

Economic Community of West African States

First Extraordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government

Bamako, 27 and 28 November 1990

Final Communiqué

1. The Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) held its first ever Extraordinary Session on 27 and 28 November 1990 at Bamako under the Chairmanship of His Excellency Aihaji Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, President of the Gambia and current Chairman of the Authority. The session was attended by the following Heads of State and Government or their accredited representatives:

His Excellency General Mathiew Kerekou
President of the Republic of Benin

His Excellency Captain Blaise Compaore
Chairman of the Popular Front
Head of State
Head of Government
Burkina Faso

His Excellency Mr. Aristides Maria Pereira
President of the Republic of Cape Verde

His Excellency Mr. Félix Houphouët Boigny
President of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire

His Excellency Aihaji Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara
President of the Republic of the Gambia

His Excellency Flight-Lt. Jerry John Rawlings
Chairman of the Provisional National Defence Council
Head of State of the Republic of Ghana

His Excellency General Joao Bernardo Vieira
Secretary-General of the PAIGC
President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau

His Excellency General Moussa Traore
Secretary-General of the Democratic Union of Malian People
President of the Republic of Mali

His Excellency General Ali Saibou
Chairman of the Supreme Council for National Orientation
Head of State of the Republic of the Niger

His Excellency General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida
President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

His Excellency Mr. Abdou Diouf
President of the Republic of Senegal

His Excellency Major-General Dr. Joseph Saidu Momoh
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

His Excellency General Gnassingbe' Eyadema
Founder-Chairman of the Togolese People's Rally
President of the Togolese Republic

Honourable Commandant Facine Toure
Minister of Transport and Works, Representing the President of the Republic of Guinea

Honourable Hasni Ould Didi
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation, Representing the President of the Republic of Mauritania

2. Present at the summit as special guest was His Excellency Yoweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity

3. Also attending the summit in an observer capacity were the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the regional representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Report of the Standing Mediation Committee

4. The Chairman of the ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee, His Excellency Alhaji Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, submitted a report to the Extraordinary Summit on the activities of the Committee. The Authority noted the report and expressed its appreciation to the members of the Committee for the initiative taken in finding a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Liberia. It particularly expressed gratitude for the human, financial and material contributions these member States had made on behalf of the Community towards the restoration of peace and stability in Liberia.

Review of the Liberian Situation

5. In reviewing the current situation in Liberia, the Authority noted that the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) had succeeded in establishing calm in Monrovia and its immediate environs. This measure of success had made it possible for both ECOMOG and international relief agencies to [sic] carry out humanitarian relief work and for tens of thousands of foreign nationals, including ECOWAS citizens, who had been trapped in Liberia without any means of escape or protection, to be evacuated. The Authority expressed the hope that permanent peace and harmony would soon be restored throughout the territory of Liberia.

Endorsement of ECOWAS peace plan

6. The Authority endorsed the ECOWAS peace plan for Liberia as embodied in the Banjul communiqué and decisions of the Standing Mediation Committee adopted on 7 August 1990. The ECOWAS peace plan, among other things, calls for:

- (a) A complete cease-fire and cessation of destruction of life and property;
- (b) ECOWAS monitoring of the cease-fire;
- (c) The establishment of a broad-based interim government acceptable to the people of Liberia;
- (d) The holding of general and presidential elections within 12 months;
- (e) Observation of the elections by ECOWAS and other international bodies to ensure that they are free and fair.

7. The Authority noted with satisfaction that the ECOWAS peace plan had received the widest acceptance and support from Liberians and the international community.

Signing of the cease-fire agreement

8. In giving practical effect to this ECOWAS peace plan for Liberia, the Authority stressed the urgent need for a comprehensive cease-fire to be observed by all the warring parties as a necessary condition for the return of peace and normalcy throughout the territory of Liberia. The Authority therefore warmly commended the two warring parties - the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) - who had agreed to observe a cease-fire and had signed a cease-fire agreement at Banjul on 24 October 1990,

9. At the Extraordinary Session of the Authority at Bamako, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPLF) - the third party to the conflict in Liberia - expressed its readiness to join in the search for a peaceful solution to the conflict. The Authority noted with pleasure the acceptance by the NPLF and the other warring parties not only of the ECOWAS peace plan for Liberia as embodied in the communiqué and decisions of 7 August 1990 of the Community Standing Mediation Committee, but also their declaration of a cease-fire, which shall come into effect immediately. The Authority urged that the details for the implementation of the cease-fire should be worked out as soon as possible. It expressed the sincere hope that this declaration of cease-fire would mark the complete cessation of all hostilities as the necessary foundation for the return of lasting peace, stability and political accommodation and reconciliation of Liberia.

Collective responsibility for ECOMOG

10. Acknowledging that the membership of ECOMOG had never been closed ever though the burden of the implementation of the ECOWAS peace plan has so far fallen entirely on the members of the Standing Mediation Committee, the Authority appealed to all other members of the Community able and willing to do so to contribute forces to the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group in order to enlarge its peace-keeping capability. It also appealed to all member States that had not yet done so to make generous contributions to the special emergency fund for the ECOWAS operations in Liberia. The Authority further called upon all other African Governments and the rest of the international community to contribute to the special emergency fund.

11. The Authority also considered the necessity for an agreement to be concluded between ECOWAS and the Interim Government of Liberia with respect to the status and operations of the Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia. To this end, the Authority mandated the Executive Secretary to sign an agreement with the Interim Government of Liberia after approval by the Chairman of the Authority.

Agreement on interim governance of Liberia

12. The Authority urgently invited the parties to the conflict in Liberia to enter into dialogue with a view to reaching a political accommodation for the governance of Liberia within the framework of the ECOWAS peace plan. The Authority requested the Standing Mediation Committee to continue its efforts in encouraging such an accommodation between the Liberian groups.

Reaffirmation of the Protocol on Non-Aggression

13. The Authority strongly reiterated the imperative of securing peace and maintaining stability in the ECOWAS subregion as the necessary underpinning of economic co-operation and integration for the achievement of progress and prosperity in the Community. The Authority therefore considered it most tragic that while other regions of the world were making every effort to dismantle the apparatus of war and banish tensions and conflicts from their international relations, as evidenced by the widely acclaimed treaty of Paris recently signed by Governments at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, ECOWAS Heads of State and Government were compelled to meet in extraordinary conference to find ways of bringing to an early end the horrors of a civil war in a member State of the Community and containing the threat it posed to the peace, security and stability of the subregion.

14. Recalling that it had itself fully recognized the necessity for maintaining the peace and security of the subregion early in the life of the Community through the Protocol on Non-Aggression adopted on 22 April 1978, and believing that the Liberian crisis has given that Protocol a fresh validity, the Authority decided to reaffirm the provisions of the Protocol on Non-Aggression and to urge all member States to adhere fully to their obligations under it. In particular, the Authority recalled the commitment by all member States to refrain from committing, encouraging or condoning acts of subversion, hostility or aggression against any other member State. It further called on all member States to refrain from any action that might prejudice or undermine the smooth and speedy implementation of the ECOWAS peace plan for Liberia.

Appeal for early return of refugees

15. The Authority expressed satisfaction at the progress made so far towards the restoration of peace and security in Monrovia. Considering that the declaration of a cease-fire by the parties to the conflict enlarges the prospect for the restoration of peace and security throughout Liberia, the Authority called on all Liberian refugees to plan an early return to Liberia, in order to join their compatriots in assisting the Interim Government in the implementation of its programme to return Liberia to democratic rule.

Appeal for international assistance to Liberia

16. The Authority made an urgent appeal to the; international community, particularly its humanitarian relief organizations, to step up without further delay humanitarian relief work in Liberia with special emphasis on the provision of food, medical supplies and clothing. It also appealed to the international donor community to contribute generously to the efforts of the Interim Government in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the damaged economy of Liberia.

Vote of thanks

17. The Authority once more warmly commended and congratulated the Chairman and members of the Community Standing Mediation Committee for the timely initiatives taken on behalf of the entire Community to assist Liberians in their search for a lasting solution to the crisis in Liberia. The Authority expressed its appreciation for the excellent preparations made by the Committee, which had facilitated the deliberations of the Extraordinary Session.

18. The Authority expressed its sincere gratitude to His Excellency General Moussa Traore, Secretary-General of the Democratic Union of the Malian People and President of the Republic of Mali, and the entire Malian Government and people for the very warm and truly African welcome extended to all delegations and for the excellent facilities made available to ensure the success of its meetings.