



EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE ECOWAS AUTHORITY
OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ON GUINEA BISSAU

8th November 2019, Niamey, Republic of Niger

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

1. The Extraordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was held on 8th November 2019 in Niamey, Republic of Niger, under the chairmanship of H. E. **Issoufou Mahamadou**, President of the Republic of Niger and Chairman of the Authority.

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

- H.E. **Patrice Guillaume Talon**, President of the Republic of Benin;
- H.E. **Alassane Ouattara**, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire;
- H.E. **Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo**, President of the Republic of Ghana;
- H.E. **George Manneh Weah**, President of the Republic of Liberia;
- H.E. **Issoufou Mahamadou**, President of the Republic of Niger;
- H.E. **Macky Sall**, President of the Republic of Senegal;
- H.E. **Julius Maada Bio**, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone;
- H.E. **Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe**, President of the Togolese Republic

3. Also present were the following Vice Presidents, Ministers and Personalities:

- H.E. **Prof Yemi Osinbajo**, Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
- H.E. **Dr Issatou Touray**, Vice President of the Republic of the Gambia,
- H.E. **Alpha Barry**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Burkina Faso
- H.E. **Tiebile Drame**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Mali,
- H.E. **Naby Youssouf Kiridi Bangoura**, Senior Minister, Permanent Secretary, Presidency of the Republic of Guinea,

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H.E. **Suzy Barbosa**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Guinea Bissau,

H.E. **Ignacio Felicio Rosa Carvalho**, Ambassador of the Republic of Cabo Verde to Senegal

4. The session was also attended by:

- H.E. **Jean-Claude Kassi Brou**, President of the ECOWAS Commission;
- Dr. **Mohamed Ibn Chambas**, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS);
- Honourable **Minata Samata Cessouma**, Commissioner Political Affairs, African Union Commission

5. At the opening ceremony, a statement was delivered by Jean-Claude Kassi Brou, President of the ECOWAS Commission. The welcome address was given by H.E. **Issoufou Mahamadou**, President of the Republic of Niger,

On the political situation in Guinea-Bissau

6. The Authority took note of the Report of the Ministerial Follow-Up Committee on the political situation in Guinea-Bissau, which emerged from the mission conducted to Bissau on 3rd November 2019.

7. The Authority expressed satisfaction at the quality of the report and memorandum presented and the relevance of the recommendations made therein.

8. The Authority recalled the successful legislative election of March 10th 2019 and the nomination of Prime Minister Aristides Gomes;

9. Recalling that the term of the President of the Republic ended on 23rd June 2019 and on the basis of the consensus reached by the political stakeholders, the following decisions were taken at the last Summit of 29th June 2019:

- The President to sign the decree of nomination of the Government before 3rd July, 2019, on the basis of the proposition made by the Prime Minister
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- The government will, amongst other things, engage in the preparation of the presidential election to be held on 24th November 2019;



- The President will stay in office until the next presidential elections but will leave the management of government affairs to the newly formed government

10. The Authority notes the progress made in the preparation of the presidential elections, including:

- i. The consensual decision by all stakeholders to use the voters' register issued for the legislative elections of 10th March 2019;
- ii. The finalisation of the list of candidates for the presidential election by the Supreme Court;
- iii. The decision of ECOWAS to provide support to the electoral process through the disbursement of USD 1.5 million;
- iv. The decision to deploy ECOWAS electoral observers.

11. The Authority observes that it was at the very time when the Member State had commenced preparations for the presidential elections to hold on 24th November 2019, with the support of international community, that President Jose Mario Vaz suddenly dismissed Prime Minister Gomes by a decree of Monday 28th October 2019 and dissolved the government. President Vaz subsequently appointed a new Prime Minister and a new government on Tuesday, 29th October 2019.

12. The Heads of State and Government express their deep regrets with this turn of events, which plunge the country into political and institutional crisis and bring on the threat of civil war. They confirm their renewed and firm belief in the values and founding principles of ECOWAS, and their total commitment to spare no effort in ensuring the consolidation of peace, security and democratic values.

13. The Authority insist on the date of 24th November 2019 as the date for the first round of presidential elections in Guinea Bissau. To this end, the President of the Commission shall take all necessary steps to support the electoral process, including the deployment of election observers such that the credibility and transparency of the entire process are guaranteed

14. The Authority firmly condemns President Vaz's decision to dismiss Prime Minister Aristides Gomes and the appointment of a new Prime Minister. It underlines the fact that this violates the constitution of Guinea Bissau and is contrary to the decision handed down by the Authority during its 55th Ordinary Session of 29th June 2019.

15. The Authority reaffirms its full support to Prime Minister Aristides Gomes and to his government and urges them to continue to carry out their duties, in particular the efforts to prepare the 24th November 2019 elections.

16. To this end, the Authority demands the immediate resignation of the Prime Minister appointed on the 29th October 2019 and his entire government, failing which individuals sanctions will apply.

17. The Authority recalls that since 23rd June 2019 President Vaz is in fact an acting President whose orders must be countersigned by the Prime Minister to render them legal.

18. The Authority insists that any recourse to the army or the security forces as a way of forcefully imposing any illegal action will be considered a coup d'etat and will lead to sanctions being taken against those responsible.

19. The Authority welcomes the kick off of the electoral campaign on 2nd November, 2019 and encourages all stakeholders to work for the effective holding of presidential elections on 24th November, 2019. It encourages the twelve (12) presidential candidates validated by the Supreme Court, to do their level best to ensure the holding of violence free, transparent and credible elections. To this end, the Authority calls for a strengthening of the dialogue between the Institutions and political actors.

20. The Heads of State and Government direct the President of the Commission to present a list of any individuals who may have in any way undertaken actions that would derail the electoral process and upset political stability, whereby they would immediately be sanctioned.

21. The Authority also commends the professionalism of the ECOMIB Force and encourages the Defence and Security Forces of Guinea-Bissau to continue to remain neutral in relation to the political crisis.

22. In addition, the Authority decides to strengthen the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea Bissau (ECOMIB), to position it to respond to all challenges, before,



during and after the elections. This would include an increase in troop numbers and a possible reinforcement of its mandate.

23. The Heads of States and Government note with concern the drug trafficking activities in Guinea Bissau and their connection with the political circle and urges the Government to intensify the fight against drug trafficking in the country.

24. The Authority invites the Commission to provide urgent technical support after the presidential elections to accelerate the implementation of the constitutional reforms contained in the Conakry Agreement. A timetable will need to be provided three (3) months after the presidential elections. The referendum on the constitutional reform should hold in 2020.

25. The Authority decides to dispatch to Bissau, a high-level mission of Heads of State and Government, led by the Chair of Authority and comprising the Heads of State of Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria, to convey the decisions of the Authority to President Vaz. The mission will be preceded by a mission of ECOWAS Chiefs of Defence Staff.

On the closure of the border between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Member States

26. The Authority was briefed on the border closure between on the one hand, the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of Benin and, on the other hand, between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of Niger. The Summit notes the on-going actions being taken by the Commission with the deployment of the Task Force on the Free Movement of Goods and Persons. The Heads of State encouraged the affected Member States to continue consultations, in order to reach a consensual solution. The Authority was informed that a tripartite meeting has been scheduled between Nigeria, Benin and Niger in Abuja on 14th November 2019, to find a lasting solution to the issue. In addition, subsequent meetings will be convened between in particular, the Ministers of Trade and Finance of Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria and Togo, under the auspices of the President of Burkina Faso, champion of the Free Movement of Goods and Persons. These meetings will seek to deepen discussions on trade between Member States in the sub-region.

27. The Authority conveys its congratulations to H. E. **Issoufou Mahamadou**, President of the Republic of Niger and Chairman of the Authority, for his unrelenting commitment to regional integration and exemplary leadership in steering the affairs of the Community.

DONE AT NIAMEY THIS 8TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2019

THE AUTHORITY

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**EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE ECOWAS AUTHORITY OF
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Niamey, Republic of Niger, 8th November 2019

VOTE OF THANKS

We, Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States, meeting on 8th November 2019 in our Extra Ordinary Session in Niamey, express our deep appreciation to H. E. **Issoufou Mahamadou**, President of the Republic of Niger and Chairman of the Authority, and the people of Niger for the warm hospitality extended to us in a truly African fashion and for the excellent facilities placed at our disposal to ensure the success of our Summit.

We equally wish to thank him for his commitment to peace, security and good governance and for his remarkable leadership in steering the affairs of our Community. We pay him a well-deserved tribute for his contribution, as Chairman of the Authority, to deepening the integration process in West Africa.

In that regard, we, Heads of State and Government, express our highest regard to H.E. **Issoufou Mahamadou**, President of the Republic of Niger and Chairman of the Authority, for the skill and effectiveness with which he presided over our proceedings, which significantly contributed to the formulation of relevant decisions for the deepening of the integration process.

We are also grateful to him for the relaxed atmosphere in which we held our meeting.

DONE AT NIAMEY, THIS 8TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2019

THE AUTHORITY