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COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
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SIXTY- FIRST ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

Kempinski Hotel, Accra, 3rd July 2022

REPORT OF 88TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ECOWAS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

ECOWAS Commission
Accra, July 2022

COMUNIDADE ECONOMICA DOS
ESTADOS DA AFRICA OCIDENTAL

ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF
WEST AFRICAN STATES

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

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EIGHTY-EIGHTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ECOWAS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Accra, 30 June - 1 July 2022

FINAL REPORT

ECOWAS Commission
Accra, July 2022

INTRODUCTION

1. The Eighty-Eighth Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers was held on 30th June and 1st July 2022 in Accra, Republic of Ghana. The session, which was attended by Ministers in charge of Regional Integration and Finance, was chaired by Hon Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Republic of Ghana and Chairperson of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers.

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;
- Republic of Niger;
- Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- Republic of Senegal;
- Republic of Sierra Leone;
- Togolese Republic.

3. Burkina Faso, the Republics of Guinea and Mali did not participate because of the suspension imposed on the Member State by the Authority of Heads of State and Government from participating in all ECOWAS activities until further notice.

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

- ECOWAS Commission;
- ECOWAS Parliament;
- ECOWAS Community Court of Justice;
- West African Health Organisation (WAHO);
- Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA);
- ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development;
- Office of the Auditor General (OAG).

5. The Audit Committee of Council also participated in the meeting.

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

I. OPENING CEREMONY

7. In his welcome address the President of the Commission, H.E. Jean-Claude Kassi Brou expressed his pleasure at welcoming participants to Accra on the occasion of the 88th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers. He also expressed his sincere appreciation to the government and people of the Republic of Ghana for all the arrangements made to welcome and ensure the smooth stay of participants at the statutory meetings of the Community right from arrival.

8. He extolled His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana and Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, for his leadership in strengthening regional integration and further thanked the Chairperson of Council for her stewardship of the Council of Ministers and the implementation of decisions of the Authority of Heads of State and Government. We are proud of your personal commitment and dedication to safeguarding the interests of the Community.

9. He said the 88th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers is being held in a context still marked by the COVID-19 health crisis, although it is less worrisome than in the recent past. He highlighted that the current meeting is being held in an environment characterised by the lingering security crisis in the frontline countries (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Nigeria) and in several coastal countries. These different crises, compounded by the devastating consequences of climate change, have resulted in a difficult humanitarian situation. He underscored that internationally, the crisis between Ukraine and Russia has had a significant impact on global inflation and the supply of basic commodities to the region's people and economies.

10. Having noted that this session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers is the last to be attended by the current management of ECOWAS Institutions, he expressed, on behalf of the Institutions, statutory appointees and staff of the Community, their utmost gratitude for all the support and guidance throughout their tenure.

11. He stated that during their tenure, they have made every effort to meet the expectations of ECOWAS leaders and people. However, as with any human endeavour, much has been achieved but much more remains to be done to actualise the ECOWAS Vision 2050, with the mantra: *"ECOWAS of the Peoples: Peace and Prosperity for All"*. He expressed the hope that the region will once again show resilience and the economies will make a strong recovery for the benefit of community citizens

12. He thereafter wished all the participants fruitful deliberations and successful meeting.

13. In her opening remarks, the Chairperson of Council, Hon Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, conveyed greetings from His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana and Chairperson of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS to the Council and warmly welcomed members of Council.

14. She emphasized the presence of the Council Members as an ample testimony to their unwavering commitment as well as support to the common endeavour of promoting and furthering the integration agenda of the Region for the collective benefit of community citizens

15. She underscored that the 88th Session is taking place against the backdrop of several challenges confronting our Region which have the potentials of derailing our quest to achieve sustainable development, progress and prosperity for our Peoples. At the international level, the region is confronted with uncertainties arising out of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian crisis which has negatively impacted on the global economic recovery and further exacerbated the already dire socio-economic and humanitarian situations resulting from the adverse effects of terrorism, the COVID-19 pandemic and climate-change related difficulties.

16. Going further, she said the imperative of acting in concert to effectively address the challenges the region is faced with, shall require strengthening of regional solidarities in building resilient mechanisms for the Region. These challenges definitely require innovations in seeking the synergies and complementarities in all the sectors, as well as, defining common mechanisms for consolidating regional production of essential goods and boosting intra-Community trade.

17. She duly acknowledged and expressed the Community's sincere appreciation to His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhari of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Champion for the coordination of the fight against the coronavirus, for which he has taken salutary initiatives and made available the necessary resources and logistics at the service of the Community.

18. She thereafter highlighted the items on the Agenda of the meeting and urged Council to examine them dispassionately. After taking due note of the imminent transition in the management of Community Institutions, she, on behalf of the Council of Ministers and on her own behalf, extended warmest congratulations to H.E. Mr. Jean-Claude Kassi Brou, President of the Commission, Madam Finda Koroma, Vice-President, all the Commissioners, Heads of Institutions and all the staff, for the remarkable work done during their term of office in an extremely delicate environment.

19. She thereafter declared the 88th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers duly and formally opened.

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

II. ELECTION OF BUREAU

21. The following bureau was elected:

- Chairperson - Republic of Ghana;
- Rapporteurs - Republic of Cabo Verde;
  - Republic of Cote d'Ivoire.

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME

22. The following agenda was adopted:

I. **OPENING CEREMONY**

- Welcome Statement by President of the ECOWAS Commission, **H.E. Mr Jean-Claude Kassi Brou;**
- Opening Remarks by Chairperson of Council, **Hon. Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey**, Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Republic of Ghana;
- Group Photograph;

II. **CLOSE OF OPENING CEREMONY**

- Housekeeping Information;

III. **CLOSED DOOR SESSION**

- Election of Bureau;
- Adoption of Draft Agenda and Work Programme;

ITEMS FOR DECISION

i. Presentation and Consideration of the 2022 Interim Report of the President of ECOWAS on the State of the Community;
ii. Presentation and Consideration of Report on the Financial Situation of the Community as at 31st May, 2022;
iii. Presentation and Consideration of the Final Report of the 31st Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee;
iv. Presentation and Consideration of the Auditor General's 2021 Annual Report;
v. Presentation and Consideration of Report of the 47th Meeting of the Audit Committee;
vi. Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Supplementary Act on the classification of subject and decision-making by ECOWAS Governing Bodies;

vii. Presentation and Consideration of the Status of Tasks Assigned by the 87th Ordinary Session of Council of Ministers;

viii. Presentation and Consideration of Draft Agenda of the 61st Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government;

ITEMS FOR ENDORSEMENT

ix. Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the ECOWAS Start-Ups Summit and the Draft ECOWAS Micro Small and Medium Enterprises Charter 2021- 2030;

x. Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Harmonised Standards for Bouillon;

xi. Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on ECOWAS Directive on the Labelling of Electrical Appliances;

xii. Presentation and Consideration of Memorandum on the Food Crisis, Mitigation Measures and Building Food Systems Resilience in West Africa;

xiii. Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Regional Strategy on Climate;

xiv. Presentation and Consideration of Memoranda on: a) Regulations on Regional Mechanism for the Prevention and Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases and Zoonoses b) Five Regional Strategies on Animal Health;

xv. Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Gender Transformative HCD Strategy, 2022-2032;

xvi. Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the proposed Amendments to the Supplementary Act AS.17/02/12 on Axle Load Control in the ECOWAS region;

xvii. Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on Jury Deliberation on the 2021 Support Programme for Research and Innovation;

xviii. Report of Chair of the Presidential Task Force on obstacles to the Free Movement of Goods on the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor;

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

xix. Report of the Ministerial Committee on the Single Currency Programme;

xx. Memorandum on ECOWAS Member States' Applications for International and Regional Statutory Positions;

STRICT CLOSED-DOOR SESSION

xxi. Presentation and consideration of the Report of the Ad Hoc Ministerial Committee for the Selection and Evaluation of Performance of Statutory Appointees of the Community for the period 2022-2026

STRICT CLOSED DOOR SESSION ENDS

xxii. Any Other Business;

xxiii. Adoption of report;

xxiv. Vote of Thanks;

xxv. Closing Ceremony;

IV. OUTCOME OF DELIBERATIONS

ITEMS FOR DECISION

Item 1: Presentation and Consideration of the 2022 Interim Report of ECOWAS

23. In his presentation, the President highlighted issues related to the (i) continued existence of the COVID-19 pandemic despite a slight drop in infections, (ii) ongoing terrorist attacks and associated humanitarian crisis, (iii) political, security, food and humanitarian challenges, (iv) economic resilience and the status of implementation of programmes and projects.

24. Regarding COVID-19, he reported that 52% of the doses received have been administered, bringing to 17.2% the number of vaccinated people as at 29 May 2022. Against the backdrop of the near-disappearance of the 4th wave of the pandemic, land, sea and air borders have been fully reopened and prevention measures for fully vaccinated travellers have been gradually relaxed.

25. On other communicable diseases that affected the region in the first half of 2022, he cited the outbreak of Monkeypox (36 confirmed cases, including 2 deaths), Cholera (1,954 cases), Lassa Fever (3,828 cases), Measles (3,621 cases), and the resurgence of Avian Influenza cases in Member States.

26. With reference to security issues, **several initiatives have been taken to implement the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan to combat terrorism**, notably training and equipment of defense and security forces, information and intelligence sharing, security checks at land, air and sea borders, and arms and sensitive multipurpose products. The other initiatives relate to the establishment of the International Counter-Terrorism Academy (AILCT) in Cote d'Ivoire, supply of military and logistics equipment to Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria, operationalisation of the West African Regional Centre for Maritime Security (CRESMAO) in Cote d'Ivoire, operationalisation of the Zone F Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre (Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Burkina Faso) and the institutionalisation of the ECOWAS National Security Advisors Forum.

27. In addition, **as part of the implementation of the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Mechanism**, nine (9) national centres have been established, with the remaining six (6) national centres to be established in the course of 2022.

28. On peace and democracy in the region, the President reiterated that democracy has taken root in ECOWAS with the regular conduct of parliamentary and presidential elections with assistance from the Commission, notwithstanding the situation in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali. He recalled the sanctions imposed on Mali in January 2022 and the ongoing efforts to find a consensus on the electoral timetable in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali. In the area of **peacekeeping**, ECOMIG is operational in The Gambia and a peacekeeping stabilisation mission has been deployed to Guinea-Bissau.

29. In terms of the economy, the President stated that ECOWAS' economic resilience has been sustained in 2022, albeit at a slower pace than expected due to the slow pace of vaccination against COVID-19, the Ukraine/Russia crisis and its impact on international prices. Thus, real GDP is projected to grow by 4.75% in 2022, against 4.2% in 2021 in West Africa, and 6.9% in 2021 in Africa, and 2.9% in 2022 compared to 5.7% in 2021 at the global level. ECOWAS' economic resilience is attributable to increases in the prices of export commodities, mainly oil (+55.7%), gold (+4.65%), cotton (71%) and cocoa (2.07%). Increased production of staple foods (other than grains) driven by growing demand and increased oil production would contribute to the resilience of our economies. However, this outlook could be negatively impacted by high imported inflation, poor weather conditions, new outbreaks of COVID-19, and fiscal pressures.

30. ***Under the single currency programme***, the new Convergence and Macroeconomic Stability Pact among ECOWAS Member States was adopted in June 2021, with the convergence phase covering the 2022 - 2026 period and the stability phase from January 2027. Similarly, the roadmap was also adopted in June 2021, providing for the launch of the ECO in 2027. Macroeconomic convergence performance is expected to improve in 2022.

31. The new Vision 2050: ***"ECOWAS of the Peoples: Peace and Prosperity for All"*** was adopted in December 2021 and comprises 5 pillars (Pillar 1 - Peace, Security and Stability, Pillar 2 - Governance and Rule of Law, Pillar 3 - Economic Integration and Interconnectivity, Pillar 4 - Transformation, Inclusive and Sustainable Development, Pillar 5 - Social Inclusion). A strategic implementation framework, a communication strategy on the Vision and a resource mobilisation strategy are being finalised to ensure its operationalisation.

32. In the area of trade and free movement, the Trade Liberalisation Scheme Task Force has been made aware of the obstacles to free movement at Benin's borders. To facilitate trade, an Interconnected System for the Management of Goods in Transit (SIGMAT) has been set up. In connection with the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**, all ECOWAS Member States have signed the agreement. However, 3 Member States are not yet State Parties because of non-ratification or non-deposit of the instrument of ratification. Under the **Free Movement of Persons**, the biometric identity card has been implemented in 5 Member States and is under

preparation in 3 Member States. A roadmap has been adopted for the implementation of the ECOWAS Single Visa (ECOVISA).

33. In **agriculture**, figures for the 2021-2022 crop year show an 11% drop in grain production, bringing the grain deficit to 5.5 thousand tonnes, which would affect 38.3 million people by August 2022. In terms of managing the Regional Food Security Reserve, requests for assistance to Burkina Faso (10,000T) and Niger (15,000T) are being met. Similarly, negotiations for bulk purchases with producers in the region are underway to secure fertilizer supplies for the regional market, given the soaring prices.

34. With regard to the global environment, the leadership of Member States was commended in respect of the organisation of the 9th World Water Forum in Senegal (March 2022) and the COP 15-UNCCD in Cote d'Ivoire (May 2022).

35. **In terms of transport infrastructure, work** on the **Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Project** will be launched in 2023 and the **Dakar-Praia Sea Link Project**, for which studies are underway, will be presented at an investment and resource mobilisation forum in 2023.

36. On **energy**, it was noted that the energy potential (hydropower, solar, wind, oil, coal, gas) is still under-exploited. As regards the interconnection of the power grids between Member States and energy production, 13 Member States are interconnected, 5 hydropower dams are under construction for 2,500MW and 5 others are in preparation, and the construction of WAPP Information and Coordination Centre (ICC) is well advanced. An update was provided on the ongoing implementation of different projects, including the ECOWAS Regional Electricity Access Project (ECOWAS-REAP), the Regional Electricity Access and Battery Energy Storage Technologies Project (BEST), the Regional Off-Grid Electrification Project (ROGEAP), and the rural electrification of communities located within 10 km of the axis of the interconnection projects.

37. In the area of telecommunications, the implementation of the Roaming Regulation in ECOWAS has revealed that 24 out of 44 operators in 12 Member States are in compliance with the regulation. Furthermore, the ALISA Project (SIGMAT) made it possible to connect 7 Member States using the static system (phase 1) and develop the mobile version (phase 2) by the end of 2022. Lastly, measures relating to Cybersecurity and the fight against Cybercrime have been taken to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework.

38. Regarding **industry and private sector promotion**, the Standards on Bouillons and *Consommés* have been validated by the ECOSHAM Technical Standards Management Committee and will be submitted for adoption by ECOWAS governing bodies. Under ECOWAS support for internationally-recognised accreditation, 15 laboratories are already operational in quality certification in the mango, cassava and textile value chain. In the area of **trade facilitation**, the legal framework of the ECOWAS Payments and Settlement System (EPSS),

approved by Central Bank Governors in February 2022, was validated by the sector Ministers in June 2022.

39. With respect to Human Capital, the Human Capital Development Strategy was adopted in December 2021 (Health/Nutrition, Education and Skills/Employment, Entrepreneurship, Financial Inclusion and Digital Payments). It was forwarded to Member States and its implementation is ongoing.

40. Concerning social affairs and gender, there was advocacy on the ILO conventions. As part of drug prevention and control, activities continued with the establishment of the West Africa Network of Addiction Treatment Experts. Similarly, the maiden edition of the ECOWAS Youth Business Incubation Programme was launched in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger to select and support 40 start-ups.

41. In **education and training**, the harmonisation of education degrees across ECOWAS is ongoing with the validation of the Mathematics curriculum (April 2022). In **science**, a consortium of researchers was selected in March 2022 to receive support under PARI (Research and Innovation Support Programme) and 30 researchers were trained in Guinea Bissau. Finally, in the area of **culture**, the regional committee for action plan monitoring has been set up and 30 museum managers given training in African museum management standards.

42. On internal reforms, the ECOWAS Commission was down-sized from 15 to 7 Commissioners. Interviews for the recruitment of new Commissioners have been completed for several positions. Steps taken to ensure good governance within ECOWAS Institutions and Agencies were also outlined.

43. In terms of activities of other Institutions, the First Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Parliament opened on 9 June 2022, following the Extraordinary Session of the Fifth Legislature (March 2022, Monrovia-Liberia), to review the political and security situation in the region. In addition, a Cooperation Agreement with the Parliament of Morocco was signed and a Seminar on the ECOWAS Vision 2050 organised in Liberia in March 2022, to ensure active monitoring of the implementation of the Vision.

44. With regard to the ECOWAS Court of Justice, 62 court sessions were held, 24 judgments delivered (including 20 during the external court session held in Accra in 2022) and 1 ruling given. 20 cases were lodged and 164 cases still pending. In addition, an International Conference was held in May 2022 on the ECOWAS integration model. There were thematic reports on 35 cases, with 20 more expected by end of June 2022.

45. On WAHO, the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic was the main activity of the organisation during the period under review. It included the purchase and distribution of antigen-based rapid diagnostic tests (Ag RDTs) from the *Institut Pasteur* of Dakar Foundation, ongoing laboratory accreditation and certification programme, establishment of a vaccine exchange platform in the region and the connection of eight (8) Member States to the WAHO BIOMARS travel platform for digitised verification of PCR tests. There was also development and adoption of WAHO Vision 2030, Accra Declaration on Universal Health Coverage and the inauguration of a Regional Parliamentary Network on Malaria Elimination in the ECOWAS region (REPEL MALARIA).

46. With respect to GIABA, Guinea Bissau's Mutual Evaluation Report was finalised in February 2022. Togo and The Gambia's reports were adopted in May. In addition, technical assistance to and capacity building for all stakeholders in Member States continued in 2022.

47. Council congratulated the President of the Commission and the Management of ECOWAS Institutions for the work done during their tenure. Council also commended the President for the quality of the report presented and most of the salient issues raised should be brought to the attention of the incoming management in order to sustain the momentum.

48. Council thereafter adopted the interim report.

Item 2: Presentation and Consideration of Report on the Financial Situation of the Community

49. The Commission presented the report on the financial situation of the Community as at 16th June 2022. It informed the meeting that the Council of Ministers, during its 87th Ordinary Session of Council held in Abuja on 9-10 December 2021 considered and approved a Community budget of UA 393,612,400 balanced in revenue and expenditure.

50. In terms of structure, revenue from the Community Levy including year end bank balances remains the main source of ECOWAS financing representing 70% of the approved 2022 budget. On the expenditure side, the largest share (82%) continues to be reserved for the Institutions.

51. The Commission also informed that as at 31st May 2022, a total amount of UA 139,803,430 had been mobilised, that is, a mobilisation rate of 35.5% of which:

(i) UA 67,044,261 as Community Levy, representing a mobilisation rate of 44.1%

(ii) 99.5% of Year-End Balances and 0% mobilization of Arrears of Community Levy

(iii) No funds were received from Arrears of Contribution but UA105,272 as Other Income representing 13.2% of mobilization

(iv) UA 6,809,339 from external funds in favour of the Commission, WAHO and GIABA

Table 1: Implementation of the Approved Budget

Chapters	2022 Approved Budget	Actual Income 31st May 2022 (UA)	Rate Actual Income (%)
Income			
Community Levy	152,162,209	67,044,261	44.1%
Year-End Bank Balances	66,188,824	65,844,558	99.5%
Arrears of Community Levy	58,389,968	0	0.0%
Arrears of Contribution	0	0	-
Other Income	798,130	105,272	13.2%
Income from External Sources	116,073,269	6,809,339	5.9%
Total Income	**393,612,400**	**139,803,430**	**35.5%**
Expenditure			
Institutions	321,150,319	43,538,990	13.6%
Statutory Obligations	11,711,966	1,455,470	12.4%
Special Programmes & Interventions	30,436,264	0	0.0%
Peace & Security	30,313,851	3,441,370	11.4%
TOTAL	**393,612,400**	**48,435,830**	**12.3%**

52. On the expenditure side, only 12.3% of the anticipated expenses were made, that is, UA 48,435,830 against UA 393,612,400 of which UA 43,538,990 was consumed by Institutions, UA 1,455,470 by Statutory Obligations, and UA 3,441,370 by Peace and Security.

53. A comparison of actual expenditure vis-à-vis actual income received per institution depicts implementation rates ranging from 9.1% to 42.6%. The implementation rates of Income vs Expenditure show 34.4 % to 100%.

54. The report also highlighted key achievements attained between 2018 and 2022, namely:

(i) Preparation of backlog of financial statements 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017;
(ii) Institutional Reform - Public Finance Management (PFM);
(iii) Improved Regulations, Tools and Manpower;
(iv) Improved Resource Mobilisation (Community Levy);
(v) Institutionalization of Community Wide Finance Function.

55. Council lauded the improved rate of recoveries of community levy receipts and urged the Commission to continue fielding both High-Level and Technical Missions to resolve the implementation of the Community Levy Protocol.

Item 3: Presentation and Consideration of the Final Report of the 31st Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee

56. The final report of the 31st Ordinary Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee was presented by Mr. Mohammed Nurudeen Ismaila, Head of the ECOWAS National Office in Ghana and Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC). The report covered the following:

- Presentation and Consideration of Status of Tasks Assigned to Community Institutions by the 30th Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee;
- Presentation and Consideration of Report on the Financial Situation of the Community as at 31st May, 2022;
- Presentation and Consideration of the Community Levy Report;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Proposed Readjustment and change of Nomenclature of certain positions in GIABA's Approved Organogramme;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on Revision of Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA);
- Auditor General's 2021 Annual Report;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Manual of Procedures for Human Resources Management;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Status and Outcome of the Staff Skills Audit;
- Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Status of the Recruitment Process;
- Update on the Implementation of 2022 approved work programmes from January to June and Presentations by management on their Achievements during their Tenure from March 2018 to June 2022;
- Update on the Preparation of the Community Strategic Framework;
- Memorandum on the Handbook for the Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation System of ECOWAS;
- Construction of the New Headquarters Building of the Commission.

57. After presentation of the report, Council adopted all the recommendations contained therein.

Item 4: Presentation and Consideration of the Auditor General's 2021 Annual Report

58. The Auditor General presented his 2021 Full Year Report to the 88th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers in accordance with Regulations **C/REG.17/07/18** establishing the Office of the Auditor General (OAG). The Report was presented in two parts, Part A and Part B.

59. Part A reported on the Summary of Observations of all Audits, Inspections and Investigations covering Operations, Human Resources, Finance, Programme Performance and Information Systems Audit of all Institutions, Agencies and President's Representation Offices with an **overall Audit Opinion of Limited Assurance.** The community-wide risk implications indicated a high incidence of Non-Compliance with Community Laws and Regulations which require immediate remedial actions by Management. The AG provided a context as to why the Audit opinion of the ECOWAS Community was Limited Assurance and detailed the necessary measures taken by Management to address the situation.

60. The AG presented to Council, the work done by the OAG in the year, such as, the Audits carried out, the Management Services provided, Audit Committee Meetings held, the operational activities carried out and the challenges faced. He provided an update on the status of implementation of the OAG Human Resources Strategy, approved by Council in 2018, highlighting the cost savings accrued to the Community.

61. The AG also updated Council on the status of ceding-off Control responsibility to Management. He indicated that Management has missed the deadlines in the timetable for the progressive handing over of this function. He indicated that Management has set new dates for the control function to be handed over.

62. On Risk Management, the AG updated Council on actions taken so far and informed Council that All ECOWAS Institutions and selected departments of the ECOWAS Commission, have concluded work on their Risk Management documents and are ready to be uploaded unto Governance Risk & Compliance (GRC) platform of the SAP/ECOLink system when fully operational.

63. The AG further emphasized the need for Management to complete the urgent recruitment of staff for the OAG, having recruited 5 staff so far with 31 recruitments outstanding since July 2018. Also, the recruitment of critical staff for the Finance, General Administration & Conferences and Human Resources Departments of the ECOWAS Commission, WAHO (RCSDC) and ERCA directed by Council remain pending.

64. Part B reported on the Income & Expenditure, Community levy, and Contribution Arrears, Community Financial Trends and Staffing Analysis of Community Institutions, Agencies and Offices.

65. On Income and Expenditure, 61% of income was mobilized against the budget, with the largest proportion coming from Community Levy, the expenditure execution rate was 42% against the budget which mirrors the Income Mobilization Rate. However, against opening Cash Balances and Community Levy receipts by the Institutions, an average expenditure execution rate of 69% was achieved. The low execution rate is largely accounted for by the adoption of

smarter ways of executing programmes virtually by Management, resulting in cost savings in Travels and Conference costs and the reduction in the number of meetings and participants.

66. On Staffing, staff representation per Member State, Gender Balance and Staff Age Analysis were reported on. The Male-Female ratio is 71:29 which as compared to AfDB target of 62:38 by 2025 shows good effort in the right direction. He further stressed again the need for an ECOWAS target on gender mainstreaming as has been done by peer organizations such as the UN and AfDB. On the Staff Age analysis, he highlighted the need for ECOWAS to have a policy on youth employment as only 11% of staff are within the age bracket of 20 – 39. He highlighted to Council the decline in number of staff from June 2018 to December 2021, projecting the further decline in 2024 if the ban on Staff Recruitment is not lifted. He recommended to Council for them to consider lifting the ban on recruitment.

67. The AG updated Council on the status of their Directive on Staff Conversions. Out of the 236 requests received, 206 were endorsed (87.3%), and these staff have already been converted. This has resulted in an improvement in the Permanent to Contract Staff Ratio from 59:41 in 2017 to 83:17 by December 2021. The AG recommended to Council for a target Permanent to Contract Staff Ratio to be set for all future recruitments in line with peer practice. Focus on recruitment of staff in the age category of 20-29 and promotion of high performing G- staff into the P1 grade in line with the Staff Regulations was also recommended.

68. The Auditor General made the following Recommendations to the Council of Ministers for approval and implementation by Management among others in the report:

i. To develop a Roadmap detailing steps to move from Limited Assurance to Moderate Assurance by the end of 2023;
ii. To ensure on-going compliance with Supplementary Acts, Directives and Regulations and build the capacity of staff and use of rewards and sanctions to ensure compliance;
iii. To urgently recruitment of staff for Critical / High Impact Control Functions
iv. To urgently implement all Critical and High-Risk issues raised in the SAP Post-Implementation Audit report;
v. To Commission a Special Audit to review and report on the cost of implementing the various Modules by ECOWAS versus Cost incurred by Peers for same Modules, recommend cost to fix issues raised and recommend costs for all new Modules to be implemented;
vi. To direct the ECOWAS Commission to recruit a Consultant urgently to carry out work on the Authorities Schedule;
vii. To fully take over the Control Function from the OAG;
viii. To implement all Directives, promptly and on an on-going basis;
ix. Set target for Permanent to Contract Staff Ratio for all future recruitments in line with peer practice and present to Council for approval in its next session.

69. Council commended the Auditor General on the quality of his report. After deliberations, Council approved the report of the Auditor General and directed Management to take the necessary steps to implement all the recommendations contained in the report. Council further directed Management to concurrently communicate results of the Staff Skills Audit to staff as well as continue to recruit to fill critical functions to facilitate performance and effective taking over of the Control Function.

Item 5: Presentation and Consideration of Report of the 47th Meeting of the Audit Committee

70. Mr Oumarou Amadou Saley, a member of the Audit Committee presented the report of the Committee to Council on behalf of the Chairperson, Mr Mongo Aharh-Kpessou. The report covered three meetings (46th, 47th and 48th) held since the last Council of Ministers meeting. The report recorded matters discussed during the Committee meetings and made the following recommendations for Council consideration and endorsement:

i. Approve the ECOWAS Consolidated Financial Statements for the year 2021;

ii. Approve the Financial Statements for the year 2021 of the following ECOWAS Institutions and Agencies:
   a. The ECOWAS Commission
   b. The Community Levy
   c. The ECOWAS Parliament
   d. The ECOWAS Community Court of Justice (CCJC)
   e. The West African Health Organization (WAHO)
   f. The Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA)
   g. The Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (ARAA)
   h. The ECOWAS Project Preparation Unit (PPDU)
   i. The ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (ARREC)
   j. The ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREE)
   k. The ECOWAS Centre for Gender Development (ECGD)
   l. The ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre (EYDC/ECOWAS)
   m. The ECOWAS Water Resources Management Centre (EWRC)

iii. Approve the revised Charter of the Office of the Auditor General of ECOWAS Institutions;

iv. Approve the Auditor General's Report;

v. Instruct Management to follow up the implementation of the recommendations contained in the OAG's audit reports and also to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the audit of the post implementation of SAP (ECOLink).

71. Council commended the Audit Committee for the quality of the report presented and urged the Commission to urgently make proposals for the reconstitution of a new membership. Thereafter, Council endorsed the recommendations of the Audit Committee.

Item 6: Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Supplementary Act on the Classification of Subject and Decision-Making by ECOWAS Governing Bodies

72. The meeting recalled that at the Fifty-Second (52nd) Ordinary Summit of the Authority of Heads of State and Government held in Abuja on 16 December 2017, and with regard to institutional matters, the Authority looked into applications for accession by third countries to the Community. Morocco had requested for adhesion to ECOWAS as a full Member State, Tunisia wished to be admitted as an Observer Member while Mauritania requested its admission as an Associate Member.

73. The Authority had also noted at this 52nd Ordinary Session, that neither the Revised Treaty, the Supplementary Protocols/Acts nor other Community Law, offer appropriate methods for decision-making on the issue of accession of third countries to the ECOWAS Treaty. Article 9, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Treaty provided for decision making by unanimity, consensus or by a two-thirds majority of Member States depending on the subject matter under consideration. The Treaty further provided that the subject matters for decision should be contained in a Protocol. However, twenty-five years after the entry into force of the Revised Treaty, the Protocol was yet to be adopted, member states therefore continue to take decisions solely by consensus.

74. In order to give itself the means to decide on the issue of accession to the ECOWAS Treaty, the 52nd Session of the Authority established a Committee of Heads of State composed of the Presidents of the Togolese Republic, the Republics of Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea and the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The two tasks of the five (5) Member States Committee were i) to adopt the terms of reference and oversee an in-depth study of the implications of membership and ii) initiate the process of drafting an appropriate Community Act to define the decision-making process within the Community in accordance with the provisions of Article 9, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty.

75. The Draft Supplementary Act on the Classification of Matters and Modes of Decision-Making by ECOWAS Statutory Bodies presents all the matters for decision-making and the coefficients for determining which method, unanimity, consensus, two-third majority shall be applied to each matter.

76. Following the presentation and clarifications sought, Council endorsed the Draft Supplementary Act on the Classification of Matters and Modes of Decision-Making by ECOWAS Statutory Bodies, subject to amendment.

Item 7: Presentation and Consideration of the Status of Tasks Assigned by the 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th and 87th Ordinary Sessions of Council

77. The Vice President of the Commission, Madam Finda Koroma, presented a status report on the implementation of the twenty-three (23) tasks assigned to the ECOWAS Community Institutions by the Council of Ministers at its 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th and 87th Ordinary Sessions.

78. After presentation, Council took note of the report and urged the Commission to ensure faster completion of the outstanding tasks.

Item 8: Presentation and Consideration of the Draft Agenda of the 61st Ordinary Summit of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government

79. The President of the Commission presented the draft agenda of the 61st Ordinary Summit of the Authority of Heads of State and Government.

80. After presentation, Council adopted the Draft Agenda.

ITEMS FOR ENDORSEMENT

Item 9: Presentation of a Memorandum on the ECOWAS Start-Ups Forum and the Draft ECOWAS Micro Small and Medium Enterprises Charter 2021- 2030

81. The Start-ups Forum held in November, 2021 in Niamey, Niger, sought to identify and celebrate innovative digital enterprises (start-ups) under the auspices of West Africa Start-up Forum. It brought together innovative entrepreneurs, developers in ECOWAS to showcase innovative multi-sectoral solutions on the ground, while connecting them with policymakers, public and private investors, universities, media, business centres and entrepreneurs to share lessons and address critical issues underlying improvements in start-ups and the innovation ecosystem in West Africa. The sector Ministers validated the report of the Experts Jury on the Start-ups Summit and noted the quality of work performed as well as the results achieved.

82. The ECOWAS Ministers in charge of Trade and Industry further made the following specific recommendations:

i. Council of Ministers to institutionalize the Start-ups Summit as an annual event at the regional level;
ii. Encourage Member States to replicate at the national level;
iii. Promote and create more sensitisation on the West Africa Start-ups Summit.

83. Council was informed that, the ECOWAS MSME Charter 2021 – 2030 updated the 2015 – 2020 version and expired in 2020 with the imperatives for MSME promotion and competitiveness in the era of AfCFTA, digital technology and Covid-19.

84. The key objective is to achieve transformative economic growth driven by entrepreneurship and technological innovation by promoting effective MSME Regulatory Governance; nurturing and enabling investment climate among ECOWAS Member States; improved access to finance and specific intervention to protect infant industries and mitigate some of the risks.

85. The sector Ministers considered the report of the Experts on the draft MSME Charter 2021 – 2030 and recommended the adoption by the Council of the term "MSME" (micro, small and medium enterprises) for harmony. They thereafter adopted the report and made the following specific recommendations:

a. ECOWAS Council of Ministers to adopt the draft ECOWAS MSME Charter 2021 – 2030.
b. Encourage sustainable funding of MSMEs
c. ECOWAS to develop a strategy to promote the competitiveness of MSMEs
d. Take steps to boost the development and adoption of new technologies
e. Ensure alignment of relevant policies at national level with ECOWAS MSME Charter

86. Council endorsed the report and all recommendations contained therein.

Item 10: Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Harmonised Standards for Bouillon

87. The Draft Harmonized Standards for Bouillon (FDHS 093:2020) addressed current practices in the manufacture of Bouillon with emphasis on fortification with minerals and vitamins to enhance its nutritional quality on voluntary bases. It emphasized on the need for standard and regulation on micronutrient fortifications of Bouillon in the ECOWAS region to guarantee the safety and health benefits of consumers.

88. Bouillon and Consommés are soup gravy preparations that are liquid, powdered, paste or granulated products. They contain protein-rich substances or extracts and hydrolysates with or without added seasonings and or flavour, edible fats, sodium chloride, spices or other food additives to improve their taste.

89. The ECOWAS Ministers in charge of Trade and Industry considered the report of the Experts from Member States and recommended the adoption by the ECOWAS Council of Ministers.

90. After presentation, Council endorsed the memorandum.

Item 11: Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on ECOWAS Directive on the Labelling of Electrical Appliances

91. This Directive covers minimum energy performance standard and labelling of electrical appliances manufactured or imported into ECOWAS region. The ECOWAS Ministers in charge of Trade and Industry considered the importance of regulating the manufacture and marketing of electrical appliances in the region in view of the wide spread of substandard products circulating in the regional market and recommended two labels for consideration and adoption by the ECOWAS Council of Ministers. Concerning the Draft Directive on Minimum Energy Performance Labelling for Electrical Appliances, the Ministers took note of and validated the two labels proposed; the five (5) star and the three (3) star.

92. The Ministers agreed that the labels should be affixed to the product by the supplier and not the distributor to enhance traceability. The Ministers also agreed on the need to provide clear information on the label in official languages of ECOWAS depending on the target market.

93. Council endorsed the memorandum, thereafter.

Item 12: Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Food Crisis, Mitigation Measures and Building Food Systems Resilience in West Africa

94. In his presentation, Hon. Yaw Frimpong Addo, the Deputy Minister for Food and Agriculture of the Republic of Ghana, on behalf of Dr. Akoto Afriyie, Minister for Food and Agriculture and Chairperson of the Specialised Technical Committee of Agriculture and Food of ECOWAS stated that the food and nutrition situation in the region would deteriorate during the projected period of June-August 2022, marked by the food gap for countries in the northern part of the ECOWAS region.

95. The number of food insecure areas is increasing and expanding to new territories, resulting in high food insecurity rates. Compared to the 2021 lean season, the severe food insecurity rate, which corresponds to crisis-to-worst phases, increases from 27.1 million to 38.2 million people from June 2021 to June 2022 (an increase of 41% in one year) while for the minimum phase of the food crisis with only one meal per day, the rate increases from 67.1 million to 83 million people (or 24% over the same period).

96. He indicated that, the war between Russia and Ukraine, which started at the end of February 2022, has had aggravating effects on the already difficult food and nutrition situation in all ECOWAS Member States. It has worsened the region's grain deficit, by disrupting the food

supply chain, causing price hikes of foodstuff and fertilizers, of which the two said countries in conflict are major suppliers on the international markets, as well as wheat, corn, edible oils and fertilisers for most ECOWAS Member States

97. After presentation, Council endorsed the recommendations of the report related to (i) support the supply of fertilizer to farmers in the region, (ii) facilitate cross-border transactions of agriculture commodities, food and agricultural inputs in order to mitigate the impacts of the food and nutrition crisis and (iii) strengthening the sustainability of resilience of agri-food systems in West Africa and particularly in the Sahel region.

Item 13: Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Regional Strategy on Climate

98. The ECOWAS Specialised Ministerial Technical Committee on Environment validated two documents at the end of its virtual ministerial meeting on 29 April 2022 in Accra. The Committee recommended adoption of the two strategic documents by the Council of Ministers. The validated documents are: i) ECOWAS Regional Climate Strategy; ii) ECOWAS Climate Finance Access and Mobilisation Strategy.

99. Concerning the **ECOWAS Regional Climate Strategy,** the overall objective is to support Member States to tackle the challenge of combating climate change, for the achievement of their commitments under the Paris Agreement. The Strategy has six (6) specific objectives and presents the actions to be carried out at the adaptation and mitigation levels for each of the following key sectors: Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Energy, Transport and Mobility, Natural Ecosystems and Biodiversity, Water Resources, Coastal Areas, Health, Climate Services, Hydrometeorological and Climatological Systems, Early Warning Systems and Hydrometeorological and Climatological Disaster Risk Management, and Industry. The Regional Climate Strategy also defines an action plan (2022- 2030) and institutional arrangements with the means of implementing and monitoring the actions identified.

100. Regarding the **ECOWAS Climate Finance Access and Mobilisation Strategy**, it aims to facilitate the implementation of priority climate change mitigation and adaptation projects at the national and regional levels. This Strategy defines key actions to address the challenges, obstacles, and opportunities identified to promote mobilisation and access to climate finance for ECOWAS Member States. A total of thirty (30) strategic actions will be carried out in five strategic areas of intervention. The implementation of these strategic actions will help Member States to close the current climate financing gap with an estimated overall funding need of USD 294 billion for the 2015- 2030 period. The Strategy is accompanied by an implementation plan for the 2022-2030 period, which sets out the institutional arrangements, the monitoring and evaluation mechanism, the reporting and review mechanism, and the resources required for the implementation of the plan.

101. The Specialised Ministerial Technical Committee on Environment made some recommendations, among others: i) use instruments such as green bonds to mobilise resources for climate finance; ii) Establish a harmonised legal and regulatory framework for climate investments to transform the economies of countries in the West African region; iii) increase the mobilisation of internal resources, especially through the establishment of a carbon market involving the private sector; iv) strengthen stakeholders' direct access to the Green Climate Fund through the accreditation of several regional institutions; v) include the waste management sector in the mitigation component; vi) establish a measurement system (MRV) for the Regional Climate Strategy (RCS) to provide reliable information for monitoring the implementation.

102. After clarification sought, Council endorsed the memorandum.

Item 14: Presentation and Consideration of Memoranda on: a) Regulations on Regional Mechanism for the Prevention and Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases and Zoonoses b) Five Regional Strategies on Animal Health

103. In his presentation, Hon. Yaw Frimpong Addo, the Deputy Minister for Food and Agriculture of the Republic of Ghana, on behalf of Dr. Akoto Afriyie, Minister for Food and Agriculture and Chairperson of the Specialised Ministerial Technical Committee of Agriculture and Food of ECOWAS indicated that two regulations and five strategic documents were validated at the end of its hybrid meeting held in-person and virtually in Abidjan-Cote d'Ivoire on the 27th to 28th September 2021. The Committee recommended the adoption of the two regulations and five strategic documents by the Council of Ministers.

104. The validated documents include: i) ECOWAS Regulation on Regional Mechanism for the Prevention and Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) and Zoonoses; ii) ECOWAS Regulation on Establishing an Emergency Window for the Prevention and Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases and Zoonoses within the Regional Agriculture Fund domiciled in EBID; iii) ECOWAS Regional animal health and welfare Strategy; iv) ECOWAS Strategy for the Progressive Control and Eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminant (PPR); v) ECOWAS Regional Strategy for the Elimination of Dog-mediated Rabies using the One Health Approach; vi) ECOWAS Livestock Identification and Traceability Strategy (ECOLITS); vii) ECOWAS Regional Strategy for the Control of Animal Trypanosomiasis (AT) and Tick-Borne Diseases (TBDs).

105. The overall objective of the regulations aims at ensuring coordinated and integrated actions among Member States for the prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases and zoonoses, and establish a fund to tackle transboundary animal health emergencies in Member States when they arise thus supporting livestock farmers and ensuring food and nutrition security, and improved livelihoods.

106. The five strategies have the overall objective of ensuring animal health and welfare, progressively eradicating endemic and neglected transboundary animal diseases and zoonoses as well as ensure animal identification to support effective planning, efficient livestock management, animal movement control, and enhanced safety of trade in animal and animal products. The strategies define actions for five years and provides for institutional arrangements for implementing and monitoring the actions identified.

107. The Specialized Ministerial Technical Committee on Food and Agriculture further recommended an increase in the internal mobilization of funds for the prevention of animal diseases as many human diseases originate from animals. Ministers also called on the continued support of development partners in achieving the prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases and zoonoses. Ministers expressed concern about animal welfare issues in the region, in particular the clandestine slaughter of donkeys, which if not checked can aggravate rural poverty as the contribution of donkeys in terms of transportation and ploughing power in poorly resourced households cannot be quantified.

108. After presentation and clarifications sought, Council endorsed the memoranda.

Item 15: Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the Gender Transformative Human Capital Development Strategy (HCD), 2022-2032

109. On behalf of the Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources of the Republic of Ghana, Hon. Mrs Cecilia Abena Dapaah, the Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Dr Francis Kai-Kai stated that the Authority of the Heads of State and Government at its the Fifty-Ninth Ordinary Summit adopted the ECOWAS Regional Integrated Human Capital Development (HCD) 2030 Strategy. With the adoption of the Regional HCD Strategy, ECOWAS has set an ambitious objective to become a top-performing Regional Economic Community in Human Capital Development Strategy (HCD) by 2030 in Sub-Saharan Africa. The ECOWAS HCD Strategy focuses on three thematic areas, which are stated as follows:

a) Health and Nutrition;
b) Education, Skills and Labour participation; and
c) Entrepreneurship, Financial Inclusion and Digital Payments.

110. Under the thematic areas, 19 strategic indicators have been developed and being implemented in each Member State of ECOWAS. All the fifteen Member States are at various stages of developing their own national human capital development (HCD), with the regional HCD strategy as a reference.

111. To achieve this ambitious strategy, ECOWAS is supporting the Member States to improve their HCD outcomes over the next 10 years through these four strategic levers:

a) **Advocacy, Policies and Communication:** develops and communicates a common vision for the region, and shares the best practice of policy, legislation, and advocacy.

b) **Monitoring and Evaluation:** tracks progress against the regional HCD vision and provides a standardized source of performance data to inform regional and national decision-making.

c) **Capability Building and Knowledge Sharing:** supports the sharing and dissemination of technical knowledge and skills.

d) **Resource Mobilization:** supports fundraising activities and coordinate donor efforts in the region in line with its vision and objectives

112. To date, the following HCD tools and documents have been developed towards the effective implementation of HCD 2030 Strategy in our region and need to be adopted by the Council:

a) ECOWAS Integrated HCD Index finalised and has been built to track latest performance and progress towards 2030 strategy;
b) ECOWAS Gender Index 2022;
c) HCD Monitoring and Evaluation Dashboard;
d) ECOWAS 2022 HCD report;
e) Assessment report on Gender Transformative Action;
f) Capability building on cross-cutting skills such as problem solving, designing a strategy, effective communication to stakeholders.

113. After presentation, Council endorsed the memorandum and all the recommendations contained therein.

Item 16: Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on the proposed Amendments to the Supplementary Act AS.17/02/12 on Axle Load Control in the ECOWAS Region

114. Presenting on behalf of the Hon. Kwasi Amoako-Attah, Minister for Roads and Highways of the Republic of Ghana, the Deputy Minister for Roads and Highways, Mr. Stephen Pambin Jallulah recalled the dominance of road transport in national and regional trade and its feature in Pillar 3 of the new ECOWAS Vision 2050, which seeks to intensify infrastructure development and enhance inter-connectivity, for the free movement of goods and people.

115. Unfortunately overloading of heavy goods vehicles in the ECOWAS Region continues to contribute to the rapid deterioration of roads. In this regard, the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, in 2012 adopted and signed Supplementary Act ACT/SP/17/02/12 with an action plan and a roadmap for overload control. The UEMOA Commission adopted similar Regulation No. 14/2005/CM/UEMOA in 2005.

116. He indicated that Ten (10) years after coming into force, the ECOWAS Commission has assessed the implementation challenges and recommended revisions to the Supplementary Act/SP.17/02/12. This was done with the UEMOA Commission which resulted in a single harmonized Regional Act. The assessment study covered the status of implementation,

challenges, and proposed areas of improvement to the Act. This formed the basis for the proposed amendments to the Supplementary Act and Action Plan.

117. A wide stakeholder consultation was undertaken with Member States, Cross-border Transport Unions, Regional Engineers Associations, Development Partners and the UEMOA Commission. The Amended Act and related documents were also endorsed by the Road Transport Sector Ministers and subsequently by the ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja, June 20, 2022

118. Council considered the report and endorsed the Supplementary Act XX/06/22 Amending Supplementary Act/SP.17/02/12 relating to the Harmonization of Standards and Procedures for the Control of Dimensions, Weight, and Axle Load of Goods Vehicles in West Africa, harmonized with Regulation 14, and recommended same for the adoption by the Authority of Heads of State and Government. The accompanying Action Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks were also adopted.

Item 17: Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum on Jury Deliberation on the 2021 Support Programme for Research and Innovation (PARI)

119. The Minister for Environment, Science and Technology of the Republic of Ghana, Dr Kwaku Afriyie in his presentation stated that, the ECOWAS Research and Innovation Support Programme (PARI) is a competitive programme that aims to select the best projects submitted by Researchers gathered in consortium through calls for applications. PARI is implemented to provide a response to the many challenges of the research and innovation sector (obsolescence and degradation of equipment and infrastructure, low production of researchers, etc.). It allows the development of regional research programs with an impact on populations and the establishment of consortia of researchers at the regional level necessarily involving researchers from the three (03) linguistic *areas (Anglophones, Francophones and Lusophones*) to improve regional integration and the preparation of the next generation by introducing young people to research. It is regulated by Regulation C/REG.7/9/20 adopted by the Council of Ministers on 5 September 2020 and by the ECOWAS Grants Code. The two areas for which PARI awards grants are: ***Life and Earth Sciences and Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation.***

120. At the end of the 2021 Session, the Jury Meeting held in Lomé, from 21 to 25 February 2022 for the fields of Basic Sciences, Technologies, and Innovation in the discipline of Chemistry, which is in competition, did not dedicate any laureate to it.

121. However, for Life and Earth Sciences, a field of Pharmacopoeia, the Jury proposes to award the grant of 200,000 USD to the Consortium ranked 1st with a score higher than the minimum eligibility score of 70 points. The Consortium is led by **Dr. Bernadin Jean Robert Klotoe** (University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin) on the theme: "***Toxicological and Antidiabetic Activities of Medicinal Plants involved in the Endogenous Treatment of Diabetes Mellitus: A Holistic Study for the Production of Phytomedicines***". The Consortium includes the following

partners: Prof. Olufunke Adebola Sodipo (Nigeria), Priscilla Kolbea Mante (Ghana), Cotta Évora Elisabeth (Cabo Verde). The project also integrates young people with a significant **number of the female gender.** The Sectoral Ministers, having examined the results of the Jury, recommended same for the endorsement of the Council of Ministers.

122. Council endorsed the report thereafter.

Item 18: Presentation of a Report of Chairperson of the Presidential Task Force on Obstacles to the Free Movement of Goods on the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor

123. In his presentation, the Chairman of the Presidential Task force on ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS), Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas informed Council that the purpose of the memorandum was to appraise Council of the update on its handling of the issues of barriers to intra-community trade on the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor.

124. He recalled the directives of Council at its 87th Ordinary Session which took place in Abuja from the 9th to 10th December, 2021 tasking the ELTS Task Force to find a satisfactory solution for a return to the free movement of goods on the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor.

125. Council was informed that the Task Force conducted a Mediation Mission in Ghana, Nigeria and Bénin from 28 February to 8 March 2022 and a suggestion-gathering mission in Cote d'Ivoire and Togo from 22 to 25 March, 2022. He reported that the mission revealed several barriers and concerns relating to trade on the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor.

126. Council thanked the Task Force for the quality of work done and endorsed the recommendations contained therein. It further directed that there should be a follow-up of the implementation of the recommendations.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Item 19: Presentation of a Report of the Ministerial Committee on the Single Currency Programme

127. On behalf of Mr Ken Ofori Atta, Minister for Finance of the Republic of Ghana, the Deputy Minister for Finance, Dr. John Kumah stated that, ECOWAS launched the idea of creating a single ECOWAS currency in 1983 in Conakry (Decision A/DEC/6/5/83). In order to operationalize this idea, the ECOWAS Monetary Cooperation Program (ECMP) was adopted on July 9, 1987 (A/DEC.2/7/87). The revised ECOWAS Treaty has reinforced this desire by enshrining in Article 55 the formal commitment of Member States "to the establishment of a Customs Union, an Economic and Monetary Union.

128. In order to fast-track the process, the Authority of Heads of State and Government in June 2021 in Accra, Ghana, adopted a new roadmap for the launch of the ECO in 2027 and a revised Macroeconomic Convergence and Stability Pact among ECOWAS Member States. The implementation of the roadmap has commenced, and the observance of the Pact also started January 2022.

129. The regular assessment of the state of the macroeconomic performance and convergence of Member States indicated that the region has pulled out of recession in 2021 with growth rebounding to 4.2 percent, compared to a contraction of 0.8 percent in 2020. Meanwhile, inflationary pressure in the region continued its upward trend in 2021 peaked at 12.5 percent, compared to 9.5 percent recorded in 2020. The region's budget deficit as percentage of GDP improved to 4.7 percent in 2021 from a deficit of 5.0 percent in 2020. The public debt situation deteriorated to 36.1 percent of GDP from 34.4 percent in 2020.

130. The region had a Balance of Payment (BOP) surplus of 0.7 percent of GDP in 2021 compared to 0.2 percent of GDP in 2020 due to higher export earnings and improved transfer inflows, compared to 2020. While the policies remained accommodative to further mitigating the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and fostering solid and lasting economic recovery in the region.

131. In 2021, none of the Member States met all the Primary Criteria same as in 2020, while nine (9) Member States met all the Secondary Criteria in 2021 same as in 2020.

132. On 27th June 2022, the Ministerial Committee met to review the report of the Technical Committee on:

I. The ECOWAS Macroeconomic Performance and Convergence Report in 2021,
II. Proposal for the amendment of Decision establishing the Special Fund and the Manual of Procedures for the use of financial resources of the Fund,
III. Proposal for the ECOWAS Payments and Settlement System: Legal, Regulatory and Policy Frameworks, and
IV. Proposal for the definition of "majority" within the framework of the Macroeconomic Convergence and Stability Pact among ECOWAS Member States

133. At the end of the deliberation the Ministerial Committee took the following decision:

- ***On the Macroeconomic Performance and Convergence report in 2021,*** the Ministerial Committee adopted the recommendations contained in the report of the Technical Committee;

- ***On the amendment of the decision establishing the Special Fund and the Manual of Procedure for the use of the Fund.*** The Ministerial Committee noted the withdrawal of the amendment for further consultation

- ***On the ECOWAS Payment and Settlement System,*** the Ministerial Committee adopted the recommendations of the Technical Committee relating to the legal, regulatory and general policy frameworks.

  Recommended that WAMA should follow the ECOWAS procedure to submit the texts on the ECOWAS Payment and Settlement System (EPSS) to the competent Authorities for adoption

- On the Proposals for the definition of "majority" within the framework of the Macroeconomic Convergence and Stability Pact among ECOWAS Member States, the Ministerial Committee could not reach a consensus, but directed the Technical Committee to explore the other options and make a presentation to the next meeting.

- Invited the ECOWAS Commission to organize a Technical Committee meeting to examine the two proposed definitions of majority, namely:
  i. stratified majority consisting of all UEMOA Countries and at least 50% of WAMZ economies, including the two largest economies of the Zone; and
  ii. simple majority of member states with specific measures that takes into account the large economies that may join at a later stage.

134. On the recommendation of the Technical Committee meeting from June 8th – 10th 2022, the Ministerial Committee on ECOWAS Single Currency meeting on June 27, 2022

- ✓ Adopted the recommendations of the report of the technical committee on the 2021 Macroeconomic Convergence Report,
- ✓ Invited the ECOWAS Commission to organize consultations with the relevant stakeholders in the modification of the texts on the Special Fund for the financing of the ECOWAS Single Currency Program;

135. The Ministerial Committee wishes to inform the Authorities, that the efforts to finalize all the outstanding issues concerning the Macroeconomic Convergence Stability Pact Among ECOWAS Member States, especially the definition of Majority, are ongoing.

136. Council took note of the information provided.

Item 20: Presentation of a Memorandum on ECOWAS Member States' Applications for International and Regional Statutory Positions

137. To harmonize 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 Government1 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 subsequently set up in 2016 a 5-member Ministerial Committee, made up of Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal, which agreed on criteria2 for selecting candidates and emphasized on the importance for all countries of the Community to give full support to successful candidates.

138. For the year 2022, Member States have requested support for a total of seventeen (17) vacancies, out of which elections for nine (9) vacancies have been already held, and elections for eight (8) vacancies are still pending. As of 29 June 2022, these eight (8) vacancies do not call for arbitration since each of the position matches a single application from ECOWAS. For the year 2021, the Commission received a total of thirty-two (32) requests for support from the ECOWAS Member States for forty-one (41) available vacant positions. Among the positions that were filled in 2021, ECOWAS was able to secure notably the position of Commissioner for Political affairs, Peace and Security for Nigeria, and that of Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development for Burkina Faso.

139. To facilitate its work the Committee pleads with the Member States to (i) systematically notify to the ECOWAS Commission their applications to international and regional positions, as well as their requests for the Community support; to (ii) provide accurate and complete information regarding the positions i.e. CV translated in the ECOWAS official languages, election dates, etc.); and to (iii) inform the Commission about the outcome of the election to facilitate the reporting to the ECOWAS statutory meetings.

STRICT CLOSED-DOOR SESSION

Item 21: Presentation and Consideration of the Report of the Ad Hoc Ministerial Committee for the Selection and Evaluation of Performance of Statutory Appointees of the Community for the Period 2022-2026

140. The Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Ministerial Committee for the Selection and Evaluation of Performance of Statutory Appointees reminded Council of the interview guidelines while laying emphasis on the interview Rules of Procedure. She presented the results of the interviews with the scores obtained by each candidate. She also highlighted the recommended the candidates with the highest scores, as shown in table below and mentioned that in the case of Liberia, no candidate obtained the minimum score to be selected.

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1 Refers 49th Ordinary Summit on 4 June 2016 in Dakar, and the Chairperson of the Authority decision's on August 2016

2 Quality of applications (i), Solidarity (ii), Geographical spread (iii), Alphabetical rotation (iv).

Statutory Position	Member State	Recommended Candidate
Vice President	Togo	Ms. Damtien Tchintchibidja
Commissioner for Internal Services	Nigeria	Prof. Nazifi Abdullahi Darma
Commissioner for Political Affairs Peace and Security	Ghana	Dr. Abdel-Fatau Musah
Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Agriculture	Cote D'Ivoire	Ms. Massandjé Touré-Litse
Commissioner for Infrastructure, Energy & Digitalisation	Niger	Mr. Sediko Douka
Auditor-General	Guinea Bissau	Mr. João Alage Mamadú Fadiá
Director-General of GIABA	Liberia	No Successful Candidate

141. During the deliberations, the Republic of Senegal, indicated that, there were no consultations held with the Republic of Ghana regarding the position of Commissioner, Political Affairs, Peace and Security.

142. Following consultations, the Republic of Senegal agreed to take up the position of Commissioner, Human Development and Social Affairs for this new term of 2022 – 2026. However, the Republic of Senegal would be given the first right of refusal for the position of Commissioner Political Affairs, Peace and Security in the next rotation of 2026 – 2030, subject to compliance to the Community Levy requirements.

143. The position of Director General of the West Africa Health Organisation (WAHO) has been allocated to the Republic of Benin

144. After deliberations, Council congratulated the Ad Hoc Ministerial Committee for its outstanding work. Council requested the Republics of Benin, Liberia and Senegal to submit three names each for the positions allocated to them by 15th July, 2022 at the latest. Council thereafter adopted the report of the Ad Hoc Ministerial Committee. Benin reiterated its interest of position for Commissioner for Human Development and Social Affairs and not Director General WAHO.

Item 22: Any Other Business

Presentation of a Memorandum on Enhancing the Roles and Responsibilities of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC)

145. The Dean of the PRC, Dr. Al-Hassan Conteh stated that the ECOWAS Permanent Representative Committee (PRC) is composed of the Permanent Representatives of Member States accredited to ECOWAS. In line with the 2010 Supplementary Act defining the role of the Permanent Representative to ECOWAS, the Committee was mandated by the Authority of Heads and State and Government to work on sub-regional peace and security matters and to

contribute effectively to the realisation of the goals and objective of the Community. At its Extra Ordinary Session held in Dakar, in 2015, Council decided to establish the PRC as an Advisory organ to Council. In view of development in Peace and Security in the sub-region since 2010, it has become imperative to fully integrate the PRC as an organ of ECOWAS.

146. He further stated that the enhancement of the role of the PRC will not interfere with the responsibility of the AFC, rather it will provide Member States the necessary impetus to take ownership of the organisation. Given that the Permanent Representatives are based in Abuja, their work will not pose any significant impact on the budget for meetings and travel. It would therefore be appropriate to provide the PRC with other responsibilities that put it on par with the best practices of the PRC at the AU and the UN.

147. Following presentation and clarifications sought, Council decided that a Committee made of Member States be formed to critically look at the establishment of the PRC as an advisory organ of Council and report the findings to it during its next Ordinary Session.

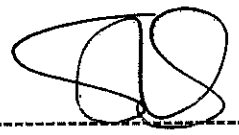
Item 23: Adoption of the Report

148. The report was adopted after amendments.

Item 24: Closing Ceremony

149. The Chairperson of Council, Hon Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, in her closing remarks, thanked Council Members for their active participation and constructive contributions during the Council meeting. Thereafter, she declared the Eighty-Eighth Ordinary Session of Council closed, and wished all participants safe journey back to their respective destinations.

DONE AT ACCRA THIS 1ST DAY OF JULY 2022



HON. SHIRLEY AYORKOR BOTCHWEY
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

CHAIRPERSON
FOR: THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS