

ECHOES

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JEAN-CLAUDE KASSI BROU CALLS FOR INCREASED TRADE AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA AND ECOWAS

The President of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Jean-Claude Kassi Brou, has called for increased and diversified trade and economic relations between India and the West African Community.

Speaking on 8th October 2018 in Abuja, Nigeria, at the opening of the India-West Africa Regional Conclave, he commended the current excellent trade and financial cooperation between the two sides.

"Trade between India and West Africa has continued to grow in recent years to reach nearly US\$22 billion, against US\$17 billion in 2016/17. This is a sign of the growing strength of our economy and our trade and financial cooperation," Mr. Jean-Claude Kassi Brou said.

He was confident that the conclave, which draws on the previous ones, would result in a higher level of investment and stronger commercial ties between India and ECOWAS.

He expressed his gratitude to the Indian government for facilitating flexible financing of its investments in West Africa through Eximbank, and also for recently providing a loan of US\$500 million to the ECOWAS Investment and Development Bank (EBID) to support investments by the regional organisation's financial arm in various sectors.

"This is a clear indication of the strong cooperation between our two parties, as demonstrated by the presence at this meeting of India's Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. J. Akbar, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr. C R Chaudhary, and a large delegation from the Confederation of Indian Industries led by its President," Mr. Brou said



Jean-Claude Kassi Brou and Rajesh Sharma exchanging the signed MoUs

The conclave, the third of its kind following "Namaskar Africa" in 2010 in Lagos, Nigeria, and 2012 in Accra, Ghana, was a platform for the ECOWAS Commission

President to showcase the economic potential and assets of the regional organisation.

"ECOWAS is a region with a population of nearly 370 million, made up of mainly young people. Gross domestic product is estimated at US\$551 billion in 2017. The economic growth indicated above is expected to reach 3.1% in 2018, compared to 2.3% in 2017, with some countries benefiting from improved international commodity prices," Mr. Brou noted.

The President of the ECOWAS Commission also stated that the Community offers many investment opportunities in agriculture, industry, infrastructure, finance, education and health.

Ahead of the opening ceremony of the conclave, Jean-Claude Kassi Brou met with India's Minister of State for Trade and Industry, C R Chaudhary, to discuss priority

development areas such as energy, infrastructure, health, building where ECOWAS is seeking to intensify its cooperation with India.

Along with the two Indian Ministers of State and Nigeria's Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Dr. Okechukwu Enelamah, Mr. Brou watched a documentary and attended an exhibition on the works of Mahatma Gandhi, an Indian political and spiritual leader born



President Brou inspecting the exhibition of Mahat Magandhi



Mr. Brou and Indian ministers Chaudhary and Akbar cutting the ribbon to declare the exhibition open



Members of the high leveled panel discussion group

He also visited the ECOWAS stand manned by Ms. Amamata Sulaiman from the Communication Directorate of the regional organisation, and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Confederation of Indian Industries.

Memorandum of Understanding with the Confederation of Indian Industries.

It should be noted that Jean-Claude Kassi Brou was at the conclave with his Executive Assistant, Kadja Eugène Etché, the Commissioner for Industry and Private Sector Promotion, Mamadou Traoré; the Commissioner for Infrastructure, Pathé Gueye, and the Commissioner for Energy and Mines, Sédiko Douka.

Others were the Commissioner for Telecommunications and Information Technology, Dr. Zouli Bonkoungou, the Commissioner for Education, Science and Culture, Dr. Leopoldo Amado, the Director of the Private Sector, N'Fally Sanoh, and the Acting Director of Communication, Liberor Doscof Aho.

on 2nd October 1869 and murdered in New Delhi on 30th January 1948.

the Confederation of Indian Industries.

NEW COUNTRIES AND INSTITUTIONS COMMIT TO PROMOTING COOPERATION WITH ECOWAS

Six new envoys presented their letters of credence to the President of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Jean-Claude Kassi Brou on the 9th of October 2018, in Abuja, Nigeria.

They were the High Commissioners of Ghana and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Alhaji Rashi Bawa and T. Raeenthiran respectively, Ambassadors of Egypt, Assem Mohammed Elseify, North Korea, Jon Tong Chol, Mali, Moustapha Traoré, as well as the country representative of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, Suffyan Koroma.

Accepting their letters of credence, Jean-Claude Kassi Brou congratulated them on their appointments and pledged his support for successful tour of duty.



Jean-Claude Kassi Brou with Alhaji Rashid Bawa

He reviewed the status of cooperation between their respective institutions and countries and the regional organisation. He enjoined them to initiate new projects to enhance cooperation towards regional economic integration.

Responding to the President's statement; each of the personalities pledged to foster cooperation between his country or organisation and the region.

The ECOWAS Commission President promised to work closely with them for the attainment of the objectives of the West African organisation.

Reacting to the North Korean Diplomat's remarks, Mr. Brou highlighted the enormous economic potentials and resources of ECOWAS.

«ECOWAS boasts several investment opportunities in agriculture, industry, infrastructure, finance, education and health. Investors therefore stand to benefit from this big market», Mr. Brou stated.

On his part, Mali's new Ambassador to ECOWAS, Moustapha Traoré, held discussions with Jean-Claude Kassi



Amb. Raeenthiran of Sri Lanka In a hand shake with President Brou



Ambassador of Mali, Moustapha Traoré with President Kassi Brou



Egyptian Ambassador, Assem Elseify with Jean-Claude Kassi Brou



Suffyan Koroma of FAO with President Jean-Claude Kassi Brou

On his part, Mali's new Ambassador to ECOWAS, Moustapha Traoré, held discussions with Jean-Claude Kassi

Brou on regional integration and institutional matters, particularly the ongoing institutional reforms in Community Institutions.

Aside from bilateral cooperation between Egypt and ECOWAS, talks between the Egyptian Ambassador, Assem Mohamed Mahmoud Elseify and Jean-Claude



Ambassador of North Korea, Jon Tong Chol and Jean-Claude Kassi Brou

Kassi Brou, centered on the Intra-Africa Trade Fair scheduled to hold from 11th to 17th December 2018 in Cairo, the Egyptian capital. The President of the ECOWAS Commission has been invited to the event.

The country representative of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Suffyan Koroma informed the ECOWAS Commission President of the forthcoming commemoration of the World Food Day on 16th October 2018.

The accreditation ceremony was attended by Mr. Brou's Director of Cabinet, Kalilou Traoré, his Executive Assistant, Kadja Eugène Etché, ECOWAS Commission's Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender, Dr. Siga Fatima Jagne and her colleague for Energy and Mines, Sédiko Douka, as well as by the representative of the Director of External Relations, Mr. Babatunde Idowu, and the Ag Director of Communication of the ECOWAS, Mr. Liberor Doscof Aho.

ECOWAS ADOPTS DESIGN SCHEME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW HEADQUARTERS COMPLEX FOR THE COMMISSION

Ministers for Infrastructure, Works and Housing of West African States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have adopted a design scheme for the development of a new Headquarters complex for the Commission that will be built in the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria- Abuja by the Chinese government through a \$31.5 million grant.

The meeting of the ad-hoc Ministerial Committee on the construction of Community institutions which held on 22nd September 2018



Madam Finda Koroma, Mr. Musa Nuhu and Mr. Vafolay Tulay, Commissioner for General Administration and Conference



Ministers from ECOWAS Member States or their representatives

in Abuja, Nigeria, saw their representatives adopt a design scheme in order to commence the development of the final design which will be produced with the input of the Commission and Member States.

The ECOWAS Commission's commissioner for General Administration and Conferences Vafolay Tulay, who presented three design schemes to the Ministers, stated that criteria such as site optimization, functionality, safety and security and the requirements of the Commission were taken into account while adopting the design scheme.

The Ministers recommended that the final design of the new Headquarters Complex should not only integrate elements of West African culture but must also comply with international and Nigeria's standards and specifications of construction.

Furthermore, the Ministers also recommended that the design for the new Headquarters complex should have the expansion of the Commission in view while being developed. 'The design should take into consideration functionalities and coordination consistent with the needs of the Community', they said.

The Commissioner for Infrastructure, Pathe Gueye, in his remarks added that the Commission would enlist a consultant/quality control firm to assist ECOWAS with the final design to ensure that the building meets all the required standards and is of the highest quality.

The Chairman of the meeting of the ad-hoc Ministerial Committee Mr. Musa Nuhu, head of the ECOWAS National Unit, Nigeria, assured the Commission of the full



A cross section of Ministers from Members States or their representatives

support of the Nigerian government in the implementation of the project.

The Ministerial Committee also approved the design for the second and third phase of the development of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) logistics depot in Lungi, Sierra Leone.

The meeting of the ad-hoc Ministerial Committee was preceded by a meeting of experts which held on 21st September 2018 in Abuja.

Also in attendance, Madam Finda Koroma, the Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission reiterated the commitment of the Commission towards the implementation of these two projects as she described them as being of great importance to the Community.

2017 MEMBER STATES' MACROECONOMIC CONVERGENCE ON THE AGENDA OF THE 40TH WAMZ COUNCIL MEETING

The 40th statutory meeting of the Council of Ministers of Member States of the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) was held on 14th September 2018 in Abuja, Nigeria, and attended by central bank governors, the representative of the President of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and several other dignitaries.

During the meeting, the ministers reviewed the macroeconomic convergence situation in Member States for 2017 and discussed the achievements and challenges relating to the introduction of the common currency by 2020.

The meeting also considered the report of the 37th session of the WAMZ Committee of Central Bank Governors and the status of implementation of previous decisions.

On behalf of the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Jean-Claude Kassi Brou, the Commissioner for Industry and Private Sector Promotion, Mamadou Traoré, lauded the collaboration between ECOWAS and WAMZ.

He outlined the progress made by the Commission of the regional organisation in the area of energy, road infrastructure, financial market integration, and private sector promotion.

Mr. Traoré also highlighted the introduction of a regional payment system, the ECOWAS investment guarantee mechanism, the promotion and liberalisation of trade in the region, the consolidation of the customs union, the implementation of the Common External Tariff by 14



Commissioner Mamadou Traoré



A group photograph of ECOWAS Central Bank Governors

Member States and the creation of a free trade area through the establishment of a trade liberalisation scheme within ECOWAS.

He nevertheless noted that significant challenges remain to be addressed, particularly with regard to the choice of exchange rate regime, the monetary policy framework and the right choice of the central bank model for the future common monetary area.

For his part, the representative of the Nigerian Minister of Finance urged members of the Council to create a robust framework for the implementation of the Community currency to ensure economic growth and well-being of West African people.

It should be recalled that the 37th session of the Committee of WAMZ Central Bank Governors was held the day before in the auditorium of the Central Bank of Nigeria, also in Abuja.

Aside from the Governors, delegates from the Commission of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI), the West African Monetary Agency (WAMA) and the representative of the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) also attended the meeting.

The ECOWAS Commission was represented by Dr. Kofi Konadu Apraku, Commissioner for Macroeconomic Policy and Economic Research.

ECOWAS FORUM URGES MODERNISATION OF HYDROMET AND DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Representatives of ECOWAS Member States' institutions, in conjunction with disaster and climate resilience building stakeholders, have urged for a modernization of hydromet and disaster risk management services in West Africa.

The meteorology, hydrology and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) stakeholders are also requesting in this regard, the scaling up of efforts by the development partners including the World Bank, European Union (EU), and other

United Nations (UN) organisations, in line with needs and priorities expressed by ECOWAS, Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), River Basin Organizations as well as national governments in the region.

A set of far-reaching recommendations made at the end of their 3-Day regional hydromet Forum and DRR platform in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire on the evening of the 21st of September 2018, bordered on the need for firmer political commitment, resource mobilisation and allocation, a workable funding strategy as well as increased advocacy on reliable disaster data management best practices.

Specifically, the delegates who also comprise members of the Bureau of African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), requested the high officials of the ECOWAS Commission who were on hand, to bring their resolutions to the attention of the President of the Commission and of the ECOWAS Parliament “for endorsement and action”.

They maintained that since there is an “increasing demand for customized weather, water and climate services to build resilience in communities and economies and provide effective early warning for the ECOWAS region” the modernization of every aspect of the entire value chain of hydromet systems and services with advanced weather prediction techniques, will bring innovation and engender a better response to end user needs in the ECOWAS region.

As part of the envisaged new hydromet order, the more than 200 participants recommended the promotion of a conducive environment for building and exchanging academic and research expertise as well as continued professional education on weather, water, climate and disaster risk reduction in the ECOWAS Member States.

Importantly, and in support of sustainable development, they urged the promotion of a “robust and meaningful gender mainstreaming and the inclusion of youth and



Commissioner Jagne reading the welcome address



(l-r); Michel Lologo, Pierre Laporte, Commissioner Jagne, Patteri Taalas, Mr. Silva, Mr. Kone, Ms. Adoum Sacko, Commissioner Sangare and Dr. Djime on a panel discussion

community based organizations” in the design and implementation of integrated approaches for weather, water, climate and disaster risk management services.

In the communiqué of the Forum read by the ECOWAS Commission's Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender Dr. Siga Fatima Jagne, the germane issues of safeguarding the environment and human lives in consciousness of the responsibilities of national governments, regional organisations and the people were highlighted.

Bringing the forum to a close, the Minister of Transport of Cote d'Ivoire said this is now “the time to shift from words to action” He was supported at the podium by the Chair of the AMCOMET bureau and Minister of Agriculture and Environment of Carbo Verde, Gilberto Correia Silva.

ECOWAS HOLDS MAIN PLANNING CONFERENCE FOR ITS COMMAND POST EXERCISE

The Directorate of Peace Keeping and Regional Security of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in collaboration with Member States, Training Centres of Excellence (TCEs), the African Union (AU) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) conducted the Main Planning Conference (MPC) for its Command Post Exercise (CPX) - JIGUI IV, which aims to test the Full Operational Capacity (FOC) of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF).



Group photograph of participants



Some participants of the conference

The 5-day meeting which ended on 28th September 2018 at the National Defence College in Abuja, Nigeria saw participants develop the Exercise plan, Exercise Structure and further develop the CARANA Scenario which is being used for the CPX.

The conference also availed participants the opportunity to further develop the technical communication plans for the Exercise, its public information and media strategy and logistic plans also known as 'real life support'.

The Director of Peace Keeping and Regional security Dr. Cyriaque Agnekethom during his remarks at the close of the conference expressed his satisfaction with the input of the participants to improve on the strategies developed during the Initial Planning Conference which held in November 2017.

He expressed the commitment of the management of the Commission to ensure that the CPX takes place in line with the Exercise timelines which were also established during the conference.

The MPC is expected to be followed by the operational headquarters training scheduled to hold in October 2018 at Ecole de Maintien de la Paix Alioune Blondin Beye in Bamako, Mali as part of the build up to the Exercise.

The CPX JIGUI IV scheduled to take place in 2019 aims to test and enhance the capability of the ESF to conduct strategic and operational level planning for multidimensional operations and to exercise command and control of deployed forces on a simulated ECOWAS/AU mandated Peace and Security Operation in West Africa.

ECOWAS COMMISSION DONATES RELIEF ITEMS TO IDPs TO COMMEMORATE WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY

As part of its commitment to bringing succour to displaced and socially dislocated citizens, the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) donated some relief items to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Abuja, Nigeria on the 13th of September 2018.

The gesture is in commemoration of the World Humanitarian Day (WHD), marked worldwide at the behest of the United Nations (UN), on the 19th of August 2018, by the Commission in league with other stakeholders such as the Nigerian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), and the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).



Mrs Florence Iheme (m) supported by Mrs Shizzer Bada presenting some of the donations to the IDP women leader Kaltumi Abubakar

The items donated by the ECOWAS Commission included bags of rice, cartons of oil as well as tons of clothing materials.

Handing over the items to the IDPs at their camp in Karimajiji, in the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria, the Commission's Director, Humanitarian Affairs Mrs. Florence Iheme told the recipients that the ECOWAS Commission will continue its humanitarian services to the displaced persons in the region as part of its larger corporate responsibility to the people of West Africa.

Conveying warm greetings to the IDPs on behalf of the President of the Commission Jean Claude Kassi-Brou, Mrs. Iheme assured them that their deplorable condition is not lost on the Management of the Commission.

The Director stated that the ECOWAS Commission is helping the government of Nigeria in resolving the insurgency problem that has created humanitarian camps. "ECOWAS is working hard, in support of the Nigerian government and our partners to resolve the problems that brought you here" she added.

The Head, IDP Department of the Nigerian NCFRMI Mrs. Schizzer Nasara Bada stressed the need for continuous good behaviour by the IDPs noting that international agencies and regional Organisations such as ECOWAS will not abandon them until they are reintegrated into the society.

The IDPs, mostly women and children were elated by the ECOWAS gesture. The Chairman of the Karimajiji camp Mr. Mohammed Abubakar supported by their Women Leader Hajia Kaltumi Abubakar expressed their appreciation and urged more support and kindness from ECOWAS.

Apart from pledging about one million dollars' worth of humanitarian assistance package for the troubled areas of the region, the ECOWAS Commission has continued to



Some of the donated items

provide timely assistance to IDPs in the affected communities in Nigeria, Niger and Sierra Leone, among others.

EXPERTS CALL FOR EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION AND NETWORKING ON CHILD PROTECTION

Participants at the technical meeting on the operationalization of the Child Protection Framework of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have called for effective collaboration and networking among all stakeholders.

Other recommendations of the meeting which ended on the 27th of September 2018 at the ECOWAS Commission Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria, bordered on the need for a harmonized research and data collection, using reliable and validated instruments to plan for and solve problems relating to child protection.

Noting that continuous dialogue and engagement of all stakeholders on Child Protection have become necessary, participants further recommended a regime of resource distribution, accountability and good governance.

In addition to this, they maintained that focus should be on effective community engagement on the five priorities outlined in the regional child protection framework.

Having deliberated on the thematic presentations at length, relevant child protection issues were identified by the experts and representatives of ECOWAS Partners on child protection.

Some of the issues included peace education, child education in emergencies, food nutrition issues such as



Group photograph of participants

School Feeding, Child Labour in Agriculture as well as protection issues in the Social Media.

Before their recommendations were arrived at, an overview of the “ECOWAS Strategic Framework for Strengthening National Child Protection Systems to prevent and respond to Violence, abuse and exploitation against children in West Africa” was given.

There were also presentations on the situational analysis of child protection system in West Africa.

Issues of relevant and up-to date data, legal framework, resource mobilization as well as the appropriate communication strategy on child protection were also examined.

The report adopted at the end of the Two-Day meeting highlighted the gaps in the political commitment of Member States towards the implementation of international and regional legal frameworks.

Closing the meeting on behalf of the Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender – Dr. Fatima Siga Jagne, the Principal Programme Officer for Gender and Child Dr. Bolanle Adetoun, thanked all the participants for their valuable interventions and inputs.

Stressing the need for the continuous mainstreaming of child protection issues in their work, she noted that being a cross-cutting theme involving many professionals and subject areas, an effective child-protection system, calls for action from all segments of society and governments.

In December, 2017 the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government approved the ECOWAS Strategic Framework for Strengthening National Child Protection Systems to prevent and respond to violence, abuse and exploitation against children in the region.

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