



ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO



SIXTY-EIGHTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ECOWAS AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

14 December 2025, Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

1. The Sixty-Eighth Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) convened on 14 December 2025 in Abuja, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, under the chairmanship of **H.E. Julius Maada Bio**, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone and current Chair of the Authority.
2. The Session was attended by the following Heads of State and Government or their duly mandated representatives:
 - **H.E. Jose Maria Pereira Neves**, President of the Republic of Cabo Verde
 - **H. E. Adama Barrow**, President of the Republic of The Gambia
 - **H. E. John Dramani Mahama**, President of the Republic of Ghana
 - **H.E. Bassirou Diomaye Faye**, President of the Republic of Senegal
 - **H.E. Julius Maada Bio**, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone
 - **H. E. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé**, President of the Council of the Togolese Republic
 - **H.E. Tiémoko Meyliet Koné**, Vice-President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire
 - **H.E. Senator Kashim Shetima**, Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
 - **H.E. Olushegun Adjadi Bakari**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bénin
 - **H.E. Sara Beysolow Nyanti**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Liberia

3. Also, in attendance were:

- **H.E. Omar Alieu Touray**, President of ECOWAS Commission
- **H.E. Abdoulaye Diop**, President of the UEMOA Commission
- **H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf**, Chairperson of the African Union Commission represented by Dr. Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security
- **H.E. Mohamed Ibn Chambas**, Chairperson of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme Taskforce
- **H.E. Amb. Baba Kamara**, Special Envoy on Terrorism
- **H.E. Leonardo Santos Simão**, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) represented by Dr. James Aji, Head of UNOWAS Representation to Nigeria.

4. During a special segment, the Authority made important pronouncements on the Future of the Community ahead of the convening of a Special Summit on the Future of Regional Integration. The Authority notes with satisfaction the progress ECOWAS has made over the past 50 years, takes stock of the challenges confronting the region and proffers alternative approaches to the future. Key areas of focus during the deliberations include a recommitment to deeper regional integration, review of relevant Community texts to adapt to current dynamics and better respond to the aspirations of the populations, youth and women empowerment, stronger regional and continental unity, economic and digital transformation, connectivity, peace and security, democratic and accountable governance, as well as equitable and win-win partnerships.
5. The Authority took note of the 2025 Report of the President of the ECOWAS Commission on the state of the Community, the Reports of the 55th Ordinary Session of ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council and the 95th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers.
6. The Authority commended the quality of the reports and the excellent work accomplished by Community Institutions in implementing the West African Regional integration agenda, reviewed the relevant recommendations contained therein and decided as follows:

ON ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION PROGRAMMES



On economic performance

7. The Authority welcomed the resilience of ECOWAS economies in 2025, characterized by an acceleration in the pace of economic growth, the reduction of inflationary pressures, and fiscal consolidation efforts.
8. With a view to consolidating these achievements, The Authority called on Member States to continue implementing economic reforms, intensify domestic resource mobilization, and strengthen the efficiency and quality of public spending.

On monetary integration

9. The Authority took note of the deliberations of the 12th session of the ECOWAS Convergence Council and expresses its concerns regarding the macroeconomic convergence performance of Member States, with less than two years before the launch of the ECO, as well as delays in the implementation of certain activities of the Roadmap for the launch of the ECO.
10. The Authority invites Member States to implement appropriate economic policies enabling them to meet the macroeconomic convergence criteria and reach consensus on the institutional arrangements necessary for the launch of the ECO.
11. The Authority also instructs the Commission to reactivate the Presidential Task Force on the ECOWAS Single Currency Programme, to facilitate the building of consensus on sensitive and or urgent issues.
12. The Authority also took note of the adoption by Council of the Directive establishing the framework for public accounting within the ECOWAS and directs the Commission to support Member States in its domestication into national legislations no later than 31st December 2029.

Concerning the Free Movement of Persons

13. The Authority commends the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the successful deployment of the ECOWAS National Biometric Identity Card (ENBIC), which represents a significant milestone in advancing regional integration and the free movement of persons. To date, only seven Member States have deployed the ENBIC, reflecting progress but also highlighting the need for broader participation.
14. The Authority urges the remaining Member States to accelerate deployment in line with regional commitments, so that the collective benefits of enhanced security, seamless cross-border mobility, and strengthened regional cooperation can be fully realized across the ECOWAS Community.

On the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS)

15. The Authority took note of the report of Council on the implementation of the ETLS and directed the Commissions of ECOWAS and UEMOA to harmonize the rules of origin operating in the region in order to enhance the free movement of community goods and promote regional integration.
16. On the imposition of the “community solidarity levy” on goods originating in non-UEMOA ECOWAS Member States exported to other ECOWAS member states belonging to UEMOA, The Authority instructs the President of the Commission to engage UEMOA Commission with a view to resolving the situation.

On the Agreement on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

17. The Authority took note of the status of implementation including the submission of the consolidated single ECOWAS Schedule of Specific Commitments under the Protocol on Trade in Services.
18. The Authority urges all Member States to accelerate implementation of the Agreement by strengthening relevant institutional structures and operationalising Regional and National strategies on the AfCFTA, and further calls on the ECOWAS Commission to continue to support Member States and coordinate Regional positions.

On the West African Power Pool (WAPP)

19. The Authority took note of the WAPP historic successful synchronisation of the power systems of 15 West African countries, from Mauritania to Nigeria, on 8th November 2025.
20. The Authority however expresses concerns about the persistence of payment defaults by the member companies of WAPP which has resulted in historically low recovery rates and now threatens WAPP’s ability to meet its essential obligations. This financial pressure also jeopardises major strategic initiatives, such as the launch of the Regional Electricity Market and the full synchronisation of power systems across West Africa.
21. The Authority therefore urged Member States to ensure the timely payment of their contributions and arrears to WAPP for sustained operations, considering its strategic importance to regional economic development.

On Air Transport

22. The Authority recalled the decision at its sixty-seventh Ordinary Session held on 22 June 2025 in Abuja, directing Ministers in-charge of Air Transport and the ECOWAS Commission to coordinate and monitor the effective application of the Supplementary Act on the Regional strategy to reduce passenger and security charges by 25% and remove taxes levied on air transport services, in compliance with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) principles and procedures on Taxes, Fees and Charges, which prohibits taxing of Air Transport Services based on non-relatedness, transparent and related pricing principles.
23. The Authority directs the Commission to work with Ministries of Finance and Air Transport to ensure the uniform compliance of the directive from the 1st January 2026 commencement date.

ON THE STATE OF DEMOCRACY, PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE REGION

24. The Authority notes with satisfaction the relative stability and resilience of the region, amidst the growing geopolitical and geostrategic pressures and schisms. The Authority commends the laudable efforts being invested by Member States and the ECOWAS Commission towards the consolidation of democracy, peace, security, and stability in the region.
25. The Authority notes the recently conducted Presidential and General Elections in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau, respectively, and the ongoing electoral processes underway to hold general elections in Benin and legislative elections in Côte d'Ivoire. The Authority welcomes the efforts by Guinea to conclude the country's political transition through the holding of a Presidential election scheduled for 28th December 2025, following the successful conduct of the Constitutional Referendum on 21st September 2025. It encourages the authorities to ensure transparency and inclusivity in these pivotal processes.
26. The Authority welcomes the significant progress made by stakeholders in Sierra Leone on the implementation of the various resolutions of the Agreement for National Unity between the Government and the opposition All Peoples' Congress, including the progress on electoral reforms and the release of the detained members of the opposition. It encourages the International Moral Guarantors to continue monitoring progress in the implementation of the Agreement, in close collaboration with the country's Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion (ICPNC).
27. The Authority considers the audio pronouncements that Yahya Jammeh, former President of The Gambia, makes from exile in Guinea Equatorial both as a breach

of conditions of asylum and a threat to peace and security as well as social cohesion in The Gambia.

28. The Authority affirms that the joint declaration that ECOWAS, the African Union and the UN made prior to Jammeh's departure from The Gambia does not in any manner absolve him from answering charges of alleged human rights violations that may have happened during the period between 1994 and 2017.
29. The Authority vehemently condemns the recent coup d'état that halted the electoral process in Guinea-Bissau, subverted the will of the electorate and disrupted the constitutional order. The Authority equally notes with dismay the attempted coup d'état in Benin on the eve of the country's general elections that threatened a reversal of decades of uninterrupted constitutional order.
30. The Authority also notes with concern the increasing deterioration of the security situation across the region, particularly in the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin, characterized by continuing attacks, kidnapping and sabotage operations by terrorist armed groups, insurgents and bandits on communities and security forces, leading to the destruction of property, mass displacements and serious humanitarian crisis, affecting about six (6) million people.
31. In this regard, the Authority decides as follows:

On the state of Democracy and political situation in the region

32. The Authority commends the Commission for its continuous support to Member States conducting elections in conformity with the relevant provisions of the 2001 Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. It directs the Commission to continue to accompany and offer needed support to Member States preparing for elections in December 2025 and the year 2026, with a view to ensuring inclusive, credible and peaceful outcomes and the consolidation of constitutional order in the region.
33. The Authority directs the Commission, in collaboration with Member States and partners, to facilitate the strengthening of human rights and anti-corruption institutions in Member States to help promote and enhance the respect for the rule of law, human rights, and accountability.
34. The Authority encourages Member States to endeavour to strengthen democratic and governance institutions to prevent further decline of democracy in the region. In this regard, it urges Member States, through dialogue and institutional reforms, to consciously forge a conducive environment and a level-playing field for inclusive

and competitive electoral processes and to strengthen frameworks for the delivery of livelihoods and well-being to the populations, particularly the teeming youth.

35. **On Benin**, the Authority condemns without reservations the attempted coup d'état that threatened the constitutional order in the country. It applauds the swift response by elements of the ECOWAS Standby Force in supporting the republican forces of Benin to halt the attempted coup and commends ECOWAS Member States, in particular the Governments of Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Sierra Leone for the demonstration of regional solidarity. The Authority further directs the Commission to propose relevant texts governing the ECOWAS Standby Force and a consultative framework among members of the Authority to enable rapid intervention in cases of emergencies, including acute humanitarian situations and attempts at coups d'état.
36. **On The Gambia**, the Authority deplores attempts by former President Yahya Jammeh, to disturb the peace and security of the country and warns him that there will be consequences for breaching the conditions of his asylum in Equatorial Guinea and for interfering with the peace and security of The Gambia and the region.
37. **On Guinea**, the Authority notes with satisfaction the significant progress made in the transition process, culminating in the scheduled Presidential election for 28 December 2025, having peacefully and successfully conducted a Referendum on 21 September 2025, with the outcome indicating an overwhelming support for the adoption of a new Constitution. In this regard, the Authority directs the Commission to continue to accompany the country in its transition process by deploying long-term election observation and preventive diplomacy missions ahead of the 28 December 2025 Presidential election to detect and mitigate emerging risks and deploy a short-term observation mission to cover the poll. The Authority further directs the Commission to enhance collaboration with regional and international partners, including the AU and UNOWAS, to sustain coordinated support for Guinea's transition.
38. **On Guinea-Bissau**, the Authority reiterates its decisions taken at the Extraordinary Session of the Mediation and Security Council (MSC) at the level of the Heads of State and Government held virtually on 27 November 2025. It also notes that the elections conducted on 23 November 2025 were reported as free, transparent and peaceful by the ECOWAS Election Observation Mission (EOM) as well as other international observation missions, including the African Union (AU) and the

Community of **Portuguese Language Countries** (CPLP). It outrightly rejects the 'transition program' as recently announced by the authorities in Guinea Bissau.

39. In this regard, the Authority calls for the:

- a. immediate release of all political detainees and for their participation in all political processes of Guinea Bissau;
- b. institution of a short transition to be led by an inclusive government that reflects the political spectrum and society of Guinea Bissau, with a mandate to undertake constitutional, legal and political reforms, and the organization of credible, transparent and inclusive elections;

40. The Authority authorises the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea Bissau to provide protection to all political leaders and national institutions of Guinea Bissau.

41. The Authority, thus, directs the Commission to fully accompany the transition process, including increasing the capacity of ECOWAS Stabilization Support Mission in Guinea-Bissau. The Authority further requests the Chair to lead another high-level Mission to Guinea Bissau for further engagement with the authorities of Guinea Bissau. It also directs that a delegation of the Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff (CCDS) be dispatched immediately to engage the military authorities. If the demand to put in place a short transition led by an inclusive government is not met, the Authority shall impose targeted sanctions on all individuals or group of persons that obstruct return to constitutional order through an inclusive process. The Authority calls on the African Union and other international partners to support ECOWAS on the matter.

On the fight against terrorism and other security threats

42. The Authority reaffirms its commitment to eradicating terrorism within the ECOWAS space and commends the continuous efforts by Member States in tackling the scourge. The Authority strongly condemns the surge in the spate of banditry, kidnappings and abductions of school children, particularly in Northern Nigeria. The Authority expresses its solidarity with the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and commends President Bola Ahmed TINUBU for the swift actions taken to secure the release of the victims and measures put in place to combat the menace.

43. The Authority calls on the international community, through the African Union and the UN Security Council, to urgently respond to the needs of terrorism-affected countries in the region in a coherent and coordinated manner.

44. The Authority urges Member States and directs the ECOWAS Commission, to sustain their engagements with Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger for effective and strengthened collaboration to tackle the deteriorating security situation in the region. As part of the Community's counterterrorism efforts, the Authority directs the President of the Commission to urgently make available an amount of Two Million Eight Hundred and Fifty Thousand US Dollars (\$2,850,000) to each of the affected Member States, namely Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, and Togo, to be sourced from the Regional Security Fund, subject to the review of the Plan of Action.
45. The Authority instructs the Commission to carry out urgent actions to operationalize the Regional Counterterrorism Brigade in accordance with the funding mechanisms proposed by the Ministers of Finance and Ministers of Defence and to urgently convene meetings of the Committee of Chiefs of Intelligence Service (including those of neighbouring States) and the Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff to advance the activation of the Brigade.

On the Humanitarian Situation

46. The Authority commends the humanitarian efforts of the Commission and directs the President of the Commission to continue the Commission's implementation of multi-sectoral approaches to strengthen its response mechanisms and support to Member States to mitigate the worsening humanitarian and security challenges. It further directs the Commission to urgently mobilize resources, including budgetary allocation, towards urgent evacuation of ECOWAS citizens stranded in Libya and Algeria.

ON INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

Regarding ECOWAS statutory positions for 2026-2030 period

47. The Authority endorses the recommendation of the Council of Ministers with respect to the allocation of statutory positions as follows:

(i) President of the Commission	Senegal
(ii) Vice President	Nigeria
(iii) Political Affairs Peace and Security	Sierra Leone
(iv) Economic Affairs and Agriculture	Liberia
(v) Internal Services	Côte d'Ivoire
(vi) Infrastructure, Energy and Digitalization	Ghana
(vii) Human Development and Social Affairs	Benin
(viii) West Africa Health Organization	Togo

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| (ix) GIABA ¹ | Gambia |
| (x) Auditor General | Cabo Verde |
| (xi) ECOWAS Court of Justice (5 positions) | Benin, Togo, Gambia, Nigeria,
Liberia |

48. The Authority also decided to support the sole candidacy of Ghana for the chairmanship of the African Union for the year 2027; and to allocate the position of President of the ECOWAS Commission for the 2030-2034 period to Liberia subject to Liberia meeting all the criteria for the allocation of the position of the President of the Commission at the time of allocation.

49. The Authority decides to relocate the headquarters of the West African Health Organisation (WAHO) to Cote d'Ivoire.

Regarding the replacement of two statutory appointees at the Commission,

50. The Authority took note of the Assumption of duty of **Dr. Kalilou Sylla** as new Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Agriculture, succeeding Mrs. Massandje Toure-Litse, appointed by the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire to another position.

51. The Authority also took note of the Assumption of duty of **Dr. Habibu Yaya Bappah** as new Commissioner for Internal Services replacing Prof Nazifi Abdullahi Darma.

Regarding the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) operations with the AES

52. The Authority endorses the resolution of EBID Board of Governors on continued participation of AES Countries in the Bank as non-regional members. The Authority equally approves the Board's proposal to maintain the Staff of EBID

On the Application for Membership in GIABA by Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger

53. The Authority grants admission of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger as Non-ECOWAS members of GIABA on the basis of their strong political commitment to fully implement obligations required of GIABA members, including addressing deficiencies in their Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism/Countering Proliferation Financing (AML/CFT/CPF) frameworks and cooperating and complying with all obligations related to Anti-Money Laundering, Countering the Financing of Terrorism, and Countering Proliferation Financing as provided for under the GIABA Statute.

¹ Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa

On international cooperation and partnership

54. The Authority expresses its gratitude to financial and technical partners of ECOWAS for their contribution towards the implementation of its regional integration agenda and directs the President of the Commission to intensively engage both traditional and emerging partners with a view to supporting the financing of priority regional infrastructure particularly the construction of the flagship corridors, Abidjan-Lagos and the Praia-Dakar-Abidjan, regional energy connectivity projects, digital infrastructure as well as initiatives relating to the fight against regional terrorism and insecurity. Subsequently, the Authority directs the Commission to ensure the active involvement of the ECOWAS Bank of Investment and Development (EBID) in these financing engagements.

Date and venue of next Summit

55. The date and venue of the Sixty-ninth Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government will be communicated in due course, in line with the established calendar of meetings.

56. The Authority sincerely applauds **H. E. Julius Maada Bio**, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone and current Chair of the Authority, for his exemplary leadership and unrelenting commitment to the regional integration, peace and security of West Africa.

DONE AT ABUJA, THIS 14TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2025

THE AUTHORITY

