

**COMUNIDADE DOS ESTADOS DA
AFRICA DO OESTE**

**ECONOMIC COMMUNITY
OF WEST AFRICAN STATES**



**COMMUNAUTE ECONOMIQUE
DES ETATS DE L'AFRIQUE
DE L'OUEST**

ECW/CM/LXXV

Original: English

**SEVENTY-FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION
OF THE ECOWAS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

Abuja, 13th – 14th December, 2015

FINAL REPORT



INTRODUCTION

1. The Seventy-Fifth Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers was held on 13 and 14 December, 2015 in Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria. The meeting, which was attended by Ministers in-charge of ECOWAS Affairs and Finance, was chaired by H.E. Khadim Diop, Minister of African Integration, NEPAD and Promotion of Good Governance of the Republic of Senegal.

2. The following Member States were represented:

- Republic of Benin
- Burkina Faso
- Republic of Cabo Verde
- Republic of Cote d'Ivoire
- Republic of The Gambia
- Republic of Ghana
- Republic of Guinea
- Republic of Guinea Bissau
- Republic of Liberia
- Republic of Mali
- Republic of Niger
- Federal Republic of Nigeria
- Republic of Senegal
- Republic of Sierra Leone, and
- The Togolese Republic

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

- ECOWAS Commission;
- ECOWAS Parliament;
- Community Court of Justice;
- West African Health Organisation (WAHO);
- Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA);
- ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) and;
- Office of the Financial Controller;
- West African Power Pool (WAPP)
- West African Monetary Agency (WAMA)
- West African Monetary Institute (WAMI)

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

I. OPENING CEREMONY

5. In his opening address, the Council Chair, H.E. Mr. Khadim DIOP, Minister of African Integration, NEPAD and Promotion of Good Governance of the Republic of Senegal, welcomed participants to the 75th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers. Similarly, on behalf of Council, he expressed his sincere appreciation to the Government and people of Nigeria for the warm welcome extended to the delegations, and commended the ECOWAS Commission for the excellent facilities placed at their disposal to ensure the smooth conduct of deliberations.



6. The Council Chair subsequently welcomed the smooth conduct of the 2015 general elections in Nigeria, Togo, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, and hoped the 2016 elections to be held in five Member States will be an equal source of pride to the Community. He further recalled the founding fathers' ambition to achieve a West African common market and economic and monetary union, stressing that, luckily, it is being pursued by the present Community leaders, especially through the progress towards an ECOWAS of People.

7. The Council Chair also stressed the need to fast-track the implementation of programmes in some strategic sectors, complete the application of the Common External Tariff and finalise the signing of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union. Furthermore, he underpinned the urgent need to conclude the ECOWAS institutional reforms and revitalise the Community Levy mechanism, and ensure better prioritisation of activities, before advocating that lessons be drawn from past experiences.

8. Following these remarks, the Council Chair declared open the 75th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers.

9. In his opening statement, the President of the ECOWAS Commission, H.E. Mr. Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo, expressed deep gratitude to the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to the delegations, as well as the excellent facilities put in place to ensure the success of the meeting.

10. Subsequently, he gave an overview of the main items on the Agenda, stating his belief that Council members will, from their consideration of the items, take decisions which will enable the Community make good progress in the management of its different projects.


11. The President further emphasized the Commission's commitment to always do more and better without additional resources, by making judicious use of the information and communication technologies and taking full advantage of the availability of the Community's partners. He also highlighted the prospects for improving the status of Community Levy lodgement, subsequent to the missions carried out by the Commission to Member States that encountered challenges in that regard.

12. The President concluded his address by expressing best wishes for the Council's deliberations and reiterating his faith in ECOWAS as well as his strong conviction that the Institution can help Member States realize all their dreams of shared progress and harmonious development. He also expressed sincere gratitude, on his own behalf and on behalf of the other relevant statutory appointees, to all Council members, ECOWAS partners and staff, for the support accorded them throughout their four-year term of office which is due to expire in February 2016.

13. The full texts of the speeches are attached to this report.

II. ELECTION OF BUREAU

14. The following bureau was elected:

- Chairman - Republic of Senegal;
 - Rapporteurs - Republic of Guinea Bissau;
 - Republic of Liberia
- 



III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME

15. The following agenda was adopted after amendments.

- **OPENING CEREMONY**

- a) Opening Statement by the Chairman of Council, H.E. Khadim Diop, Minister of African Integration, NEPAD and Promotion of Good Governance of the Republic of Senegal;
- b) Statement by the President of the ECOWAS Commission, H.E. Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo;
- c) Adoption of Draft Agenda and Work Programme;
- d) Election of Bureau;

- **ITEMS FOR DECISION**

- a) Presentation and Consideration of the 2015 Annual Report of the President of the Commission;
- b) Presentation and Consideration of the implementation status of Tasks Assigned by the 74th Ordinary Session of Council;
- c) Presentation and Consideration of the Financial Controller's 2015 Interim Report;
- d) Presentation and Consideration of the Final Report of the 18th Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee;
- e) Presentation and Consideration of the Report of the Community Levy Management Committee;
- f) Presentation and Consideration of the Memorandum on ECOWAS Community Strategic Framework 2016 - 2020;
- g) Presentation and Consideration of the Phase II Report of the Institutional Reform Consultants;
- h) Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Admission of the Union of the Comoros as a GIABA Member State;
- i) Presentation and Consideration of the Recommendations of the GIABA Ministerial Committee on the Sustainability of the fight against Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing in West Africa;
- j) Consideration and Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 48th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government;

- **ITEMS FOR ENDORSEMENT**



- a) Consideration and Adoption of Reports of the 2015 Meetings of the Assembly of Health Ministers and the Memorandum on the West African Center for Disease Control;
- b) Consideration of the Report of ECOWAS Ministers of Industry and the Memorandum on Draft Regulations Approving ECOWAS Harmonised Standards (ECOSTAND);

- **ITEM FOR INFORMATION**

- a) Briefing on Member State's Requests for International Posts;
- b) Memorandum on the ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority;
- c) Briefing on the ECOWAS Academic Mobility Programme;

- **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- **ADOPTION OF REPORT**

- **CLOSING CEREMONY**

- a) Vote of thanks;
- b) Closing Remarks of the Chairperson of Council

IV. OUTCOME OF DELIBERATIONS

Items for Decision

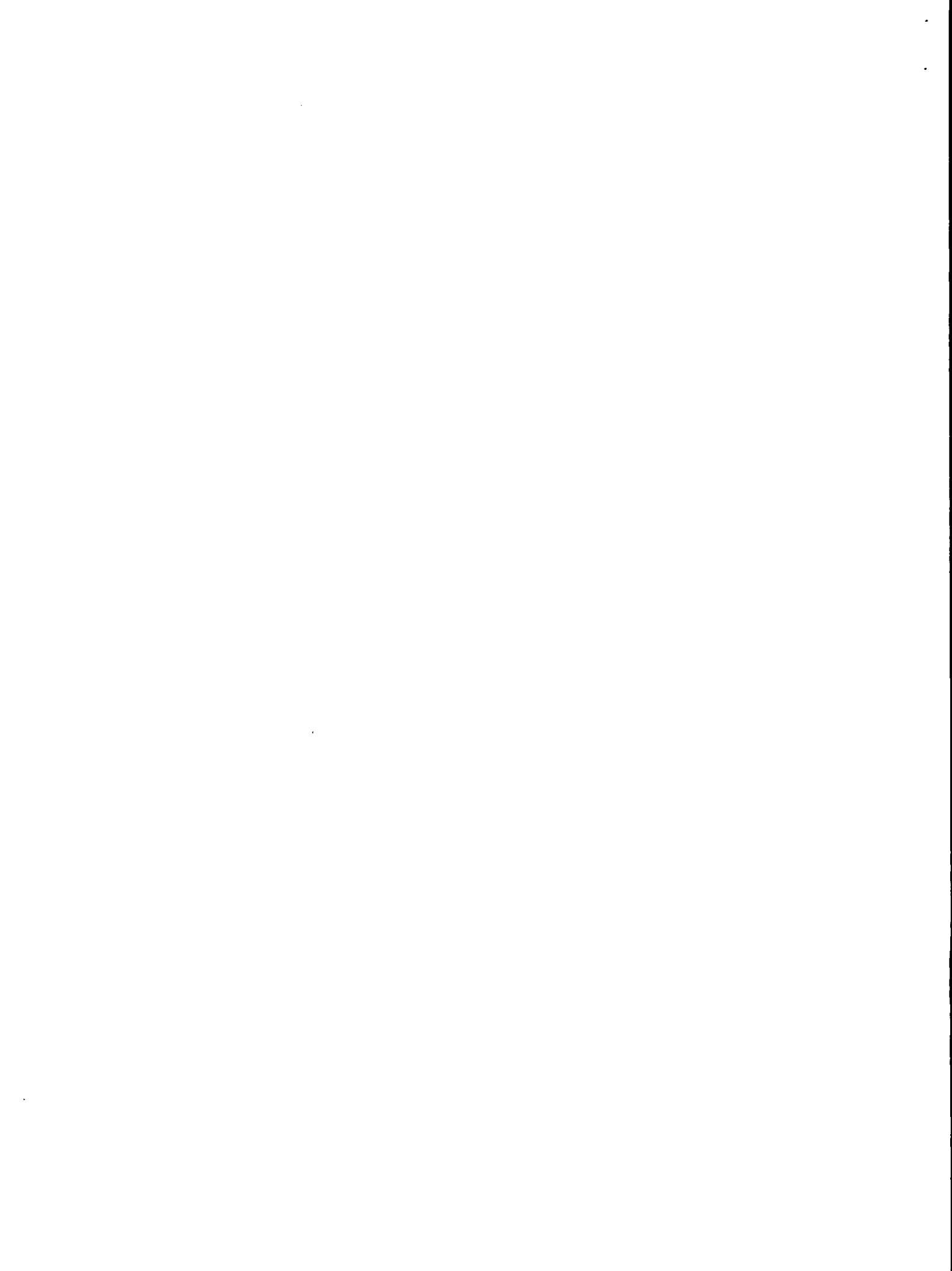
Item 2: Presentation and Consideration of the 2014 Annual Report of the President of the ECOWAS Commission

16. The 2015 Annual Report was presented by the President of the ECOWAS Commission, H.E. Mr. Kadré Désiré OUEDRAOGO. He gave a detailed account of the status of implementation of the Community work programme for the period January to November 2015, and outlined the main challenges as well as the region's medium and long term prospects.

17. The presentation pointed out that the current forecasts showed a decline in the region's economic performance with a 4.2% growth rate in 2015 against 6.2% in 2014.

18. Regarding the implementation of the Community work programme, the Commission President highlighted the following key achievements:

- The adoption, by the Convergence Council, of the draft document on the establishment of the ECOWAS Monetary Institute that will be the precursor of the ECOWAS Central Bank to be established prior to the launch of the single currency in 2020;
- The finalisation of the ECOWAS Sahel Strategy Document and its Action Plan;
- The signing of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union by 13 Member States, while efforts are underway for the signing of the Agreement by The Gambia, Mauritania and Nigeria;
- The entry into force of the ECOWAS CET on 1st January 2015, and its



the challenges encountered by the seven Member States that are yet to implement it;

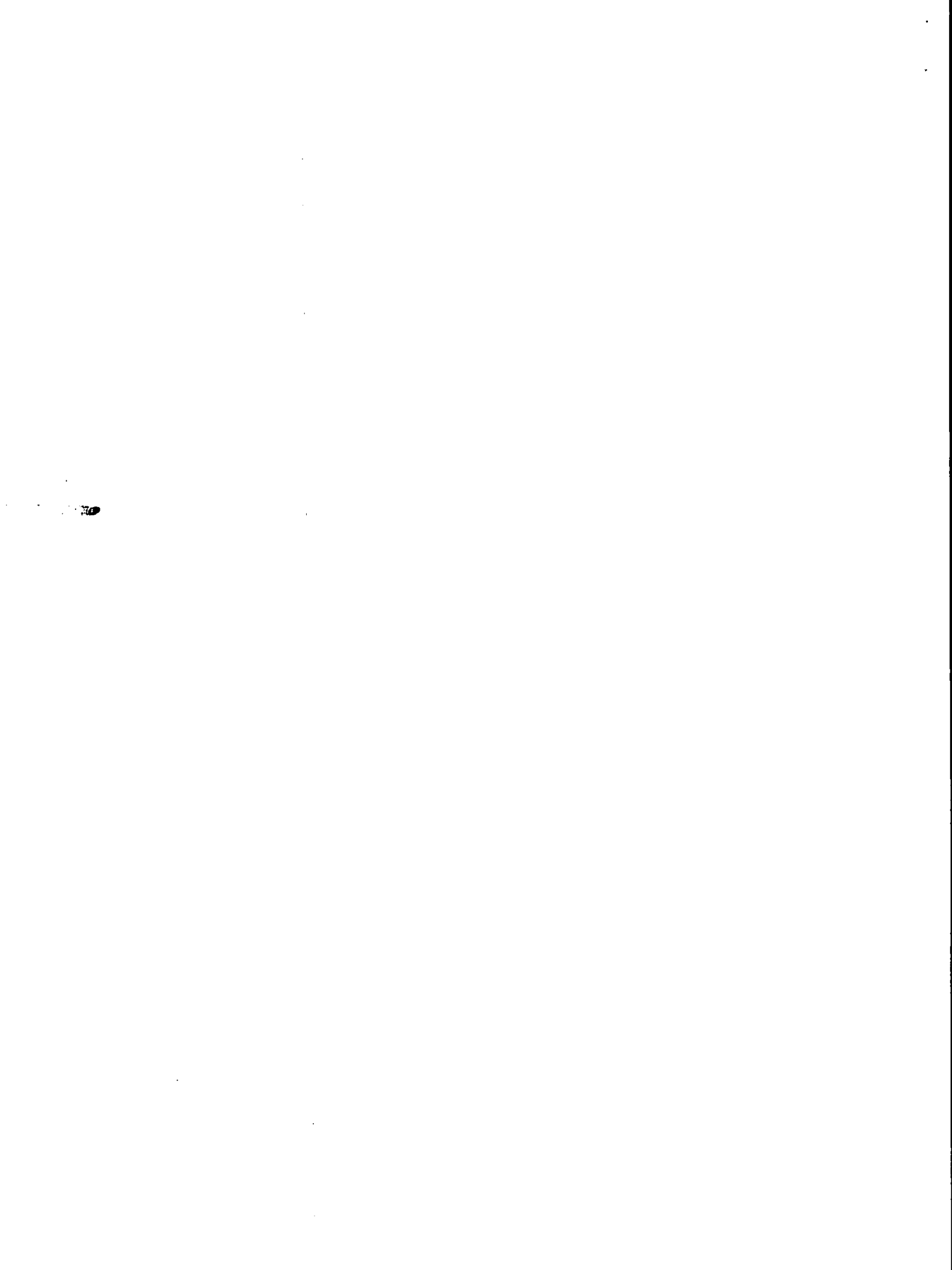
- The Adoption of the ECOWAS Biometric Identity Card to facilitate mobility and promote security in the region;
- The promotion of strategic products to enhance food security and food sovereignty
- The operationalisation of the West African Regional Agricultural Information System - ECOAGRIS- in the 15 Member States;
- The continued operationalisation of the Regional Investment Guarantee Mechanism with the signing of a partnership agreement with the African Trade Insurance Agency (ATI) as well as the establishment of a regional framework for public-private partnership;
- The ongoing process for the establishment of the ECOWAS Radio and TV Station;
- The sustained implementation of the construction project of the Abidjan-Lagos highway, the joint border posts programme and development of the region's aviation sector;
- The grant of assistance to the Ebola-affected Member States, the victims of the volcano eruption in Cabo Verde and the displaced persons due to the Boko Haram terrorist activities in Nigeria;
- Management of Epidemics, especially the Ebola Virus Disease.
- The Community support in collaboration with the African Union and the United Nations for a smooth transition process in Burkina Faso;
- Provision of technical and financial assistance to Nigeria, Togo, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso to organise their general elections in 2015;
- Conclusion of the first phase of the institutional reform, development of the Community strategic framework 2016-2020 and operationalisation of the ECOLINK programme;
- The ongoing inauguration of the 4th legislature of the ECOWAS Parliament;
- The establishment of the ECOWAS Regional Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECOWAS-RCDP) at the ECOWAS Headquarters in Nigeria;

19. On the ECOWAS Commission's vision for the next 40 years entitled "ECOWAS of our dreams", the President indicated that the ECOWAS 2055 Agenda, which is consistent with United Nations 2030 Agenda and African Union 2063 Agenda, focuses mainly on deepening regional integration, eradicating abject poverty and promoting socio-economic development. It also aims to create the enabling conditions for sustainable enhancement of living standards and peaceful coexistence among the people, as well as among Member States on the basis of good governance and rule of law. The President concluded his presentation by putting forward recommendations for promoting the deepening of regional integration and enhancing regional economic development.

20. Council welcomed the quality of the document and congratulated the Commission for the actions taken especially the role played by the Member States in facilitating the major integration achievements and peacekeeping. It subsequently took note of the undertaking made by Guinea Bissau, Cabo Verde and Sierra Leone to implement the CET in 2016, as well as the submission of a bill on CET, by Ghana to its Parliament, for consideration. Council adopted the report alongside all its recommendations.

Item 3: Presentation and Consideration of the Implementation status of Tasks Assigned by the 74th Ordinary Session of Council

21. The Commission presented an implementation status on the tasks assigned to the



held in Accra on 15 and 16 May, 2015. The tasks assigned which covered sixteen (16) key areas are attached to this report as Annex B.

22. After presentation, Council sought clarifications on the issue of payment of gratuity to contract staff, renovation of the official residence of the President of the Commission, the construction of a new headquarters building by the Government of the People's Republic of China as well as transportation of personal effects of staff. Thereafter, Council adopted the report with the following recommendations: -

- Gratuity should be deposited in a special account and paid once, to staff at the time of separation;
- The Commission is invited to consider the option of pre-financing the renovations on the official residence of the President of the Commission and ask for reimbursement from the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- The Commission should continue discussions with the Chinese Government and ensure that the said new headquarters building is constructed and handed over with all relevant equipment;
- The Commission should ensure that transportation of staff personal effects is paid in accordance with grade and destination.

Item 4: Presentation and Consideration of the Financial Controller's 2015 Interim Report

23. The 2015 Report of the Financial Controller covered the budgetary and financial situation as well as staffing of the Community Institutions for the period 1st January to 31st October, 2015.

24. It indicated that ten (10) months from the beginning of the year, total income receipts amounted to only about UA88m, yielding 37% mobilisation rate. A UA1.95m part-redemption of Contribution Arrears was received from Guinea Bissau out of UA20.4m outstanding. On the whole, with 37% resource mobilization for the period, only 34% of the expenditure budget could be executed.

25. The Financial Controller stated that as at 31st October, 2015, the Community had a total staff strength of 1,117. This comprises 27 Statutory Appointees, 51 Directors, 447 other International Staff and 592 Local Staff. Females represent 28% of staff. The Community now has 5 Institutions, 6 Agencies, 4 Liaison Offices, 5 Centres, 9 Special Representations and 4 Zonal Bureaux.

26. At the end of his report, the Financial Controller made the following recommendations:-

- a) The closure of the bureaux in Burkina Faso and Liberia by end of March, 2016, and the redeployment of the Staff of the bureaux as appropriate;
- b) To protect Community resources and to serve as a deterrent, it is recommended that officers involved in the reported case of infraction in the Mali Special Representation's Office, should be sanctioned;
- c) The limitation of the tenure of Heads of Representation/Liaison offices to a term limit of two-years renewable only once;
- d) The Office of the Financial Controller will extend oversight roles to all entities which receive funds from the Community Levy. Where the receiving entity is not

4 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1

6 108

under the direct supervision of the Council, such oversight shall be limited to Community funds so received only;

- e) The Commission should activate a robust treasury management system whereby idle funds deposited in Community accounts are invested to derive optimal returns.

27. Council lauded the quality of the report and sought clarifications on the following key issues reported by the Financial Controller in his report, namely:

- Allegations against the Special Representative in Mali;
- Tenures of Heads of Representation;
- Closure of Zonal Bureaux in Burkina Faso and Liberia;
- Low execution rate of programmes due mainly to the low-level of repayment of Community Levy proceeds by Member States.

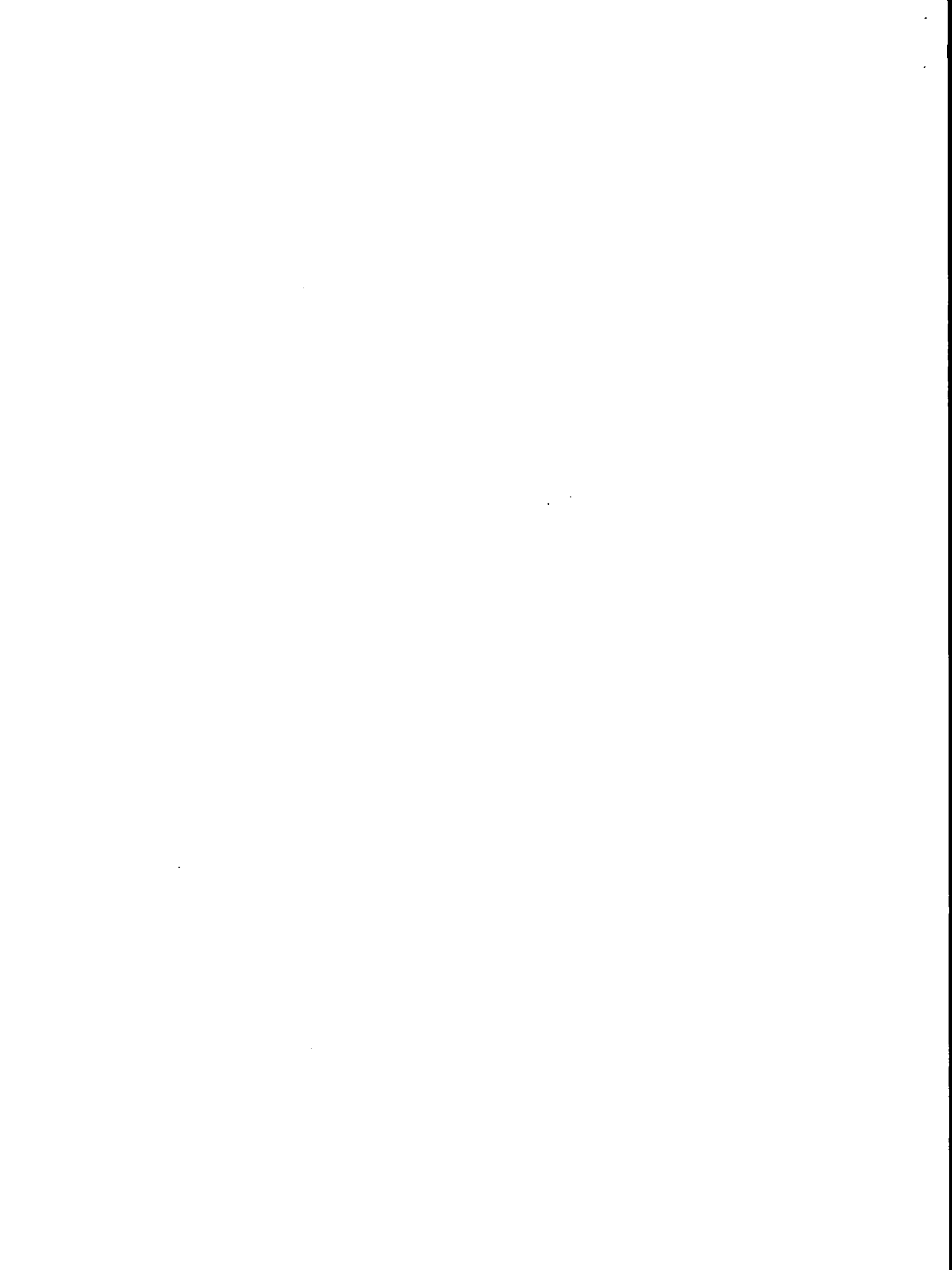
28. The President of the Commission informed Council of an ongoing investigation into the Office of the Special Representation in Mali and that appropriate measures would be taken to address any shortcomings. Council took note of the information provided by the Commission and adopted the report with the following specific decisions:

- Financial Controller should share his report with other institutions and incorporate their Observations/arguments when presenting the report to Council;
- The Commission should address the tenures of the Heads of Representation in the general framework of the revision of the Staff Regulations;
- The Zonal Bureaux in Burkina Faso and Liberia will be hosted in the Offices of the Permanent Representations from where they will continue to execute their mandate;
- The need to take due account of the principle of geographical spread in all recruitments including the appointments of Permanent Representatives in particular when the process of the opening of these Representations resumes;
- The Commission should develop a strategy to reinforce mobilisation of external funding.

Item 5: Presentation and Consideration of the Final Report of the 18th Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee

29. The final report of the 18th meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee was presented by Mr. Jean Antoine Diouf, Chairman of the Committee. The report dealt mainly with the following key issues:

- Presentation and Consideration of the Implementation Status of the Community Levy Protocol;
- Presentation and Consideration of the 2016 Draft Consolidated Budget of ECOWAS Institutions;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Request for the Disbursement of ECOWAS Counterpart Funding for the Implementation of the Project Initial Activities of the Strategic Programme on Reduction of Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in West Africa;



- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum relating to the Organization of ECOWAS Meetings in Member States;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Establishment of an ECOWAS Radio/Television Station;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on a Special Budget for 2016 Elections in Niger, Benin, Cabo Verde, The Gambia and Ghana;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Draft Regulation on the establishment of the National Early Warning and Response Mechanism;
- Presentation of the 2015 Financial Controller's Interim Report;
- Presentation of the Project Document on the Establishment of ECOWAS Monetary Institute.

30. After extensive discussions, Council adopted the report and agreed specifically on the following decisions:

- a) The Community should ensure that the work programmes and activity report are annexed to the draft budget
- b) To urge Community Institutions to present their budget using a common template for presenting budget
- c) To urge ECOWAS Institutions to place greater emphasis on the execution of social projects;
- d) To equally urge them, where necessary, to delegate more responsibilities to the Member States, civil society and the private sector for Community programme implementation;
- e) To ask ECOWAS to step up its resource mobilisation efforts, especially through a more purposeful approach to the collection of Community Levy particularly through quarterly visits to Member States and the consideration of possible external funding by the development partners;
- f) To encourage the ECOWAS Commission to reflect on the implementation of programme budgets;
- g) Member States are invited to provide political support for the creation of the ECOWAS Radio and Television Station and encourage the Commission to mobilise the necessary financial resources, particularly from the private sector.

Item 6: Presentation and Consideration of the Report of the Community Levy Management Committee

31. In its presentation, the Commission highlighted the challenges relative to the late payments in the Community Levy proceeds, non-depository of collected funds into the ECOWAS account in Central Banks as well as the conversion of the proceeds of the Community Levy into convertible currency.

32. The Commission indicated that these challenges in the implementation and management of the Community Levy Protocol have resulted in the dearth of financial



resources and consequently impacted negatively on its integration objectives and marred the operations of the Community.

33. In this regard, the Commission recommended the following to Council for adoption:-

- A technical review of the ECOWAS Community Levy Protocol be conducted by the Commission in the light of challenges faced by Member States in the application of the Protocol provisions;
- Concerned Member States should do what can be done to clear up outstanding arrears in order to avoid imposition of the sanctions stipulated in the said Protocol;
- A new grace period of two years be given, with the deadline for paying up all arrears owed the Community not exceeding 31st December, 2017.

34. At the end of the deliberations, Council took note of the determination of all Member States to meet their obligations in the area of funding the Community.

35. Council adopted the report with the following decisions:-

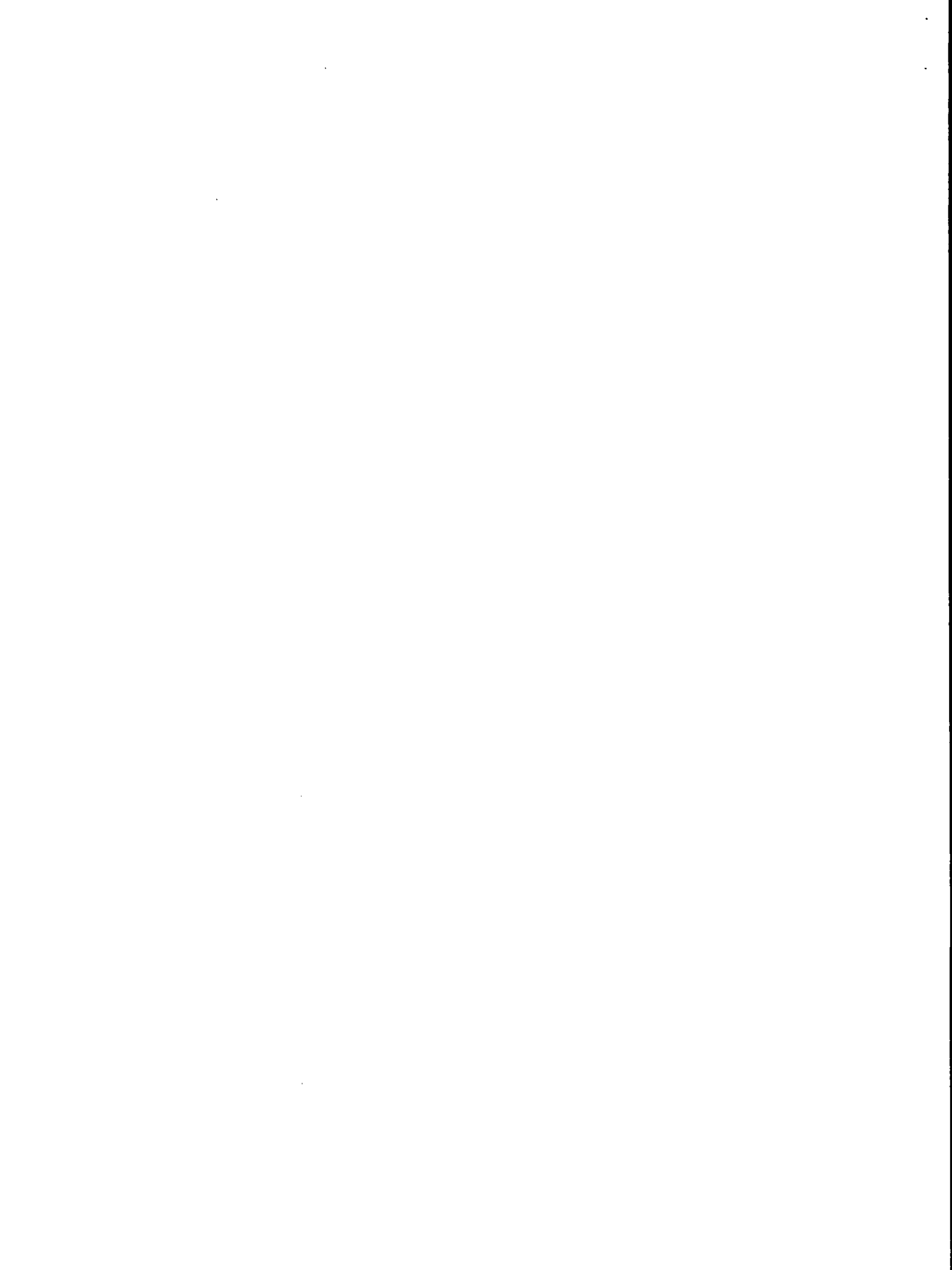
- Encourage the Commission to continue and fast-track the process of general revision of Community funding mechanisms already launched, and include, in the exercise, a technical assessment of the Protocol relating to the ECOWAS Community Levy;
- Direct the Commission to draw up immediately, with the concerned Member States, a timetable for the settlement of arrears, be it CL contributions or lodgement of proceeds and ensure a timely submission of the memoranda on the settlement of arrears.

Item 7: Presentation and Consideration of the Memorandum on ECOWAS Community Strategic Framework 2016 - 2020

36. The Commission presented the 2016-2020 Community Strategic Framework (CSF) with emphasis on the strategic priorities, operational objectives, implementation strategy as well as the monitoring and evaluation framework.

37. The framework aims to consolidate the gains made over the last forty years and accelerate the regional integration process in all fields.

38. In this perspective, the framework stands on three strategic pillars and five operational objectives. The strategic pillars are political integration and stability and institutional and infrastructural support. The operational objectives ensuing from the ECOWAS Vision and the fundamental principles as stipulated in the 1993 Revised ECOWAS Treaty are as follows: Deepening socio-economic development in Member State; Forging and consolidating regional economic and monetary integration; Penning political cohesion and participation within the region; Mobilising and sustaining societal and institutional support; and Expanding and improving infrastructural facilities within the region.



39. With regard to implementation, the CSF is structured around a results-based management (RBM) framework. In addition, it involves the need for greater coordination of activities among and within institutions and partners. Consequently, it is intended to be used as a single benchmark for all ECOWAS institutions and agencies in defining their plans and programmes. The successful implementation of the CSF is contingent on the fundamental support of all ECOWAS statutory bodies and Member States particularly through the ECOWAS national offices. Another important aspect of the implementation strategy as laid down in the presentation focuses on funding for the CSF and the challenges to be addressed. As regards monitoring and evaluation, the CSF is underpinned by a solid foundation for performance assessment and achieving results through the setting out of indicators and targets.

40. Council took note of the Strategic Framework as proposed and underscored the need to ensure its linkage with the different national development strategies. Council also underscored the need to involve non state actors, such as Civil Society Organisations and professional bodies in the popularization and ownership of the CSF. In this regard, Council directed the Commission to ensure that such linkages be effected in collaboration with the ECOWAS National Offices.

Item 8: Presentation and Consideration of the Phase II Report of the Institutional Reform Consultants

41. In its presentation of the memorandum on Phase II of the Institutional Reform on Business Processes, Systems, Procedures and Staffing, the Commission focused on the following issues covered in the report:

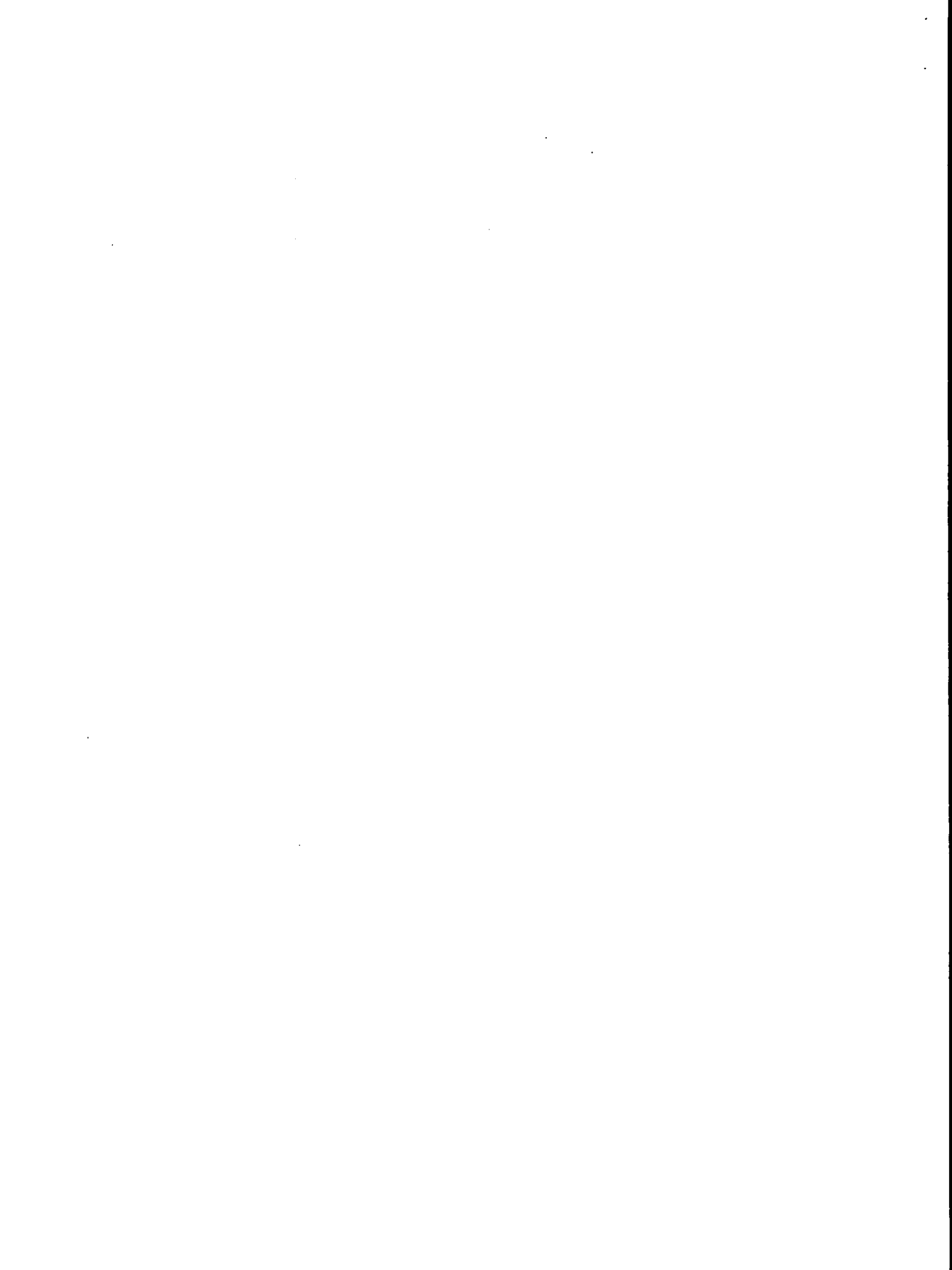
- Business Process Re-engineering;
- HR Management practices, job classification and staffing needs;
- Financial Management, Internal Audit and Information Technology;
- Procurement, Ethics, Fraud, and Corruption;
- Travel Management, rules of procedure and office technology.

42. The Commission also highlighted the major findings in the report which basically pointed to the creation of a mid-management category, between G and P suggestively to be called A (Administrative). The said findings relate to:

- The Performance Management Framework,
- The effective utilization of financial and human resources
- The adoption of best practices in Human Resource Management that are well known within the Department but rarely applied, and
- The adoption of job classification and grading systems

43. In conclusion, the Commission highlighted a list of six (6) recommendations as well as twenty (20) action points in the report, to be adopted to ensure the success of the reform process and invited Council to consider and approve the recommended actions.

44. After exhaustive deliberations, Council approved the Phase II Report. Council further requested that the conclusions and recommendation of this phase II be presented to it by the Consultants. Finally Council agreed to set up an Ad Hoc Ministerial Subcommittee comprised of Cabo Verde; Ghana; Guinea; Niger, Nigeria and Senegal for the monitoring of the implementation of the Institutional Reform.



Item 9: Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Admission of the Union of the Comoros Islands (UCI) as a GIABA Member State

45. GIABA presented a memorandum on a request for full membership from the Union of the Comoros Islands (UCI) of GIABA. It recalled Council's endorsement of the observer status of Comoros in GIABA at its 69th Ordinary Session held in Abuja and its recommendation to the Authority of Heads of State and Government which approved it.

46. The memorandum stated that at its 15th meeting held in Dakar, Senegal, in November 2015, the GIABA Ministerial Committee (GMC) gave its consent for the admission of the Union of The Comoros Island (UCI) as a full member of GIABA, subject to the endorsement of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers, and final approval of the Authority of Heads of State and Government.

47. In this regard, the UCI should honour all its financial obligations to GIABA and as part of the conditions for its membership, UCI agree to make an annual contribution to the budget of GIABA as a non-regional member.

48. In view of the commitment expressed by UCI in GIABA activities since it was granted observer status in 2012, and its fulfilment of all necessary and sufficient conditions for membership of GIABA, Council is requested to endorse the membership of GIABA of UCI and recommend the approval by the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government in accordance with the relevant provisions of the GIABA Revised Statutes.

49. After deliberations, Council approved the membership of GIABA of UCI and recommended its endorsement by the Authority.

Item 10: Presentation and Consideration of the Recommendations of the GIABA Ministerial Committee on the Sustainability of the Fight against Money Laundering in West Africa;

50. The Commission in its presentation indicated that the GIABA Ministerial Committee (GMC) composed of Ministers of Finance, Justice and Security of the ECOWAS Member States met on 7th November, 2015 in Dakar to review the challenges posed by the scourges of money laundering and terrorism financing in West Africa particularly noting the demands from the International Community for more compliance by ECOWAS Member States.

51. In conclusion, GIABA requested Council to adopt a recommendation related to the sustenance of AML/CFT funding in ECOWAS budget.

52. Council took note of the presentation.

Item 11: Consideration of the Draft Agenda of the 48th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government;

53. The President of the Commission presented the draft agenda of the 48th Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government.

54. After amendments, Council adopted the draft agenda annexed to this report.



ITEMS FOR ENDORSEMENT

Item 12: Consideration and Adoption of Reports of the 2015 Meetings of the Assembly of Health Ministers and Memorandum on the West African Center for Disease Control

55. The Honourable Minister of State in charge of Budgets of Senegal, Mr Birima Mangara on behalf of his colleague in charge of Health and President of the Assembly of Health Ministers, presented the report of the 16th Ordinary Meeting of the Assembly of Health Ministers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) held on 13th March, 2015, in Niamey, Niger.

56. The Minister also presented the report of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Assembly of ECOWAS Health Ministers held in Dakar on 3rd November 2015, which highlighted the recommendations as adopted, particularly the WAHO Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 and the projects on the creation of the functional modalities of the ECOWAS Regional Centre for Disease Control.

57. The Minister's presentation was completed by the Director General of WAHO who particularly expressed the need for a budget of \$5m for the establishment of the Centre to be based in Nigeria.

58. In conclusion, the Minister indicated that the Assembly of Health Ministers recommended to Council to adopt the Reports and approve the amount of \$5m requested for the establishment of the Centre for Disease Control.

59. After presentation, Council endorsed the reports and the memorandum on the Centre for Disease Control and urged the Commission in collaboration with WAHO to mobilise external funds for the amount so requested.

Item 13: Consideration and adoption of the Report of ECOWAS Ministers of Industry and the Memorandum on Draft Regulations Approving ECOWAS Harmonised Standards (ECOSTAND)

60. In his presentation, the representative of Ghana on behalf of the Minister of Industry of Ghana recalled Article 26 of the Revised Treaty which confers duties regarding the development of the Industry Sector in the West African Region which gave rise to the adoption of the West African Common Industrial Policy (WACIP) in 2010.

61. He also indicated that in line with this, the ECOWAS Ministers in charge of Industry and Quality met on 24th April, 2015 in Accra to revise the Strategy for the WACIP and also to validate twenty-five (25) Final Drafts of ECOWAS Harmonized Standards (ECOSTANDs).

62. He further also stressed the need to accelerate the mobilization of necessary resources to ensure the implementation of the WACIP as well as complete the standards harmonization process and ensure the dissemination of those standards.

63. In conclusion, Council was invited to endorse the adoption of the Revised Strategy for the WACIP as well as the 25 ECOSTANDs.

64. After presentation, Council endorsed the report



ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Item 14: Information on Member States' Requests for International Posts

65. The Commission informed the Council of the Federal Republic of Nigeria's intention to present its candidature for membership into the Africa Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) for another three (3) years starting from the year 2016. The election is scheduled to hold during the 26th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in January 2016.

66. The Commission also informed the Council of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire's intention to present the candidacy of **Mr. CISSE YACOUBA** as a Member of the United Nations International Law Commission representing the African group, the tenure of whose current members is due to expire in 2016.

67. Furthermore, the Commission informed Council of Burkina Faso's intention present its candidacy to host the headquarters of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) of the African Union.

68. Council took note of the information provided and indicated its support for the various requests from Member States.

Item 15: Memorandum on the ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority

69. The Commission informed Council of the process underway for setting up the ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority instituted by Supplementary Act ASA.2/12/08.

70. By Decision A/Dec.3/05/15, the 47th ordinary session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government awarded the headquarters of the ERCA to The Gambia. The Commission informed Council of the working mission fielded to Banjul in October 2015 helped finalise the ERCA Headquarters Agreement between The Gambia and the Commission. Based on the progress made, the Commission indicated that the Headquarters Agreement and official opening of the headquarters are subsequent steps to be taken.

71. As a result, the Commission sought Council's approval of a budget of UA300, 000 to cover the start-up costs, personnel recruitment process and procurement of initial office equipment.

72. Council took note of the memorandum.

Item 16: Information on the ECOWAS Academic Mobility Programme

73. The Commission, in its presentation recalled the recommendation by the ECOWAS Ministers in charge of Higher Education and Scientific Research in November 2014, to create within the region, an academic mobility system for students and teachers, including the diaspora.

74. In line with this, the Association of African Universities (AAU) was designated as the lead implementing agency for the ECOWAS Academic Mobility Scheme in view of its track record of successfully implementing regional awards of this nature.



75. The Commission further informed that, for the launching of the programme, a total of 3,546 applications were received by AAU for admission into Masters and PhD programmes. After due screening and selection based on the criteria, 50 and 25 students were shortlisted for Masters and PhD respectively and admission has been negotiated with universities for the 2015/2016 academic year. Also 13 lecturers have benefited from the staff exchange programme in different universities across the region.

76. In order to increase the visibility and sustainability of such programme, the Commission requested Council to approve that ECOWAS Academic Mobility Scheme be called **Nnamdi Azikiwe Academic Mobility Scheme**.

77. Council took note of the presentation and endorsed the proposal to rename the academic mobility programme as **Nnamdi Azikiwe Academic Mobility Scheme**.

Item 17: Any Other Business

78. Council presented its heartfelt condolences to Mrs. Hannah Tetteh, Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Republic of Ghana on the occasion of the loss of her mother. Council expressed its unreserved solidarity with Mrs. Tetteh and her family on this sad occasion.

Item 18: Adoption of the Report

79. The report was adopted after amendments.

CLOSING SESSION

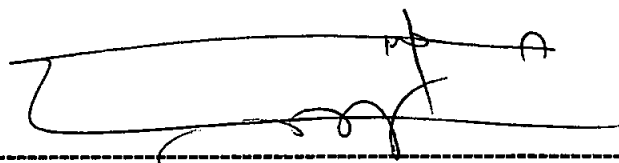
Item 19: Vote of Thanks

80. The Vote of thanks was read by Mr. Cheickna Seydi Ahmadi DIAWARA, Honourable Minister of International Cooperation and African Integration of the Republic of Mali.

Item 20: Closing Remarks of the Chairperson of Council

81. The Chairperson of Council, H.E. Khadim Diop, in his closing remarks, thanked Council members for their contributions during the deliberations and for the spirit of brotherhood and friendship which prevailed during their session. Thereafter, he declared the Seventy-Fifth Ordinary Session of Council closed, and wished all returning participants, safe journey back to their respective destinations.

DONE AT ABUJA THIS 14th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2015



**H.E. Khadim Diop
MINISTER OF AFRICAN INTEGRATION, NEPAD AND PROMOTION
OF GOOD GOVERNANCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL
CHAIRMAN**

FOR: COUNCIL OF MINISTERS



**COMUNIDADE DOS ESTADOS DA
AFRICA DO OESTE**

**ECONOMIC COMMUNITY
OF WEST AFRICAN STATES**



**COMMUNAUTE ECONOMIQUE
DES ETATS DE L'AFRIQUE
DE L'OUEST**

VOTE OF THANKS

The participants at the Seventy-Fifth Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers held in Abuja, from 13th – 14th December, 2015 express their profound gratitude to His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and to the Government and people of the Federal Republic 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 14TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2015

THE SESSION

