



MANO RIVER UNION UNION DU FLEUVE MANO



**DRAFT FINAL COMMUNIQUE
OF THE 22ND ORDINARY SESSION OF THE
SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND
GOVERNMENT OF THE MANO RIVER UNION
HELD ON 30TH APRIL 2013
MONROVIA, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**

The 22nd Ordinary Session of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Mano River Union (MRU) was held at the Royal Grand Hotel in Monrovia, Republic of Liberia on Tuesday 30th April 2013. The Summit was held to review and take decisions on recommendations made by the Union Ministerial Council (UMC) on important issues bordering on the MRU Secretariat relative to the implementation of decisions taken at the 20th and 21st Ordinary Sessions, held in Monrovia, Republic of Liberia in July 2011 and in Conakry, Republic of Guinea in June 2012 respectively; take decisions on implementation of critical programmes in the interest of the Union; and on current developments in the sub-region and on the African Continent.

This Session was attended by His Excellency Dr. Ernest Bai KOROMA, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone; His Excellency Alassane OUATTARA, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire; His Excellency Professor El-Hadji Alpha CONDE, President of the Republic of Guinea and Her Excellency, Madam Ellen Johnson-SIRLEAF, President of the Republic of Liberia, Chairperson of the Union and Host of the Summit. The meeting was also graced by the presence of His Excellency Saïd DJINNIT, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General to West Africa.

During their frank and cordial deliberations, the Heads of State considered the recommendations of the Union Council on the progress report of Madam the Secretary General, Ambassador Hadja Dr KABA Saran Daraba; the restructuring of the Union Secretariat, the report of the Finance and Administrative Commission; actions to be taken on the agreed sub regional priority road connectivity network; funding of the MRU Headquarters construction and steps to be undertaken for its implementation; celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Union, implementation of the West African Power Pool programme for the Union; and sub regional and regional political and security issues.

The Heads of State and Government of the Union agreed to combine their efforts in these areas, and take appropriate actions to deal with them including emerging challenges facing the sub-region; and to ensure that socio-economic development can be pursued on a sustainable basis with their collective support.

Based upon their deliberations, the Heads of State and Government took the following decisions:

MRU Secretariat Issues

The Mano River Union Heads of State and Government endorsed the Union Ministerial Council's recommendations as follows:

1. **2013 Fiscal budget:** The Heads of State approved the 2013 budget in the amount of **US\$ 9,102,120** and encouraged the Member States to make their contributions in a timely manner to ensure implementation of planned programme activities. Such action would give development partners and donors the desired impetus to lend requisite support to the Mano River Union.

2. Restructuring of the MRU Secretariat:

The Heads of States endorsed the recommendations of the Union Ministerial Council Meeting to maintain the current structure with one (1) Secretary General and three (3) Deputies but that Member States would present three nominees for the position of a Deputy Secretary General to be properly vetted by a committee comprising UMC representatives from Member States and the best candidate appointed based on professional competence and experience. This will take effect beginning 1st January 2014. All Executives will have a tenure of office of four (4) years to be renewed once where applicable.

3. MRU Headquarters Construction:

The Heads of State expressed appreciation to the President, Government and People of Sierra Leone for providing land space for the construction of the MRU House in Freetown. They requested President Koroma to lead the process for securing assistance for the construction of the Headquarters.

Peace and Security

- ❖ The Heads of States expressed appreciation on the commitment of the Guinean and Sierra Leonean Governments to ensure that the joint border post between the two countries becomes fully operational.
- ❖ The Heads of States endorsed the UMC recommendation on the harmonization of border opening and closing hours: 0600hrs to 1800hrs taking into consideration logistical constraints.
- ❖ The Heads of State noted with satisfaction the initiatives among the countries geared towards the sustenance of peace and stability and promised to monitor the situation on a regular basis to ensure that peace continues to prevail.
- ❖ The Heads of States also committed themselves to taking actions along their respective borders and within their countries to remove unnecessary barriers to trade and free movement of persons, goods and services.

Economic Development and Regional Integration

Road Infrastructure:

- ❖ The Heads of State endorsed the UMC recommendations on the priority connectivity roads and requested the Secretariat to undertake the steps outlined in the recommendations to secure the required funding for construction and feasibility studies.

Energy

The Heads of State were encouraged by the positive developments taking place under the West Africa Power Pool (WAPP) Project in addressing the energy problem in the Member States; noting that all Member States have now signed the WAPP Treaty, making way for the full implementation of the Energy Project in the MRU Sub-region.

Agriculture and Food Security

The Heads of State noted that the Food Security Hub is already established in the MRU Secretariat and encouraged the full functioning of the Hub to deal with the movement of food items in the sub-region.

40th Anniversary Celebrations

The Heads of State, while agreeing that 40 years of existence of the Mano River Union is a noteworthy achievement, decided that any elaborate celebration be deferred to the 50th Anniversary.

MRU Position Sub Regional and Regional Issues

Mali – The Heads of State expressed their appreciation to His Excellency, the Chairman of ECOWAS, President Alassane Ouattara of the Republic of Côte d’Ivoire for the excellent leadership demonstrated in resolving the Malian crisis. They took positive note of the contribution of troops by each Member State of the Union to the Peace Keeping efforts in Mali. They also commended all other States contributing troops to contain the Malian crisis and the support of the International Community in general.

The Heads of State requested the MRU Secretariat to undertake an assessment of the impact of the Malian crisis on the Member States of the Union and to make appropriate recommendations.

Côte d’Ivoire and Liberia – The Heads of State noted the progress made by the two countries especially the outcome of the quadripartite meeting held in Monrovia on 5th April 2013 and encouraged them to maintain the path they have started to consolidate their bilateral relationship.

Guinea – The Heads of State requested the MRU Secretariat to give the requisite support to the Government and People of Guinea in the forthcoming electoral process.

Guinea and Sierra Leone – The Heads of State commended Prof. Alhaji Alpha CONDE, President of the Republic of Guinea for his will, courage and maturity in resolving the Yenga issue. They promised to participate in the planned meeting at Yenga to celebrate the occasion.

Condolences

The Heads of State of Côte d’Ivoire and Sierra Leone joined the Liberian President, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in expressing deepest condolences to President Conde and the people of Guinea on the untimely death of the Guinean Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Kelefa Diallo, and ten others in a tragic plane crash while en route to Monrovia to attend Liberia’s Armed Forces Day Celebrations on February 11, 2013.

Conclusion

The Heads of State and Government reiterated their profound gratitude to the development partners for the support provided to the Secretariat and to the Member States, not only to ensure the consolidation and maintenance of peace, security and stability, but the socio-economic development of the sub-region.

They expressed satisfaction with the convergence of views on all the issues and concerns raised and expressed particular delight with the spirit of mutual understanding and cordiality that prevailed during their deliberations.

They further reiterated their strong will to take all required actions to speed up socio-economic development and integration in the sub-region.

The Mano River Union Heads of State and Government expressed their sincere thanks and profound gratitude to Her Excellency Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, and the Government and People of Liberia for hosting the Summit and for the hospitality extended to them.

Done in Monrovia, on Tuesday 30th April, 2013.

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Her Excellency Madam Ellen Johnson-SIRLEAF
President of the Republic of Liberia and
Chair of the Mano River Union

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His Excellency Dr. Ernest Bai KOROMA
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

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His Excellency Prof. Alpha CONDE
President of the Republic of Guinea

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His Excellency Alassane OUATTARA
President of the Republic of la Côte d'Ivoire