

**FORTY-FIRST ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ECOWAS
AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT
Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, 28-29 June 2012
FINAL COMMUNIQUE**

1. The Forty-First Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) took place from 28-29 June 2012 in Yamoussoukro, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire under the chairmanship of H.E. Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and Chairman of Authority.

2. The following Heads of State and Government, or their duly accredited representatives, attended the Summit:

H.E. Thomas Boni YAYI, President of the Republic of Benin

H.E. Blaise COMPAORE, President of Burkina Faso

H.E. Alassane OUATTARA, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

H.E. Ellen JOHNSON-SIRLEAF, President of the Republic of Liberia

§H.E. Mahamadou ISSOUFOU, President of the Republic of Niger

H.E. Macky SALL, President of the Republic of Senegal

H.E. Ernest Bai KOROMA, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

H.E. Faure Essozimna GNASSINGBE, President of the Togolese Republic

H.E. Manuel Serifo NHAMAJO, Interim President of the Republic of Guinea Bissau

H.E. Cheick Modibo DIARRA, Prime Minister of the Transitional Government of the Republic of Mali

H.E. Jorge BORGES, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cape Verde

H.E. Ousman SONKO, Minister of Interior and NGO Affairs, of the Republic of The Gambia

H.E. Chris KPODO, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Republic of Ghana

H.E. Eddouard Niankoye LAMAH, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Guineans Abroad of the Republic of Guinea

H.E. Nurudeen MOHAMMAD, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

3. The President of the African Union Commission, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General in West Africa, and the representative of the President of the UEMOA Commission also participated in the Summit as observers.

4. H.E. Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo, President of the ECOWAS Commission, took the oath of office before Authority, which subsequently authorized him to go forth and continue with his duties.

5. The Heads of State and Government took note of the 2012 Mid-term Report of the President of the Commission on the status of implementation of Community projects under the regional integration agenda, as well as the reports of the 11th Extraordinary Session and the 68th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers, presented by the Chairman of Council. Authority also took note of the memoranda of the President of the

Commission on the current political and security situations in Mali and Guinea Bissau, followed by briefings by H.E. Blaise Compaoré, President of Faso and ECOWAS Mediator in Mali, and H.E. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chairman of the Regional Contact Group on Guinea Bissau.

6. Having endorsed the main recommendations made in the various reports, Authority reaffirms the norms and principles underpinning the Community Integration Agenda as set out in the Revised ECOWAS Treaty of 1993 and in all the derivative Protocols, in particular the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Goods and the Right of Establishment; the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security; and the Constitutional Convergence Principles of the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

7. The Heads of State and Government proceeded to take the following decisions:

Regional Economic Performances

8. Authority welcomes the Region's positive economic growth rate of 6.4 percent recorded in 2011 and the bright prospects for 2012. Summit reaffirms the need to deepen the regional integration process in order to alleviate the negative impacts of shocks and to provide better prospects for development.

9. To this end, the Heads of State and Government commit themselves to the pursuit of efforts aimed at harmonizing budgetary and fiscal policies among Member States in order to ensure greater macroeconomic convergence. In particular, they reiterate their determination to remove the impediments to the effective implementation of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Goods and the Right of Establishment.

10. For the purposes of consolidating the common market and reinvigorating the Community Development policies, Authority instructs the Commission to step up the establishment of the Common External Tariff (CET) and to take all necessary measures to ensure the finalization of the Community investments code and the implementation of the common industrial policy.

Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)

11. Authority reiterates its commitment to the swift conclusion of a development oriented Partnership Agreement. Concerned by the juxtaposition of different trade regimes and the challenges posed by the ratification of interim agreements by Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana to the integration process in the event a Regional Agreement is not concluded, the Heads of State and Government underscore the need to find solutions to the main remaining divergences. They therefore urge the chief negotiators of the two parties to endeavour, in a consensual manner and with the required flexibility, to find ways and means of signing, as soon as possible, an EPA that safeguards the interests of both parties. Authority further insists on the need for adequate resources to finance the EPA Program for Development (EPADP).

Sectoral Policies

12. The Heads of State and Government welcome the efforts being made at regional level with a view to providing a sustainable solution to the food and nutritional crisis. Summit therefore endorses the supplementary emergency measures and the structural measures taken at the High-Level Meeting of the Member States of ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS held in Lome on 5 June 2012 aimed at finding a durable solution to the food crisis facing the region through in particular, the federation national food storage facilities in order to achieve regional

food reserve. Authority calls on the International Community to support the process by providing technical and financial resources towards the achievement of the goal.

13. Authority also welcomes the European Union's Partnership for Resilience in the Sahel initiative and the 1.2 Billion US Dollars committed by the International Community towards it. Authority renews its call on the International Community to mobilise the additional resources required to meet the humanitarian needs of the affected Sahelian populations in an effective and durable manner. It directs the Commission to more actively pursue its coordination efforts with partners, particularly the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations, in the implementation of the Sahel strategy.

14. The Heads of State and Government endorse the Community policies with regard respectively to Science, Technology and Innovation, and to Humanitarian Affairs. In that regard, they instruct the ECOWAS Commission to take all necessary measures to implement the Action Plans of these policies.

15. Authority underscores the importance of infrastructure in improving the competitiveness of the Region. It directs the Commission to intensify its efforts in regional infrastructure development and the mobilization of the necessary resources towards this end.

Regional Peace and Security

16. Authority expresses concern over the atmosphere of tension that generally surrounds the preparation and conduct of elections, as well as electoral reform processes, across the Region. It encourages the political parties and other stakeholders to always seek consensual solutions to disputes emanating from these processes. It directs the Commission to undertake timely fact-finding missions to Member States to facilitate the peaceful resolution of election-related tensions.

17. Authority expresses worry at the upsurge in terrorism in the Sahel region and in Nigeria. It also expresses deep preoccupation with the volatile security situation in the Gulf of Guinea caused by piracy, robbery at sea, dumping, environmental degradation, as well as trafficking in drugs, humans and weapons. Authority underscores the debilitating impact of these criminal acts on regional and international peace and security, and reaffirms its determination to confront these scourges through the appropriate measures.

The Situation in Mali

18. Summit strongly condemns the attempts by certain fringe political and social forces in Mali to obstruct the smooth execution of the on-going political transition, in particular the violent mob-attack on the Interim President on 21 May 2012, the campaign to impede the deployment of ECOWAS troops and to impose leaders, as well as the incitement to disobedience and violence by sections of the military, political class and the partisan media. It exhorts the Transitional Authority to speedily conclude the investigations into the mob-attack on the Interim President and submit its report to ECOWAS for the appropriate action.

19. Authority instructs the Commission to facilitate the speedy return of the Interim President to Mali to resume his functions.

20. Authority expresses its non-recognition of CNRDRE as a legal entity in the transition, as well as the status of Former Head of State conferred on Captain Amadou Sanogo. Authority reiterates its demand for the military to return to barracks and to concentrate on their core duties of defending the territorial integrity of the country.

21. Authority decides to automatically trigger the imposition of the targeted and general sanctions already established, on individuals or groups who obstruct the implementation of ECOWAS decisions. To this end, Authority directs the Commission to pursue the compilation of the list of offenders, in cooperation with the AU and UN.

22. Authority expresses deep preoccupation with the persisting deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situation caused by the armed aggression in Mali. It condemns the foisting of terror and acute insecurity on the population, characterized by summary executions, violent crackdown of demonstrations, armed robbery, rape, and desecration of holy and cultural sites.

23. Summit notes with deep concern the objective of the terrorist groups to create a safe haven and a coordinating centre in the north of Mali for continental terrorist networks, including AQMI, MUJAO, Boko Haram and Al-Shabab, and warns that the longer the precarious situation persists, the greater the danger it poses to regional and international peace and security.

24. Authority reaffirms all its previous decisions on Mali and directs the Commission to facilitate their full implementation. Consequently, while upholding its commitment to a peaceful settlement of the rebellion, Authority reiterates its determination not to compromise on the territorial integrity of Mali nor negotiate with terrorist organizations. It therefore reaffirms its resolve to assist Mali in re-establishing state authority over the entire country.

25. Authority decides to fast-track the deployment of the ECOWAS Standby Force Mission in Mali (MICEMA) under the mandate already adopted by Authority, and in line with Article 25 of the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security.

26. To this end, Authority decides to immediately dispatch a Technical Assessment Mission to Mali to liaise with the Transitional Authority with a view to preparing the ground for the imminent arrival of MICEMA. It directs the Commission to take all necessary measures to implement its directives.

27. Summit expresses satisfaction with the strong political support by the AU Peace and Security Council and the UN Security Council to ECOWAS efforts aimed at resolving the crisis, in close cooperation with the African Union. Summit welcomes the active consideration being accorded the ECOWAS request for authorization to deploy troops in Mali under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, and urges the Council to speed up the process.

28. Authority reaffirms its commitment to the on-going political transition, and expresses its determination to ensure the consolidation of the Transitional Government with the support of all stakeholders in order to ensure a smooth transition. It calls for the broadening of the base of the Government to achieve inclusiveness.

29. Authority expresses its strong determination to assist Mali in ensuring the conduct of a fair, transparent and credible Presidential election within the twelve-month transition period. It urges all the

members of the transitional organs to strictly comply with the modalities for the implementation of urgent actions agreed under the transition. In this regard, Authority demands the immediate adoption of the roadmap leading up to the election, and clearly indicating actions to be taken and the timelines for their execution.

30. In order to facilitate the achievement of these objectives, Authority mandates the Mediator to urgently put in place in Mali, a framework for consultation with the participation of all stakeholders, particularly the political parties and civil society actors.

31. Summit directs the Commission to strengthen the coordinating role of ECOWAS in the mobilization of international support towards the resolution of the double crisis in Mali, in close cooperation with the AU, UN, countries bordering Mali, and other partners.

32. Summit expresses deep appreciation to the Mediator in the crisis, H.E. Blaise Compaoré, President of Faso, and the Associate Mediator, H.E. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for their tireless efforts in Mali and encourages them to persevere with the mediation. Summit also expresses gratitude to H.E. Thomas Boni Yayi, President of the Republic of Benin and Chairman of the African Union, for his role in mobilising AU and international support around the ECOWAS initiatives in Mali.

The situation in Guinea Bissau

33. Authority endorses the transitional organs established in Guinea Bissau with the support of ECOWAS. It calls on the International Community to recognize and support the Transitional Government.

34. Summit decides to suspend the general sanctions imposed on Guinea Bissau, while maintaining the country under close watch in order to ensure the definitive return to constitutional normality.

35. Authority urges all the political actors and civil society to work together to achieve a truly inclusive government in order to ensure a consensual transition. To this end, Authority encourages the Interim President and Prime Minister to intensify their efforts aimed at securing the full participation of all the internal stakeholders in the tasks of carrying out urgent reforms and conducting a Presidential election in the course of the transition.

36. Authority welcomes the deployment of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) in the country and expresses gratitude to all the troop-contributing Member States. Authority congratulates Angola on the successful withdrawal of its Technical and Military Assistance Mission (MISSANG).

37. Authority exhorts the Member States of ECOWAS, UEMOA, and the International Community to extend financial support to the Transitional Government to help it meet its obligations.

38. Summit instructs the Commission to take urgent steps to ensure a conducive environment for the rapid implementation of urgent reforms of the constitution, the electoral code, the economy, and the Defense and Security Sector.

39. In line with UNSC Resolution 2048, Summit welcomes the ongoing initiatives between ECOWAS, the CPLP, the AU, the UN and other partners aimed at forging an international consensus on the transition. It directs the Commission to take all necessary measures to intensify consultations with the partners in this regard.

40. Summit congratulates the Regional Contact Group on Guinea Bissau on the encouraging achievements in the efforts to stabilize the country, and expresses deep appreciation to H.E. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the financial assistance extended to the transitional authority to meet contingencies.

Other Security Concerns

41. Summit welcomes the on-going initiative between ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) to hold a Joint Regional Summit on Maritime Security in 2012. Summit looks forward to the adoption of a common strategy in conformity with UNSC Resolution 2039 on Piracy, Robbery at Sea and other threats to maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, with the facilitation of the United Nations Offices in Central and West Africa (UNOCA and UNOWA). To this end, Summit encourages Member States to actively engage in the process.

42. Conscious of its continuing health hazards and corrupting influence on society and politics, the Heads of State and Government express deep concern over the serious threats posed by drug trafficking to regional and international peace and security. They decide to renew their political commitment to the fight against drug trafficking and call for the speedy implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on the fight against Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa, adopted in 2009. To this end, they direct the Commission to urgently reactivate the Plan. They welcome the financial support by the EU, and invite other partners to also contribute to its implementation.

43. Authority strongly condemns the terrorist aggression being perpetrated by Boko Haram in Nigeria that has claimed hundreds of lives and threatens to instigate religious based conflict in the country. Authority expresses heartfelt sympathy with the victims of the criminal acts and expresses its unflinching solidarity and political support to the Government in the fight against the Boko Haram scourge. Authority calls on Member States and the International Community to come to the assistance of Nigeria in its war against terrorism. It directs the Commission to participate in the efforts to halt the terrorist aggression.

44. Authority notes with concern the persistence of security threats along the border between Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia. It extends its support to the two Governments in their efforts aimed at eradicating all attempts at destabilization. Authority renews its gratitude to ONUCI for its assistance and extends heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of Niger, to the families of the perished Blue Berets, and other victims of the attacks.

Institutional Matters

45. The Heads of State and Government endorse the recommendation to increase the number of statutory members of the Commission from nine (9) to twelve (12). In this regard, they instruct the Council of Ministers to urgently finalise the modalities for the implementation of this decision, as well as

the attribution of the other statutory positions within the Community Institutions. They further instruct Council to continue its reflexion on the feasibility of a 15-member Commission, and to submit its findings to the next session of the Authority.

46. Summit urges all Institutions to continue their reforms aimed at improving their functioning and institutional performances with a view to improving the efficiency and dynamism of the Community Institutions.

47. Summit decides to endorse the candidature of Mr. Lassina Zerbo, a national of Burkina Faso, for the post of Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization.

48. The Heads of State and Government pay merited tribute to H.E. Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and Chairman of ECOWAS, for his leadership and relentless efforts aimed at deepening the values that underpin and nourish the principles of integration, as well as the promotion and consolidation of the rule of law, peace and security in West Africa.

49. The Heads of State and Government decide to hold their next Ordinary Summit at a date to be decided after consultation with the Chairman of Authority.

Done at Yamoussoukro, this 29th Day of June 2012

THE AUTHORITY