



**MIDTERM REVIEW AND INTERNAL STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ECPF**

14 AUGUST, 2015

FINAL REPORT

**ECOWAS Commission
Headquarters, Abuja**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Midterm Review and Internal Steering Committee (ISC) on the implementation of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) was held on 14 August, 2015 at the ECOWAS Commission. The ISC was established to oversee and coordinate the ECPF implementation process within the ECOWAS Commission and with all involved stakeholders. To this end, the ISC has the following strategic objectives: to ensure that the implementation process of the ECPF is coordinated within the ECOWAS Commission, to enable a prioritisation of ECPF activities for implementation and in the long-term a progressive implementation of all ECPF components, and to ensure ownership and maximum utilisation of synergies between the thematic Departments of the ECOWAS Commission in this process. As one of the specific roles of the ISC is to examine the existing Actions Plans and decide on a prioritisation of ECPF activities, the Midterm Review and ISC meeting was convened for the purpose of consolidating ownership of the ECPF and monitoring the effective implementation of the ECPF 3 Year Priority Plans by the relevant ECOWAS Directorates.

2. The ISC meeting was co-chaired by the Director of Political Affairs, Dr. Aderemi Ajibewa, the Director of External Relations, who was represented by PPO Resource Mobilization, Mr. Jerome Boa and the Director of Strategic Planning, Mr. Essien Abel. Also in attendance were representatives from the following Directorates: Political Affairs, Finance, Early Warning, Communications, Humanitarian and Social Affairs, Agriculture, and the EU PSS Project Support Unit. A detailed list of participants is attached to this Report.

II. WELCOME ADDRESS

3. The Director of Political Affairs welcomed the participants to the meeting and proceeded to remind them of the importance of the ISC as a coordinating mechanism to ensure the operationalization of the ECPF at the ECOWAS institutional level. He noted that each Directorate invited to the meeting has a role to play in the implementation of the ECPF through one or more of its fifteen components. He pointed out that given the cases of human rights abuses, civil unrest, electoral fraud, internally displaced persons

and acts of terrorism in the region, if ECOWAS Directorates, Member States and Civil Society Organizations are to properly utilize the ECPF, there would be fewer of such incidences. He stressed that the ECPF should be fully utilized by ECOWAS directorates as it is a powerful instrument, which can assist the Commission to be victorious in its mission to maintain and promote peace and security in the region. He expressed optimism that by the end of the Meeting, the ISC would be able to assess progress made by ECPF Focal Points on the implementation of ECPF programmes, jointly agree on a monitoring framework in the facilitation stage of the ECPF activities, and discuss supplementary funding opportunities for the operationalization of the ECPF. In closing, Dr Aderemi Ajibewa informed the ISC Members of his expectations that the Meeting would generate fruitful discussions on not only the current level of implementation of ECPF programmes but also the proposals on programmes to operationalize the ECPF in 2016.

4. The Welcome Address by the Director of Political Affairs was followed by an introduction of the participants of the Meeting. Following the introductions, Dr. Aderemi Ajibewa called for the review and adoption of agenda for the Meeting. The ISC members unanimously adopted the agenda, which paved the way for the Overview of ECPF Programme Implementation by ECOWAS Directorates by the ECPF Secretariat which was represented by Mr. Constant Gnacadja, Programme Officer, Conflict Prevention

III. OVERVIEW OF ECPF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION BY ECOWAS DIRECTORATES

5. Mr. Constant Gnacadja expressed his pleasure to be attending his first meeting of the Internal Steering Committee (ISC) on the Implementation of the ECPF. He reminded the ISC members that the aim of the meeting was to enhance cohesion and synergy across ECOWAS Directorates on programmes designed to prevent conflicts, strengthen peacebuilding mechanisms and promote region-wide humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness strategies and the culture of democracy.

6. He informed the participants that as part of the measures to operationalize the ECPF, a Mediation Facilitation Division was established earlier this year through the support of the Danish Government. He explained that the MFD would facilitate the realization of the primary objective of the Preventive Diplomacy Component of the ECPF which is to “defuse tensions and ensure the peaceful resolution of disputes within and between Member States by means of good offices, mediation, conciliation and facilitation based on dialogue, negotiation and arbitration”. He expressed his hope that in the course of the meeting, the ISC would be able to extract lessons on how to improve in the coordination and execution of ECPF programmes and activities at the level of the ECOWAS Commission. He concluded by encouraging the Directorates present to be open about any challenges faced in the implementation of its ECPF programmes as the ECPF Secretariat can provide assistance in this regard.

IV. OUTCOMES AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS OF MAPPING EXERCISE VALIDATION MEETING

7. Following the presentation of the Overview of ECPF Implementation by ECOWAS Directorates, the ECPF Programme Assistant, Ms. Sa’adatu Shuaibu presented the Outcomes and Follow-up Actions of the Mapping Exercise Validation Meeting. During her presentation, Ms. Shuaibu pointed out that all of the recommendations from the last ISC Meeting had been fulfilled except one which was for the IT Consultant for the Mapping Exercise to liaise with the Community Computer Centre (CCC) on changing the background colours, ECOWAS logo and security features on the Web Portal in line ECOWAS communication standards. Ms. Shuaibu informed the ISC members that the IT Consultant was able to hold a meeting with the CCC and the Political Affairs Directorate and the conclusion of the meeting was for a new IT Consultant to be recruited to design a new Web Portal since the previous one could not be changed due to the coding technique used to create it. The Political Affairs Directorate had developed a Terms Of Reference for the new IT Consultant which was sent to the CCC for their input and action, however, the CCC had not acted on the draft Terms of Reference and therefore, the Web Portal had been not been redesigned. Upon receiving the report of the ECPF Programme Assistant, the Co-Chairs of the ISC delegated the ECPF Secretariat with the

responsibility of following up with the Community Computer Centre on finalizing the Terms of Reference for the IT Consultant.

V. MID TERM REVIEW OF ECPF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION BY ECOWAS

8. Presentations were made on the level of implementation of ECPF programmes and activities by ECPF Focal Points by the Directorates of Political Affairs, Peacekeeping and Regional Security and Early Warning. Due to conflicting schedules, other ECPF Focal Points were unable to make their presentations on the level of implementation in their respective Directorates. However, the ECPF Secretariat will ensure to meet with each Focal Point to receive their completed ECPF Reporting Template.

VI. INTRODUCTION OF EU-ECOWAS PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY PROJECT

9. Mrs. Frances Fortune, one of the members of the Peace Security and Stability (PSS) Project Support Unit, offered an introduction on the EU support to the ECOWAS Peace Security and Stability (PSS) mandate. She stated that the EU-ECOWAS PSS project has an overall objective of contributing towards building and maintaining peace, security and stability in West Africa to ensure conditions for development. She also explained the specific objective of the programme is to support ECOWAS to execute its conflict prevention and resolution mandate in a sustainable way, notably by executing a shift from a reactive to a preventive mode in acquiring increased strategic, operational and management capacities. She further stated that the programme will be supporting the implementation of 10 ECPF components, namely: Early Warning, Preventive Diplomacy, Democracy and Political Governance, Human Rights and the Rule of Law, Security Governance, Practical Disarmament, ECOWAS Standby Force (civilian component and police components), Humanitarian Assistance, Cross-Border Initiatives and Women, Peace and Security.

10. Following the presentation of Mrs. Frances Fortune, participants inquired about the modalities for accessing EU funds and raised the importance of being able to access funds for the activities scheduled for 2016 such as the pre-election fact-finding missions in Benin and Niger. Mrs. Frances Fortune assured the participants on the availability of

the EU funds for the 2016 programmes. She also informed the participants that the ECOWAS Procurement Committee has agreed on the need to conduct trainings for ECOWAS staff on the procurement procedure of the EU.

VII. EMERGING THREATS IN MEMBER STATES

11. The Meeting also held discussions on the emerging security threats in ECOWAS Member States. Some of the major topics discussed include the dissolution of the Cabinet in Guinea Bissau, the progress of the transitional government and the International Follow-up and Support Group in Burkina Faso, attacks on expatriates in Mali, efforts by ECOWAS to prevent countries from changing their constitution six (6) months before an election, the control of the Ebola epidemic, the importance of addressing the needs of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria, an impending flood in Cameroon might cause the destruction of farmlands and property of neighbouring towns, children on the streets syndrome in West Africa which serves as a feeding ground for insurgency, and the stability of Guinea Bissau post-ECOMIB.

VIII. SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

12. After exhaustive deliberations, the ISC made the following recommendations:

1. Co-Chairs of the ISC and ECPF Secretariat to hold meetings with the CCC Department to discuss the logistics for the recruitment of the IT Consultant to redesign the ECPF Web Portal;
2. ECPF Secretariat to develop road map on the finalization of the ECPF Web Portal;
3. All ECPF Focal Points to receive copies of the 3 Year Priority Plans of Action;
4. ECPF Focal Points to articulate how they are supporting the operationalization of the ECPF at the Directorate level using the ECPF Reporting Template;
5. ECPF Secretariat to update list of ECPF Focal Points with their current contact information;
6. On the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project, ECPF Secretariat and Monitoring and Evaluation Unit to organize meeting with the PSS Project Support Unit;
7. Finance Department to avoid bottlenecks with regards to the access of Donor Partner funds.

ANNEX:

- A. Agenda
- B. List of participants
- C. 3 Year Priority Plans of Action;