



ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

ECW/CM/XCII
Original: English
Date: 5 July 2024

**NINETY-SECOND (92ND) ORDINARY SESSION
OF THE ECOWAS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

Abuja, Nigeria. 4 - 5 July 2024

FINAL REPORT

ECOWAS Commission
Abuja, July 2024

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Ninety-Second Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers was held in Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria, on 4th and 5th July 2024.

2. The following Member States were represented:

- Republic of Benin;
- Republic of Cabo Verde;
- Republic of Cote d'Ivoire;
- Republic of The Gambia;
- Republic of Ghana;
- Republic of Guinea Bissau;
- Republic of Liberia;
- Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- Republic of Senegal;
- Republic of Sierra Leone; and
- Togolese Republic.

3. The following ECOWAS Institutions and Specialised Agencies were also represented:

- ECOWAS Commission
- ECOWAS Parliament
- Community Court of Justice
- ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID)
- Office of the Auditor General
- Inter-governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA)
- West African Health Organisation (WAHO)
- West Africa Monetary Agency (WAMA)
- West African Monetary Institute (WAMI)

4. A list of participants is attached as an annex to this report.

II. OPENING SESSION

5. In his welcome address, the President of the Commission, Dr Alieu Omar Touray, on behalf of the Management and staff of ECOWAS, welcomed members of Council and other participants to the 92nd Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers and expressed gratitude of the Management for Council's guidance and support in the implementation of Community decisions and integration programmes.

6. He also expressed appreciation to H.E. Bola Ahmed Tinubu (GCFR) President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chair of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, as well as to H.E. Yusuf Maitama Tuggar (OON), the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, and Chair

of Council, and to the Government and People of Nigeria, for the warm reception extended to all the participants of the meeting and for the facilities made available for the effective conduct of the meeting.

7. The President recalled the enormity of the challenges facing the Community and highlighted the efforts being made to still deliver tangible results for citizens. These include high-level engagements to clear the impediments to free trade along the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor, plans made by Ministers of Finance and Defence to mobilise funds to safeguard the community against terrorism and unconstitutional changes of government as well as an ECOWAS Social Protection Framework for social cohesion and the improvement of the living standards of ECOWAS citizens.

8. Dr. Touray urged the Honourable Ministers to actively engage in the discussions to shape the future trajectory of West Africa. While urging Member States to keep the regional bond, he thanked Members of the Council of Ministers for their continued support to the Commission and other Community institutions through the challenging global economic challenges.

9. Taking his turn, the Chairperson of Council, H.E. Amb. Yusuf Maitama Tuggar (OON), Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, on behalf of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chair of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, H.E. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, the Government and the people of Nigeria, welcomed all participants to Abuja for the Ninety Second Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers.

10. The Honourable Minister indicated that the high turnout of Ministers demonstrates the Council's commitment to regional cooperation and the pursuit of a shared vision for peace, progress and prosperity for West Africa. He reiterated the efforts taken with the Commission to free trade across borders including the Togo-Benin border.

11. He also touched on related economic initiatives and efforts to enhancing regional security. He stressed that regardless of the gains made on regional integration, economic growth, and security, there remains substantial work head, and implored members of Council, to maintain the strength of unity and cooperation.

12. He then declared the Ninety-Second Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers open and wished participants successful deliberations.

13. The full texts of speeches are annexed to this report.

IV. ELECTION OF BUREAU

14. The following Bureau was elected:

- Chairperson - Federal Republic of Nigeria
- Rapporteurs - Republic of Cote d'Ivoire
- Republic of Guinea Bissau

V. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME

15. The following agenda was adopted:

I. OPENING CEREMONY

- Address by President of the ECOWAS Commission, **H.E. Dr. Omar Alieu Touray**
- Welcome and opening statement by the Chair of Council, **H.E. Amb. Yusuf Maitama Tuggar (OON)**, Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;

II. CLOSED DOOR SESSION

- Meeting called to order by the Chair of Council
- Election of Bureau
- Adoption of Agenda and Work Programme

ITEMS FOR DECISION

- i. Presentation and consideration of the President's 2024 Interim Report on the State of the Community;
- ii. Presentation and consideration of Report on the Financial Situation of the Community as of 15th June 2024;
- iii. Presentation and consideration of Memorandum on the Status of the Community Levy and Challenges of Remitting Proceeds collected by Member States;
- iv. Presentation and consideration of the Status of Tasks Assigned by the 91st Ordinary Session of Council of Ministers to Community Institutions;
- v. Presentation and consideration of the Final Report of the 35th Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee;
- vi. Presentation and consideration of the Auditor General's 2024 Mid-year Report;
- vii. Presentation and consideration of the Summary of the Reports of the 54th and 55th Meetings of the ECOWAS Audit Committee;
- viii. Presentation and consideration of the Report of the 2nd Meeting of the Permanent Representatives Committee;
- ix. Presentation and consideration of Memorandum relating to the Recommendations of the ECOWAS Judicial Council;
- x. Presentation and consideration of Memorandum on the Final Report of the ECOWAS Meeting of Ministers in charge of Social Protection;
- xi. Presentation and consideration of Memorandum of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme Task Force on the Implementation of Intra-Community Trade Regulations by Member States;
- xii. Presentation and consideration of Proposal for a Special Summit on the Future of the Community;
- xiii. Presentation and consideration of Draft Agenda of the 65th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- xiv. Presentation and consideration of Memorandum on ECOWAS Member States' Applications for International and Regional Statutory Positions;

- xv. Presentation and consideration of Memorandum on the State of Implementation of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS);
- xvi. Presentation and consideration of Memorandum on the Conakry Declaration titled “Labe Call for the Safeguarding of the Fouta Djallon Highlands, and for a Great Waters Coalition in the Sahel;
- xvii. Presentation and consideration of Memorandum on the ECOWAS Single Currency Programme for the First Half of 2024;
- xviii. Presentation and consideration of Memorandum on the Agricultural Outlook and the Food and Nutrition Situation in the Sahel and West Africa.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- xix. Any Other Business
- xx. Report Adoption
- xxi. Vote of Thanks
- xxii. Closing Remarks

VI. OUTCOME OF DELIBERATIONS

ITEMS FOR DECISION

Item 1: Presentation and consideration of the President’s 2024 Interim Report on the State of the Community

16. In 2024, the global economic growth is forecasted to remain at 3.2 percent in 2024 as in 2023, while inflation will be easing to 5.9 percent in 2024 from 6.8 percent in 2023. In Sub-Saharan Africa, economic growth is expected to slow to 3.8 percent in 2024, compared to 4.2 percent in 2023. Consumer price inflation is projected to reach 16.5 percent compared to 16.0 percent in 2023. In relative terms, public finance is expected to improve, with a shrinking budget deficit and declining debt to GDP ratio.

17. In 2024, the ECOWAS region is expected to grow faster than the African average. The ECOWAS economy is expected to grow by 4.2 percent in 2024, compared to 3.6 percent in 2023. The annual average inflation would drop to 19.3 percent in 2024 compared to 20.8 percent in 2023, linked to the expected drop in imported inflation, the effects of the tightening of monetary policies and the reduction in the rate of depreciation of national currencies.

18. The ECOWAS region has continued to experience a mixed result in peace and security during the first half of 2024. While some Member States saw relatively peaceful and inclusive elections, others faced mistrust among political actors and stakeholders. The Commission has supported Member States in enhancing electoral and governance processes and maintained engagements with Member States in transition (Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, and Niger) to restore democratic order, and for Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger to rescind their decision to leave the Community. In Sierra Leone, the temporary relocation of former President Ernest Bai Koroma to

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Nigeria eased tensions, and an Agreement for National Unity was signed, to address electoral issues. The Commission supported the free and fair presidential election in Senegal and legislative election in Togo.

19. On regional security, the Commission will explore financial options for the ECOWAS Standby Force to combat terrorism and deter unconstitutional changes of government, review of the Inter-Regional Maritime Coordination Centre's operations to enhance maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea and address the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the region.

20. The Commission also focused on deepening regional economic integration by implementing activities aimed at consolidating the free trade area, the customs union, the common market, and creating a monetary union. Six Member States (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo) ratified the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and thirteen Member States ratified the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Also, the ETLs Task Force visited the Sierra Leone-Liberia border to address trade disputes and customs challenges. Similarly, in order to facilitate the ETLs, the electronic certificate of origin was launched, with four countries in the test phase. In the area of Customs, ECOWAS' interconnected System for the Management of Goods In Transit (SIGMAT) was operational in twelve Member States, with efforts to connect the remaining three countries and train their customs officers.

21. The ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority (ERCA) provided technical and financial support for competition laws and established the ERCA Council to address anti-competitive practices. The private sector development focused on investment policies, joint investment promotion, and the ECOWAS Payments and Settlement System Project. In the area of industrial development, the ECOWAS Commission has made progress in quality and standards, food fortification, and research and statistics. The Commission has also initiated a strategic plan for industrial development and launched the AfricDeezayn, an online platform for ECOWAS designers.

22. On monetary cooperation, the High-Level Committee has proposed a draft Practical Arrangements for the launch of the ECO currency, including the procedure for the selection of candidate countries for the Monetary Union, as well as the institutional arrangements. The Commission has produced a draft 2013 ECOWAS Macroeconomic Convergence Report and Forecast for 2024. The second edition of the ECOWAS Regional Economic Outlook has been produced with the theme "transport and communication infrastructure as a catalyst for regional economic integration".

23. On humanitarian challenges, driven by conflicts and insecurity in the Sahel. The region has witnessed influx of refugees from Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, with approximately 87,000 seeking refuge in the northern regions of Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Togo by 2024. In response, the Commission has allocated \$9 million to assist Persons of Concern, including refugees, IDPs, and asylum seekers. This funding aims to enhance access to protection, food, education, healthcare, and livelihoods, bolstering the resilience of host communities. Similarly,

under the ECOWAS Counter Terrorism Humanitarian Response, ECOWAS supported the frontline Member States with \$4 million.

24. The Commission continued with the ECOWAS Nnamdi Azikiwe Academic Mobility Scheme to equip youth with practical skills, harmonization of education systems in the region, the establishment of the West African Network of National Academies of Sciences, and the African Forum for Research and Innovation.

25. In terms of youth and sports development, the Commission also deployed volunteers to different countries, conducted monitoring and evaluation missions, and provided financial support to national volunteering programmes. On Gender Development, the Commission provided support to women with obstetric fistula, empowered women entrepreneurs in agribusiness, and focused on gender equality in education and the green economy. The EGDC has also worked on combating gender-based violence and sexual harassment. The production of the 2024 Human Capital Development Report and HCD Index is underway and is expected to be completed by the end of July 2024.

26. On Energy and Mines, the Commission has completed FEED studies and is collaborating with AFREC to enhance the ECOWAS-EIS. PRODEL20000 has identified over 15,000 localities for off-grid and grid-extension projects. The ECOWAS-REAP projects are advancing electrification efforts in The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, and Mali.

27. The ECOWAS Special Investment Fund for Renewable Energy is implementing projects in eight Member States, focusing on electrification, solar energy, and water access. The Desert-to-Power initiative seeks to harness solar energy in the Sahel, with clean mini-grid feasibility studies and training programs commencing. The ECOWAS Regional Electricity Sector Regulatory Authority (ERERA) has implemented activities aimed to streamline pricing, licensing, and dispute resolution processes.

28. On promoting environmental governance, ECOWAS has supported Member State experts in international meetings and negotiations on environmental concerns. It has also supported the implementation of the Paris Agreement and Nigeria in disseminating its low-carbon development strategy and exploring the establishment of a regional carbon market.

29. On the ECOWAS Regional Agricultural Policy, meetings of the various thematic steering committees on topics such as livestock, fisheries, agricultural productivity, climate change adaptation, and food security were held to fine-tune the implementation strategies. The Commission and EBID have approved instruments for the operationalization of the Regional Fund for Agriculture and Food (RFAF). The Food Crisis Prevention Network (FCPN) highlighted concerns regarding food and nutrition security. ECOWAS is taking steps to address the crisis, including donating grains and enriched flour to affected Member States and strengthening the Regional Food Security Reserve. A regional rice production roadmap has been developed to achieve self-sufficiency in rice production, and the first General Assembly of the Rice Observatory has been held.

30. On the regional project to support pastoralism in the Sahel. ECOWAS focuses on improving animal health, sustainable landscape management, livestock value chains, and the inclusion of women and young people. The region vaccinated over 392 million livestock against animal diseases. Similarly, efforts are being made to establish common rules for controlling veterinary medicine products at borders. The Commission has also launched a project to access the Green Climate Fund, promoting climate-smart agriculture through field sub-projects and the use of climate-adapted technologies.
31. On strengthening ECOWAS Institutions, ECOWAS has taken steps to strengthen its human resources through onboarding training for recruits, training programmes on performance management, and target setting. Manpower planning and recruitment are ongoing, with several positions advertised at various grade levels. The Commission has reviewed and updated its Risk Register and Procurement to deploy various systems such as the ECOWAS Learning Management System (LMS) and a Performance Management System (PMS). ECOWAS has developed a Succession Planning Programme, guidelines and policies to ensure uniform interpretation and application of Staff Regulations.
32. In terms of administration, the construction of the new ECOWAS Commission headquarters is progressing well, with completion scheduled for February 2025. While the Logistics Depot phases 2 and 3 in Sierra Leone have been completed and is awaiting the transfer of equipment.
33. On external relations, the Commission has accredited new Ambassadors and engaged with various countries to reaffirm its commitment to the ECOWAS Integration Agenda. The Commission participated in high-level meetings on peace, good governance, and resource mobilization for integration, and signed cooperation agreements with Germany and Spain. The ECOWAS Commission has established a unit to coordinate with other institutions within ECOWAS. The unit focuses on collaborating with the ECOWAS Parliament and Member State Embassies. In this regard, the unit has organized parliamentary sessions and contributed to the ECOWAS Code of Ethics.
34. On the ECOWAS Parliament, an evaluation of the performance of the Fifth Legislature was undertaken. Committees and leadership positions for the Sixth Legislature were also established. They also addressed issues related to illegal mining and conducted diplomatic missions and election observer missions. The Parliament participated in various international conferences.
35. On the Community Court of Justice, during the period under review, fifteen (15) new cases were filed at the Community Court of Justice, thirty-three (33) court sessions were held, and eleven (11) judgments were delivered. There were pending cases, and non-judicial activities including conferences, training, and sensitization. Challenges included translation delays and efforts were made in research, documentation, and information and communication.
36. Council took note and endorsed the 2024 Interim Report on the State of the Community.

Item 2: Presentation and Consideration of the Report on the Financial Situation of the Community as of 15th June 2024

37. The 91st Ordinary Session of Council held in Abuja on 7 - 8 December 2023 considered and approved a Community budget of **UA 397,215,748** for fiscal year 2024, as recommended by the Administration and Finance Committee. The approved budget, which is balanced in Income and Expenditure is comprised of the following:

38. Revenue from the Community Levy remains the main source of ECOWAS financing representing 82.7% of the approved budget. On the expenditure side, the largest share (87.2%) continues to be allocated to the Community Institutions.

39. As of 15th June 2024, a total amount of **UA 77,686,823** had been mobilised (see Table 1), representing a mobilisation rate of **19.6%**.

Table 1: Implementation of the Approved Budget

Chapters	2024 Approved Budget	Actual Income	Actual Income (%)
		15 th June 2024 (UA)	
Community Levy	187,820,000	18,957,874	10.1%
Year-End Bank Balances	65,509,332	47,011,747	71.8%
Arrears of Community Levy	74,987,116	4,138,632	5.5%
Other Income	550,000	147,929	26.9%
Income from External Sources	68,349,300	7,430,641	10.9%
Total Income	397,215,748	77,686,823	19.6%
Chapters	2024 Approved Budget	Actual Expenditure	Actual Exp. Rate (%)
		15 th June 2024 (UA)	
Institutions	346,485,654	72,996,531	21.1%
Statutory Obligations	11,650,002	60,667	0.5%
Special Programmes & Interventions	18,754,528	988,532	5.3%
Peace & Security	20,325,563	1,952,288	9.6%
TOTAL	397,215,748	75,998,018	19.1%

40. On the expenditure side, an implementation rate of **19.1%** was attained. In this regard, **UA 75,998,018** was utilized out of UA 397,215,748. Out of the utilized amount, UA 72,996,531 was consumed by **Institutions**, UA 60,667 by **Statutory Obligations**, UA 988,532 by **Special Programmes and Interventions**, and UA 1,952,288 by **Peace and Security**.

41. A detailed analysis of the institutional budget implementation against the total approved Annual Budget as of 15th June 2024 revealed levels of implementation ranging from 22.9% to 48.4% in terms of income and 19.3% to 30.8% in terms of expenditure (see Table 2). However, a comparison of actual expenditure *vis-à-vis* actual income depicts implementation rates ranging from 49.9% to 105.5% in terms of income and 42.1% to 67.2% in terms of expenditure (see Table 3).

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Table 2: Budget Execution Rates (%) Per Institution (On Approved Annual Budget)

INSTITUTIONS	INCOME % (Actual Vs Approved)	EXPENDITURE % (Actual Vs Approved)
Commission	30.3%	19.3%
Parliament	48.4%	26.8%
Court	36.5%	30.8%
WAHO	22.9%	21.2%
GIABA	38.0%	28.8%
Auditor General	28.9%	25.7%

Table 3: Budget Execution Rates (%) Per Institution (On Approved Year-To-Date (Ytd) Budget)

INSTITUTIONS	INCOME % (Actual Vs Approved)	EXPENDITURE % (Actual Vs Approved)
Commission	66.2%	42.1%
Parliament	105.5%	58.5%
Court	79.7%	67.2%
WAHO	49.9%	46.3%
GIABA	83.0%	62.9%
Auditor General	63.0%	56.1%

42. Council took note of the report and expressed concern about the financial situation of the Community. Council appealed to Member States to fulfil their obligations.

Item 3: Presentation and Consideration of Memorandum on the Status of the Community Levy and Challenges of Remitting Proceeds collected by Member States

43. As of 30th May 2024, a total of six hundred and sixty-eight million twenty-two thousand five hundred and eighty-four UA (668,022,584) constituted cumulative arrears of payments under the Community Levy.

Table 4: Cumulative situation of the Community Levy in Units of Account (UA) as of 30 May 2024

Member States	Cumulative amount collected	Cumulative amounts paid to ECOWAS	Cumulative amounts outstanding	Payment percentages
Benin	118.214.430	78949.148	39.265.282	66.78%
Burkina Faso	158.583.240	142.497.817	16.085.423	89.86%
Cabo Verde	41.114.703	8.629.610	32.485.093	20.99%
Cote d'Ivoire	387.208.083	364.457.339	22,750.744	94.12%
Guinee	84.914.898	55.811.281	29.103.617	65.73%
Guinee Bissau	8.773.616	8.944.479	(170.863)	101.95%
Gambia	15.525.644	16.245.859	(720.215)	104.64%
Ghana	235.201.874	241.219.768	(6.017.895)	102.56%

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Liberia	52.255.150	40.854.770	11.400.380	78.18%
Mali	143.229.394	124.879.031	18.350.363	87.19%
Niger	59.286.564	54.970.375	4.316.189	92.72%
Nigeria	1.066.749.839	571.550.397	495.199.441	53.58%
Senegal	244.875.053	237.794.532	7.080.521	97.11%
Sierra Leone	3.663.815	4.150.988	(487.173)	113.30%
Togo	77.098.277	77.716.602	(618.325)	100.80%
Total	2.696.694.579	2.028.671.995	668.022.584	

44. The Commission made the following recommendations for the consideration of Council:

- a. Organise high-level missions from the Commission to Member States to raise the issue of arrears and raise awareness on the need for regular payment;
- b. Call on Member States to fully respect the conditions of the Community Levy, in particular the transfer of the proceeds of the CL collected into the dedicated account opened in the central banks within the time limit indicated;
- c. Call on Member States to transfer the proceeds in full and directly to the dedicated CL account;
- d. Apply the sanctions set out in the Revised Treaty and the Supplementary Act on the mechanism of sanctions against Member States which do not honour their obligations.
- e. In addition to the Commission's high-level missions, organise assistance and advocacy missions involving ECOWAS Members of Parliament, the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers and the Chairman of the Authority of Heads of State and Government;
- f. Organise an annual meeting of stakeholders and Ministers of Finance as indicated in the Supplementary Act on the Community Levy Protocol;
- g. Strengthen the structure of the Community Levy mechanism for greater efficiency.

45. Council raised concerns about the recurring issue of non-payment of Community Levy by Member States, which continues to affect the performance of Community Institutions. In this regard, Council decided as follows:

- a. Member States to honour their Community Levy obligations by ensuring that proceeds collected are remitted to the Commission on time.
- b. Directs the President of the Commission to engage with the Chair of Council to undertake high-level Missions to defaulting Member States for remittances to be made. Members of the ECOWAS Parliament should also be engaged to assist with the high-level advocacy in their respective countries.
- c. ECOWAS Commission to collaborate with the Auditor General to perform an audit of the past funds transferred to EBID, to enable Council consider proposals of investing part of the Community Levy in financial instruments for returns.

- d. Although the Protocol provides for sanctions, Council held the view that they should not be applied at this stage. Rather Member States should be engaged at all levels, such as advocacy through high level Champions.

Item 4: Presentation and Consideration of the Status of Tasks Assigned by the 91st Ordinary Session of Council of Ministers to Community Institutions

46. The Commission presented the status of implementation of the 14 tasks that were assigned by the 91st Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers to the ECOWAS Commission, Institutions and Specialised Agencies.

47. Council took note of the presentation and directed the Commission to accelerate the implementation of outstanding activities .

Item 5: Presentation and Consideration of the Final Report of 35th Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee

48. The final report of the 35th Meeting of the AFC was presented by Amb. Olawale E. Awe who chaired the meeting. The report covered the following:

- a. Presentation and Consideration of Implementation Status of Tasks Assigned to Community Institutions by the 34th Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee;
- b. Presentation and Consideration of the Financial Situation Report of the Community, as of 15th June 2024;
- c. Presentation and Consideration of Report on the Status of Implementation of Provisions of the Community Levy Protocol by Member States;
- d. Presentation and Consideration of the Memorandum on the Status of the Community Levy and the Challenges of Remitting Proceeds collected by Member States;
- e. Presentation and Consideration of the Revised Organograms of ECOWAS Institutions;
- f. Presentation and Consideration of the Memorandum on the ECOWAS Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct;
- g. Presentation and Consideration of the Memorandum on a Predictable Schedule for ECOWAS Statutory Meetings;
- h. Presentation and Consideration of the Memorandum on the Status of Staff Recruitment;
- i. Presentation of Conversion of Staff Recruitment;
- j. Presentation of Status of Implementation of 2024 Work Programme.
- k. Presentation of the Auditor General's 2024 Mid-Year Report;
- l. Presentation of Memorandum providing Update on the Implementation Status of the ECOWAS Fund for Regional Stabilisation and Development (FRSD) ;
- m. Presentation of Memorandum on the ECOWAS Trade Report 2023.

49. After the presentation and the deliberations that ensued, Council commended the AFC for the quality of its report and adopted the recommendations contained therein including those of the Extraordinary AFC held in April 2024.

Item 6: Presentation and Consideration of the Auditor General's 2024 Mid-Year Report

50. The Auditor General (AG), Dr. João Alage Mamadú Fadiá presented the 2024 Mid-Year Report to the Council of Ministers. The Report covered an overview of the Office of the Auditor General of ECOWAS Institutions, work carried out as at mid-year 2024 (including Status of implementation of audit recommendations), and Budgeting and Staffing.

51. The report noted the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict and the announced withdrawal of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger as having hindered resource mobilisation required for the realisation of the ECOWAS Vision 2050. The report also highlighted some progress made by the management of the various Institutions and Agencies towards the implementation of audit recommendations and called for its sustenance.

52. The Auditor General then made the following recommendations for the consideration of the Council of Ministers for which the President of the Commission, in his capacity as Chief Executive of the Commission (in accordance with Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/06/06 amending the Revised Treaty), should take the necessary measures:

On Programme Performance Audits:

- a. Carry out an independent evaluation of all ECOWAS Programmes and Projects to determine their relevance in the context of integration and impact to ensure the optimal use of resources.
- b. Suspend the Scholarship of Excellence for Boys and Girls Programme, implemented by the EGDC, and instruct the Commissioner responsible to restructure the Programme with mechanisms and structures to ensure efficient, equitable and transparent administration in awarding of the Scholarships.
- c. Instruct the Commissioner responsible to reactivate all governance structures and bodies provided for in the Water Resource Coordinating Centre (WRCC) Regulations to ensure the full performance of the oversight functions.
- d. Ensure that the Council of the ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority (ERCA) is constituted, and members duly appointed. The Mergers and Acquisitions Regulations of the Authority must also be completed and signed to enable their effectiveness.
- e. Engage with Member States with a view to establishing and financing "Independent National Competition Regulatory Authorities" (INCRA) in the remaining Member States.

On Operational Audits:

- f. Ensure compliance with the Financial Regulation and the Manual of Procedures.

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On Human Resources:

- g. Ensure compliance with the Staff Regulations and expedite the recruitment of staff to fill priority positions, namely those that ensure the effective execution of control functions, such as in the areas of Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, Travel and Missions and Information Technology.
- h. To ensure greater stability in the establishment plan in the medium and long term, set the following age limits for future recruitment:
 - i. General services 35 years
 - ii. Professionals 45 years
 - iii. Internal candidates 57 years

On Procurement:

- i. Ensure full compliance with the application of the Procurement Code and the Manual of Procedures, as well as the effective management of the assets of the Institutions and Agencies.

On Travel:

- j. Ensure the development and implementation of a Community-wide Travel Policy.

On Information Technology:

- k. Ensure the urgent preparation and implementation of IT policies and procedures, as well as the provision of the necessary secure and reliable IT infrastructure, equipment, and networks.

Internal Control:

- l. Take the necessary measures for the implementation of the delegation schedule, as well as the integration of risk management in all Institutions and Agencies. To this end, Management should expedite the establishment of the Internal Oversight Committee provided for in Article 153 of the Financial Regulations.
- m. Ensure the transmission of quarterly update reports on the implementation of audit recommendations to the Office of the Auditor General.

53. Council commended the Auditor General for the quality of his report. However, on the issue of the ECOWAS Scholarship of Excellence for Boys and Girls, Council tasked the President of the Commission to address the operational challenges that led to the suspension and re-commence as soon as possible.

Item 7: Presentation and Consideration of the Report of the 54th and 55th Meetings of the Audit Committee

54. The Chairperson of the Audit Committee presented the Summary of the Committee's fifty-fourth (54th) and fifty-fifth (55th) meetings. The Presentation sought the approval of the Council of Ministers for the following:

- a. 2023 Audited Financial Statements namely:
 - i. 2023 Consolidated Financial Statements.
 - ii. 2023 Financial Statements of the Community Levy.
 - iii. 2023 Financial Statements of all ECOWAS Institutions and Agencies.
- b. The extension of the contract of the External Auditors, Ernst & Young Chartered Accountants (Ghana), for another two-year term
- c. The Auditor General's 2024 Mid-Year Report and its Recommendations

55. The Audit Committee also made the following recommendations for the consideration of the Council of Ministers:

- a. **Development of Community-wide Operational Policies:** Considering the isolated and “silo” approach to the development of operational policies and procedures by Institutions and Agencies to govern key areas of operations, the Commission should convene a meeting by the end of the third quarter of 2024, with all Institutions and Agencies to take stock of all existing policies and procedures and those in the process of preparation as of 30th June 2024. This is to ensure standardization, harmonization, and uniformity of operational policies and procedures across the Community and will also save time and money in the preparation of separate policies and procedures by each Institution or Agency. The operational areas should include but not limited to Information Technology, Travel, Pooling Services, etc.
- b. **Governance Structures:** The President of the Commission to direct all Commissioners to:
 - i. Ensure that meetings of governance structures of Specialised Agencies under their Departments are convened in line with approved Protocols, Regulations, or Directives on their creation, and
 - ii. Review the existing governance structures of these Specialised Agencies as appropriate.
- c. **Misuse of Resources of ECOWAS Institutions and the Community:**
 - i. On the issue of two per diem payments made to a Statutory Appointee from two different Agencies under his supervision for missions covering the same period, which was noted to have occurred on at least two different occasions, the Audit Committee recommends an immediate refund of all monies received by the official inappropriately by the end of August 2024. In addition, the President is to issue an administrative warning to the official.
 - ii. Regarding the observation relating to the continued payment of sitting allowances by GIABA to its Inter-Ministerial Committee Members, despite evidence brought to its attention and the Decision of Council at its 91st Ordinary Session, to stop such payments, the Audit Committee recommends that:
 - the Director-General should stop the payments of sitting allowances forthwith,
 - the Director-General be surcharged with the full amount of the unauthorized payment made in May 2024 and the full amount recovered from his salary by the end of the year 2024, and

- the President of the ECOWAS Commission writes an administrative warning to the GIABA DG to desist from such disregard of Community Regulations.

56. Also, to ensure the judicious use of available resources, the Audit Committee recommends the Council of Ministers to:

- approve for the institutionalization of sanctions or punitive measures for Statutory appointees as they were excluded from the sanction's regime for staff,
- instruct Management to develop and institutionalize a Performance Evaluation system that provides for an objective and fair appraisal of the performance of all staff and Statutory Appointees,
- direct Management to make a presentation on ECOLink to the Audit Committee at its next meeting, to enable it to fully appreciate the level of investment to date (financial and human), its capabilities and functionalities, status of implementation and use by each Institution and Agency, as well as the underlying reasons behind its limited use across the Community.

57. Considering the alarming results of the Programme Performance Audit as presented earlier by the Office of the Auditor General, the Audit Committee recommends that the Management of the Commission should perform an independent assessment of Programmes of Community Institutions to ascertain their relevance and impact in the light of current global economic crises.

58. On the staffing situation of Community Institutions, Management of the Commission should develop an action plan with clear milestones and timelines for filling the existing vacancies across the Community Institutions, while ensuring gender balance and geographical spread and report on same by its next ordinary meeting.

59. Having reviewed the Auditor-General's proposals presented earlier to Council to address the ageing staff population of the Community, the Audit Committee recommends the following revisions to the maximum entry ages into the ECOWAS workforce:

Table 5: Age limit for recruitment

Grade	Current age	Recommended Age
General services	50	35
P1 to P7	50	45
D1 and D2	50	50
Internal candidates	No age limit	57

60. The purpose of this recommendation is to ensure that new staff have ample time (a minimum of 12 years for highly experienced professionals) to contribute to the realisation of the achievements of ECOWAS, effective transfer of knowledge and a greater flexibility for Management in workforce planning and development.

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61. Council commended the Audit Committee for the quality of the report and adopted the recommendations contained therein with the exception of the following:

- a. Concerning to the payment of sitting allowance to the GIABA's Inter-Ministerial Committee Members, Council:
 - i. reiterates its decision at its 91st Ordinary Session to stop the payment of sitting allowances to Inter-Ministerial Committee Members as recommended by the AFC at its 34th Meeting held in Abuja from 1st to 10th November 2023
 - ii. rejects the Audit recommendation to surcharge the said payments from the Director General of GIABA
 - iii. directs GIABA and other Community Institutions to comply with the decision of Council and stop the payment of sitting allowances to its Inter-Ministerial Committee Members, and
 - iv. urges the ECOWAS Commission to explore appropriate mechanism for compensation of Members of Governing Bodies.
- b. Concerning the age limit for internal candidates, Council decides to refer the matter to the AFC for consideration.

Item 8: Presentation and Consideration of the Report of the 2nd Meeting of the Permanent Representatives Committee

62. The Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) as an Advisory Organ of the Council of Ministers held its second (2nd) meeting on 26th June 2024. In accordance with its Rule of Procedure, the PRC considered the Draft Agenda of the 92nd Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers and the Memoranda to be presented to the Council of Ministers.

63. Following the presentation and deliberation, the PRC urged the Commission to:

- a. ensure timely provision of documents to enable the PRC to make reviews before the meeting;
- b. sustain its engagements with Member States that have arrears on Community Levy;
- c. provide Member States with the necessary information and sufficient time when conducting technical missions on Community Levy;
- d. collaborate with the PRC on matters relating to the collection, lodgement and remittance of the Community Levy;
- e. involve the Permanent Representative of the relevant Member States when embarking on technical visits to Member States on Community Levy arrears;
- f. ensure that the consultation on drafting of the Rules of Procedure of the Judicial Council is inclusive and comprises all the relevant stakeholders including the sector Minister such as the Ministers of Justice in Member States;
- g. ensure that all Member States are included in the implementation of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS);

h. ensure adequate staffing of the technical directorate that is responsible for the implementation of the ETLS.

64. The Meeting also called on the PRC to use their good offices to engage relevant national authorities and Ministers in their respective Member States to ensure full compliance with the provisions of the protocol on Community Levy, including the payment of arrears.

65. Council took note of the report.

Item 9: Presentation and consideration of Memorandum relating to the Recommendations of the ECOWAS Judicial Council

66. The presentation of Memorandum relating to the Recommendations of the ECOWAS Judicial Council sought to present the draft revised Rules of Procedure and Recommendations from the Statutory Meeting of the ECOWAS Judicial Council to the Council of Ministers for consideration and onward transmission to the Sixty-fifth (65th) Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government for its adoption.

67. Council took note of the report and adopted its recommendations with the exception of the following:

- a. Concerning the expansion of the mandate of the CCJ and mechanisms for executing the Court's judgements, Council directed the Commission to conduct an in-depth review of these issues in order to facilitate an informed decision.
- b. Concerning the tenure of the current Community Court of Justice Judges, Council directed that the three Member States (Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, Republic of Ghana and Federal Republic of Nigeria), whose tenure at the Court expired in July 2022, should continue serving pending the resolution of the impasse in the transition processes of the three Member States which the positions were allocated to.

Item 10: Presentation and consideration of Memorandum on the Final Report of the ECOWAS Meeting of Ministers in charge of Social Protection

68. The Commission submitted a Memorandum on the Report of the First Meeting of Ministers in charge of Social Protection held on 24th November 2023 in Banjul, The Gambia to validate the ECOWAS Social Protection Framework and its Operational Plan.

69. Council was informed of Member States' efforts to expand social protection coverage in the region and the challenges that continue to stall the progress in providing robust social protection systems in West Africa.

70. Furthermore, Council was informed that the ECOWAS Social Protection Framework and its Operational Plan provides a broad set of guidelines and principles to the ECOWAS Commission and Member States in the design and delivery of social protection interventions. In addition, the Framework and its Operational Plan will serve as an advocacy tool for resource mobilisation and for the monitoring and evaluation of social protection policies and programmes as well as for enhancing regional learning and promoting cross-learning opportunities.

71. Following the presentation of the Memorandum, Council adopted the ECOWAS Social Protection Framework and its Operational Plan as recommended by the ECOWAS Ministers in charge of Protection of Social Protection.

Item 11: Presentation and consideration of Memorandum of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme Task Force on the Implementation of Intra-Community Trade Regulations by Member States

72. The Commission presented the report of the Trade Liberalisation Scheme Task Force on the implementation of intra-Community trade regulations by ECOWAS Member States. Council took note of the report and encouraged the ETL Task Force to continue its advocacy missions on all ECOWAS trade corridors.

73. The report made the following recommendations for the consideration of Council:

- a. Member States, particularly those on the Abidjan-Lagos corridor, to speed up the interconnection of their customs administrations to the Interconnected System for the Management of Goods in Transit (SIGMAT); to abolish with immediate effect the illegal collection of taxes imposed on vehicles registered in other Member States of the Community under the name of "ECOWAS International Circulation Permit";
- b. The Commission, to speed up the construction of the Jendema-Bo-Waterside Joint Border Post (JBP) between Sierra Leone and Liberia.

74. Council adopted the recommendations of the report and also directed the Commission to expedite the operationalisation of the ECOVISA.

Item 12: Presentation and consideration of Proposal for a Special Summit on the Future of the Community

75. The Commission announced plans to hold a Special Summit on the future of ECOWAS, to be attended by all Member States, including Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

76. At the end of the discussions, Council requested that a concept note be drawn up giving detailed information on the objectives, format, venue and issues to be addressed. In addition, Council recommended that it be included on the agenda of issues to be discussed by the Authority of Heads of State with a view to obtaining their guidance.

77. Furthermore, Council recommended that the Agenda of future Extra-ordinary Summits should refocus on the Community's efforts towards economic issues such as private sector promotion, trade, food and agriculture, infrastructure development etc. in addition to the political issues

Item 13: Presentation and consideration of Draft Agenda of the 65th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government.

78. The President of the Commission presented the draft agenda of the 65th Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government.

79. After presentation, Council adopted the draft agenda which is annexed to this report.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Item 14: Presentation and Consideration of Memorandum on ECOWAS Member States' Applications for International and Regional Statutory Positions

80. In its presentation, the Commission recalled that in order to harmonise and give more chances to ECOWAS Member States' applications to vacant positions in regional and international organisations, the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government set up in 2016 a 5-member Ministerial Committee, made up of Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal.

81. The Authority requested Member States applying for these positions to submit their candidatures to the Chair of the Council of Ministers for arbitration in order to come up with single candidatures for different positions and emphasised the importance for all countries of the Community to give full support to successful candidates.

82. In total, from January 2023 to 26th June 2024, the Commission received 28 requests for support for vacancies from the ECOWAS Member States. For this year, and as of 26th June 2024, Member States requested support for a total of 11 vacancies, out of which elections for eight (8) positions are yet to be held while 3 have already been allocated.

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Table 6: Summary of requests for support to Member States' applications for international positions - as of 26th June 2024 (Positions yet to be filled)

ORGANISATIONS	VACANT POSITIONS	CANDIDATES	ELECTION DATES	OBSERVATIONS
1 United Nations	Non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council for the period 2028-2029	• Guinea Bissau	• June 2027 in New York	• Candidacy endorsed by the Heads of State and Government during the 63 rd Summit in Guinea Bissau
2 United Nations	Non-Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), representing the Western Africa Region for the period 2026-2027	• Liberia	• June 2025 in New York	• Candidacy endorsed by the Heads of State and Government during the 63 rd Summit in Guinea Bissau
3 WHO	Regional Director of the World Health Organisation for Africa (WHO AFRO)	• Senegal	• 26 th to 30 th August 2024, at the 74 th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa, Brazzaville	• Requested on 22 nd April 2024 (Cote d'Ivoire withdrew its request to favour Senegal); • Notified to all ECOWAS Member States (Other Candidates: Niger, Rwanda, Tanzania)
4 AUC	Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security at the African Union Commission (Re-election)	• Nigeria	• Feb. 2025	• Requested on 8 th May 2024 • Notified to all ECOWAS Member States
5 AUC	Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (Election)	• Benin	• Feb. 2025	• Requested on 4 th July 2024 • Notified to all ECOWAS Member States
6 United Nations	Membership position at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the term 2028 – 2029	• Nigeria	• June 2027 in New York	• Requested on 5 th June 2024 • Notified to all ECOWAS Member States
7 United Nations	Member of the United Nations Committee against Torture (CAT) for the period 2025-2027	• Benin	• June 2024 in New York	• Requested in October 2023 • Notified to all ECOWAS Member States • Results : tbc
8 United Nations / HRC	Membership to the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee	• Ghana	• September 2024	• Requested on 21 st June 2024 • Notified to all ECOWAS Member States

Table 7: Already Filled Positions: For the Year 2024, as of 26th June 2024

	ORGANISATIONS	VACANT POSITIONS	CANDIDATES	ELECTION DATES	OBSERVATIONS
1	United Nations / UNSC	Non-permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for 2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sierra Leone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elected
2	African Union	Candidacy to succeed the Republic of Senegal as the Representative of the ECOWAS for the membership of Bureau of the Assembly of the African Union (AU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ghana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> February 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elected as 3rd Vice Chair of the Bureau for 2024
3	ILO	Reelection into the Governing Body (GB) of the International Labour Organisation as a titular Member to represent the WA Sub-region (2024-2027)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nigeria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June 2024, during the AU special Technical Committee on Social Dev 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not reelected as a full Member but occupying the position of Deputy member of the Employers' group for 2024-2027

83. The current eight (8) positions that are yet to be filled as of 26th June 2024, do not call for arbitration since each of the position matches a single application from ECOWAS. After internal consultations, Member States were called to support Nigeria and Senegal regarding their respective applications for the position of Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security at the African Union Commission (AUC) to hold in February 2025, and the position of Regional Director of the World Health Organisation for Africa, for elections to hold from 26th to 30th August 2024, during the 74th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa in Brazzaville, and for which Cote d'Ivoire withdrew its application to favour Senegal.

84. The Republic of Benin also informed about its candidacy for the AUC position of Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation for elections to hold in February 2025 and requested support from Member States. The Commission is still expecting additional female applications from Member States for this position to secure it for ECOWAS.

85. The Commission informed that to facilitate its work, the Committee pleads with the Member States to:

- a. systematically notify the ECOWAS Commission of their applications to international and regional positions, as well as their requests for Community support;
- b. provide accurate and complete information regarding the positions (i.e. CV translated in the ECOWAS official languages, election dates, etc.);

- c. submit their requests for support at least one (1) month before the holding of the statutory meetings to ensure their inclusion in the reports of the Commission; (iv) inform the Commission about the outcome of the election to facilitate reporting to the ECOWAS statutory meetings.

86. Council took note of the report.

Item 15: Presentation and Consideration of Memorandum on the Status of Implementation of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS)

87. The Commission presented the state of implementation of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS), in particular the activities undertaken by the ECOWAS Commission to improve the application of the Community Acts on the Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS) in order to ensure the smooth functioning of trade in originating products within the ECOWAS region.

88. The report made the following recommendations to the Commission for the consideration of Council:

- a. Accelerate the dematerialisation of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS) procedure and the digitalisation of the certificate of origin;
- b. Raise awareness and provide training in the Member States on the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS), in particular on the new Community rules of origin;
- c. Encourage direct exchanges between Member States to find concrete and practical solutions to the obstacles to the free movement of palm oil,
- d. Accelerate staffing

89. Council took note of the report and its recommendation. Furthermore, it directed the Commission to ensure adequate staffing of the technical directorate that is responsible for the processing of the ETLS applications.

Item 16: Presentation and consideration of Memorandum on the Conakry Declaration titled "Labé Call for the Safeguarding of the Fouta Djallon Highlands, and for a Great Water Coalition in the Sahel"

90. The Commission informed the ECOWAS Council of Ministers of the "Labé Call for the Safeguarding of the Fouta Djallon Highlands and for a Great Waters Coalition on water in the Sahel" which was launched on 1st June 2024 in Conakry, by the Agencies of the United Nations System (the FAO, the Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations, the WFP) and the Guinean Government in collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission.

91. The report made the following recommendations for the consideration of Council:

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- a. Member States to renew their commitment to the preservation of the Fouta Djallon Massif for the well-being of the peoples of the sub-region and humankind;
 - b. The Commission to (a) strengthen its role as coordinator of the Fouta Djallon Highlands Programme; (b) strengthen partnerships and synergies with basin organisations and other organisations; (c) mobilise the governments of the West African sub-region and the Sahel and all technical and financial partners to increase innovative green financing for the preservation of the Fouta Djallon Highlands.
92. Council took note of the report and its recommendations.

Item 17: Presentation and Consideration of Memorandum on the ECOWAS Single Currency Programme for the First Half of 2024

93. ECOWAS institutions continued work towards the realisation of the single currency programme by rigorously pursuing the implementation of the activities of the roadmap for the launch of the ECO, including regional Payments and Settlement System, among others.

94. The Commission has conducted joint missions to Member States to ascertain relevant information and data, which culminated in the production of a draft ECOWAS Macroeconomic Convergence Report and Forecast for 2024. However, the non-transmission of the Multi-Year Convergence Programme by Member States become a hindrance for the Commission regarding the preparation of any report on Convergence Programme and ECOWAS Economic Outlook.

95. The High-Level Committee on the Practical Arrangements for the creation of the ECO held its second meeting by videoconference on 20th June 2024. The conclusions and recommendations of the meeting will be presented to the 65th Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government scheduled for 7th July 2024.

96. Council took note of the report.

Item 18: Presentation and Consideration of Memorandum on the Agricultural Outlook and the Food and Nutrition Situation in the Sahel and West Africa

97. The ECOWAS Commission presented a memorandum on the agricultural outlook and the food and nutrition situation in the Sahel and West Africa. In the region, the cereal production for 2023/2024 amounts to more than 77 million MT, this is down by 0.6% from the previous years. Significant decline in cereal production was recorded in Nigeria and Niger compared with the average for the last five years due to prolonged dry season periods and flooding. The total cereal harvest shows a deficit of 12 million MT for the region.

98. The pastoral situation in the ECOWAS region presents a major fodder deficit in the Sahelian zones of Niger, Mali and Northern part of Senegal.

99. The regional agricultural markets continue to be disrupted in the areas of civil insecurity, and the eastern basins in Nigeria and Niger where supply of agricultural commodities is lower notwithstanding increasingly strong household demand. Despite the fall in price indices in the world market, inflation in the region remains high at 21% compared with 18% in January 2023.

100. The food and nutrition situation in the region analysis indicated that from March to May 2024, 35.3 million people (including 25 million in Nigeria alone) were in an acute state of food and nutrition insecurity. This number can reach 49.5 million in the next lean seasons (June – August 2024), if appropriate measures are not taken.

101. The ECOWAS Commission with the support of its technical and financial partners, and using the available instruments (humanitarian emergency fund, regional food security stock, etc.) would take necessary measures to help mitigate the impact of the 2023/2024 crisis on the most vulnerable people. The ECOWAS Commission will also provide financial support for the implementation of the harmonized framework in the fifteen Member States for better and accurate data analysis on the food security situation.

102. Council took note of the report.

Item 19: Any Other Business

103. The Federal Republic of Nigeria raised the issue of crypto currency, which if left unregulated could pose potential threats to the financial markets. Council directed the Commission to consider the establishment of a regional regulatory framework for crypto currency and strengthening relevant structures such as GIABA.

104. H.E. Amb. Yusuf Maitama Tuggar (OON), Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria briefed Council on the third (3rd) meeting of the Ministerial Ad hoc Committee Meeting on the Construction of Headquarters Buildings of Community Institutions which held on 5th July 2024.

105. The Ministerial Ad hoc Committee meeting considered a Report from an Experts' Ad hoc Committee meeting held at the Commission on 2nd July 2024, which highlighted the physical and financial progress of construction works, arrangements for operation and maintenance and ensure the transfer of skills to staff for the New Headquarters complex.

106. The Council of Ministers noted the brief and urged the Commission to work with the Contractor and the Federal Republic of Nigeria to ensure the timely completion of the Project within the first quarter of 2025.

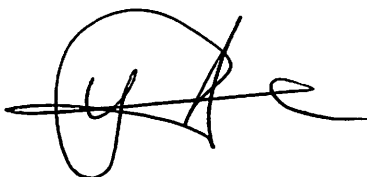
Item 20: Adoption of Report

107. The report was adopted after amendments.

Item 21: Closing Session

108. The Chairperson of Council, H.E. Amb. Yusuf Maitama Tuggar (OON), Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in his closing remarks, thanked Council Members for their active participation and constructive contributions during the session. Thereafter, he declared the Ninety-Second Ordinary Session of Council closed.

DONE IN ABUJA, THIS 5TH DAY OF JULY 2024



**AMB. YUSUF MAITAMA TUGGAR (OON)
CHAIRPERSON
FOR COUNCIL**