ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE ECOWAS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

ON THE CONTINGENCY PLAN RELATING TO THE WITHDRAWAL OF BURKINA FASO, THE REPUBLIC OF MALI AND THE REPUBLIC OF NIGER FROM ECOWAS

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION

HE Omar Alieu TOURAY

Accra, Ghana

April 2025

- Your Excellency, Amb. Yusuf Maitama Tuggar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chair of Council.
- Hon Min of foreign Affairs of Ghana
- Your Excellencies Honourable Ministers, Members of the ECOWAS Council
- Your Excellency Abdoulaye DIOP, President of UEMOA Commission
- Excellency Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission, Heads of Institutions and Commissioners

We are deeply honoured by your presence at this Extra-Ordinary Session of Council, which is dedicated to the consideration of the contingency plan for future cooperation with the three member states that have withdrawn from ECOWAS, namely Burkina Faso, Republic of Mali and Republic of Niger.

Excellencies

Over the years, the ECOWAS Protocols on Free Movement of Persons, Rights of Residence and Establishment have enabled community citizens to move freely, to reside and establish within the Community. The ECOWAS Trade Liberation Scheme (ETLS) on its part has allowed free trade in almost 50,000 products within the Community. These instruments, which have been in existence for over four decades, are responsible for laying the foundation for the socio-economic integration of the Member States. Running side-by-side with these programmes were programmes on Agriculture, food security and transhumance. There are also Regional economic infrastructure projects, particularly those related to energy, such as the ECOWAS Electricity Market established under West Africa Power Pool and several vital development projects Financed by ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID), as well as grants and loans provided by ECOWAS partners. Thanks to these programmes, ECOWAS is set to become a true community of people and a single market. However recent events in the region have led to Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger to decide to withdraw from ECOWAS.

In strict respect for the provisions of our Treaty, the effective withdrawal of the three countries took place on 29th January 2025, one year after their notifications of the withdrawal of membership. Your Excellencies may also recall the directive of the 66th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority to the President of the Commission in December 2024, to launch the withdrawal formalities after the deadline of 29th January 2025 and to draw up a contingency plan covering all areas, and for Council to meet in an extraordinary session in the second quarter of 2025 to consider and adopt the separation modalities and the contingency plan. We are therefore gathered

here today to consider the separation modalities and contingency plan, which was developed through a technical work involving all ECOWAS institutions.

The Plan encompasses the following key areas

1. **Legal, Institutional Financial and Personnel Matters**: this relates specifically to the adjustments of ECOWAS legal instruments, the closure and transfer of ECOWAS Institutions based in the withdrawing countries, management of staff and personnel-related matters; the fulfilment of financial obligations by departing States and the management of ECOWAS assets;
2. **The Regional Market and Economic Integration:** issues of the free movement of persons, regional market access and the integrity of the CET;
3. **Political Governance, Peace and Security:** related in particular to the effective and coordinated fight against terrorism, violent extremism and transnational organized crime and the intelligence sharing;
4. **Sectoral Policies:** including issues of coordination of the application of regional standards and directives as well as the implementation of major integrating programs in various sectors (Agriculture and Food Security, Environment, Transport Infrastructure, Energy, ICT, etc.)
5. **Human Development:** health, education and humanitarian issues.

This Meeting is therefore expected to consider and agree on our future relations with AES Countries with respect these areas.

I am confident that in these deliberations, you will be guided by the interest and the wellbeing of the people.