

# ECCAS-ECOWAS: A FRESH START



*A group photograph of ECOWAS and ECCAS delegation*

**F**or a fresh start, as proclaimed by the two spokespersons throughout their discussions in the presence of colleagues in the margins of the 27th Summit of the African Union, the words were indeed momentous. The meeting between the Secretary General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Ambassador Ahmad Allam-Mi and the new President of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), His Excellency Marcel de Souza, left nothing to chance in deepening this new era in the cooperation between the two Regional Economic Communities and their leaders.

### **Symbolic gestures**

From the outset, a warm handshake, an exchange of business cards and the introduction of the different persons selected to participate at the meeting: the diplomatic norms were well observed and the sense of African brotherliness was equally present.

### **Matters at hand**

After the exchange of pleasantries, protocol and diplomatic courtesies, the

two Heads of Institution delved into the matters at hand.

The first matter was cooperation in the area of maritime security and safety. The second, inauguration of the management team for the Inter-regional Coordination Centre for the fight against piracy and insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea.

### **The third, organisation of a Donors' Conference.**

Then fourthly, renewed efforts to organise the meeting of Heads of State and Government on the fight against the armed, terrorist group, Boko Haram.

### **Next Steps**

Recruitment and inauguration by the end of August 2016, of the management team for the Inter-regional Coordination Centre (ICC) for the fight against piracy and insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea.

Organisation of bi-annual meetings by the two Communities, to share experiences in different areas, particularly in peace and security and

the establishment and functioning of a Free Trade Zone.

Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by the two Parties setting out the areas of cooperation.

### **Organisation of a Donors' Conference by the end of September.**

Follow-up with the Heads of State of ECCAS and ECOWAS on the initiative to hold a joint ECCAS-ECOWAS meeting on the fight against the Boko Haram terrorist group;

The ECCAS Secretary General informed his ECOWAS counterpart of the institutional and organisational reforms underway at ECCAS. "We want to review the administrative and legal procedures governing the structure and functioning of our institution, to infuse new life..." Ambassador Ahmad Allam-Mi indicated.

The discussions were held and concluded in an atmosphere characterised by the determination of both leaders to embrace a fresh start. ■



# ECOWAS Commission President Accredits Four Ambassadors, Pledges Greater Cooperation

The ECOWAS Commission president His Excellency Marcel de Souza has pledged greater cooperation with the diplomatic Missions accredited to the Commission towards the realization of the integration goals of the Community.

President de Souza gave the pledge on the 15th of June 2016 at the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja while receiving letters of credence from four ambassadors to Nigeria who are also concurrently accredited to ECOWAS.

The President's Pledge is coming at a time when the sustenance of the excellent relations between ECOWAS and the development Partners have become pertinent towards the continuous nurturing and entrenchment of peace, stability and economic advancement in the region.

The ambassadors were H.E Stephane De Loecker (Kingdom of Belgium), H.E Dr. Gabor Ternak (Republic of Hungary), H.E Paul Lehmann (Australia), and H.E Haja Afsatu Olayinka Ebishola Kabba (Republic of Sierra Leone).

Conferring with the envoys separately after they were reciprocally handed the ECOWAS acknowledgment seals, President de Souza welcomed them warmly to the Commission while expressing the constant readiness of ECOWAS Commission and



H.E Afsatu O. E. Kabba of Sierra Leone presents her letter of credence to President Marcel De Souza



H.E Dr. Gabor Ternak of Hungary, presenting his letter of Credence to President Marcel De Souza



H.E Paul Lehmann of Australia presenting his letter of Credence to President Marcel De Souza



Amb. H.E Stephane De Loecker Belgium receiving his letter of Credence from President Marcel De Souza

institutions to cooperate with them towards the accomplishment of their Mission in Abuja.

Expressing the gratitude of the Commission to the countries for their support and for having a set of shared values with ECOWAS, the President said ECOWAS is also willing to share experiences with the respective countries.

He harped on the need to take forward some of the integration projects and programmes particularly in the area of energy, transport and agriculture.

The ambassadors in their various responses expressed sincere thanks to President de Souza for the audience, the privilege of partaking

in the symbolic ceremony and restated the desire of their countries to continue to partner ECOWAS in specific as well as general areas where intervention is needed.

The President was supported in audience by the Vice President of the Commission H.E Edward Singhatey and senior officials of the Commission which included the Director of Cabinet Ambassador Abel Agbebleo, the Acting Director, External Relations Mr. Jerome Boa, Principal Programme Officer Mrs Benita Tar and Legal Adviser Obii Onuoha. ■



## ECOWAS, Permanent Representatives Meet in Abuja on Developmental Programmes



*President De Souza, ECOWAS Commissioners and Permanent Representatives in a group Photograph*

The President of the ECOWAS Commission, H.E. Marcel de Souza and his Management Team held a meeting with the Permanent Representatives of ECOWAS in Abuja recently.

The meeting which will be held bi-monthly was called by President de Souza to among other things brief the Permanent Representatives on the Main conclusions of the 49th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Community Development Programme (CDP)

Priority Projects and the Status of the ECOWAS Community Levy.

President de Souza in his welcome address said that the bi-monthly meetings will be holding to discuss progress reports of the Community's projects and developments.

While briefing the Permanent Representatives on the Priority Projects of the Community Development Programmes, the ECOWAS President stressed that the Construction of the Lagos - Abidjan Highway and promised to involve the private sector to

actualize the project.

The Chairman of the meeting, H.E. Prof. Al-Hassan Conteh, the Ambassador of Liberia to Nigeria and the Permanent Representative to ECOWAS in his remarks said that the Permanent Representatives can be counted on for support in the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan and the ECOWAS Vision 2020, as he emphasized that they are vital catalysts in the development of the Region. ■



# President Sirleaf Opens Two-day Post Ebola Conference; Calls for Resilience Health System in the Sub-Region



*President Sirleaf making remarks at the opening of Two-day Post Ebola Conference in Monrovia in flaged by the Togolese Prime Minister, Komi Sélom Klassou (l)*

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has called for the building of resilience in the healthcare system of the ebola-affected countries in the West African region. She pointed out that this was necessary to ensure that the deadly Ebola virus disease and other infectious diseases do not resurface in sub-region. She said using the Liberian experience will help prepare the health sectors of the affected countries.

President Sirleaf noted that reforms in Africa are achievable if the political momentum is built among African leaders and their peoples. She expressed optimism that the ongoing conference will accomplish the targeted outcomes if African states and their partners find solution to issues and matters related to sectors deliberated. She maintained that the deliberations at the conference will lead to results that will have global impact and will help protect the

world from deadly infectious diseases.

For his part, Prime Minister Komi Sélom Klassou who proxy for Togolese President, Faure E. Gnassingbe appreciated the efforts of the three most affected West African Countries in defeating the virus and now strategizing to be prepared for future outbreaks. He furthered that the deadly Ebola Virus disease devastated the economy of the three most affected countries, adding that it needs serious attention for recovery.

Mr. Klassou advised that the Sub-region collaborate and work together to develop a workable solution from the two-day conference that will inform positive decision-making. He proposed the setting up of scientific institutional mobilization framework that will help with the prevention of Ebola and other diseases. Mr. Klassou congratulated President Sirleaf for

her extraordinary leadership exhibited during the fight of the deadly Ebola. Also making remarks, the Regional Director for United Nations Aids, Dr. Djibril Diallo called for combined regional efforts to eradicate the deadly Ebola Virus disease. He pointed out that collaboration will help save the Sub-region from the traits of the virus and applauded President Sirleaf and others leaders of the affected countries for containing the virus.

Welcoming her colleagues, Minister, Dr. Bernice T. Dahn indicated that the conference is a signal to the world that there is now a great triumph over the deadly Ebola virus disease by affected countries in particular and West African Sub-region in general. She said issues surrounding International Health Regulation and data is a unique and collective view that should help inform key measurable actions adding, "We all do know from experiences that the world tend to go into amnesia when calamities and epidemics are ended".

She said the windows of opportunities for creating a vibrant Public Health system and a resilient Health system that build trust and partnerships with communities are rapidly closing. She thanked President Sirleaf for the leadership.

The Conference brought together the former President of Benin, Yaya Bonnie, six Health Ministers from the affected countries in Africa along with UN and other international partners. The Conference brings together health officials from the Ebola affected countries. ■



## ECOWAS Epidemiology Experts Move Closer Towards Greater Collection and Analyses of Drug use Data



*Ms Cristina Albertin, in a handshake with ECOWAS Dr. Sintiki Tarfa-Ugbe after the opening ceremony*

**E**pidemiology experts are moving closer towards greater, efficient and reliable collection and analyses of data on drug use in the West African region.

At the close of the two-Day meeting of the meeting of technical experts of the West African Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (WENDU) on the 14th of July at the auditorium of the ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja, participants affirmed that the capacities of National Focal Points (NFPs) in the monitoring of key drug use and supply with the WENDU Data and Country Reporting Forms had been strengthened remarkably.

“We are marching on” said the ECOWAS Director, Gender Youth, Sports, CSO, Employment and Drug Control Dr. Sintiki Ugbe while winding up the meeting. She noted that the confidence of the regional body stems from the support of the funding and technical partners.

Expressing satisfaction that WENDU which merely had in its fold eight member states in 2014



*A cross section of delegates from Member States during the meeting*

now had 15 of the ECOWAS member states by close of 2015, she enthused that the Commission is ardently looking forward to reports from across the region on the steps being taken to advance the WENDU action plan meant to guarantee greater health for citizens of West Africa.

Thanking the experts, stakeholders and delegates for their prized efforts in preparing and presenting country reports Dr. Sintiki who was

representing the ECOWAS Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender Dr. Fatimata Sow maintained that such commitment is an indicator of their willingness to continuously collaborate with the ECOWAS Commission and partners to make the region a proud, and secure place to live as well as creating a healthy environment besides ensuring that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are kept on course. The Programme Coordinator of the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) Mr. Cheikh Toure stressed that the partners are desirous

of seeing increased capacities of all the officers involved in the regional project while putting systems in place for easier collection and analyses of relevant data.

During the meeting, an update of activities on the implementation of the 2008-2014 regional action plan was given. The experts assessed the level of knowledge and attitude towards generating data using the WENDU country reporting Form. ■



# PHOTO GALLERY



Group Photograph (from 3rd right): President Marcel De Souza, President, with H.E. Hajiya Khadija Ibrahim, Minister of State, Foreign Affairs, Nigeria and ECOWAS Vice President, Edward Singhartey, flanked by some ECOWAS Commissioners and Directors of the Foreign Ministry during a working visit to the Ministry, on 26th May 2016



H.E. Marcel De Souza, President, ECOWAS Commission, with H.E. James F. Entwistle, Ambassador of the United States of America in Nigeria, during a Courtesy call on the President of the Commission



H.E. Marcel De Souza, President, ECOWAS Commission, right, pose for photograph with Mr. Siengui Apollinaire KI, Secretary General of West African Power Pool (WAPP) who paid him a courtesy call on Tuesday, 31st May, 2016



ECOWAS Vice President Mr. Edward Singhaty, Commissioner Fatimata Sow leading the ECOWAS delegation in a group photograph with EU delegation during a courtesy call to the Commission



Group Photograph of delegates from ECOWAS, Member States, UNODC and Representatives of International Organizations during the Ministerial Meeting on 2016-2020 ECOWAS Drug Action Plan, Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organised Crime and Drug Abuse, Abuja