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**SIXTY-SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ECOWAS
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

Abuja, 19th – 21st December 2011

FINAL REPORT

**ECOWAS Commission
Abuja, December 2011**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Sixty-seventh Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers was held at the ECOWAS Commission, Abuja from 19th – 21st December 2011.

2. The following Member States were represented:

- Republic of BENIN
- BURKINA FASO
- Republic of CAPE VERDE
- Republic of COTE D'IVOIRE
- Republic of The GAMBIA
- Republic of GHANA
- Republic of GUINEA
- Republic LIBERIA
- Republic of MALI
- Republic of NIGER
- Federal Republic of NIGERIA
- Republic of SENEGAL
- Republic of SIERRA LEONE
- TOGOLESE Republic

3. The following institutions and specialized agencies of ECOWAS were also represented:

- ECOWAS Parliament;
- Community Court of Justice;
- West African Health Organisation (WAHO);
- Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA);
- ECOWAS Gender Development Centre;
- West African Power Pool (WAPP);
- West African Monetary Agency (WAMA);
- ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ERCREEE);
- ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Agency (ERERA)
- ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre

4. The list of participants is annexed to this report.

II. OPENING SESSION

• Address by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers

5. In his address, the Chairman of Council and Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, Ambassador Olugbenga Ayodele Ashiru, MFR, warmly welcomed the participants and described 2011 as an encouraging year for ECOWAS' integration, especially with respect to political stability and democratic governance.

6. He also used the opportunity to convey his appreciation to the Ministers and delegations present for their commitment to the objectives of our regional organization.

7. He noted that the region and indeed most of the developing countries of Africa had been experiencing economic stability insulated from the negative impact of world financial crisis, noting however the draught and famine experienced by countries in the Horn of Africa. Nonetheless, he said that ~~West African sub-region still faces economic challenges, manifested in food shortages,~~ high cost of energy, dearth of investment capital and low human capacity development. In view of these realities, he stressed the need for a redoubling of efforts towards the realization of the ~~objectives behind programmes in agriculture, human resource development, infrastructural development and renewable energy,~~ such as solar power as a platform for our sustained growth and development. He described ECOWAS programmes under the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) and the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) as exemplars in the pursuit of these objectives.

8. The Chairman also stressed the need for the full implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Goods, Services and the Right of Residence and Establishment as a complement to the success of the regional integration project.

9. He further acknowledged the important role being played by our development partners in the attainment of the Community's integration objectives and said that despite the financial crisis in the developed world, we continue to enjoy the support of development partners. He therefore called for their continued engagement to achieve our objectives.

10. He concluded his address by reiterating Nigeria's commitment, as one of the founding fathers of ECOWAS, to the organization and used the occasion to convey the commitment of His Excellency, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the ideals of the organization premised on the principles of the rule of law and good democratic governance within the sub-region.

• **Address by the President of the ECOWAS Commission**

11. In his statement, the President of the ECOWAS Commission H.E. James Victor Gbeho noted that the 67th session of Council was taking place against the background of very disturbing developments in the global economy, epitomised particularly by the on-going financial crisis in the Euro Zone, the Region's main trading partner and other advanced economies of the world. He commended members of the Council for their contribution to the growth of the regional economy which maintained its robust growth of more than 6 percentage points despite the crises, attributing this development to the prudent macroeconomic management of our national economies and favourable prices for the region's raw materials. He warned however that the regional economy was still vulnerable to the global economic crises, suggesting that this was an opportune time to adopt preventive measures as an appropriate response by the region to the crises. He noted that countries in Southern and Eastern African Communities and elsewhere in Asia and the Americas have already adopted similar measures, particularly those that will deepen the integration of their markets in order to meet the new challenges and remain more competitive in the global market.

12. He underscored that this Session of Council is also critical for two reasons. First, it is the last of the year 2011 which should set the agenda for stock-taking of our endeavours not only over the last year and readjust our goals for the coming year, but also to review the work of the first team of Commissioners since the 2007 transformation into a Commission. In this regard, he said that Council will be informed of the efforts being made by the Commission since the transformation to

implement the Decisions of Authority and Council's Recommendations aimed at realising the goal of an "ECOWAS of People". In addition, he said that Council will also be intimated about the measures taken by the Commission to implement The Authority Decision regarding the assumption of duty of new Commissioners. He therefore used the occasion of the current session to express his thanks and appreciation to Honourable Members of the Council for their support and wise counsel over the same period.

13. He concluded the address by wishing Council fruitful deliberations.

III. ELECTION OF BUREAU

14. The following bureau was elected:

- Chairman - Nigeria
- Rapporteurs - Cote d'Ivoire
- Liberia

IV. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME

15. The following agenda was adopted:

1. Opening Ceremony

- Opening Statement by the Host Minister, Chairman of Council
- Statement by the President of the ECOWAS Commission

2. Election of Bureau

Adoption of the Draft Agenda and Work Programme

Items for Decision

3. Presentation and Consideration of the 2011 Final Report of the President of the ECOWAS Commission (Summary Report)
4. Presentation and Consideration of the Status of Tasks Assigned by the 66th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers
5. Presentation and Consideration of the Financial Controller's 2011 Interim Report
6. Presentation and Consideration of the Report of the 21st & 22nd Meeting of the Audit Committee.
7. Presentation and Consideration of the Report of the 10th Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee.
8. Presentation and Consideration on issues relating to Air Transport Sector: 3 Drafts Regulations on Air transport Committee, Negotiations of Air Services and Transport Unit.

Items for Endorsement

9. Presentation of the Report of the Ministerial Monitoring Committee on the EPA Negotiations held in Accra, Ghana on 30th November 2011
10. Presentation of the Report of the Meeting with the European Union on the Utilization of the Regional Indicative Programme (10th EDF) held in Brussels on 13th December 2011.
11. Presentation of the Report of the 4th Conference of Ministers of Culture held in Abuja on 25th November 2011.
12. Presentation of the Report of the Ministerial Conference on Humanitarian Assistance and internal Displacement in West Africa held in Abuja on 17th July 2011.
13. Presentation of the ECOWAS Master Plan for the Generation and Transmission of Electrical Energy.
14. Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on issues Relating to Air Transport Sector: 9 Drafts supplementary Acts.
15. Presentation of the Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management.
16. Report of the sixth Ordinary session of the ECOWAS Convergence Council of Ministers of Finance and Governors of Central Banks.
17. Any other Business
18. Adoption of Report
19. Closing Session

V. OUTCOME OF DELIBERATIONS

Items for Decision

Item 3: Presentation and Consideration of the 2011 Final Report of the President of the ECOWAS Commission (Summary Report)

16. The President of the ECOWAS Commission, His Excellency James Victor Gbeho, presented the 2011 Annual Report, taking stock of global and sub-regional development prospects in 2011, as well as the status of implementation of the Community work programme.

17. It emerged from the presentation that global economic activity declined in 2011. By the latest IMF projections, global economic growth would decline, falling to a rate of about 4% up to the end of 2012 against the 5% rate in 2010.

18. In that context, economic activity in West Africa will suffer a slight decline in 2011 with a growth rate ranging between 6% and 6.7% in Côte d'Ivoire. The decline is due to the drastic fall in

production in Côte d'Ivoire, with a -5.8% growth, and a decline in Nigeria (6.9% in 2011 against 8.7% in 2010). Contraction or production at regional level in 2011 would be cushioned by the extremely good performance of Ghana, with an economic growth rate estimated at 13.5%, making the country one of the world's best-performing economies in 2011.

19. Regarding the implementation of the Community Work Programme in 2011, the President presented the status of implementation of all sector programmes, pointing out the significant progress made in consolidating regional peace and security.

20. As far as macro-economic policy is concerned, efforts were sustained in pursuing the coordination of economic and financial policies, implementing Road map activities for the ECOWAS single currency, as well as the surveillance of the Member States' economic performance, statistical harmonization and formulation of the Community Development Programme. In the same vein, considerable progress was recorded in private sector promotion, particularly the creation of an ECOWAS Investment Market, and enhanced cooperation with China, India and Brazil.

21. Regarding the EPA, negotiations are still underway to take due account of the region's development objectives. Nonetheless, divergences still persist, particularly on:

- the Scope and duration of the liberalization of the West African Market;
- the Financing of the EPA Development Programme (EPADP);
- the Application of the Most-Favoured Nation (MFN) Clause; and
- the Application of the Non-execution Clause.

22. In the case of trade liberalization, it is worth mentioning, among other things, the establishment of a Trade Liberalization-Scheme (TLS) Website for promoting a smooth and easy flow and availability of trade-related information. Furthermore, it was observed that there are some obstacles to the application of the TLS. In that regard, the Member States concerned were urged to implement the scheme. Regarding the ECOWAS CET, considerable progress has been achieved towards its finalization and adoption in 2012.

23. On industries and mines, it was noted that ECOWAS had validated the priority programmes of the West African Common Industrial Policy, as well as the ECOWAS mineral resource development policy. Similarly, the Commission continued the implementation of the ECOWAS Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

24. Regarding free movement, actions have been undertaken in the framework of the sensitization and training of stakeholders. The process for the adoption of a Schengen-type visa is being finalized. Appropriate recommendations will be submitted to the next Summit of the Authority of Heads of State and Government for the definitive implementation of the single visa in the ECOWAS region.

25. Concerning infrastructures, actions have been undertaken particularly on transport and transit facilitation, and the achievement of telecommunications and energy infrastructures. Construction work for three juxtaposed border posts at Seme (Nigeria/Benin), Noepe (Ghana/Togo) and Malanville

(Niger/Benin) amounting to over 37 million Euros is ongoing, ECOWAS also continued supporting Guinea and Guinea Bissau as part of the emergency plan to solve their energy challenges.

26. ~~As regards Agriculture and the Environment, ECOWAS finalized the regional agricultural investment plan and policy instruments and supported the States in the development of national agricultural investment plans. The process for mobilizing funds for the implementation of the various investment plans is ongoing.~~

27. Furthermore, the Commission continued its efforts towards the implementation of the Convention on Climate Change, the ECOWAS Forestry Policy, as well as the development of a bio-safety legal framework.

28. As concerns human development, the ECOWAS Commission developed a draft humanitarian policy, an action plan and a draft humanitarian intervention mechanism. Efforts were also made in the fight against drug trafficking, promotion of cultural and sporting activities, and the implementation of the malaria eradication programme.

29. Regarding peace and security, tangible progress was recorded in the region with the holding of successful elections in 2011, and ECOWAS remained committed to the application of the Protocol on Good Governance. In that context, with support from the international Community, it pursued its efforts to restore democratic governance, promote dialogue for national reconciliation, and supported Member States to conduct democratic elections. The peace and security situation however remains fragile in the region and deserves sustainable attention.

30. After setting out the outlook for 2012, the Commission President thanked all the political leaders for their continued support and urged them to continue supporting ECOWAS programmes with a view to establishing an integrated, credible and viable regional economic market.

31. The Report was adopted with suggestions that future reports should highlight major challenges encountered in the period and also reflect in greater detail work done on the question of youth in Member States.

Item 4: Presentation and Consideration of the Status of Tasks Assigned by the 66th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers

32. The Commission presented a table on the implementation status of tasks assigned indicating the status of implementation of each task as well as remarks on the tasks. Altogether three (3) tasks were identified and reported on.

33. At the end of the presentation, Council directed the Commission to speed up the engagement of the Management Consultancy firm so that the report will be ready before the new management team of Commissioners comes on board. It further instructed the Commission to ensure that its decision on the recruitment is scrupulously adhered to.

Item 5: Presentation and Consideration of the Financial Controller's 2011 Interim Report

34. ~~The 2011 Interim Report of the Acting Financial Controller was presented to the Administration and Finance Committee. The report covers the budgetary, financial and staffing situation of community institutions for the period 01 January to 30 June, 2011. The report recalled~~

that the Council of Ministers at its Sixty-fourth Ordinary Session approved a total budget of UA 181,313,384 for Community Institutions for the year 2011, an increase of 7% over the preceding year, of which UA ~~152,384,772~~ was to be funded from community levy, UA 5,200,000 from contribution arrears, UA ~~250,000~~ surplus funds from previous years, UA ~~23,364,588~~ from donor grants and UA 114,024 miscellaneous income. In summary, about 87% of the budget was expected to be funded from the Community resources and 13% from donor funds.

35. It was reported that for the period under review, total income recorded was UA 92,778,896 at the end of the first semester registering an achievement of 51% of budgeted income for the year. Of the total income recorded as received for the period, Community Levy accounted for UA 84,352,784 constituting 91% of total receipts and representing 55% of the community levy budget. Out of the total levy received, UA 54,911,148 or 65% was disbursed to Community Institutions to finance their programmes and activities. No contribution arrears were received from Member States during the period under review. Donor grants received amounted to, UA 8,384,754 or 36% of the grants budgeted and miscellaneous income recorded stood at, UA 41,359. The rate of income achieved for the period was positive in terms of the main source of income, the Community Levy.

36. The Acting Financial Controller reported some challenges in the management of the Community levy. He pointed out that the statement on levy assessments are grossly behind schedule making it difficult to ascertain the levy balance due from Member States at the end of the period. The report noted that almost all the statements of levy deposited into the community levy bank accounts have been received in spite of delays from some Member States for example Nigeria, which constitute 54% of the total levy receipts for the period. The report stated that contrary to the Decision of the Authority A/DEC.4/01/05, Nigeria continues to restrict access to the ECOWAS levy bank account at the Central Bank of Nigeria making it difficult for the Commission to manage about 50% of the resources coming from the Community levy. He recommended that the Council come up with a lasting solution to this recurring problem which puts the main finance resource of the Community at risk. Furthermore, he emphasized in his report the need to assess and build the human and material capacity of the unit in the Commission responsible for the management of the Community Levy funds.

37. The Acting Financial Controller went on to reiterate recommendations contained in his predecessor's previous reports concerning the need to improve the mobilisation, budgeting and accounting for donor funds. To this end, he urged all institutions to accelerate the implementation of plans geared towards improving mobilisation and management of donor grants and assistance.

38. On the Expenditure, the report recorded UA 60,892,772 as committed for the period January to June 2011 representing 34% of the budget for the year. Programme expenditure recorded was UA 36, 433, 027 or 60% of the total expenses committed, administrative expenditure was UA 21,791,706 representing 36% of the total expenses committed and others UA 2,668,039. The overall rates of budget and programme implementation improved considerably compared to those of the same period of the preceding years. The performance per institution varied from 22% to as high as 64%. The rate of implementation of the budget for administration of 40% was also higher than that achieved under the programme budget of 33%. Programme to administrative expenditure ratio was reported to be 63:37

39. The report highlighted a number of challenges faced by the institutions in programme implementation and expenditure management, procurement, mission planning, delegation of authority and staffing.

40. On the staffing situation, it was reported that a total of ninety-eight (98) staff were appointed during the period under review, one (1) statutory appointee, twenty-eight (28) professionals and sixty-nine (69) local staff. At the end of June 2011 the total staff strength in ECOWAS institutions was nine hundred and seventy-nine (979) comprising twenty-one (21) statutory appointees, three hundred and sixty-nine (369) professionals and five hundred and eighty-nine (589) local staff. The total female staff is two hundred and sixty-two (262) representing 27% of total staff strength and a slight increase of 2% as compared to the previous year. Staff expenditure of UA 21,991,032 was reported committed representing 39% of the staff expenditure budget for the year and accounting for 36% of the total expenditure for the period.

41. On the financial situation, the Acting Financial Controller reported that a total of UA 273.5 million was held in various bank accounts by the community institutions at the end of the period. Of the total amount held, UA 190.3 million was community funds and UA 83.2 million donor funds.

42. At the end of the report seven (9) recommendations were made for the consideration of the Council of Ministers.

43. Council took note of the report, which was presented to it and endorsed the recommendations contained in the report.

44. Council further directed that:

- Future reports provide figures on ratio between administrative and programme costs of the institutions.
- Although a 63:37 (admin/program) ratio was reported as good performance for half of the fiscal year, administrative costs should be kept at the barest minimum. In this respect, the Financial Controller should ensure the reduction of administrative costs.
- Restraint is required in administrative costs of Community products, including drivers' licenses.
- Another graph was suggested to provide a comparison between the ratio of professional positions occupied by each Member State against financial contribution.
- Timely payments of community levy should be made by Member States because of the Financial Controller's report that community levy increased, but at a lower pace, since all Member States are behind in their payments.

45. Council further directed the Commission to send a high level delegation to Member States to negotiate the conversion of the Community Levy deposits in Banks from local to foreign currencies to enable ~~ECOWAS have access and use such contributions.~~

Item 6: Presentation and Consideration of the Report of the 21st & 22nd Meetings of the Audit Committee

46. The synopsis report of the 21st and 22nd meetings of the Audit Committee were presented by its Chairman Mr. Kalilou Traore, the report covered the following issues:

- Status of implementation of Tasks Assigned Monitoring System (TAMOSYS);
- Status of implementation of Tasks Assigned to ECOWAS Institutions;
- Activities of the office of the Chief Internal Auditor and Internal Audit Reports;
- Assessment of the performance of the Chief Internal Auditor and his Staff;
- Recruitment of External Auditors for ECOWAS;
- Terms of Reference for the Diagnostic Study of ECOWAS.

47. After the presentation of the report, Council congratulated the Audit Committee for the quality of the report presented and adopted the report and the recommendations contained therein.

48. Council recommended to the Authority of Heads of State and Government the appointment of KPMG Ghana as External Auditors for ECOWAS Institutions for the Fiscal Year 2011-2012.

Item 7: Presentation and Consideration of the Report of the 10th Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee

49. The Report was presented by the Chairperson of the Administration and Finance Committee and focused on the following points discussed and agreed upon during the meeting:

- Implementation status of tasks assigned to the Community Institutions;
- Interim Report of the Financial Controller;
- Implementation status of the Community Levy Protocol;
- Pre-Budget Brief/Report of the Commissioner for Administration and Finance
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the ECOWAS Solidarity Fund;
- ECOWAS Pension Scheme;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the ECOWAS Commission Communication Strategy;
- Presentation of a Memorandum on the conclusion and Recommendations of the Sixth Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Convergence Council held in Lomé on 14th October, 2011;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on proposed amendments to Articles 40, 71 and 72 of the ECOWAS Financial Regulations;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the ECOWAS Humanitarian Response Mechanism;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Operational Manual for ECOWAS National Units;
- Consideration of the 2012 Budgets of ECOWAS Institutions

50. After discussions, Council adopted the report of the 10th Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee and the recommendations therein and gave the following directives:

- On the issue of the ECOWAS Pension Scheme, Council directed that the services of ~~professional pension managers should be contracted to handle~~ financial management of the pension funds while the role of the board of trustees remains administrative.
- The Solidarity Fund should be domiciled at the EBID since the major objective for the fund is for long term project financing for which that institution has the expertise.

Item 8: Presentation and Consideration on issues relating to Air Transport Sector: 3 Drafts Regulations on Air transport Committee, Negotiations of Air Services and Transport Unit.

51. The Honourable Minister for Transport of Ghana and Chairman of the Meeting presented the Report on the high level meeting of Transport Ministers and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Airlines on a viable Airline Industry in the ECOWAS Region which was held from 24th – 25th October, 2011, in Accra, Ghana. The meeting was preceded by an Air Transport Experts' meeting also held in Accra from 21st -24th October 2011. He indicated that this meeting was in line with a directive by the Thirty-sixth (36th) Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government held in Abuja on 22nd June, 2011.

52. He recalled that to this end the ECOWAS Commission had organised the 1st meeting in Accra, Ghana which adopted an action plan. It was followed by a second meeting which was held in Lome, Togo.

53. The report highlighted the recommendations with regards to the Member States, the ECOWAS Commission, and the Airlines of ECOWAS Member States.

54. The meeting reviewed and adopted the following:

- Two Regulations relating to the establishment of an Air Transport Committee and on Negotiations on Air Services between Air ECOWAS and Third Parties;
- Nine draft Supplementary Acts which were recommended for adoption by the Authority.

55. Concerning the transformation of the unit of air transport to a specialized agency, Council accepted the principle of transformation subject to appropriate due process.

Items for Endorsement

Item 9: Presentation of the Report of the Ministerial Monitoring Committee on the EPA Negotiations held in Accra, Ghana on 30th November 2011

56. Council took note of the conclusions of the meeting of the Ministerial Monitoring Committee on EPA negotiations held in Accra on 30 November 2011. While acknowledging that the slow pace of negotiations may, in the long run, have negative impacts on the construction of the common market in the region, Council recommended the speedy implementation of the conclusions reached by the MMC.

57. It urged West African Negotiators to immediately engage a dialogue at the political level with their European counterparts, particularly the European Parliament and European countries, with a view to finding lasting solutions to persistent differences, so as to maintain the good relationship between Europe and West Africa.

58. Taking into account the multiplicity of trade regimes between WA and the EU, Council requested the ECOWAS Commission to conduct a thorough study on the possible consequences of a non-conclusion of the regional EPA negotiations before 2013 and consider appropriate measures to be taken with a view to preserving the gains of the regional integration. Finally, it appealed that the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government be seized this matter in order to provide further guidelines on the negotiations with a view to breaking the current deadlock.

Item 10: Presentation of the Report of the Meeting with the European Union on the Utilization of the Regional Indicative Programme (10th EDF) held in Brussels on 13th December 2011.

59. The ECOWAS Commissioner in charge of Macro-economic Policy presented the report of the Meeting on the Utilization of the 10th EDF Regional Indicative Programme held in Brussels on 13 and 14 December 2011. The report presented the status of implementation of WA-RIP, identified the challenges, and recommended possible solutions to accelerate implementation and fund absorption by 2013, the programme end-date

60. The Council of Ministers expressed concern about the low absorption of the RIP (10th EDF) funds and urged the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions, in collaboration with the EU, to take the necessary measures to expedite action on the utilization of the funds.

61. In that regard, the Council of Ministers adopted the recommendations of the report, especially those regarding the new project identification and implementation framework which led to the selection of 45 regional projects for the ECOWAS, UEMOA and EU Commissions, at their meeting in Brussels on 13 and 14 December 2011.

62. Council asked the ECOWAS Commission to provide the Member States with the list of the 45 regional projects selected

Item 11: Presentation of the Report of the 4th Conference of Ministers of Culture held in Abuja on 25th November 2011

63. The Honourable Minister of Tourism and Culture, and National Orientation of Nigeria presented the Report on the 4th Conference of ECOWAS Ministers of Culture. In his presentation the Minister recalled that the recommendations of the previous Conferences of Ministers of Culture at Dakar, in 2002 and in Abuja in 2005, evaluated the implementation of the action plan in Abidjan in 2009. He further stated that the objectives of the fourth conference were to evaluate the status of implementation of the Action plan and the recommendation of the third Conference.

64. The report highlighted the recommendations adopted during the Conference which focused mainly on the following tasks to be undertaken by the ECOWAS Commission and Member States:

- Culture Industries;
- The Creation of a West African Cultural Institute (WACI);
- Copy Right Protection;
- Resource Mobilization by the ECOWAS Commission;
- Information /Sensitization;
- Cultural Statistics;
- Economy of Culture;
- Business round Table on moving the culture sector forward;
- ECOWAS Price for Excellence;
- Centre of Excellence;
- Social Protection of Artists;
- ECOFEST;
- Heritage.

65. After discussions, Council adopted the report.

Item 12: Presentation of the Report of the Ministerial Conference on Humanitarian Assistance and internal Displacement in West Africa held in Abuja on 17th July 2011

66. Mr. Tajudeen Adeniyi, Deputy Director ECOWAS Division in the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented on behalf of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry who chaired the first Ministerial Conference on Humanitarian Assistance and Internally Displacement of Persons Nigeria, the report of that Conference. The Ministerial Conference was organised by the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja on the 7th July 2011 in collaboration with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and the African Union with the support of Government of Finland.

67. The report highlighted the key points of the Communiqué from the Ministerial Conference and made recommendations on the following:

- Prevention of Forced Displacement in ECOWAS
- Protection, assistance and durable solution for the Internally Displaced
- Promotion, signing, ratification, domestication and implementation of the African Union Kampala Convention on the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced persons
- Collaboration with the International Humanitarian Community.

68. The report was adopted by Council.

Item 13: Presentation of the ECOWAS Master Plan for the Generation and Transmission of Electrical Energy.

69. Mr. BIZIE Leto, Deputy Chief of Staff representing the Minister of Mines, Petroleum and Energy of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, presented the Final Communiqué of the meeting of Energy Ministers on the ECOWAS Master Plan for the Generation and Transmission of Electrical Energy. Energy Ministers of Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone and representatives of Ministers from other countries attended the meeting held in Abidjan from 24 to 25 November 2011, with the aim of reviewing and adopting the updated ECOWAS Master Plan for the Generation and Transmission of Electrical Energy.

70. After considering the Updated Master Plan which requires a total funding of 26.516 Billion US dollars, the meeting of Energy Ministers adopted the said Revised Master Plan and recommended that the ECOWAS Commission submit the conclusions of the Council of Ministers for endorsement and prepare a Supplementary Act to be submitted to the Authority of Heads of State and Government.

71. The Council of Ministers adopted the report and endorsed the conclusions of the Revised ECOWAS Master Plan for the Generation and Transmission of Electrical Energy. Council directed that a draft Supplementary Act on the Revised Master Plan on Energy be submitted to the Authority for adoption.

Item 14: Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on issues Relating to Air Transport Sector: 9 Drafts supplementary Acts.

72. Council recalled earlier discussions on issues relating to the air transport Sector under agenda item 8. It however noted that Member States who have observations or comments should forward them to the Commission after consultations with the sectoral Ministers in their home countries.

Item 15: Presentation of the Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management.

73. The ECOWAS Commission presented the Memorandum on the Adoption of the Charter for food Crisis Prevention and Management by Experts from ECOWAS, WAMU, CILSS Member Countries, Mauritania and Chad. In the presentation, the Commission recalled that the evolution

from food Aid Charter to a Charter for the Prevention and Management is the result of intense discussions that started in 2007 and culminated on the development of a draft document in June 2009. The discussion centred on:

- i. **Background and review process of the Food Aid Charter**
- ii. **Content of the draft text of the new Charter**
- iii. **Review of the document content**

74. Following discussions on the above the following points were highlighted and agreed upon:

- The need to highlight complementarity between production and monetary aspects
- The principle of free movement of goods and people in ECOWAs region should serve as a tool for implementing the Charter;
- Real involvement of the civil society and the private sector in the Charter implementation.
- Promoting innovations and partnership frameworks for food Security to become a reality
- The need to initiate and implement overarching actions for the private sector to fully participate in the implementation of the new charter, including strong actions that can improve the running of the regional market (by ending harassments on the roads, among others) and national markets
- Sustainability of monitoring-evaluation systems of national food security policies and programmes and early warning system.
- Promoting productive and sustainable agriculture and supporting access to markets for smallholders
- Effective implementation of food security policies in the countries
- The need for the state to meet costs associated with implementation of the charter and relating to their commitments

75. After considering the report the Council of Ministers adopted the report.

Item 16: Report of the Sixth Ordinary session of the ECOWAS Convergence Council of Ministers of Finance and Governors of Central Banks.

76. The Honourable Minister of State for Finance, Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chairman ECOWAS Convergence Council presented the Report of the Sixth Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Convergence Council of Ministers of Finance and Governors of Central Banks Lome, 14 October 2011. The Minister in analysing the performance of Member States under the convergence criteria, observed that notwithstanding the modest achievements made in recent times towards convergence, the budget deficit /GDP ratio and inflation criteria continued to pose significant challenges for the region largely due to debilitating effects of the global economic and financial crises. He indicated that the region was faced with daunting challenges posed by high youth unemployment and globalisation and urged Member States to step up their efforts in the implementation of structural benchmarks under the multilateral surveillance mechanism.

77. Discussions at the meeting was centred on the report of the technical committee on macroeconomic Policy on the following issues:-

- conclusions on the convergence report for 2010
- conclusions on the report of the study on the harmonisation of convergence criteria within ECOWAS
- conclusion on the guide for elaboration of multi-annual programme on convergence
- conclusions on the supplementary Act concerning convergence and macroeconomic stability pact among the ECOWAS Member States
- conclusions of the Technical committee on Macroeconomic policy on the supplementary Act concerning modification of decision A/Dec.17/12/01 creating a mechanism for the Multilateral Surveillance of Economic and Financial Policies of ECOWAS Member State.

78. The Council after reviewing the general and specific recommendations of the technical Committee on Macroeconomic Policy adopted the following:

- The general recommendations made by the Technical Committee on Macroeconomic policy.
- The specific recommendations submitted by the Technical Committee on Macroeconomic Policy

79. After considering the Report, the Council of Ministers adopted the report

Item 17: Any Other Business

- **Arrangements for the Appointment of new Commissioners and new Judges of the ECOWAS Court**

80. The Chairman of Council informed the Meeting that in consultation with his colleagues they have decided to schedule the meeting of the Ad Hoc Ministerial Committee on the Selection and Evaluation of the Performance of Statutory Appointees for the interview of new Commissioners to hold from 11th-13th January 2012 and an Extraordinary Session of Council to be held on 14th January 2012 to adopt the report of the Committee.

81. Council further directed that the Commission should also commence arrangements for the appointment of the four (4) new Judges of the ECOWAS Court whose tenures equally ended in January 2011.

82. As far as the issue of allocation of statutory positions is concerned, the delegation of Côte d'Ivoire made a reservation and asked for the referral of the matter to the Authority of Heads of State for further discussion.

- **Briefing on the Election in The Gambia**

83. The delegation of The Gambia made a presentation raising strong objections about the ECOWAS Commission not having fielded an Observer Mission to the November 2011 Presidential elections in that Member State. The presentation however recognised the discretionary powers of

the President of the Commission on fielding of such missions as contained in the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

84. ~~Council requested the Gambian delegation to submit a memorandum on the issue at the next session of Council.~~

▪ **ECOWAS Small Arms Programme (ECOSAP)**

85. The Malian delegation informed Council that the Commission is in the process of collapsing ECOSAP situated in the Republic of Mali contrary to the decisions of the sectoral Ministers in charge of the programme who had recommended that the programme should be continued for the next 5 years and some part of the funding required for its continuity had been secured from development partners. Council was further informed that the key staff of the programme had been offered appointments at the Commission Headquarters in contravention of Council's earlier directive that recruitments should be suspended.

86. The President of the Commission indicated that the Commission equally has a position on the matter showing why the programme was closed by the funding partners and the need to redeploy the staff who were recruited in 2006 and not recently.

87. Council took note of the information and requested that the Republic of Mali and the President of the Commission should circulate the relevant documents on the issue to Member States in order to enable it make an informed decision at its next session. It however reaffirmed that recruitment is still on hold as decided at its last session.

▪ **Vacancy at the International Labour Organisation (ILO)**

88. The delegation of Benin Republic informed Council about the intention of the Republic of Benin to field a candidate for the position of Director which will become vacant in ILO and therefore solicited for the support of Member States for its candidate.

89. Council took note of the request.

▪ **Hosting of the Headquarters of the Specialised Agency for Air Transport**

90. The Republic of Niger delegation reminded Council of their offer made during the 66th Ordinary Session of Council to host the headquarters of the Specialised Agency for Air Transport and informed Council that the Commission was duly notified through Note Verbale dated 9th September 2011.

91. Council took note and requested the Commission and the Republic of Niger to adhere to the provisions of the relevant Council Regulation governing the hosting of the headquarters of Community Institutions and Agencies.

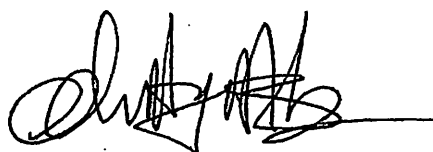
Item 18: Adoption of the Report

92. This report was adopted after amendments.

Item 19: Closing Ceremony

93.

DONE AT ABUJA THIS 21ST DAY OF DECEMBER 2011



**AMBASSADOR OLUGBENGA AYODELE ASHIRU, MFR
HONOURABLE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

CHAIRMAN

FOR THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

COMISSAO DA CEDEAO



COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO

ECOWAS COMMISSION

VOTE OF THANKS

The participants at the Sixty-seventh ordinary session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers held in Abuja, from 19th – 21st December, 2011 express their profound gratitude to His Excellency Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chairman of the Authority, and to the Government and people of Nigeria for the warm African hospitality extended to them during their stay in Abuja and for the facilities placed at their disposal to ensure the success of their meeting.

DONE AT ABUJA THIS 21ST DAY OF DECEMBER 2011

THE MEETING