

SUMMARY RECORD

Meeting of the Strategy and Policy Group (SPG)  
Issy-les-Moulineaux (France), 13 and 14 September 2007



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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

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AfDB	African Development Bank
APF	Africa Partnership Forum
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
CCNM	Centre for Co-operation with non-Members (OECD)
CILSS	Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (Comité permanent inter-Etats de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee/OECD
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ENDA-Diapol	ENDA, Prospective et dialogues politiques
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreements EU-ACP
FCPN	Food Crisis Prevention Network
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FOSIN	Food Security Information Note
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRDR	Groupe de recherche et de réalisation pour le développement rural
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ROPPA	West African Network of Farmers' Organisations and Agricultural Producers (Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest)
SPG	Strategy and Policy Group (SWAC)
SWAC	Sahel and West Africa Club
UEMOA	West African Economic Monetary Union (Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNOWA	United Nations Office for West Africa
WALTPS	West African Long-Term Perspectives Study

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## INTRODUCTION

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The Sahel and West Africa Club's (SWAC) Strategy and Policy Group (SPG) met on 13 and 14 September 2007 at the SWAC's headquarters in Issy-les-Moulineaux, under the chairmanship of Mr. Charles GOERENS, with the participation of the Deputy Secretary-General to the OECD, Mr. Mario AMANO; the Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission, Mr. Jean de Dieu SOMDA; the Director of the Private Office of the ECOWAS Commission President, Mr. William Awinador KANYIRIGE; the Director of the Private Office of the UEMOA Commission President, Mr. Hamza CISSÉ; the Honorary President of ROPPA, Mr. Mamadou CISSOKHO and the former President of the SWAC, Mrs. Thérèse PUJOLLE.

Representatives of Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland attended along with several representatives of West African embassies based in Paris (Benin, Cameroon, Ghana and Senegal).

The Executive Secretary of the CILSS, Mr. Alhousseyni BRETEAUDAU and the Director of the Centre for Co-operation with Non-Members (CCNM/OCDE), Mr. Eric BURGEAT were unable to participate along with the United States, AfDB, the African Union (AU), UNDP, UNECA and UNOWA.

This meeting took place as a workshop to discuss the SWAC's 2008-2012 work programme as was suggested by SPG members at the meeting in Berlin in January 2007. Based on the review of the 2005-2007 Work Plan terminating at the end of December 2007, members made suggestions and recommendations on the outline of the next five year (2008-2012) programme.

Following the opening speeches<sup>1</sup>, Thursday 13 September focused on structural issues and the circumstantial evolutions in West Africa from 2005 to 2007 as well as the review of the 2005-2007 Work Plan.

That evening, Mr. Jean-Marie BOCKEL, Secretary of State to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsible for Cooperation and French-speaking Communities, hosted a cocktail for participants.

Friday 14 September began with a continuation of the discussions initiated the day before and strategic thinking was carried out on the orientations of the SWAC's 2008-2012 Work Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Annexed hereto

## OPENING INTERVENTIONS

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Three interventions were made at the opening session:

- Mr. Charles GOERENS, President of the SWAC
- Mr. Mario AMANO, Deputy Secretary-General to the OECD
- Mr. Jean de Dieu SOMDA, Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission

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### **Mr. Charles GOERENS, President of the SWAC**

After thanking all the participants including SPG members, Mr. GOERENS explained that this mid-term meeting should serve as the basis for the development of a detailed 2008-2012 Orientations document to be presented at the January 2008 SPG meeting for review and approval.

Referring to the SWAC's activities which he has followed closely as President over the last two years, he indicated that the Club today is characterised in particular by:

- The priority that it gives to the regional dimension of the medium- and long-term development of West Africa
- Its close cooperation with many regional and international organisations
- Its amplification of the role and voice of civil society in the region (political parties, youth, women, the media, the private sector, grassroots associative movements such as ROPPA)
- Its insistence on a balanced reading of the region based on facts that can feed into decision making and action on the ground
- Its ability to emphasise the dynamics and drivers of change.

Furthermore he commended the significant achievements in raising its visibility although there is still a way to go.

In conclusion, he insisted on the SWAC's need for stable financial resources for the 2008-2012 Work Programme.

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### **Mr. Mario AMANO, Deputy Secretary-General to the OECD**

This was the first SPG meeting for Mr. Mario AMANO, Deputy Secretary-General to the OECD, who took up his duties in June 2007. A career diplomat, Mr. Amano had been in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs until his recent nomination as Deputy Secretary-General.

Mr. AMANO reiterated OECD's interest in Africa as illustrated by the various initiatives such as the *African Partnership Forum (APF)*, the activities of the Development Centre which co-produces the *Africa Economic Outlook* with the AfDB, the *Development Assistance Committee's (DAC)* work on aid effectiveness and policy coherence, as well as the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

The Deputy Secretary-General congratulated the SWAC team for its performance during 2007, its partnership with other Directorates as well as its contribution to the OECD's Development Cluster. Furthermore, he commended the partnerships undertaken over the last years with a number of West African regional organisations.

Finally, he stressed to SPG members the importance of their intellectual and financial support to the SWAC.

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**Mr. Jean de Dieu SOMDA, Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission**

On behalf of Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the Vice President commended the SWAC on its support in the identification of strategic questions with regard to the region's development and African capacity building through a participatory approach based on the sharing of experiences.

He is pleased with the partnership with the SWAC begun in 2004 and officialised in 2006 with the signature of a Partnership Agreement. Today this partnership is in line with the strategic vision for regional development adopted by the Heads of State and Government Conference on 15 June 2007. This vision, he stated, aims to promote an integrated, peaceful and competitive West Africa.

Recalling the progress made but also the challenges of the region, he underscored the priorities based on the strategic vision namely strengthening peace and democracy, furthering regional integration and the interconnection of infrastructures, improving populations' living conditions, strengthening human capital and facilitating mobility throughout a shared zone. The 2008-2012 Orientations envisaged by the SWAC greatly corroborate these concerns and allows some optimism with regard a continued partnership with ECOWAS.

He invited the partners present to participate in the next ECOWAS donors meeting which will be held in Abuja on 19 and 20 November 2008.

In conclusion, Mr. SOMDA hoped that the partnership between the two organisations would continue with the exchange of information, joint analyses and the co-organisation of events. He concluded his intervention by paying tribute to the SWAC, its President as well as its Director.

# I. WEST AFRICA

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Mr. Lauzon presented a “current reading” of West Africa which, deepened by the exchanges that followed, provided an outline of a conceptual framework for future SWAC work:

- West Africa remains one of the poorest regions in the world. The inadequate international transfers<sup>2</sup>, budgetary resources and local savings, large public debt, environmental vulnerability, conflict and instability are major constraints to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).
  - *These shortcomings should remain at the centre of regional partners’ and SWAC concerns.*
  - *Never has the international community paid so much attention to aid effectiveness (Paris Declaration). For as much, attaining the MDG in West Africa seems unlikely by 2015. The regional dimension of development and aid has not been sufficiently explored even if recently some progress has been made.*
  - *From this perspective, the entire regional integration process calls for negotiations and exchanges of views relating to specific interests such as they are perceived at the national and regional levels. The vitality and effectiveness of these processes is measured by their capacity to reconcile these interests to benefit the greatest number of people.*
  
- West Africa also is a dynamic region. There have been significant changes over the last twenty years: new modes of governance (going from a single party to multi-party, decentralisation); the emergence of the private sector and the expansion of the informal sector. There have also been macro-economic adjustments, economies have been liberalised, the media has developed and civil society has been strengthened. At the same time women’s rights have evolved and cultural creations have been encouraged. West African agricultural production has increased three-fold over the last forty years, practically keeping pace with the increasing population.
  - *Understanding and supporting these dynamics assumes continuous development of dialogue with all the actors stimulating these dynamics. The diversity of these actors and their sometimes diverging interests justify the need for contradictory debate as encouraged by the SWAC.*
  - *While the State’s role should be valorised, civil society should be heeded and directly involved.*
  - *Particular attention should also be paid to local governance.*
  
- West African natural resources (uranium, oil, bauxite, iron, phosphates, etc.) face intense international competition from an increasing number of actors including the powerful rapidly emerging countries such as Brazil, China and India. These countries are also aiming to conquer the West African market and position themselves as donors of the region. This new configuration is providing a large number of opportunities as well as risks
  - *This renewed interest seems to come with more and diverse foreign direct investment, in particular with regard to the processing of raw materials (oil and uranium refineries, metallurgy) and in transport infrastructure (ports, railroads, roads). Is this the beginning of industrialisation? If this trend continues, whether the wealth generated will remain in West Africa will be a key issue for the region’s future.*

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<sup>2</sup> West Africa accounts for less than .3% of total foreign direct investment (FDI) and 1% of global trade. Official Development Assistance (ODA) remains low compared to the need (approximately US\$17/habitant and less than 5% of the regional GDP).

- *In any case agriculture will continue to be a strategic sector even though actors feel that its potential is under exploited (very little regional market protection, insufficient public and private investment, etc.)*
- West Africa is also generating anxiety at the national, regional and international levels. Cannabis is grown in and exported from this area and it is now also becoming an important transit corridor for South American cocaine. Furthermore, many observers suspect that the Saharan-Sahelian zone is a breeding ground for terrorist and criminal activities.
  - *Development is not a stand-alone policy. It is also linked to collective security.*
- West Africa is at the heart of the immigration issue with regard to European countries even though West African migration towards Europe accounts for only 5% of total regional migration.
  - *One of West Africa's challenges is to explicitly define with its partners the link between development and migration. What can be done? In what timeframe? In this regard, how to reconcile national issues and regional cooperation?*
- West African negative and positive evolutions are neither straightforward nor contradictory. They are part of a complex and changing reality. They should be integrated into a balanced reading which cannot be reduced to an exclusively pessimistic vision of the region. This reading must also respect the profound regional nature of West Africa. This region is composed of many interdependencies based on the history of its people, the remarkable mobility of the population along with the innumerable social and economic links.
- In 2008, Africa will be at the top of the international agenda. In September 2008 development partners will evaluate the Paris Declaration at a conference to be held in Accra. In November 2008, the second Ministerial Euro-Africa Conference on Migration and Development will be held under the chairmanship (France, beginning in July 2008) of the European Union. Furthermore, negotiations between West Africa and the European Union on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) will continue in 2008 as recommended by ECOWAS and UEMOA. These events will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on the region's future.
  - *West Africa and its partners need to understand the forces at work in the region, to evaluate the forthcoming avenues and anticipate the different future scenarios without claiming to forecast the future.*

## II. THE SWAC'S SPECIFICITIES

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### 2.1 A Foot-hold in the region

Since its creation in 1976, the SWAC's specificities have been debated and there has been consensus on the following points:

- **It is a unique structure** bringing together public and private actors as well as development partners of one region.
- **A regional approach taking into account all of the various levels which is at the same time essential and difficult to implement.** While emphasising the complementarity between the local, national and regional levels, the SWAC's work contributes to clearly outline the regional action (within the areas of food security, peace and security, cross-border cooperation, etc.). This work constitutes solid partnerships with regional organisations such as ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS.
- **A network approach bringing together a wide range of actors** from the 18 countries of the region. The SWAC's strong relationships with West African organisations, associations, actors, etc. provide constant contact with realities on the ground.
- **The ability to elicit innovative debate opening new paths, sometimes challenging "politically correct";** far from the standard, to institutional dialogue.
- **A prospective view:** not being a development operator, the SWAC can more easily have a comprehensive view on development issues. Furthermore, its understanding of realities on the ground and its elicited combination of perceptions and expertise allows for the SWAC to better anticipate the region's future challenges.
- **The SWAC's attachment to the OECD** enables it to facilitate exchanges of views and dialogue between West Africa and one of the key international organisations concerned with international development linked to globalisation. Created more than thirty years ago within the OECD at the initiative of member countries and Sahelian countries, the SWAC should take advantage of the situation and emphasise more effectively its value added and complementarity with some Directorates and Committees such as the DAC, the Development Centre and the APF.

### 2.2 Role and Objectives

SPG members reaffirmed the objectives set out in the 2005-2007 Orientations. They recommended that the Club have:

- **An advocacy role,** indeed a questioning role dedicated to these countries and these actors. It involves bringing perspectives and ideas forward to assure a better future for all.
- **An interface and catalyser role** between OECD member countries and West Africa. The SWAC shall be **attentive to the countries of the region** in order to provide support and counsel when requested in their relations with development partners and OECD member countries. The SWAC should **make Southern expertise better known** as well as be ready to **share with Northern partners the regional actors' perception.**
- **A supportive role for civil society:** the SWAC should assist ECOWAS in particular and other regional organisations in further including non State actors in great debates on the region's future.
- **A role emphasising the region's evolutions:** the SWAC should **emphasise West Africa's progress** without concealing its difficulties. It should contribute to making these evolutions better known and enhance the region's image. Consequently it should thus undertake specific and permanent dissemination of information and communication.

- **An anticipative role:** The SWAC should help **identify medium- and long-term strategic issues**. It should be ready to launch debates even those that are politically incorrect. In its monitoring and counsel role it should be able to anticipate important issues that could be of interest to the region over the coming years “to conceive future models as reference points and attaching the past to the present”.
- **A role leading politically incorrect debates:** The SWAC should lead contradictory debates, elicit ideas and be a “back-seat driver”.

### **2.3 Founding Partnerships**

Over the last three years, the SWAC has developed solid partnerships with regional and civil society organisations such as:

- A solid partnership with ECOWAS and UEMOA;
- A renewed partnership with the CILSS;
- Establishing relationships with West African Ambassadors based in Paris;
- Operational partnerships with NGOs (ENDA, GRDR, Youth Movement for Peace and Integration, etc.)
- Collaboration with the AU;
- Cooperation agreements in the process of being finalised with AfDB, ROPPA, UNECA and UNOWA;
- Strengthening working relations with various civil society actors including women, youth and the private sector.

#### *2.3.1 General remarks*

Members would like the SWAC to be a catalyst, to be able to evaluate the absorption capacity of the organisations it supports while not taking on the work of these partners. They encouraged the SWAC to develop multi-actor partnerships instead of separate partnerships with a view to better coherence and harmonisation.

#### *2.3.2 Partnership with ECOWAS*

**The partnership with ECOWAS** was discussed at great length of which emerged:

- The bonds forged over the last four years between the SWAC and ECOWAS are solid as demonstrated in the implementation and financing of joint initiatives, the organisation of workshops and the mutual participation in strategic meetings. Furthermore, the SWAC has supported ECOWAS in the development process of its 2007-2010 Strategic Plan.
- ECOWAS would like the SWAC to play a greater advocacy role within and outside the region, in particular with regard to institutions and development partners as well as provide support to the implementation of its communications strategy. The upcoming launch of a joint information portal on West Africa based in Abuja is an integral part of this strategy.
- The Vice President of ECOWAS, Mr. Somda encouraged the SWAC to develop relations in addition to the Commission, with all of the ECOWAS bodies including Parliament.
- Future developments of this partnership must take into account the ECOWAS 2007-2010 Strategic Plan, while each of the SWAC’s activities may not necessarily related to this Plan.
- A review of the joint initiatives will be carried out and will serve as a basis to intensify the partnership agreement underway, capitalise on achievements and take into account the evolution of the region’s realities and needs.

### 2.3.3 Partnership with the CILSS

The SWAC was initially created to provide support to the CILSS. Some members believe that the SWAC should galvanize and provide more support to the CILSS in its political role as unifier and representative of Sahelian countries. SPG members would like the SWAC-CILSS partnership to go beyond collaborating on technical issues (desert locusts, food security, etc.).

### 2.3.4 Partnership with the producers

SPG members placed great importance on the partnership with ROPPA. They also stressed that the SWAC should diversify its partnerships with other producer organisations.

### 2.3.5 Partnership with UEMOA

SPG members commended the partnership with UEMOA officialised by the signing of a Partnership Agreement in October 2007.

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## **SPG Members' Remarks and Questions**

- *SWAC's focus goes beyond the scope covered by ECOWAS. Mauritania and Chad are members of the CILSS and are therefore included in the SWAC's work.*
- *What is Cameroon's status and position? Institutionally this country is seen as part of Central Africa. Taking Cameroon into account is essential due to the many interdependencies that link it to the West African region.*
- *The SWAC should be ready to collaborate with the Commission of the African Union and with other Pan-African institutions specifically on issues of interest for West Africa.*
- *Supporting West African capacity development is central to the SWAC's identity and role. While the SWAC should be a place where innovative initiatives are developed, it must also monitor the progressive transfer of leadership to its West African partners. In line with the Paris Declaration, this approach will underpin actions undertaken by the SWAC.*

### III. ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY THE SWAC

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SPG members confirmed their interest in the initiatives undertaken within the framework of the 2005-2007 Work Plan. Without going into detail, remarks, suggestions and recommendations on the main themes of the discussions are set out below:

#### **3.1 Medium- and Long-Term Development Perspectives**

SPG members reaffirmed their interest in the retrospective and prospective approach adopted by the SWAC. With regard to policies, investments, and partnerships, West African countries and the entire region need to clarify their short-term choice in light of an analysis of history, geography, specificities and medium- and long-term perspectives. This approach should be based on an understanding of the progress, changes, constraints and challenges.

This approach is undertaken in the work carried out for the Atlas of Regional Integration in West Africa. It also underpins the **Joint ECOWAS/SWAC Report on West Africa** which is currently being produced. The 2008 Report on "Resources for Development in West Africa" examines in particular financial, natural, cultural and human resources. SPG members would like this exercise to be an opportunity to capitalise on West African expertise. They would like this Report to be made available before the important events regarding West Africa in 2008 (two ministerial conferences on migration and development and the Accra Conference on the Paris Declaration).

**Re-launching strategic thinking such as the WALTPS** published in 1994 was discussed but not resolved. Some members would want the SWAC to update the actual study or even develop a new tool for Southern and Northern partners. SPG members were reminded that it took 5 people working full time over a 4 year period to produce the WALTPS. Currently the SWAC does not have the financial nor human resources to undertake such an endeavour.

#### **3.2 Regional Integration**

The regional construction process does not negate the role of the State. In fact, the State should be directly involved with this process. The SWAC should continue to contribute to reconciling regional construction with the local, national and regional levels. This work should be undertaken alongside the States. SPG members suggested that the SWAC help link up the different levels and to increasingly highlight the complementarities between the Sahelian and the coastal zones.

#### **3.3 Cross-border cooperation**

SPG members encouraged the SWAC to continue its **cross-border cooperation initiatives as a regional integration** tool. They recommended that the SWAC not increase the number of pilot operations nor be directly implicated in their implementation.

#### **3.4 Migration**

SPG members were interested in the chapter focusing on migration of the **Atlas of Regional Integration in West Africa** produced by the SWAC and ECOWAS. This chapter is a source of useful information for development partners and actors on the ground providing documented migratory dynamics and shedding light on the importance of intra-regional migration. It served as a documentary basis for ECOWAS member states to develop a common approach to migration. The common approach was approved at the ministerial level and by the ECOWAS parliament. It will be submitted to Heads of State in December 2007.

At the end of 2008 France will host the second Ministerial Euro-African Conference on **Migration and Development**. The SPG encouraged the SWAC to contribute to West African regional strategic thinking during this conference.

### **3.5 Food Security**

Food security remains a priority for SPG members as the SWAC was created in 1976 within the context of droughts and food insecurity in the Sahel. The situation has evolved over the last thirty years. While there are still pockets of chronic malnutrition in the region, food insecurity is rooted in issues linked to the organisation and functioning of agricultural product markets within each country as well as at the regional level. Over the last few years the SWAC has highlighted these new challenges (see the work carried out on food security and cross-border trade in the K<sup>2</sup>M area [Kano-Katsina-Maradi]).

Along with the CILSS, the SWAC has contributed to re-launching the **Food Crisis Prevention Network<sup>3</sup> (RPCA)** and actively participates in its functioning notably through the creation of a website<sup>4</sup> and the regular publication of the *Food Security Information Note (FOSIN)*. While commending the SWAC's role in the re-dynamisation of the network and setting up of information tools, some members asked the SWAC to think about how to progressively transfer FOSIN to the CILSS. In addition to the interest in this approach in terms of capacity development, this would enable the SWAC to devote more energy to structural strategic thinking on food security.

The SWAC was asked to **better highlight** the value added of these activities in this sector where a large number of organisations are also involved.

### **3.6 Agricultural and Trade Policies**

There are two agricultural policies in West Africa: that of ECOWAS and that of UEMOA. Some producer organisations, in particular ROPPA, demand a harmonised regional agricultural policy that would increasingly involve civil society organisations.

SPG members underscored the concern of West African populations with regard to the **Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)** currently being negotiated by the European Union and ECOWAS also including Mauritania. They encouraged the SWAC to support its African partners in these difficult negotiations. The implementation of the EPA should be accompanied by continuous strategic thinking with regard to the medium- and long-term development perspectives of the region.

### **3.7 Governance**

The SWAC is attentive in its strategic thinking and actions (initiatives concerning post-conflict and crises resurgence and human security in the region) of the new dynamics with regard to security. The SPG meeting was an opportunity to take into account new connections which are being set up between crime, rebellion, terrorism, illegal and human trafficking, all which demonstrate that security in Africa is a serious issue. Coastal areas are under surveillance due to heavy drug trafficking as well as illegal fishing.

The SWAC also demonstrated the importance of human security by addressing the security issue, with a regional workshop held in Lomé in 2006. It began with ECOWAS advocating for security to be placed on the regional as well as States' agenda.

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<sup>3</sup> Réseau de Prévention des Crises Alimentaires

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.food-security.net>

### **3.8 Governance**

Taking into account the importance of this issue in all development sectors and for a great number of institutional actors and others involved in this area, an SPG member suggested that the SWAC highlight more its value added in this area.

As regards democracy and political dialogue, the SPG was able to measure the impact of the approach initiated by the *Regional Forum of Political Parties, the Media and Civil Society held in Cotonou* in 2005. From this experience a dialogue and synergy approach was developed among actors in order to strengthen democracy and build peace in West Africa. The SPG was informed that the Côte d'Ivoire's *Commission Electorale Indépendante* contacted the SWAC within the framework of preparing a Forum of Political Parties in Côte d'Ivoire with a view towards the 2008 elections.

### **3.9 Approach regarding Women and Youth**

SPG members underscored their interest of a specific approach geared towards women and youth. These two categories of actors are still sometimes insufficiently taken into account in programmes set up by development partners.

### **3.10 Civil Society**

Over the last years, the SWAC has forged solid links with civil society of the region and contributed to bringing these actors and ECOWAS closer. This approach is in line with ECOWAS' new Strategic Plan which stresses strengthening dialogue with civil society for their increased involvement in the implementation of this plan.

### **3.11 Communications**

SPG members recognised the visibility and raising of efforts made by the SWAC. They praised the newsletter, the SWAC's new internet site as well as the specific sites (cross-border cooperation, the Atlas and food security) which enable the SWAC to maintain close links with its members.

They encouraged the SWAC to continue this initiative by supporting ECOWAS in closing the communications gap within and outside the region.

As from 2008, the SWAC and ECOWAS aim to launch a joint information portal on West Africa.

## **IV. FINANCIAL ISSUES**

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The financial situation was discussed on the second morning. SPG members reviewed solutions envisaged and evoked, as well as short- and medium-term prospects.

### **4.1. The SWAC's Financial Situation in 2007**

- The SWAC is in a budgetary transition situation due to the OECD's substantial increase in overheads and a decrease in contributions i.e. the UK no longer a donor as well as reductions in contributions by some donors. Some SPG members believed that it would have been better to address this issue beforehand with their respective representatives to the OECD.
- The decrease in the SWAC's financial resources has led to postponing some initiatives.

### **4.2. Recommended Solutions**

- In order to deal with the decrease in financial resources, the SWAC was required to reduce its salaried staff by 25% leading to the discontinuation of four staff contracts and the early retirement of another staff member.
- The SWAC Directorate recognised a link between the evaluations carried out by Canada and Germany and the increase in their contributions. This indicates that their evaluations convinced decision-making bodies of these two countries of the value added and relevance of a structure such as the SWAC. This could be an area of strategic thinking for other SWAC partners.

### **4.3 Prospects**

- The financial situation for 2008 is hardly encouraging. Although large international foundations were approached for supplementary contributions, there are insufficient contributions to the general budget which are needed to implement the next 2008-2012 work plan.
- Italy announced at this mid-term meeting that it would make a specific contribution for work to be carried out on migration and medium and long-term development perspectives as well as a contribution to the SWAC's general resources.
- SPG members encouraged the SWAC to approach the European Union to join the SWAC by contributing to the SWAC's general resources. Furthermore, the SWAC will approach other OECD member countries with a view to bringing new members on board and mobilising contributions to general resources.
- It was suggested that the SWAC approach its members to provide support for some initiatives through specific contributions.
- The issue of whether to involve new development actors such as India, China and Brazil in a group like the SPG was raised but not discussed in-depth. It was nevertheless suggested, as demonstrated in the Heiligendamn Process, to dialogue with these new actors.
- SPG members would like to have a more detailed financial report than the one that they recently received. They would like to see the allocation of various budgetary lines. This report will be sent to them in November 2007.

## V. 2008 -2012 ORIENTATIONS

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### 5.1 The SWAC's Structure

- The SWAC should **remain an interface between countries of the North and countries of the South**. It must be capable of raising awareness of the perceptions, experiences and expertise of the South, a prerequisite for a genuine intermixing of Northern and Southern countries. This should be taken into account with every action undertaken.
- The SWAC should **provide an “operational push”** through strategic intervention and choosing the actors and appropriate moments capably as well as the processes to be implemented. It must avoid the temptation to act in the place of its partners.
- The SWAC should help **assure the complementarity of development efforts between the local, national and regional levels taking into account the specificity and needs of each State**.
- The SWAC should **remain true to itself, not to be too institutional** even if it is attached to an important institution which provides it with certain legitimacy to its donors and partners.
- The SWAC should **avoid standard discourse, and continue to stir up ideas**.

### 5.2. Recommendations for the future

#### *Taking into account new regional issues*

The SWAC's work should integrate new issues which reconfigure West Africa's position within globalisation. The region is becoming a strategic zone for an increasing number of actors eliciting interest and avariciousness.

#### *Broadening its horizons*

SPG members would like the SWAC to associate other types of socio-professional organisations (entrepreneurs, transporters and merchants, etc.) in strategic discussions as well as applied research and training institutes of the region.

In the forthcoming years, the SWAC should be a space for more intensive exchanges of views with countries and civil societies of the region.

#### *Maintaining the four areas of concentration*

Members would like the four main areas of concentration to be maintained in the SWAC's next work plan:

- Medium- and Long-Term Development Perspectives
- Local Development and the Process of Regional Integration
- Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development
- Governance, Conflict Dynamics, Peace and Security

### *Better reconciliation of complementarities among the different levels*

The regional approach should remain the main guideline in the SWAC's work. However, particular effort should be made at the national level. One of the SWAC's challenges is to help shed light on the apparent contradictions between various actions promoting accelerated development to benefit the greatest number of people at the local, national and regional levels.

### *Raising awareness of the SWAC and its work*

By documenting West African realities and perspectives, the SWAC should contribute to sensitising actors of the region.

The SWAC should intensify its role as a space for contradictory debates, dialogue focusing on the dynamics of change while developing its contributions to the OECD's Development Cluster. It should capitalise more on its attachment to the OECD. It should be more involved with the DAC and raise awareness among OECD members of the affect of some of their decisions.

It should make known Southern views, opinions and expertise. It was suggested to produce a directory of experts and researchers of the region.

Some SPG members asked that the SWAC be more innovative in order to make the results of its work better known. They suggest organising more restitution workshops that would bring together civil society, SWAC partners and the private sector.

### *To be action-oriented*

More than in the past, the SWAC must gear its activities towards being action-oriented in particular at the regional level. How, for example, can the SWAC's work contribute to positively integrating regional issues in national poverty reduction strategies?

### *Strengthening the links between SWAC members*

More systematic participation of SPG members could greatly contribute to the SWAC's work. The SWAC should suggest concrete principles and procedures involving its members with regard to their respective interests.

# CONCLUSIONS

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**The next SPG meeting** shall take place in Paris on 31 January and 1 February 2008. In accordance with the requests by SPG members, the SWAC should think about how civil society can be more involved at this next meeting, at the very least some organisations with whom it has forged links over the last several years. The SWAC intends to implement this recommendation; being highly aware of its budget constraints.

**Taking into the account the scant representation of Ambassadors at this strategic thinking meeting, it was suggested** that they be informed of the next SPG meeting and encouraged to participate. Hence, the SWAC plans to hold another African Ambassadors meeting before the end of the year.

The implementation of the SWAC's new 2008 Work Plan will be based on the decrease of one quarter of its staff as well as the reduction in financial resources.

SPG members reaffirmed their countries' interest in financially supporting the SWAC while suggesting that new forms of financing be sought such as cross-funding or the involvement of private foundations.

SPG members thanked the President, Mr. GOERENS and the Director, Mr. LAUZON for organising and chairing this meeting.

The SWAC will submit a detailed financial report to SPG members in November 2007.

The SWAC will also complete its 2005-2007 Activity Report before the end of the year.

The SWAC will draft an orientation document on its work to be undertaken in 2008-2012 that it will submit to SPG members in December 2007 before the SPG meeting in January 2008. This document will be based on the conclusions summarised in this summary record, in particular:

1. The structural evolutions underway in the region (demographic transition, reconfiguration of settlement areas, social, political and economic changes) must continue to underpin the SWAC's work and should also be integrated into the new issues which are reforming West African's position in globalisation: the region is becoming a strategic zone for a growing number of actors (competition regarding the exploitation of raw materials, security issues, etc.).
2. A regional approach remains a priority. West Africa should accelerate its regional integration and cooperation process in all domains involving all actors. However, particular effort must be made at the national level.
3. Within this conceptual framework, the SWAC will continue to carry out actions regarding its four areas of concentration: 1) Rural Transformation, 2) Governance, Peace and Security, 3) Local Development and the Process of Regional Integration, and 4) Medium- and Long-Term Development Perspectives.
4. For each of these areas, adjustments will be suggested in order to respond to the concerns expressed, in particular:
  - a. The SWAC's value added with regard to what other partners are doing within and outside the region; the need to question the future, to think regionally and initiate action in all domains.
  - b. The nature of partnerships, allocating responsibilities within these partnerships, the progressive transfer of some initiatives to partners.

- c. Support the development of synergies among partners.
  - d. The need for the SWAC to contribute to certain international meetings which are key for the region's future.
  - e. Capitalise on West African expertise and analysis within the framework of SWAC governance and initiatives; the need to "broaden its horizons".
  - f. The need to be flexible to react to events and interpellations.
  - g. Financial constraints.
5. In line with the mandate and objectives confirmed and defined by the SPG, the SWAC will intensify its role as a space for contradictory debate, dialogue on the dynamics of change while developing its contributions to the OECD's Development Cluster.
6. It will ensure that its programmes are more action-oriented.
7. Communication efforts will be pursued and intensified. It is important to understand West Africa and make its perspectives, initiatives and their drivers understood and demonstrate that it is useful and necessary to think and to react concretely and effectively at the local national and regional levels.
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## **ANNEX 1: INTERVENTION BY MR. CHARLES GOERENS, PRESIDENT OF THE SWAC**

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(Or. Fre.)

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to see you here today at this important meeting in which we will have an exchange of views so as to develop the Sahel and West Africa Club's 2008-2012 Work Plan. It was recommended at our SPG meeting in Berlin last January that we hold a meeting such as this.

About a month ago we sent you the agenda for this meeting along with a document entitled, « Contribution to strategic thinking on the orientations of the 2008-2012 Work Plan ». The Director of the SWAC, Mr. Normand Lauzon, will offer a review the contents of this document by grouping its presentations into four categories which will facilitate our open and direct discussions:

1. West Africa: The SWAC's perception, new structural issues and circumstantial evolutions in 2005-2007
2. The SWAC's actions in 2005-2007
3. The SWAC's specificities: the SWAC's approaches, objectives, working methods, foot-hold in its work and partnerships
4. Strategic thinking on the orientations of the 2008-2012 Work Plan.

After this meeting a document will be prepared and submitted to us in preparation of the next SPG meeting in January 2008 for review and approval. This document will take into account the results of our exchanges and will be based on the action-oriented demands expressed by the SWAC's partners such as the African Union, the CILSS, ECOWAS, ROPPA, UEMOA women and youth associations, countries involved within and outside the region, as well as representatives of the private sector. The idea is not for the SWAC to spread itself too thin in its action but rather to have a structuring approach within its joint initiatives grouping together various partners and being able to contribute to the region's populations' well-being now and in the years to come.

I would like to say a few words on the region in which the SWAC is involved. Often West Africa is considered marginal and idle. In terms of surface area, this region is twice that of the European Union and about 85% of Canada or the United States. Today West Africa's population is approximately 316 million representing 4.7% of the world population and 39% of that of Sub-Saharan Africa. It should reach 420 million by 2022. Furthermore, this region's urban population has gone from 15% in the 1960s to more than 45% now and this trend is continuing.

West Africa has also experienced significant changes over the last 40 years, economically, politically, institutionally, socially and culturally. In working with this region, we are highly aware of its difficulties and its challenges. But we must also acknowledge the strategic interest that it represents for the rest of the world if we take into account for example its natural resources and its market potential. On a strategic level, many other aspects could be addressed during our discussions, such as: the younger generation's future, migration, development, peace and security.

Since I took up my responsibilities as President of the SWAC, I can attest to the excellent work it has accomplished its specificity and valued added. I will mention only a few which come to mind:

- The priority it gives to the regional dimension of the medium- and long-term development of West Africa
- Its close cooperation with many regional and international organisations
- Its amplification of civil society's role and voice in the region (political parties, youth, women, the media, the private sector, grass-roots movements such as ROPPA)
- Its insistence on a balanced reading of the region based on facts that can serve as a reference for decision-making and action on the ground

- The priority given to the dynamics and drivers of change.

I need not go into further detail regarding these aspects as I know that you are all more familiar than I am with these realities and the SWAC's characteristics.

I would like to underscore that in 2007 the SWAC has made significant progress with regard to communications and making the results of its work known. But much remains to be done on this matter and we will discuss it. The SWAC's financial situation is another important issue which we should take into account in our strategic thinking on its 2008-2012 Work Plan. In effect, last year there was a reduction in the SWAC's voluntary contributions while there was an increase in the OECD's administrative as well as fixed costs. What will be the SWAC's future and role if financial resources continue to decrease and its operating costs increase? The SWAC is us! What do we want to do about it and what are the available financial means that we can rely on? We can further discuss this very important issue during this meeting.

So as not to take up too much of your time, I would like to conclude by inviting you to have an open and direct exchange of views which can contribute to strengthening the SWAC's role and its contribution to the development of the region essential for a the well-being and better security for all.

Thank you.

## **ANNEX 2: INTERVENTION BY THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE OECD, MR. MARIO AMANO**

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(Or. Eng.)

Dear colleagues,

I am very pleased to participate in this important meeting aimed at exchanging views on the development of the Sahel and West Africa Club's 2008-2012 Work Plan. It is the first time that I participate in the SPG meeting and I find it most interesting. I have read with great interest the documentation distributed to you by the Club to which Mr. Goerens has referred to. I am sure that this will serve as a useful basis for our open and direct discussions.

Let me thank all of you for being here with us today. This attests to the importance you attach to West Africa and the role played by the Sahel and West Africa Club. I am especially honored and pleased to welcome Mr. Jean de Dieu Somda, Vice-President of the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) who will address this meeting following my introductory remarks.

This morning, I would like to say few words on the following topics:

- The importance given to Africa by the OECD
- OECD and the Sahel and West Africa Club
- The way forward for the Club

### **1. The importance given to Africa by the OECD**

In the DAC and other OECD fora, it has been emphasized time and again that we need to reduce the gap between the developed and the not so developed countries. With the majority of the least developed countries in Africa being in West Africa, there is no question that a high priority has to be given by the international community to that part of the world. Not only for a better future for the region but also for greater security for all.

At the OECD, we are working in many different ways with our African partners. Let me highlight some examples:

- OECD through the African Partnership Forum is helping in the organization and follow-up of the G8 Summits which are giving a high priority to Africa
- Through the Development Centre and in partnership with the African Development Bank, OECD is producing the Annual Economic Outlook on Africa
- Through the DAC, OECD is focusing attention on international aid effectiveness and policy coherence
- OECD is also very much involved with its African partners in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism, policy dialogue in support of reforms, monitoring of development trends and progress.
- Through the Sahel and West Africa Club, OECD is working in close partnership with developed and developing countries, international, continental and regional organizations and the civil society to address the key issues relevant to the development of the region in the short, medium and long term, taking into account the complementarity of the promotion of development between the local, national, regional and global levels.

Let me conclude my remarks on Africa by saying that we fully recognise that while international development assistance is necessary, it is not sufficient however. Indeed, trade, investment, debt-related issues, mobilisation of national and local human and financial resources are also of critical importance. In this context, as a strategic framework for concrete action in Africa, the NEPAD has an important role to play, in conjunction with the efforts made at the local, national, regional and continental levels. The various TICAD meetings reaffirmed the key role of Trade and Investment for development as well as the role of south-south cooperation. .

## **2. OECD and the Sahel and West Africa Club**

The Club has always made significant efforts to clarify its specific role, its operational and methodological approaches and its partnerships within and outside the region, within and outside the OECD. The Club has attached a high priority to giving a bigger and louder voice to Africans themselves. The Club has also strengthened its partnership with the OECD Directorates, including as an active member of the OECD Development Cluster. I would like to highlight the dynamic role played by the Club as a member of the OECD Development Cluster which I am heading. The Club is committed to coordination, partnership for results with the rest of the OECD. I have been able to observe the excellent performance of the Club's management and of its staff.

I am also very pleased with the intensification in recent past of the cooperation between the Sahel and West Africa Club and other partners including ECOWAS, the CILSS, UEMOA, the African Union, UNOWA, UNECA, the African Development Bank, ENDA Diopol, ROPPA and many other partners. More information on this important topic will be provided during the meeting.

I believe that we owe it to the Sahel and West Africa Club for having introduced a more balanced reading of West Africa. While taking into account the problems and challenges of the region, the Sahel and West Africa Club along with its African development partners has developed a prospective vision of West Africa which focuses on the identification of the dynamics of change as well as the drivers of change. I will not go into the details. The documentation before you provides ample evidence of what I have just said. Let me simply add that over the last four decades, West Africa has experienced significant transformation.

As such, this region should not be perceived as a stagnant region, but rather as a region in constant evolution, and capable of significant adaptation and progress. The region should not be seen only in negative terms by the international community but also as a significant strategic partner.

The process of regional integration to which ECOWAS, UEMOA, the African Union and many others are dedicated is one important challenge. With an ever increasing population, the process of regional integration will become increasingly more significant to help address issues such as governance, employment and migration, investment, trade, poverty reduction and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. The work done jointly by ECOWAS, the SWAC and other partners on food security, cross-border cooperation, peace and security attests to the specificity of the Club and its value added within the region.

I am pleased to note that the Club is now focusing its work in four areas, thus helping to address the priority needs of the region and of its development partners:

- Medium- and Long-Term Development Perspectives
- Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development
- Local Development and the Process of Regional Integration
- Governance, Conflict Dynamics, Peace and Security

You will have an opportunity to exchange views on progress achieved during the period 2005-2007 and on the orientations for the Club's work during the period 2008-2012.

### **3. The way forward**

The support to the SWAC by the international community is of critical importance to allow it to play a significant role in support of West Africa's development efforts. I sincerely hope that this SPG meeting will review thoroughly this very important issue.

Many other questions have been raised in the document before you. I will not go into the details but I invite you to discuss them and any other question you may have on your mind, so as to ensure that the Club could play an even greater and more effective role in the future to the benefit of the populations of the region and in support of the commitments of the rest of the world for West Africa.

I wish you full success in your deliberations.

Thank you.

## **ANNEX 3: INTERVENTION BY DR. JEAN DE DIEU SOMDA, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ECOWAS COMMISSION**

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(or. Fre.)

ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF  
WEST AFRICAN STATE



COMMUNAUTÉ ECONOMIQUE  
DES ETATS DE L'AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST

**Mr. Deputy Secretary-General to the OECD [Mario Amano]  
Mr. President of the Sahel and West Africa Club [Charles Goerens]  
Mr. Director of the Sahel and West Africa Club [Normand Lauzon]**

**Distinguished participants**

**Ladies, Gentlemen,**

The President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr Mohamed Ibn Chambas, would have very much liked to personally participate in this important meeting. Unfortunately he had obligations beyond his control and therefore asked me to represent him.

I am pleased and honoured to participate, for the first time, as Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission.

On behalf of the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr Mohamed Ibn Chambas, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the leaders of the Sahel and West Africa Club for the honour of inviting the ECOWAS Commission to participate in this important SWAC Strategy and Policy Group (SPG) meeting focusing on the orientations of the 2008-2012 SWAC Work Plan.

Allow me first to commend the commitment you have undertaken to identifying strategic questions concerning the development of the West African region and building African capacities that you inspire with a participative approach and sharing of experiences which commands respect and admiration.

Today's meeting illustrates the SWAC's commitment to economic development through regional cooperation in which ECOWAS has been involved for over thirty years.

This is certainly the proof of a strategic and fruitful partnership between our two institutions in the development and implementation of joint initiatives which, without a doubt, convey the concerns that we share on the future and development of the West African region.

I would like to summarise the changes West Africa is experiencing and which not only underpin the strategic thinking we will be undertaking but also sanction the Commission's prospective approach and the strategic vision for regional development adopted on 15 June 2007 at its 32nd ordinary session of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Governments Conference.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

West Africa benefit from socio-cultural convergences and multi-secular solidarities which constitutes rich historic, geographic and political coherence that today represents a driving force in ECOWAS' integration process.

While this region is characterised by relatively weak economies and external dependence making it vulnerable, West Africa has also experienced significant changes over the last years, notably:

- By the emergence of new actors (women, youth, the private sector and other organised civil society segments) of which the role is evermore determining in the development process;
- By new modes of governance revealed through positive evolutions notably in the deepening the culture of good governance and peace;
- By the renewal of correlating regional initiatives and the strengthening of regional integration.

Despite these **non exhaustive** evolutions that are contributing to diminishing the pessimistic perception some have of this region.

**There are many challenges to face** for the medium- and long-term development of West Africa, such as:

- Socio-economic and socio-political constraints linked to demographic pressure;
- Insufficient economic growth and falling short of the requirements to attain the Millennium Development Goals;
- Endemic poverty whose impact on human security is worrisome;
- Issues linked to the EPA;
- Insufficient account taken of regional policies and projects in national development programmes.

**Ladies, gentlemen,**

These various challenges require sustainable responses that can be justified within the framework of medium- and long-term perspectives clarified by **ECOWAS' strategic vision** of which the objective **is to lay the foundation for an integrated, peaceful, prosperous and competitive West Africa.**

**The vision thus** consists of creating a space without borders where citizens can benefit from opportunities that sustainably exploit the region's tremendous resources; a space, where populations can carry out transactions and live in peace and dignity within the framework of rule of law and good governance.

**This global vision** is thus in line with the orientations defined in **ECOWAS' Regional Strategic Poverty Reduction Plan.**

**In accordance** with the New Partnership for African's Development and with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), it relies on the guiding principles such as the **appropriation, transparency, partnership, subsidiarity, management geared towards results and sustainability** that will enable the region to evolve by 2020 from **an ECOWAS of States towards an ECOWAS of peoples.**

From this viewpoint, strengthening the regional integration process is more than ever **a major issue** hence ECOWAS has initiated serious institutional reforms, (which can be seen by turning the Executive Secretariat into a Commission), **so that regional integration will now be a socio-economic development instrument.**

Thus, **the priorities** from this strategic vision are coordinated essentially around the **strengthening of peace and democracy, reducing poverty, developing infrastructure, building capacities, and community development programmes.**

**Four strategic focuses corroborate these priorities:**

1. **Strengthening of peace and security, promoting democracy and good governance** in order to strengthen social cohesion;
2. **Intensifying integration of the economic regional area** in order to promote intra- and extra-regional trade, increase competitiveness, diversification and growth;
3. **Development through the interconnection of infrastructure** to support integration of the economic zone and improve its competitiveness;

4. **Improving the living conditions of populations, strengthening of human capital** and facilitating mobility through the common area in order to support and distribute growth.

**Ladies, gentlemen,**

These areas of concentration underpin the **medium-term Action Plan** (2008-2010) currently being finalised and for which the implementation undoubtedly calls for **an inclusive and participative approach** to regional construction within the Commission as well as in its reports with various involved actors. Strengthening the coordination, cooperation and synergies in ECOWAS' action seems to me essential.

In particular while the organisational complementarities between the local, national and regional levels and the setting up of monitoring/evaluation mechanisms required for implementing this strategic plan, **the support of development partners** is also essential for concrete actions in order to **increasingly reduce poverty**.

It is with great **conviction** that we intend to present this action plan at the next annual coordination meeting of ECOWAS/Development partners which will be held on 19 and 20 November 2007 in order to elicit and clarify support so hoped from our partners.

We would also like to rely on the SWAC's support which provides undying support to our region.

We **note with satisfaction** the probing results which have been achieved within the ECOWAS Commission and the Sahel and West Africa Club's cooperation framework signed last autumn.

It is also the forum to reiterate the Commission's determination and commitment to pursue collaborative actions between our two institutions in areas as relevant as:

- Medium- and Long-Term Development Perspectives;
- Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development;
- Local Development and the Process of Regional Integration;
- Governance, Conflict Dynamics, Peace and Security;
- Communications.

The SWAC's orientations for 2008-2012 and which are greatly based on past achievements provide a **certain optimism** as regards the pursuit of this close partnership in the aforementioned sectors which, being completely objective, **confirm ECOWAS' strategic vision**.

**Ladies, gentlemen,**

With this optimism, the SWAC's involvement in the West African region is an integral part of the overall relations with various partners and more specifically with the OECD.

Hence, I cannot conclude my intervention without stating that I would like there to be a stronger partnership between the SWAC and OECD in all its forms (information exchange, joint analyses, co-organisation of events) in order to not only **reinforce the bridge between African and OECD countries** but also **to support the joint efforts of the ECOWAS Commission and the SWAC to face the challenges of sustainable development in West Africa**.

Also, I would like again to thank the President as well as the Director of the Sahel and West Africa Club as well as their staff, for their continued support in accomplishing ECOWAS' ambitious objectives for the well-being of its populations.

**I thank you for your attention.**

# ANNEX 4: FINAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Paris (France), 13-14 September 2007

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