**The ambassador of Spain in Nigeria paid a courtesy call on** **the Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Agriculture**

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**The Ambassador of Spain to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Juan Ignacio Sell, paid a courtesy call on the Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Agriculture, Ms. Massandjé TOURE-LITSE, on Monday, September 12, 2022 at her office at the ECOWAS Commission, River Plaza.**

The Ambassador who was accompanied by the Deputy Head of Mission and a team of the Spanish Cooperation, were at the ECOWAS Commission to first of all welcome the Commissioner into her new role and also to discuss the collaboration that exists between Spanish Cooperation and ECOWAS as well as other opportunities.

“Our partnership with ECOWAS has been successful and we intend to remain a very close partner”, the Ambassador disclosed before adding that “to remain successful, we need to build on what we have achieved and also look into the future”. It is against this backdrop that Spain is proposing to the Commission to move from mere collaboration to a cooperation agreement where they intend to expand their support into other areas such Environment and Trade.

Currently, Spain has a number of projects with ECOWAS in the Agriculture & Food Safety Nets sector and Migration & Development; and he revealed that the Embassy was proud about their long-standing partnership with ECOWAS and they are equally happy and satisfied with the results and achievements made so far on the various projects.

The Commissioner expressed her appreciation to the Ambassador and her team for the visit and the excellent relationship between Spanish Cooperation and ECOWAS. She noted that the new management of ECOWAS is keen to see projects that impact the lives of the citizenry and as such, any meaningful and impactful projects be it in Agriculture, Food Security, Trade and Migration would be welcome. She, therefore, recommended that both the Spanish Cooperation and ECOWAS look for such activities “because there are needs and I am open to proposals to improve what already exists” she stressed.

The various projects financed by Spain include: 1) the ECOWAS/Spain Fund on Migration and Development led by the Directorate of Free Movement and Migration; 2) Grants to microprojects in ECOWAS Member States; and 3) Food Reserve Fund led by the Directorate of Agriculture with the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF) based in Lome, Togo, as the operational arm. The Spanish Cooperation also provided support in the establishment and running of RAAF.

The Ambassador used the opportunity to solicit the support of the Commissioner to facilitate the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding the Cooperation has introduced to ECOWAS. This MOU covers the funding of 1) School Feeding Programme under the Directorate of Agriculture and RAAF; 2) Energy under the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) based in Praia, Cabo Verde; and 3) Gender-related activities with the ECOWAS Gender and Development Centre (EGDC) based in Dakar, Senegal.