Travel Certificate has been adopted and is in use within the region and Residence Permits have also been harmonised.

34. During the review period, the Secretariat completed work on the harmonisation of immigration forms (exit/entry cards). In conformity with the relevant aspect of the Minimum Agenda for Action adopted in July 1992 by the Authority, the harmonised immigration forms are multi-copy and carbonised. The draft document was submitted to the appropriate Commission early November for consideration. After improving upon the format, the Commission recommended its adoption by the Community; Council is being called upon to consider the harmonised immigration form at the forthcoming statutory meetings in December 1992.

iii) Monetary Cooperation Programme

Transformation of WACH

35. On the basis of the findings of a study they commissioned, the Governors of Central Banks agreed that the West African Clearing House could play a bigger and more active role in the regional monetary integration process if it was transformed into a specialised agency of the Community. The Governors' proposal was adopted by Council and the Authority in July 1992 and the transformation of WACH into the new body, West African Monetary Agency (WAMA) will cover a period of fourteen (14) months.

36. The Secretariat has been working closely with the Committee of Governors in the preparation of the statutes and protocols to be adopted in respect of WAMA. During the review period, the Governors also began consideration of the possible revision of the existing contribution formula for WACH, to reflect the nature and operation of the new institution.

Establishment of Credit Guarantee Scheme

37. Since the Authority adopted the recommendation of the Governors of the Central Banks to enhance the operations of WACH through the introduction of a credit guarantee scheme, the Community has been searching for sources where the required SDR 50 million could be obtained. During the review period, the mobilisation exercise concentrated on the EEC which had already shown interest in the proposed scheme. The consultants engaged by the EEC to undertake a technical study of the proposal undertook a field mission to the ECOWAS region. Further discussions with the EEC would depend on the outcome of the study.

Harmonisation of National Macro-Economic Policies

38. One of the proposals of the Governors of Central Banks adopted by the July 1992 session of the Authority for accelerating monetary integration relates to the harmonisation of the macro-economic policies of Member States. The Governors proposed, in particular, that attention should be focussed on monetary, fiscal and exchange rate policies, supervisory and developmental policies, and structural adjustment programmes. A meeting of the Governors was held in September in Washington during the annual joint meetings of the World Bank and the IMF and preparations have been completed for another meeting on December 3, 1992 at Abuja which would also involve ECOWAS Ministers of Finance. It should be recalled that the principle has been accepted to convene regular consultative meetings (three times a year) between the Governors and the Ministers of Finance and Planning to discuss economic and monetary integration matters.

iv) Industrial Cooperation Programme

39. The main activity under the Community industrial programme relates to the formulation of an ECOWAS Industrial Master Plan. Consultants, recruited with the assistance of UNIDO and UNDP, undertook field missions to Member States as a follow-up on the inventory of industrial enterprises that was conducted earlier on. During the review period, there were also discussions with UNIDO on the implementation of certain aspects of the West African components of IDDA II. The Institutions of the Community participated in the finalisation of preparations for the 1992 edition of the West African Industrial Forum.

v) Transport Cooperation Programme

Trans-West African Highways

40. In preparation for a donors conference on ECOWAS projects in Dakar on 14 and 15 July 1992, joint Secretariat/ECOWAS Fund missions visited Europe and North America in late May and June. The missions went to generate interest in ECOWAS and its cooperation programmes, to introduce the documents of the donors' conference to the prospective participants, and to confirm the ECOWAS invitation sent to these donor institutions.

41. The donors' conference was held as scheduled and it proved to be a success since considerable interest was shown by donors in both the road transport and rural water supply projects. Concerning the road projects, the following donors indicated their willingness to participate in the financing of fifteen uncompleted segments of the trans-West African highway:

- African Development Bank (ADB)
- Islamic Development Bank (IDB)
- OPEC Fund
- Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA)
- Kuwaiti Fund
- West African Development Bank (BOAD)

42. Following the July donors' conference, the Institutions of the Community have maintained contact with the donors concerned to ensure the transformation of the interest expressed into active participation in the execution of the road projects. In this connection, preparations have been completed towards the holding of another conference in January at which the earlier donor pledges are expected to be confirmed and progress on the roads programme would be reviewed.

Road Facilitation

43. Among the projects initiated by the Community to facilitate the use of the highways of the region is the ECOWAS Brown Card scheme. During the review period, the management of the scheme took steps to correct the administrative problems being encountered. Similarly, the teething problems of the West African Road Transporters Union (UTRAO) constituted a major item on the agenda of the Third General Assembly of the Union held at Cotonou at the beginning of October. It was agreed by the General Assembly to move the General Secretariat of the Union temporarily from Ghana to Benin.

44. The UTRAO General Assembly reviewed the problems caused by road-blocks along the highways and proposed that an ECOWAS Meeting should be organised to sensitise and educate customs,

immigration and national security agents. The Union considered the ECOWAS regulation on maximum axle load a limiting factor which would adversely affect the operations of its members; the Union therefore set up a technical body to develop an UTRAO position on the matter for presentation to the ECOWAS authorities.

Air Transport

45. In the area of air transport, the Community is promoting a greater degree of cooperation among the existing airlines in the region. A technical working group has been established to define the modalities and monitor the implementation of the coordination and cooperation programme. At the third meeting of the working group, held in Lagos at the beginning of September, it was agreed that cooperation among the airlines should concentrate on:

- maintenance and training centres
- facilitation
- joint purchase of aircraft and equipment
- joint operation.

46. The working group also examined the draft Multilateral Agreement on Air Transport among ECOWAS Member States. The Secretariat was requested to gather more information from Member States in order to improve certain provisions of the draft text. In this connection, the working group appealed to all Member States and the existing airlines to give their full cooperation, to ensure that a firm legal basis is created for the provision of efficient air service in the region.

vii) Communications Programme

47. Two coordination meetings were held in Banjul and in Bissau during the period under review for the same group of Member States (Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone). The meetings discussed tariff and transit facilities, and problems affecting the smooth functioning of the telecommunications network.

48. The Secretariat successfully pursued its search for resources to finance the feasibility study on the regional aeronautical telecommunications project: a grant of about half a million dollars was obtained from the US. The terms of reference for the study are being finalised, after which consultants would be engaged to carry out the study.

viii) Social and Cultural Affairs

49. In accordance with the Authority decision on the merger of OCCGE and the West African Health Community (WAHC), a programme has been adopted for the transformation of the two institutions into the new regional institution - West African Health Organisation. The programme includes an inventory of the assets of OCCGE and WAHC. During the review period, the Secretariat applied for UNDP financial assistance to complete the inventory-taking exercise and to prepare the necessary technical report. It is expected that this phase of the programme would be completed in the first quarter of 1993.

ix) Information Cooperation Programme

50. The cooperation programme in the information sector is derived from the May 1990 Council decision on the matter. During the review period, reminders were sent to Member States about their undertaking to promote the dissemination of information on ECOWAS, its Member States and Institutions through the different national media. The Secretariat also wrote to request for the designation of liaison officers in Ministries of Information to facilitate the distribution of information in Member States, and to indicate information needs of the various actors on the national scene. Meanwhile, a special edition of the ECOWAS CONTACT Magazine has been published, as well as a number of topical information leaflets.

51. The Secretariat assisted in the preparation of a number of national directories with emphasis on insurance, finance and banking; commercial and industrial enterprises; and raw materials and manufactured products. Various ways of intensifying ECOWAS cooperation with the West African Journalists Association (WAJA) are being explored; the process of granting WAJA an ECOWAS observer status has been initiated.

x) External Resource Mobilisation

52. Over the last few years, the international climate has been improving towards the role of regional cooperation in the development process. There has been a growing awareness among both bilateral and multilateral donor institutions that regional integration could serve as a powerful development tool and provides a viable approach to the problem of economic development. Consequently, there have been improvements in the working

relations that the Community has established with most of the external development partners of Member States.

53. The Secretariat is in the process of negotiating assistance programmes with some of these donor institutions and agencies. For instance, a project document is being formulated for submission to UNDP for funding under its Fifth Regional Programming Cycle. A draft Regional Indicative Programme was agreed upon by West African ACP States and the Commission of European Communities at a meeting in Dakar in June 1992; ECOWAS is coordinating the preparation of the regional programme to be submitted for funding under the Regional Fund of the Lome IV Convention. An ECOWAS mission visited Ottawa in late September and had preliminary discussions with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and other Canadian government officials on the framework of Canadian assistance to West Africa. It should be noted that Canada has recently adopted a blueprint "Africa 21", defining the Canadian strategy for assisting Africa with its long term development.

54. While the international community is manifesting more willingness to assist with the regional integration effort, there has been a problem with West African representation. A project that is presented as a regional project may lack viability when all the regional dimensions of the problem are not fully addressed in the project design. External donors have also called attention on several occasions to the uncoordinated manner in which West African projects are submitted for financial assistance. Even in the case of the utilisation of the West African allocation of the EEC Regional Fund where Member States and all West African IGOs agreed at the Freetown meeting in 1990 to present a single regional programme, there are indications that parallel bilateral negotiations have been going on. It is

essential that all concerned remain faithful to the common regional approach - our development partners are insisting on an organised manner of representation. Member States are called upon to adhere to the regional approach and to encourage the other IGOs they belong to show greater cooperation in this respect.

III - ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

ECOWAS Treaty Review

55. It should be recalled that the report of the Committee of Eminent Persons for the Review of the ECOWAS Treaty was considered by the Authority at its July 1992 session. The Authority adopted, in principle, the various innovations proposed by the Eminent Persons and accordingly directed Council to complete its consideration of the Draft Revised Treaty.

56. A meeting of legal and other officials of Member States, organised in Lagos from 13 to 20 October, 1992, completed an in-depth examination of all the provisions of the Draft Revised Treaty. The report of the meeting and the draft text of the revised Treaty will be presented to an extra-ordinary session of Council in December for consideration. It is worth repeating that the Eminent Persons tried to see beyond the immediate confines of the West African regional integration setting and their proposals reflect a bold vision of the future. I am convinced that, to prepare this region for the twenty-first century and the development challenges we face in West Africa, a stronger and more dynamic ECOWAS such as the Eminent Persons have proposed is what Council should recommend for adoption by the Authority.

Formalisation of ECOWAS relations with the UN

57. Provisions of the ECOWAS Treaty stipulate that signed copies of the Treaty and instruments of ratification should be deposited with the United Nations and other appropriate international bodies. During the review period this long outstanding requirement was fulfilled when an ECOWAS mission visited the UN Headquarters in New York during the 47th session of the UN General Assembly. Copies of the signed Treaty and the twenty-five ECOWAS Conventions and Protocols (which form an integral part of the Treaty) were registered with the Legal Section of the UN Secretariat, in accordance with the provisions of Article 102 of the UN Charter.

58. The ECOWAS mission to the UN also provided the occasion for discussing the application of observer status with the world body. The procedure for obtaining a UN Observer Status has duly been embarked upon.

Rationalisation of IGO

59. The July 1991 decision of the Authority which designated ECOWAS as the sole economic community in West Africa also requested for a flexible and pragmatic plan for rationalising the inter-governmental organisations (IGOs) in the region. During the review period, the Secretariat completed the process of selecting a suitable consultancy group to undertake the study. The United Nations' African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) was awarded the contract and has already begun the study. When the report on the study is received at the end of the first quarter next year, a meeting of national officials and IGOs would be convened to review the proposals of the consultants, so that

appropriate recommendations could be presented to the Authority through Council during the 1993 annual statutory meetings.

Contributions of Member States

60. At the beginning of 1992, a total amount of almost twenty-three million units of account (23 million UA) was outstanding as contributions from Member States to the Secretariat budgets, inclusive of 5,275,663 UA for the 1992 budget. As at September 30, 1992 the Secretariat had received 4,457,798 UA from eleven Member States; this was about 84% of the 1992 budget and 19% of the total outstanding contributions.

61. It should be recalled that the 1990 Authority decision on sanctions called for the liquidation of all Member States arrears to the 1990 Secretariat budget before the 1991 annual statutory meetings, and the payment of all arrears of contribution to the capital of the ECOWAS Fund before the end of 1992. Although particular effort was made in 1991 by Member States to satisfy the first condition, it turned out that contributions received during that period were not much more than the average annual receipts in the previous years. It appears that Member States simply limited themselves to liquidating the 1990 arrears.

62. From the current report of the Managing Director, the effort put in by Member States towards meeting the December 1992 deadline for paying in the called-up capital of the Fund has not been appreciable. In effect no Member States has honoured fully that obligation to the Fund. It should be noted that the routine application of certain sanctions by the Fund against defaulting Member States appeared not to have had any deterrent effect in the past. The new elements introduced by the 1990 sanctions decision have failed to elicit any significant response from

Member States and would only penalise hapless Community officials who happen to be nationals of defaulting Member States.

63. The precarious financial situation of the Community Institutions cannot be allowed to remain that way much longer. The study of alternative means of generating resources for funding the regional integration process would be accelerated so that an early and satisfactory solution is found to this crucial problem.

Movement of Secretariat to Abuja

64. It is a year and half since the permanent office complex of the Community headquarters was commissioned in Abuja. Regrettably, that ultra-modern complex cannot be in use because of the staff accommodation problem in Abuja that the Secretariat faces. As directed, the two Institutions of the Community continued their search for resources to finance the construction of staff quarters. It is hoped that positive results of the resource mobilisation effort would be reported at the next session of Council.

Computerisation of Secretariat Operations

65. Under the UNDP 4th Regional Programming Cycle, assistance has been received to enhance the technical capacity of the Secretariat. This has been in the form of computer training and the acquisition of materials. During the year, various short courses were organised under this assistance programme by the Community Computer Centre and ECA for different categories of Secretariat staff. The introduction of computers into the operations of the Secretariat has improved its efficien-

cy tremendously and every effort will be made to continue with the computerisation programme.

IV - REGIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

66. During the period under review, the Liberian crisis continued to pose a serious threat to peace and stability throughout the region. As in the past, difficulties encountered in the execution of the ECOWAS Peace Plan stemmed from the intransigence of Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL).

67. At the 1991 Annual Statutory meetings in Abuja, the Authority designated the Committee of Five as an adjunct of the Standing Mediation Committee and assigned it the responsibility of facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the ECOWAS Peace Plan. The series of mediation meetings convened by the Committee of Five culminated in the Yamoussoukro IV Accord which all the warring actions (including the NPFL) agreed to abide by. The Yamoussoukro IV Accord among other things called for a strict observance of the ceasefire, the disarmament and encampment of all combatants, the creation of a buffer zone along the Sierra Leone/Liberia border, and the creation of the necessary conditions of peace and security conducive to the holding of free, fair and democratic elections in Liberia.

68. It was evident from the reports received by the Authority at its 1992 Summit in Dakar that very little progress had been made with regard to the implementation of the Yamoussoukro IV Accord. The NPFL had refused to cooperate with ECOMOG, and had in fact captured some ECOMOG soldiers, murdering six of them in cold blood. Meanwhile, the Liberian civil war had become further complicated by the emergence of another belligerent

faction, the United Liberation Movement of Liberia (ULIMO) The Authority, therefore, made an urgent call for the strict observance of the Yamoussoukro IV Accord and decided that sanctions should be imposed against any warring faction that failed to heed that call.

69. Immediately after the Dakar Summit, the new Chairman of the Authority, His Excellency Mr. Nicéphore Dieudonné Soglo, President of Benin took steps to inform all the parties concerned about the Authority decision and invited them to a meeting in Cotonou. All the parties turned up for the 17-18 August meeting, with the exception of ULIMO due to communication and logistic problems. A special mission was sent by the Chairman of the Authority to inform ULIMO about the Authority directives and to secure the full cooperation of that warring faction.

70. In spite of these efforts, hostilities continued and the NPFL openly sought to provoke ECOMOG forces. Instead of disarming its forces, the NPFL rather captured about 500 ECOMOG soldiers and stripped them of their arms and all other supplies. It took the intervention of President Felix Houphouet-Boigny and Mr. Jimmy Carter, former US President, to secure the release of the ECOMOG soldiers. These untoward developments obliged the Chairman of the Authority to convene a joint meeting of the Standing Mediation Committee and the Committee of Five.

71. The joint session was held in Cotonou on 20 October, 1992 preceded by a meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States on the two Committees. Reports presented at the joint session by the ECOMOG Field Commander and myself clearly indicated that the situation in Liberia had worsened, particularly because of the belligerent attitude of the NPFL. Indeed, a few days to the meeting, the NPFL had launched an unprovoked attack

on ECOMOG in a bid to capture Monrovia. The report before the joint session stated that the NPFL had used the entire duration of the ceasefire to re-arm, recruit and train a 30,000-strong fighting force.

72. The Cotonou joint session re-affirmed the right of self-defence of a peace-keeping force such as ECOMOG. The meeting condemned the recalcitrant attitude of Charles Taylor and the armed attacks of the NPFL on ECOMOG forces. There was a call for a ceasefire and strict observance of the provisions of the Yamoussoukro IV Accord. The Heads of State and Government adopted a decision on sanctions against any warring faction which failed to honour the Accord within a stipulated period. The ECOMOG Field Commander was directed to monitor the situation in Liberia and report to a Committee of Nine established by the joint session to supervise the implementation of the Accord. The meeting called for an assessment of the situation by the Committee of Nine five days prior to the expiry of the deadline.

73. That first meeting of the Committee of Nine to assess whether any warring faction had run foul of the provisions of the Yamoussoukro IV Accord was held at Abuja on 7 November, two days after the expiry of the deadline for the application of sanctions. Again, the report of the ECOWAS Field Commander painted a bloody picture of the situation in Liberia. None of the warring factions had respected the ceasefire call. The NPFL had intensified its offensive against both ULIMO and ECOMOG forces. It was becoming evident that NPFL was guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity, a case in point being the brutal murder of some American nuns.

74. The Committee of Nine, therefore, decided that the sanctions decision should be deemed to have come into force on

5 November, The sanctions applied to all the warring factions and any of them could be free of such sanctions only upon approval of the report of the ECOMOG Field Commander to the effect that that faction was observing a ceasefire and also abiding by the Yamoussoukro IV Accord. The sanctions aim at cutting off arms supplies to the warring factions and also ensuring that the factions are denied access to export and import facilities - deny them access to resources with which to prosecute the civil war. All Member States are enjoined to observe the provisions of the sanctions decision, with a special appeal to Liberia's neighbouring Member States to seal off their land borders with Liberia. The decision also calls on the United Nations Security Council to assist in making these sanctions effective and binding on all members of the international community, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter.

75. At the request of the Committee of Nine, Foreign Ministers of the Member States involved went to New York to make representations to the Security Council. On 19 November, 1992, the Security Council passed Resolution 788 (1992) in support of the ECOWAS sanctions decision. Meanwhile, the NPFL hostilities have not been called off and there is no ceasefire in Liberia.

76. It may be recalled that on several occasions, the Standing Mediation Committee had appealed to all Member States and the rest of the international community to contribute generously to the Special Fund for ECOWAS Operations in Liberia. Sadly enough, response to these appeals has remained minimal. In effect, the responsibility for meeting the cost of ECOMOG operations has been left almost exclusively to the Member States contributing troops to ECOMOG. As at 30th September, 1992, about \$11 million had been paid into the Special Fund, \$5.8 million of which came from the United States Government. This amount

constitutes only a small proportion of the actual level of expenditure, since those Member States contributing troops to ECOMOG have been obliged to support their forces in kind. While all of us hope that hostilities in Liberia would be brought to an early end and a peaceful solution would soon be found to the conflict, it is necessary that adequate resources are made available in support of the ECOWAS operations. The appeal to all Member States for generous contributions should, therefore, be repeated by Council. It is only when that internal effort is made that the Community can press the rest of the world for the external supplementary resources.

CHAPTER I V

1993 COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

77. Since the forthcoming session of Council would be devoted principally to a consideration of the draft Work Programme and Budget of the Institutions of the Community for 1993, I attempt in this Chapter a brief presentation of the proposed Community Work Programme. It is emphasised that the activities envisaged for 1993 are all based on and geared towards the implementation of decisions and directives of the ECOWAS authorities.

78. Under any given Community activity programme, the nature and extent of work for the ensuing year would be determined by how much of the programme or project has already been executed and the amount of resources one expects to be made available for the year. It should be added that, for purposes of coordination and better use of resources available elsewhere for regional cooperation, the Community Work Programme is drawn up and implemented in collaboration with other West African inter-governmental organisations and relevant international institutions and donor agencies.

MACRO-ECONOMIC AND MULTI-SECTORAL PROGRAMMES

Regional Development Programme: Discussions with officials of Member States responsible for the formulation and monitoring of the implementation of SAPs and other economic reform programmes, with a view to defining an appropriate regional development policy and formulating a corresponding programme for the integrated development of the regional economy. Organisation of meeting of Ministers of Planning and Finance, together with Governors of Central Banks of Member States, to review the regional development policy and programme.

Rationalisation of West African IGOs: Finalisation of study on rationalisation of the institutional arrangements governing the West African integration process. Organisation of meeting of Member States and IGOs to review flexible and pragmatic plan of rationalisation to be proposed by study team and presentation of recommendations to Council and the Authority.

Mobilisation of External Resources: Finalisation of project documents for presentation to UNDP and EEC for funding of regional projects under the Fifth Regional Programming Cycle and the Regional Fund of the Lome IV Convention respectively. Continuation of negotiations with other multilateral and bilateral financial institutions on different assistance programmes

ECOWAS Statistical Publications: Collection of basic data from Member States. Compilation and publication of macro-economic and social indicators on Member States and data on trade and other sectoral activities within the region.

CUSTOMS COOPERATION PROGRAMME

Trade Liberalisation Scheme: Sensitisation missions and seminars in Member States, and preparation of brochures and other publicity materials on the implementation of the ECOWAS trade liberalisation scheme. Meeting of Directors of Customs, Statistics, External Trade and Industry to review various aspects of the scheme.

Harmonisation of Internal Indirect Taxation: Seminar for tax administration personnel of Member States on existing internal taxation measures and ECOWAS programme on harmonisation of internal indirect taxation.

ECOWAS Common External Tariffs (CET): Meeting of national CET study groups for joint assessment of work accomplished at national levels; missions to Member States and relevant international organisations for supplementary information needed for preparation of CET scheme.

Community Own Resource Scheme: Preparation of technical paper and draft legal framework on the adoption of scheme for generating own resources for financing the integration effort. Meeting of national experts to review Secretariat proposals.

Harmonised System of Customs Nomenclature: Seminar for officials of national customs administration on a revised ECOWAS Customs Nomenclature based on the Harmonised System of the Customs Cooperation Council (CCC).

Introduction of ASYCUDA in Member States: Meeting of ASYCUDA-financing agencies. Preparation of meeting of heads and officials

of ASYCUDA units in Member States. Installation of scheme in remaining Member States and training of appropriate personnel.

Customs Valuation: Collaboration with GATT and CCC in the preparation of technical documents of a seminar for officials of national customs administration, aimed at the adoption by Member States of the new definition of customs value.

Harmonisation of Customs Procedures: Collaboration with CCC in the study of existing statutory texts and customs procedures, and the drafting of harmonised customs procedures for adoption by Member States.

TRADE COOPERATION PROGRAMME

ECOWAS Trade Fair: Assistance to Consultation and Coordination Committee on Trade Fairs in its preparatory activities concerning the First ECOWAS Trade Fair. Consultations with Member State hosting proposed Fair.

ECOWAS Traditional Handicraft Centre: Meeting of Working Group to review Secretariat report on the creation of a regional centre for the promotion of traditional handicrafts.

COMMUNITY COMPUTER CENTRE

Development of Systems: Collaboration with relevant international bodies in the development and implementation of ECO-TRADE and ECOSTARS, EUROTRACE modules and interfaces. Development of data processing software for ECOWAS Institutions.

Computer Training: Organisation and participation in ASYCUDA and EUROTRACE training programmes, regional data processing seminars.

TOURISM COOPERATION PROGRAMME

Provision of Technical Services: Provision of data processing and computer maintenance services to the ECOWAS Institutions. Provision of data services for EUROTRACE, ASYCUDA and Compensation Systems to Member States.

IMMIGRATION PROGRAMME

Free Movement of Persons: Monitoring the implementation of the three phases of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment, including the printing and utilisation of harmonised immigration documents.

Single ECOWAS Visa: Study on the adoption and introduction of a single ECOWAS visa for the use of Member States.

MONETARY COOPERATION PROGRAMME

Creation of Single Monetary Zone: Preparation of technical documents by Coordination and Monitoring Committee for meetings of Directors of Research of Central Banks and ECOWAS Committee of Governors of Central Banks on harmonisation of national monetary and fiscal policies.

Credit Guarantee Mechanism in WACH: Continuation of negotiations with EEC, World Bank and other donor institutions on mobilisation of resources for proposed Credit and Guarantee Fund within the West African Clearing House.

Transformation of WACH: Collaboration with WACH on technical study on the conversion of WACH into an autonomous specialised agency of ECOWAS West African Monetary Agency.

TOURISM COOPERATION PROGRAMME

Integration of Tourism Activities: Completion of study on the development and integration of tourism activities in Member States. Meeting of national experts to review consultants report.

West African Tourism and Leisure Fair: Mobilisation of resources for feasibility study, and organisation of first edition of West African Tourism and Leisure Fair.

Seminar on Air Transport and Tourism: Collaboration with World Tourism Organisation in the preparation of documents on seminar for national officials on air transport and development of tourism in ECOWAS Member States.

Inter-State Tourist Circuits: Organisation of meeting of working group on the establishment and promotion of inter-state tourist circuits.

AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMME

Seed Programme: Assistance will continue to be given to both purely national seed programmes and the regionalisation of the selected seed production centres. Subventions will be given to three Member States in support of their national seed programmes, and an evaluation will be made of the impact of previous subventions on the programmes of the six recipient Member States. A market study is to be conducted on five, seed and cattle-breeding centres as part of the resource mobilisation exercise.

Agricultural Research: An inventory of agricultural research institutes to be taken and the report presented to second meeting of Directors of Agricultural Research.

Pesticide Programme: Collaboration with FAO in the establishment of West African regional pesticide management network.

Regional Food Security Programme: Data collection and analysis of food and nutritional situation, as part of programme for the improvement of food production, the organisation and management of food stocks.

ECOWAS Participation in PARC: Participation in technical coordination meetings of PARC for purposes of harmonising rinderpest and other animal disease control programmes (involving other IGOs such as CEAO, CILSS, CEBV).

Short and Medium-term Agricultural Programme: Assessment of implementation of programme adopted in 1986 and preparation of a Minimum Agenda for the development of agricultural and natural resources - to be submitted to Council in 1994.

NATURAL RESOURCES PROGRAMME

Rural Water Supply Programme: Monitoring of resource mobilisation for the projects in Group I countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo). Identification of areas and sites for the 200 water points in the Group II countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mauritania, Sierra Leone).

Assessment of Re-afforestation Decade Programme: Evaluation of implementation of 1983-1993 Decade programme and Member States' forestry policies and desertification control programmes. Evaluation report to serve as input for the Minimum Agenda to be presented to Council in 1994.

Floating Weeds Control Programme: Collaboration with ADB in the mobilisation of resources for implementing the biological control project in the four affected Member States (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria).

Meteorological Cooperation Programme: Collaboration with WMO in the coordination of meteorological and hydrological activities of West African IGOs (CILSS, ASECNA, AGRHYMET, ACMAD). Organisation of regional consultative meeting.

Fisheries Cooperation Programme: Regional seminar for Directors of Fisheries and relevant international organisations to review FAO report on fisheries development, and harmonisation of fishing agreements and maritime surveillance. Seminar to endorse proposals in the Report concerning regional fisheries cooperation programme, harmonisation of fisheries policies of Member States, and common policy for surveillance of fisheries zones.

Environmental Protection: Production and distribution of publicity materials (films, brochures, posters) on environmental protection with emphasis on desertification control and floating weeds; and promotion of public enlightenment campaigns in Member States.

INDUSTRIAL PROGRAMME

ECOWAS Industrial Master Plan: Formulation of a regional plan for industrial development through harmonisation of industrial development plans and policies of Member States. Workshop for industrialists and the national consultants who took national inventories of industrial enterprises as part of this study to review draft plan. Finalisation of draft Master Plan for presentation to a meeting of Directors of Industry of Member States.

Inter-State Pilot Industrial Projects: Study on development of six border areas as pilot industrial zones for promotion of small and medium-scale industrial enterprises.

Federation of West African Manufacturers Association - FEWAMA: Assistance to FEWAMA Secretariat to re-vitalise the Federation through joint sensitisation missions to Member States which are inactive or non-members of the Federation, and active participation in 1993 annual General Assembly of the Federation.

TRANSPORT PROGRAMME

Road Projects: Preparation of a regional road maintenance programme along the Coastal and Sahelian Trans West African Highways and the Inter-Connecting Highways. meeting of Director of Public Works and Highways to review proposed Road Maintenance Programme.

Regional Road Map: Printing of new edition of the West African Road Map.

Road Safety Campaign Programme: Working session with African Group of the International Road Safety Organisation on the preparation of an ECOWAS Road Safety Campaign programme.

ECOWAS Brown Card: Monitoring of the re-organisation of the General Secretariat of the Brown Card.

Railways Programme: Study on inter-connection of railway networks; meeting of Directors of Railways to review report of the study.

Airlines Cooperation Programme: Finalisation of draft Multilateral Agreement on Air Transport among ECOWAS Member States. Meeting of Directors of Civil Aviation and Managing Directors of Airlines in the region to review the draft Agreement.

Coastal and Inland Waterways Transport: Monitoring the implementation of coastal shipping projects in West and Central Africa (including merger of ECOWAS and UDEAC studies conducted by UNCTAD). Preparation of a Ports Facilitation Programme. Assessment of status of inland waterways transportation for purpose of preparing an Inland Waterways Transport Master Plan.

Implementation of UNTACDA II: Assessment of activities of National Coordinating Committee (NCCs) and organisation of regional meeting of NCCs. Organisation of coordination meeting of appropriate West African IGOs on transport.

COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMME

Inter-state Telecommunications Links: Fact-finding missions to Member States and coordination meetings of groups of countries

to ascertain maintenance and operational problems associated with the inter-state links and to devise common solutions.

Coordination of Postal Routing: Mission to Member States to assess national postal routing facilities and inter-state postal traffic flows. Preparation of report, for presentation to Directors of Postal Services, containing proposals on instituting safe, regular and fast routing of inter-state mail at a preferential rate.

Aeronautical and Maritime Communications: Completion of studies aimed at the improvement of aeronautical telecommunications facilities at airports for enhancing air navigation, and radio-communications facilities at sea-ports.

Telecommunications Data Bank: Installation of a computer unit and training of Secretariat personnel to develop and manage a regional data bank for the use of telecommunications administrations of Member States. Continuation of negotiations with ITU on transfer of data under the RASCOM project to the proposed ECOWAS data bank.

Telecommunications Tariff Harmonisation: Study on transit tariff issues (technical and commuted), terminal traffic rates and exchange of accounts. Meeting of Directors of Telecommunications to review proposals of study report on harmonisation of tariffs.

Completion of West African Portion of PANAFTEL Network: Feasibility studies of two uncompleted links of the Regional Telecommunications Link (Bamako-Conakry and Abidjan-Conakry) as part of the Community programme to link all state capitals by telephone, telex and fax.

Regional Telecommunications Training Policy: Formulation of training policy guidelines on the basis of findings of missions to be conducted in Member States on existing training facilities, to reflect the need for more technicians qualified to operate and maintain modern telecommunications installations.

ENERGY PROGRAMME

Supply and Distribution of Petrol and Petroleum Products: Consultations with World Bank and with Member States on the technical report of the consultant and draft cooperation programme prepared by Technical Committee.

Information System on Renewable Energy: Meeting senior officials of Member States to review draft document on the establishment of a regional information system on new and renewable sources of energy.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME

Merger of OCCGE and WAHC: Finalisation of report on fusion of OCCGE and West African Health Community into West African Health Organisation by Implementation Committee. Review of Committee's report by Ministers of Health before presentation to 1993 Annual ECOWAS Statutory Meetings.

West African Women's Association (WAWA): Assistance to WAWA Secretariat, including subvention, in strengthening the activities of the Association, and organisation of General Assembly of WAWA.

ECOWAS Games: Monitoring the organisation of sporting events in the Community (soccer, basket-ball, tennis, traditional wrestling etc..)

ECOWAS Prize of Excellence: Supervision of submission of applications, and organisation of meeting of the 7-member Jury to consider and propose first set of winners of ECOWAS Prize of Excellence.

Pan-African Film Festival (FESPACO): Collaboration with organizers of FESPACO in Ouagadougou and award of African Integration Prize to best film portraying the theme of African integration, cooperation or development.

Cultural Framework Agreement: Formulation of a cultural development plan defining priority areas for cultural cooperation within the framework of regional integration.

INFORMATION PROGRAMME

Dissemination of Information on ECOWAS: Development and production of publicity materials on ECOWAS for dissemination in Member States and elsewhere:

- special supplements in newspapers on specific ECOWAS integration programmes
- radio magazine programmes on ECOWAS activities and projects
- television documentaries on ECOWAS for use on national TV networks, at conferences, exhibitions and fairs.

Cooperation among West African Media Practitioners: Promotion of cooperation among West African press, radio and television organisations, through the organisation of a conference and a seminar.

ECOWAS Information System: Exploration of the possibility of establishing an information system for promoting ECOWAS within the international community for purposes of attracting development assistance to ECOWAS and its Member States.

COOPERATION IN LEGAL MATTERS

Convention on Extradition: Preparation of a draft convention on extradition based on a survey of relevant existing laws and conventions, for consideration by legal officials of Member States.

Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters: Collaboration with Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section of the United Nations Centre in Vienna on the preparation of seminar for legal officials on the application of the ECOWAS Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters.

West African Parliament: Finalisation of the legal texts on the establishment of the West African Parliament.

THE 1993 SECRETARIAT BUDGET

79. Council approved a total budget of 7,573,900 UA for the operations of the Executive Secretariat during the 1992 financial year. In spite of very low liquidity levels experienced during some periods in the current year, a conservative estimate of the

level of execution of the 1992 budget by the end of the year is put at about 85%. It must be pointed out that, during the course of the year, the chronic shortage of funds obliged management to be over-cautious, for fear of having a depleted treasury when urgent and sudden needs might have to be met.

80. The budget for 1993 being presented for consideration is estimated at 7,791,800 UA, a mere 2.8% above the approved 1992 figure. I requested my officials to aim at zero growth when the budget preparation exercise was embarked upon. This directive was issued in spite of the significant price increases that have been witnessed over the intervening period, in spite of the in-built increases of some budget items, and in spite of the increase in the work-load of the Secretariat. It has been our desire to maintain the same level of expenditure simply in recognition of the difficulties all Member States are facing.

81. Elsewhere in this report, attention has been drawn to the adverse effect that the low level of contributions to the budgets of the Community has been having on the integration process as a whole. The poor performance recorded in respect of budgetary contributions has forced the Community to hold down the Secretariat's operational budget to the same level for a decade or more, even though the integration process has been deepening and inflation has been a constant companion.

82. The rationalisation of West African IGOs would rightly leave ECOWAS with the main responsibility of directing the regional integration effort. Not only is there going to be an institutional re-structuring of the Community, but there will also have to be an increase in the volume of its output. In other words, the zero-growth strategy applied so often at budget

words, the zero-growth strategy applied so often at budget sessions would have to be abandoned in the very near future. This is why the Secretariat proposes to pursue vigorously the study on finding alternative ways of financing regional integration in West Africa.

83. Until such time that a new method is adopted for generating financial resources for the operations of the Community, Member States would have to shoulder this important responsibility through direct contributions. Council is kindly requested to make a strong appeal to all Member States to make the necessary effort to meet fully their financial obligations to the Community Institutions.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

84. This is my last report to the Council of Ministers, and I believe it would be appropriate to make an evaluation, however brief, of the performance of the Community. In doing this, I should also like to invite Council to reflect on some recurring issues which dominated my four years in ECOWAS and which are bound to affect the pith and direction of regional integration in West Africa in the years ahead.

85. There is no doubt that the pronounced economic difficulties that Member States have been going through for more than a decade contributed significantly to the slow pace of regional integration. As all Member States were pre-occupied with short-term adjustment programmes, longer-term issues (that regional integration addresses) tended to be neglected. Secondly, this period of economic decline and penury left Member States with hardly anything to support regional integration efforts. This notwithstanding, when one considers the nature of some of the impediments to the West African integration process, one is obliged to wonder about the degree of commitment to the building of one economic community in the region. The inertia and resistance that have attended some ECOWAS Initiatives, such as intra-regional trade liberalisation and rationalisation of IGOs, give cause for concern.

86. A bolder vision of regional cooperation and integration must be developed in order to improve upon the leisurely pace at which ECOWAS has been moving. The Community must recapture the

mood of optimism that gripped its leadership in past years, leading to the land-mark decision to sign an ECOWAS protocol for cooperation in defence matters in 1981 and to create a single West African monetary zone in 1983.

87. The Community would have a new opportunity to infuse the integration process with dynamism when the extraordinary sessions of Council and the Authority are convened in December to adopt the revised ECOWAS Treaty. While the Eminent Persons were forward-looking and proposed some innovations to propel West Africa along the development path, the national experts who reviewed these twenty provisions adopted a rather timid approach, advancing all the lessons why ECOWAS cannot strike out in any new direction or endow itself with greater power of action.

88. In the past, Member States pursued their individual and independent economic development parths, and the results have been far from satisfactory. Past experience clearly indicates that the countries of this region cannot continue along the old pathways of isolationism and independent action. The Executive Secretariat has got the Ministers of Planning and Finance of Member states to meet regularly in an ECOWAS forum and, with the participation of Governors of Central Banks, review and harmonised national economic, fiscal and monetary policies. This initiative could mark the beginning of a new era in the management of the individual domestic economies and would greatly facilitate the regional integration process.

89. As I stated in my last Annual Report, the future in Africa lies with regional integration and West Africans have no other choice than getting themselves better organised for this arduous task. It bears repeating that all regions of the world are witnessing closer economic cooperation and integration among

their respective countries. The three countries of North America are actively pursuing ways of turning into reality their agreement on a North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA). Not content with the success of "Europe 1992", the EEC countries have mounted spirited national campaigns in the past few months in support of the Maastricht Treaty. The recent visit of the Emperor of Japan to China marks a major development in regional cooperation in the Pacific Rim, where Asean is undergoing radical restructuring. Nearer home in Africa, the PTA countries have begun the process of converting their trade arrangements into a full-fledged economic community, and the Arab Maghreb Union has just concluded a Summit meeting where they agreed to step up North African Economic integration.

90. One could rightly ask what West Africa is waiting for. Indeed, West Africa has suffered a serious economic decline in recent years and cannot afford to continue lagging behind in the economic development race. The world is not getting any kinder to the countries of this region. Member States must shed their old inhibition about close and meaningful regional cooperation. Inspired regional leadership is now called for in the light of the many political configuration taking place in many countries in the region. Unless new ideas and bold solutions to the integration problem are sponsored and actively supported by one or two Member States, there would be little progress. And unless a conscious effort is made by all Member States to pay regional integration greater attention, ECOWAS would continue to merely limp along.

91. The end of 1992 will undoubtedly be recorded in the annals of regional integration as an important date for the European Economic Community. By coincidence, West African leaders have chosen the same period to decide whether their regional

integration arrangement should also be deepened by adopting the Revised Treaty. If the Europeans who divided West Africans, and whose economies seem to be in no dire need for pooling resources together - if those Europeans see great virtue in integration, then I should like to believe that West Africans would have an even greater urge to accelerate regional integration in their own region. Their continued survival depends on it.