



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**15th ECOWAS-EU Ministerial Troika Meeting - Luxembourg,  
June 16, 2009 - FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ**

1. The fifteenth ministerial Troika meeting between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the European Union (EU) was held in Luxembourg on June 16, 2009 under the Co-Chairs of Ambassador Bagudu M. Hirse, Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria and Mr. Tomáš Pojar, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.
2. The ECOWAS Troika further included Mr. Amidou Toure, Director of African Organisations, representing the Deputy Minister of Regional Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso, and Dr Mohamed Ibn Chambas, President of the ECOWAS Commission. The EU Troika included Mr. Stefano Manservigi, Director General, the European Commission, Mr. José Costa Pereira, Head of Unit, Africa Task Force, Council of the European Union and Ms. Viktoria Li, Deputy Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden. Mr. Anatole Ayissi, Senior Political Affairs Officer, representative of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and Mr Soumaila Cissé, President of the UEMOA Commission, also attended the meeting as observers.

**P R E S S**

## **PEACE AND SECURITY IN WESTERN AFRICA**

### **The ECOWAS peace and security agenda**

3. The European Union congratulated ECOWAS on the successful conclusion of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) Logistics Exercise (LogEx) in Burkina Faso on June 13, 2009, and looked forward to receiving the report of the exercise. Both Parties agreed that it was important for the region to have the full West Africa Brigade, consisting of both components, i.e. civilian (including police) and military, in place by 2010 in fulfilment of the requirements of the African Union Peace and Security Architecture. The EU and ECOWAS pledged to continue to work in close cooperation to support the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework and its implementation. In this respect, and in order to facilitate EU support, notably through the 10th EDF RIP, the EU reiterated the need for ECOWAS to focus on the development of a roadmap for the implementation of its Conflict Prevention Framework.
4. The EU and ECOWAS reaffirmed their commitment to continue to work together on full implementation and domestication of multilateral instruments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation on the basis of the positive momentum noted in various multilateral fora.
5. ECOWAS informed that the ECOWAS Small Arms Convention is expected to enter into force after the ratification by eight Member States. Against this background, ECOWAS and the EU reaffirmed their readiness to work together for its successful implementation both at regional and national levels.
6. The EU and ECOWAS reaffirmed their interest for a successful process leading to the adoption of an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), taking into account the results of the regional seminar organised in Dakar in April 2009.

### **Guinea**

7. The EU and ECOWAS welcomed the commitments made by Guinea during the Article 96 consultations, on April 29, 2009 and during the last meeting of the International Contact Group for Guinea (ICG-G), from May 4 - 5, 2009, to implement the roadmap for the restoration of constitutional order in the country. In particular, they welcomed the commitment of Guinea to hold legislative and presidential elections between October and December 2009 and the commitment that neither the President and the members of the CNDD, nor the Prime Minister and his cabinet, would stand for office. The EU and ECOWAS, however, expressed serious concerns about the slow progress in the implementation of the roadmap.

8. The Parties urged the Guinean authorities to put in place, without further delay, the National Transitional Council and to honour the pledge to make their financial contribution towards the preparation of the elections, in order to gain the confidence of the international community.
9. The Parties also called on the "Forces vives" to reaffirm their unflinching support for the implementation of the transitional roadmap. They affirmed their commitment to urge the international community to send a clear message to the CNDD about its firm stand not to compromise on the agreed roadmap, including during the next ICG-G meeting on June 27, 2009 in the margins of the AU Summit.
10. ECOWAS welcomed the intention of the EU to conclude the article 96 consultations with Guinea with clear benchmarks and incentives to accompany the transition process. The Parties considered that this framework of mutual engagements may also be included in the activities of the international partners of the ICG-Guinea, including the World Bank, African Development Bank and IMF.
11. The EU and ECOWAS called on the CNDD and the transitional government to intensify the fight against impunity. The campaign of violence and extortion by uniformed armed personnel against the business community and civilians seriously undermines the credibility of the transitional administration and poses a real threat to the indispensable political stability necessary for the conduct of free, fair and credible elections.

### **Guinea-Bissau**

12. ECOWAS and the EU expressed deep concern about the worsening climate of violence in Guinea Bissau and firmly condemned the assassinations which took place in the beginning of March and again in early June 2009 in Bissau. They emphasized the imperative need to fight against impunity in the country. To this end, the Parties welcomed the decision of ECOWAS and the AU to institute an international commission of enquiry, with the technical support of the UN and the international community to investigate the assassinations and stressed the need that the perpetrators of these brutal acts be promptly brought to justice.
13. ECOWAS and the EU urged all the stakeholders, including the government of Guinea Bissau, to speed up the implementation phase of the defence and security sector reform agenda in Guinea Bissau. ECOWAS expressed its strong appreciation of the EU ESDP mission to support SSR in Guinea Bissau.

14. ECOWAS and the EU stressed the critical importance of the June 28, 2009 presidential elections to the overall political stability of Guinea Bissau. To this end, the Parties urged the Government and the independent national electoral commission to step up their preparations for the conduct of credible elections in the country. The Parties also reminded the security forces of their responsibility to ensure a conducive environment for the conduct of the elections. Finally, the Parties welcomed the preparations being made by ECOWAS, the AU, and the EU to observe the elections.

### **Côte d'Ivoire**

15. ECOWAS and the EU expressed satisfaction with the recent improvement in the security situation in Cote d'Ivoire and the advances being made in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Peace Accord. In this regard, the EU and ECOWAS welcomed the announcement by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to hold the first round of the presidential elections on November 29, 2009. The Parties stressed the absolute need to respect this date in order to avoid political and social instability and agreed to maintain dialogue and cooperation among themselves, with the objective of supporting the crisis resolution process. They also commended the transfer of power in the Central Zone of Cote d'Ivoire (Bouake) from the zonal commanders of the "Forces Nouvelles" to central government authority, describing it as an essential step in the national reunification and reconciliation processes. The Parties commended the efforts of the facilitator of the peace process, President Blaise Compaoré, and encouraged him to continue with his good offices to promote the conducive environment for free and fair elections, in accordance with the provisions of the Permanent Framework for Dialogue agreed upon on May 18, 2009 in Ouagadougou. ECOWAS commended the EU for the financial and technical assistance towards the November 2009 presidential elections and appealed for the continuation of the support until the restoration of peace and democracy in the country.

### **Niger**

16. ECOWAS and the EU expressed grave concern and disquiet about recent developments in Niger, which they judged as a serious threat to the achievements in good governance over the last ten years in the country, as well as to the democratization process and stability in the region. To this end, the EU welcomed the communiqué by the ECOWAS Council of the Wise of May 16, 2009 as well as the declaration by the ECOWAS Commission of June 3, 2009 requesting the Niger authorities to abide by their Constitution. The Parties urged the Niger authorities to abide by the ruling of the Constitutional Court and to be mindful of the provisions of the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, signed and ratified by Niger, especially the aspects that forbid obtaining or maintaining power through unconstitutional means or modifying the electoral laws six months before elections without the consent of the vast majority of stakeholders.

## **Security and development in the Sahel region**

17. The EU and ECOWAS exchanged views on the threats to security represented by terrorist and criminal activities in the Sahel region. They unreservedly condemned the recent execution of a British citizen and expressed their concern about the other hostage still in captivity.
18. They encouraged the countries in the region to continue their efforts in order to develop a sustainable framework to improve the security situation in the region. ECOWAS and the EU reaffirmed their support for the actions of the Governments of Niger and Mali towards promoting development and preserving the peace and territorial integrity of their respective countries.
19. ECOWAS and the EU reaffirmed their strong support for the plan to convene the Sahel-Sahara regional conference addressing security and development aspects, as initiated by the President of Mali and are looking forward to the outcome of this meeting. The EU informed ECOWAS on its initiative to develop a common EU approach to support the development and security policies in the Sahel region and on the exploratory mission planned to the region.

## **CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

20. Ministers expressed concern about the impact of the international economic and financial crisis on developing countries, notably as regards growth prospects, foreign direct investment, development assistance, availability of credit and remittances from migrant workers and currency stability.
21. Ministers welcomed the outcome of the G20 Summit of April 2, 2009 and stressed the need for a coordinated approach at international level as well as for the speedy disbursement of assistance package to the developing world, with a view to resolving the current crisis.
22. ECOWAS welcomed the EU-Council conclusions of May 18, 2009 on supporting development countries to cope with the crises.
23. Ministers looked forward to the outcome of the G8 Summit on July 6-8, 2009, which has identified the issues of development and Africa among its priorities.
24. With regard to the next G20 Summit in September 2009, the EU encouraged ECOWAS to continue its practice of close coordination with AU on Africa's position.

25. Ministers welcomed the continuous progress being made in the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. They commended the strengthening of the Africa-EU political dialogue and cooperation, recalling the increased joint ECOWAS-AU initiatives in response to political and security crises. The Parties also stressed the importance of increased coordination, cooperation and synergy between the African Union and the RECs, which constitute the building blocks of Africa's political and economic integration. In this context, Ministers welcomed the commitment of ECOWAS to actively participate in the work of the Joint Expert Groups on the eight thematic partnerships.
26. They called upon all stakeholders to continue to expedite action with a view to attaining tangible results in priority initiatives outlined by the road maps before the mid-term review process of the Joint Strategy to be conducted in October 2009.
27. Ministers welcomed the progress made so far in the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations and reaffirmed the commitment of both sides to demonstrate the necessary flexibility in order to swiftly conclude the negotiations for the establishment of a comprehensive regional EPA, covering all ECOWAS countries and Mauritania. The Parties also welcomed the progress made in the definition of the EPA Programme for Development (EPADP) at both national and regional levels. Both Parties underscored the positive influence of such an Agreement on strengthening regional economic integration in West Africa, especially against the backdrop of the global economic and financial crisis. Ministers also underlined the development dimension of the regional agreement and agreed that the main objective of the EPA should be to foster the smooth and gradual integration of the West African region into the world economy, contributing to the eradication of poverty, and the economic and industrial development of West Africa.
28. Both Parties agreed that fragility constitutes a major challenge to sustainable development and peace. In this context, ECOWAS noted with satisfaction the information about the ongoing EU activities aimed at more strategic and better coordinated EU response to situations of fragility. In line with the EU Council Conclusions of November 19, 2007, the EU launched a pilot exercise with six countries (Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Timor Leste and Yemen) for which the action plans are being developed. Simultaneously, the EU is closely cooperating with the World Bank and the African Development Bank (ADB), as well as the IMF to develop a common approach to budget support in situations of fragility and to enhance the operational coordination.

29. The EU reaffirmed the importance of democratic governance, rule of law, respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the eradication of poverty in addressing situations of fragility.
30. The EU and ECOWAS acknowledged the role of the Peace Building Commission as an important tool in consolidating peace and democracy in the countries on its agenda. Both Parties noted the relative progress of Sierra Leone and to a lesser extent of Guinea Bissau in implementing the commitments stemming from the strategic frameworks.
31. With regard to Togo, ECOWAS and the EU expressed concern on the alleged plot in April 2009 to destabilise the country and reiterated their zero tolerance for coups d'état and any unconstitutional ascension to power. They urged all the Togolese stakeholders, particularly the Government and the main opposition Parties to demonstrate greater political will towards breaking the deadlock in the Inter-Togolese Dialogue and deepening the reform process.
32. The EU and ECOWAS shared their continued concern about the increasing impact of drug trafficking and international organized crime on the political and socio-economic stability of the region.
33. The Parties underlined the importance of the regional Action Plan on Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organised Crime in West Africa as a framework for all drug-related activities in the region and welcomed the recognition of the Plan by the international community.
34. ECOWAS further informed the EU on the current achievements of its regional Action Plan on Drugs and the EU reaffirmed its willingness to support ECOWAS in its implementation, notably through the Regional indicative programme under the 10th EDF and the Instrument for Stability. In this context, increasing operational capacities of ECOWAS, its Commission as well as ECOWAS Member States, and their deeper involvement in addressing drug trafficking and organised crime are of utmost importance.
35. ECOWAS and the EU agreed to continue their dialogue and cooperation in this field, based on the principle of shared responsibility and multidisciplinary approach. To this end, and in recognition of the need to tackle the drug problem through dialogue at a higher political as well as expert level, ECOWAS and the EU will continue to hold expert meetings on drugs, with the next one taking place in Brussels on June 25, 2009.

36. ECOWAS and the EU reaffirmed the need to reinforce their cooperation in the area of migration and development. In this context, they welcomed the declaration adopted at the second Euro-African Ministerial Conference on migration and development, held in Paris on November 25, 2008, which provides a good basis for developing their cooperation. The Declaration encompasses in a comprehensive and balanced way all the issues relating to migration, by addressing the facilitation of legal migration, the fight against illegal migration, as well as the synergies between migration and development. Moreover, the Declaration establishes a three year cooperation programme (2009-2011), which identifies concrete actions and measures to be taken in the relevant areas. Both Parties underlined their commitment to actively work for the implementation of the declaration and of its cooperation programme.
37. ECOWAS informed the EU on the state of play of preparation of its regional action plan on migration and the EU reaffirmed its willingness to support it through the Regional indicative programme under the 10th EDF.
38. The two Parties further agreed to step up expert-level discussions on migration-related issues involving interested Member States in future meetings of the joint working group on migration, with a view to identifying concrete areas of cooperation that could be developed, in particular within the framework of the Regional indicative programme.
39. Ministers underscored the importance of 2009 as a crucial year for the formulation of a global and comprehensive response to the challenges of climate change. They agreed to cooperate closely in order to reach an agreement on climate change by the end of this year in Copenhagen.
40. They stressed that developed countries should continue to take the lead by committing to deep emission reduction cuts in the medium and longer term. In addition, they exhorted the developed countries to provide capacity, financing and technology to help developing countries in their efforts towards a low-carbon development path and to help them adapt to current impacts of climate change, in particular in Africa. They called on developing countries to prepare as soon as possible low-carbon and environmental friendly development strategies, including addressing desertification and river basin management, in order to indicate the actions to be taken and the level of support they require. They stressed that both the actions and the support should be measurable and be subject to reporting and verification.

41. The Parties acknowledged that, with the right policies in place, there should be no contradiction between responding to the challenges of climate change and enhancing energy security. They confirmed that energy is a vital sector both as a vehicle for further regional integration and as a suitable area for deepening bilateral cooperation.
42. In this respect, the Parties emphasized the priorities for the Africa-EU Energy Partnership including the regional integration of electricity markets with the relevant interconnections, the furthering of a business climate conducive to private investment, dissemination of best practices in energy efficiency and the setting of targets for electricity from renewable sources, with a focus on solar energy for ECOWAS and the development of interconnections between Africa and Europe.
43. The Parties agreed that further development of the oil and gas sector will contribute to energy security in both ECOWAS and the EU, assuming the right balance is struck between the production for export, notably LNG, and for the domestic market. The Parties recalled that energy security also requires that the whole society benefits from the development of the energy sector, be it in terms of wide access to energy services or of energy revenues supporting a diversified growth.

**AOB**

44. The next ministerial Troika meeting will take place in Abuja at a date to be determined by the Parties.
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