

# ECHOS



A PUBLICATION OF THE ECOWAS COMMISSION

OCTOBER 2016 | VOL. 02/17



New ECOWAS Chairperson  
**President Sirleaf**  
Outlines Her Plans for  
**ECOWAS**

ECOWAS Commission  
President **Accredits**  
**Four Ambassadors,**  
Pledges Greater  
Cooperation

# IN THIS ISSUE

- **President Sirleaf Outlines Her Plans For ECOWAS** 03
- **ECOWAS, UNODC sign Letter of Cooperation on the Fight against Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa** 05
- **President Sirleaf Pays One-day Working Visit to Accra; Meets President Mahama; Holds Regional, International And Bilateral Talks** 06
- **ECCAS-ECOWAS: A Fresh Start** 07
- **ECOWAS Commission President Accredits Four Ambassadors, Pledges Greater Cooperation** 08
- **ECOWAS, Permanent Representatives Meet in Abuja on Developmental Programmes** 09
- **President Sirleaf Opens Two-day Post Ebola Conference; Calls for Resilience Health System in the Sub-Region** 10
- **ECOWAS Epidemiology Experts Move Closer Towards Greater Collection and Analyses of Drug use Data** 11
- **President of the ECOWAS Commission urges Guinea-Bissau to embrace dialogue as the mens to resolve the Crisis in the Country** 14
- **PPDU, Experts Validate study on Dakar - Lagos Corridor “Missing Links”** 15
- **ECOWAS Journalists Call For A Network on Renewable Energy Issues** 16
- **Regional Integration is Moving Forward Despite Obstacles Says De Souza** 18
- **ECOWAS Commission Wants Effective Involvement of Stakeholders in the Implementation of Climate Change Decisions** 20
- **Experts of Telecommunication/ICT And Post Prepare to Hold their Ministerial Statutory Meetings** 21
- **Senegal Wins ECOWAS Wrestling Tournament in Dosso** 22
- **ECOWAS Member States Discuss How To Unlock Transit Challenges Along the Main Trade Corridors in West Africa** 23

# President Sirleaf Outlines her Plans For ECOWAS



*H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf with H.E. Marcel De Souza, President ECOWAS Commission*

The Chair of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, Her Excellency, Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf outlined her plans for ECOWAS to the President of the ECOWAS Commission, H.E. Marcel de Souza during a recent official visit to the Republic of Liberia.

This visit was consequent upon the election of H.E. Madam Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia as the Chair of the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government at the recent Summit held in Dakar, Senegal, on the 4th June, 2016. Madam Sirleaf's election marks the first time, since the establishment of ECOWAS in 1975, that a Liberian Leader and in

particular, a female President was unanimously elected as the Chair of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government. By extension and as a coincidence, it is also the first time a Liberian female Minister of Foreign Affairs would Chair the ECOWAS Council of Ministers.

President de Souza was warmly received at Roberts International Airport on the 16th of June by ECOWAS and AU Ambassadors accredited to Liberia.

He subsequently had a tete-a-tete meeting with the Chair of Authority under a warm and cordial atmosphere, reflecting overwhelming desire for strengthening ECOWAS activities in the sub-region. During the visit, the Chair of Authority discussed extensively with

ECOWAS President and highlighted her Plan Programme of Action as contained in her Acceptance Speech at the Dakar Summit, which include the following;

## **Peace And Security**

Both leaders noted the political instability in Guinea Bissau and Mali and the threat this posed to the security in the sub-region.

They both agreed to work closely with all relevant stakeholders towards providing a lasting solution to the political and security crisis in Guinea Bissau. Both called on Member-States to take ownership of, and implement without delay, all Protocols relating to Peace and Security, as well as the Early Warning and Rapid Response Mechanism. As

a demonstration of her commitment, Madam President signed Executive Order No. 076 approving the legal framework and the commencement of the establishment of the Centre.

### **Threat of Terrorism**

Both Leaders highlighted the threats of terrorism and its attendant security challenges in the sub-region. They expressed that the fight against terrorism must not be left in the hands of security personnel alone. They called for regular exchange of intelligence and information sharing so as to avoid a repeat of recent terrorist attacks in Cote d'Ivoire and elsewhere in the sub-region. They also committed themselves to re-dedicate their efforts to combating trans-national crime, trans-humans herdsmen, human and drugs trafficking, and maritime insecurity in the sub-region.

### **Post-Ebola**

Both noted and appreciated the ongoing recovery efforts in post-Ebola countries including Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. Towards this end, they informed that President Faure Gnassingbe of Togo would be organizing a meeting with International Partners and Donors on post-Ebola recovery for affected Member-States as the Regional Coordinator on post-Ebola recovery. In addition, it was announced that ECOWAS, through the West African Health Organisation (WAHO) has constituted a standby medical team (White Helmets) ready to assist in combating communicable diseases.

### **Economy**

Both noted that most economies in the region were going through strains and stress and called for improved infrastructure and increased trading activities among Member-States to facilitate

economic integration. They also called for the ratification and implementation of all ECOWAS instruments such as Common External Tariff (CET), Economic Partnership Agreement, (EPA) and ECOWAS Trade Liberation Scheme (ETLS).

### **Institutional Reforms**

The Chair of Authority expressed satisfaction to the reforms that the President of ECOWAS Commission has embarked on especially in cutting

and EU that would serve as a veritable platform to discuss issues of critical importance with EU and other International Partners and Donors.

### **ECOWAS Infrastructural Projects (Road Network)**

Both highlighted the importance of Lagos-Abidjan-Dakar Road Network and called for early submission of feasibility report connecting all the corridors including Liberia.



*H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf with H.E. Marcel De Souza after her Swearing in ceremony*

down on meetings that have no relevant value to integration projects of the sub-region. Both Leaders expressed appreciation to Member-States that have paid up the arrears of Community Levy and called on those that are yet to fulfil their obligations to do so promptly with a view to achieving ECOWAS Vision 2020 for the benefit of the people of the sub-region.

### **ECOWAS-Eu: Lomé Meeting**

Both called on Member-States to endeavour to attend the forthcoming Lomé Meeting between ECOWAS

### **Lifting of Arms Embargo**

The ECOWAS President congratulated Liberia on the recent lifting of arms embargo through UN Security Council Resolution no. 2288 of 25th of May, 2016.

He attributed this to the sterling qualities of Madam President and was convinced that these would be brought to bear as the Chair of ECOWAS Heads of States and Government.

## ECOWAS, UNODC sign Letter of Cooperation on the Fight against Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa



*H.E. Marcel De Souza and Mr. Yury Fedotov and Dr. Mohammad Ibn Chambers at the signing of the Letter of Cooperation on the Fight against Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organised Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa*

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on September 19, 2016 on the sidelines of the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly signed a letter of cooperation to confirm their commitment for an effective and integrated implementation of the UNODC Regional Programme and the ECOWAS Action Plan on the Fight against Illicit Drug Trafficking, related Organized Crime, Corruption and Terrorism, as well as Drug Abuse in West Africa.

This cooperation between ECOWAS and UNODC has come when the development, peace and stability of West Africa is being threatened by transnational

organized crime, illicit drug trafficking, terrorism, corruption, the laundering of criminal assets and terrorism financing, weakness in the criminal justice system, as well as HIV/AIDS and drug abuse.

These constantly evolving threats if left unchecked will ultimately compromise social, economic and human development in the region. Following the evaluation of the results of the UNODC Regional Programme and the ECOWAS Plan for West Africa 2008-2014, and considering emerging threats and trends, the UNODC has developed its new Regional Programme for West Africa, while ECOWAS elaborated its Regional Action Plan to Address Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa, both covering 2016 - 2020

implementation period.

These two strategic documents aim to mobilize joint efforts to successfully face current and future threats in West Africa.

They are aligned and strategically complementary with the purpose of supporting a framework of national, regional and inter-regional collective actions to strengthen the capacities of States in areas of governance, security and health promotion, linking national, regional and inter-regional actors.

The letter of cooperation was signed by His Excellency, Marcel de Souza, President of the ECOWAS Commission and Mr. Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of UNODC on behalf of the two Institutions. ■

## President Sirleaf Pays One-day Working Visit To Accra Meets President Mahama; Holds Regional, International and Bilateral Talks



*Presidents Sir Leaf Johnson with President Mahamma at a Press conference following the signing of Cooperation Agreements*

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has paid a one-day Working Visit to Accra, Ghana where she and her Ghanaian counterpart, His Excellency, President John Mahama discussed regional, international and matters of bilateral interest to both countries and peoples. According to a dispatch from Accra, the two leaders discussed several areas of cooperation between their two countries and peoples covering security, trade and energy.

Welcoming the Liberian leader, President Mahama recalled the longstanding relationship between the two nations and extended congratulations to Her Excellency, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf for her ascendancy to the Chairmanship of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS.

The Ghanaian leader also expressed confidence in the leadership of President Sirleaf and pledged his support in ensuring that the President's tenure as Chairperson of ECOWAS becomes a success.

President Mahama then noted Ghana's interest in working with Liberia in developing its power production and distribution capacity.

In response, President Sirleaf expressed Liberia's gratitude to Ghana for its support to the peace process in Liberia through the deployment of peacekeepers, holding peace negotiations as well as hosting thousands of Liberian refugees who fled the country in the midst of a civil strife. She said Ghana and Liberia have long standing historical relations in working on regional and

continental issues. The two leaders however expressed their commitment to ensuring the successful implementation of the priorities set by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf during the course of her Chairmanship of the ECOWAS Authority including peace and security, post-Ebola reconstruction, accelerating the free movement of people and goods with the aim of making regional integration and the work of the ECOWAS Commission more effective by implementing the necessary reforms.

Both leaders agreed to set up a mechanism to counter-terrorism that is now a threat to the sub-region; look at the comparative advantages of the two countries to enhance cooperation especially in the areas of trade and technical capacity building. ■