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DES ETATS DE L'AFRIQUE DE
L'OUEST



COMUNIDADE ECONÔMICA DOS
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REGULATION MSC/REG.1/01/08

THE ECOWAS CONFLICT PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

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PREAMBLE

We, Members of the Mediation and Security Council of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS);

MINDFUL of article 58 of the ECOWAS Treaty relating to regional security;

MINDFUL of articles 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 of the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Peacekeeping and Security as amended by the Protocol A/P1/12/00;

MINDFUL of article 3 (d) of the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Peacekeeping and Security which prescribes enhancement of cooperation in the areas of conflict prevention, early warning, peacekeeping operations and control of cross-border criminality and international terrorism and the proliferation of small arms;

MINDFUL of the rules of procedure of the Mediation and Security Council;

CONSIDERING that article 10 paragraph 2 of the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Peacekeeping and Security decides and implements conflict prevention policies;

CONSIDERING that the West African region has been afflicted by conflicts and socio-political crises whose causes are multiple and were not detected or identified at the appropriate time for prevention;

NOTING that these conflicts and crises that broke out in the region were managed after their manifestation by means of missions of good offices and the mediation undertaken by ECOWAS;

REALISING that these missions have been successful as a result of effective involvement of decision making bodies of ECOWAS;

CONSCIOUS of the need to identify and outline the efforts, actions, activities and programs likely to assist in the effective prevention of conflicts in the region for judicious implementation;

DESIROUS to this end to adopt a prevention framework encompassing all initiatives for enhancing safety of life and property, as well as the security of Member States and institutions in the region;

ON THE RECOMMENDATION of the meeting of the Committee of Experts on Political Affairs, Peace and Security in Ouagadougou on the 14th and 15th of January 2008;

HEREBY ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

ABBREVIATIONS

The abbreviations listed below shall be understood to mean as follows:

ASF means the Pan-African Stand-by Force of the African Union

AU means the African Union

CEWS means the Continental Early Warning System

Commission means the Commission of ECOWAS

CSO means Civil Society Organization

DDR means Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration

DEW means the ECOWAS Department of Early Warning

ECOMICI means the ECOMOG Mission in Côte d'Ivoire

ECOMIL means the ECOMOG Mission in Liberia

ECOMOG means the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group

ECOSAP means the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Program

ECOWARN means the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network

ECOWAS means the Economic Community of West African States

ECPF means the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework

ESF means the ECOWAS Standby Force

EU means the European Union

FGM means Female Genital Mutilation

GBV means Gender-Based Violence

HIV/AIDS means Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

IFI means International Financial Institution

KPCS means the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme

M & E means Monitoring and Evaluation

MSC means the Mediation and Security Council of ECOWAS

NEPAD means the New Partnership for Africa's Development

NGO means Non-Governmental Organization

PAPS means the ECOWAS Departments of Political Affairs, Peace & Security

REC means Regional Economic Community

SALW means Small Arms and Light Weapons

SOP means Standard Operating Procedure

SSR means Security System/Sector Reform

STD means Sexually Transmitted Disease

UN (O) means the United Nations (Organization)

UNICEF means the United Nations Children's Fund

UNESCO means the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization

UNOWA means the United Nations Regional Office for West Africa

WACSOF means the West African Civil Society Forum

WAPCCO means the West African Police Chiefs' Committee

SECTION I ADOPTION

By Regulation MSC/REG.1/01/08, the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework is hereby adopted as set forth in the following paragraphs.

SECTION II: INTRODUCTION

1. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has, over the years, proven its capacity to undertake successful conflict prevention, peace-making and conflict resolution under the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security of 10th December 1999 (hereafter referred to as the Mechanism). The Institution has achieved remarkable success in fulfilling its mandate by containing violent conflicts in the region and carrying out conflict prevention interventions through preventive diplomacy initiatives - fact-finding missions, quiet diplomacy, diplomatic pressure and mediation.
2. The institution has also established several promising conflict prevention organs to underpin its mandate, including the Early Warning System, the Mediation and Security Council, Offices of the Special Representative, the Council of the Wise and Special Mediators. However, the implementation of the preventive aspects of the Mechanism has at times, lacked a strategic approach. It has been characterized by weak internal coordination, underutilization and misdirection of existing human capacities as well as the deployment of limited instruments.
3. In particular, the distribution of roles and responsibilities between ECOWAS and Member States, between ECOWAS and civil society, as well as between ECOWAS and external partners is weak, resulting in the utilization of limited instruments, piecemeal interventions and late response to crises. The development of a strategic framework to underpin the preventive aspects of the Mechanism has, therefore, become imperative.
4. ECOWAS Member States bear primary responsibility for peace and security. However, as steps are taken under the new ECOWAS Strategic Vision to transform the region from an 'ECOWAS of States' into an 'ECOWAS of the Peoples', the tensions between sovereignty and supranationality, and between regime security and human security, shall be progressively resolved in favor of supranationality and human security respectively. Consequently, civil society shall play an increasingly critical role alongside Member States in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. In this order of things, the principal role of ECOWAS shall be to facilitate creative conflict transformation interventions by Member States and civil society.
5. To this end, the purpose of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) is to serve as a reference for the ECOWAS system and Member States in their efforts to strengthen human security in the region. Achieving this objective requires effective and durable cooperative interventions to prevent violent conflicts within and between States, and to support peace-building in post-conflict environments.

6. For the purposes of the ECPF, human security refers to the creation of conditions to eliminate pervasive threats to people's and individual rights, livelihoods, safety and life; the protection of human and democratic rights and the promotion of human development to ensure freedom from fear and freedom from want.
7. The ECPF is intended as follows:
 - a. A comprehensive operational conflict prevention and peace-building strategy that enables the ECOWAS system and Member States to draw upon human and financial resources at the regional (including civil society and the private sector) and international levels in their efforts to creatively transform conflict.
 - b. A guide for enhancing cohesion and synergy between relevant ECOWAS departments on conflict prevention initiatives in order to maximize outcomes and ensure a more active and operational posture on conflict prevention and sustained post-conflict reconstruction from the ECOWAS system and its Member States. Within the ECOWAS Commission, it is primarily the Office of the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) that bears primary responsibility for operational conflict prevention policy and initiatives. However, the crosscutting nature of conflict issues means that PAPS has to work in close collaboration with other departments, such as Human Development and Gender, Communication and Legal.
 - c. A reference for developing process-based cooperation with regional and international stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, African RECs, the AU and UN systems, as well as development partners, on conflict prevention and peace-building around concrete interventions.

SECTION III: DEFINITIONS

8. **Conflict** refers to the contradictions inherent in power relations and which manifest themselves in individual and group interactions with one another and with nature in the pursuit of limited resources or opportunities. Conflict is the motor of transformation and is either positive or negative. It can be creatively transformed to ensure equity, progress and harmony; or destructively transformed to engender acute insecurity.
9. Human insecurity is driven by the negative transformation of structural factors through the exacerbation of conflict accelerators. The degeneration of conflict into open violence is often sparked by triggers.

10. **Structural factors** refer to systemic variables conditioned by decades and centuries of interactions with regard to external, regional and internal power relations (global and local governance); fault-lines in the architecture of the post-colonial African State; and the vulnerability of the continent to the vagaries of global processes and nature, such as the region's disadvantaged position in the world market and environmental degradation. The root causes of violent conflict, such as poverty, exclusion, gender and political/economic inequalities are traceable to these global and local fault lines. They have always constituted a time bomb under governance processes in West Africa, being the primary source of latent, indirect violence.
11. **Accelerators** refer to feedback events and processes that progressively worsen the impacts of structural factors, such as collapsed educational systems, repressive security apparatuses and curtailment of freedoms, corruption, religious/ethnic discrimination, and worsening cost of living.
12. **Triggers** refer to sudden events with catalytic effects on accelerators that spark a crisis, which could in turn lead to violent conflict, such as the sudden increase in the price of a staple, which could culminate in civil strife or a coup d'état.
13. Structural factors mask latent (indirect) violence, that is, harm perpetrated against the individual or group and which is embedded in the structure of our societies, such as the sources of illiteracy and innumeracy, unemployment and environmental degradation. Their possible degeneration into direct violence is a function of how, and in what direction, people interact with each other and with nature to transform them. For instance, a repressive regime may create a security racket to protect itself, crack down on the labor movement, muzzle the press, imprison opposition figures, and fill a voters' register with double entries and ghost names, all in the attempts to cling on to power. All these practices accelerate the negative transformation of structural factors and nudge society towards direct violence.
14. A step too far, such as the assassination of a popular opposition figure or the cancellation of unfavorable election results by the dictator, may just provide the trigger that tips the scales in favor of violence. Such violence causes immediate physical or psychological pain, which could be a consequence of armed insurgency, torture, ethnic cleansing, police brutality, banditry, robbery or domestic conflicts.
15. Both direct and structural forms of violence can be, and have often been, instrumentalized through culture. Cultural 'aggravators', that is, exacerbating factors that are premised on physical, social or spiritual differences – ideology, class, ethnicity, race, religion, patriarchy, gender and sex – are often given expression through art, music, education, the media and cinema. Cultural 'aggravators' are blind, emotive and potent, because they condition the mind to emphasize differences and reject tolerance for diversity through the agencies of deliberate discriminatory state, class or group policy and propaganda.

16. Unchecked, cultural ‘aggravators’ have the capacity to reinforce the foundations of structural factors, thus perpetuating the cycle of violence. Apartheid in South Africa could be considered as a structural cause, just as the entrenched and systematic discrimination against the natives by the Americo-Liberians widened the structural fault-lines and ultimately provoked violence in Liberia. It is not surprising, therefore, that in trying to explain the reasons for state inversion in the Mano River Union, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea Bissau and elsewhere, the main causes have been cited as ethnicity, religion, civil-military relations and the conflict of generations.
17. The challenge facing policy makers and analysts alike is to make an informed choice between the competing demands of structural and direct sources of violence, between medium to long-term priorities and short-term preventive solutions, and recognizing the relationship between them.

SECTION IV: CONCEPT AND SCOPE OF CONFLICT PREVENTION

18. For the purposes of this framework document, the term *conflict prevention* refers to non-violent (or creative) conflict transformation and encompasses activities designed to defuse tensions and prevent the outbreak, escalation, spread or recurrence of violence. Conflict prevention strategies may distinguish between *operational prevention* (measures applicable in the face of imminent crisis) and *structural prevention* (measures to ensure that crises do not arise in the first place or, if they do, that they do not re-occur). The emphasis is not on preventing conflict *per se* (conflict being a natural consequence of change) but in halting its descent into violence.
19. Thus, conflict prevention comprises the following elements:
 - a. *Operational prevention*, including early warning, mediation, conciliation, preventive disarmament and preventive deployment using interactive means, such as good offices and the ECOWAS Standby Force.
 - b. *Structural prevention*, often elaborated under peace-building initiatives and comprising political, institutional (governance) and developmental reforms, capacity enhancement and advocacy on the culture of peace. *Peace-building*, on the other hand, describes the development of the requisite multi-actor institutional capacity to design, implement and monitor initiatives aimed at checking the deterioration of social and economic conditions during hostilities, and strengthening the peace fabric of post-conflict countries over a long period of time in order to prevent a relapse into violent conflict. Aimed at operationalizing Chapter IX of the Mechanism, initiatives to this end include, but not limited to, humanitarian assistance, restoration and maintenance of economic and social

infrastructure; restoration and reform of governance institutions (political, economic, socio-cultural and security); justice, rule of law, reconciliation and reintegration; and conflict-sensitive development.

20. The focus of this document is *operational and structural conflict prevention*. It takes into account the recognition that a comprehensive approach to prevention requires a coherent approach extending to all areas, and that not only should operational prevention measures entail working on more structural issues, but they must also dovetail into long-term preventive initiatives. Also, in as far as peace-building interventions aim to prevent a relapse into violence, they may also fall under the broad umbrella of conflict prevention.
21. These distinctions and inter-relationships are particularly relevant to West Africa, which is concurrently one of the most impoverished regions of the world despite its rich natural endowment, and one of the regions prone to violence and civil strife. The region has witnessed positive developments recently, including a deepening of democratic processes in a number of countries and progress in resolving some of the worst conflicts. Nonetheless, political instability and low intensity conflicts remain major constraints on development in the region.
22. ECOWAS, with its wide political and economic mandate, has an obvious role in harnessing regional resources not only for sustainable development and promoting adherence to universal norms on the rule of law and basic human rights, but also to anticipate and eliminate in a predictable and targeted manner, conflict accelerators, including factors leading to humanitarian crises, which could undermine these efforts. In doing so, careful distinction must be drawn between the role of the ECOWAS system and that of Member States, who bear the primary responsibility, and own the process, for peace and security.

SECTION V: CONTEXT OF THE ECPF

23. With the easing of cold war tensions, Africa witnessed a fall in the instances of inter-state conflicts but a dramatic rise in violent internal power struggles that threatened state implosion across the continent. It became obvious that a nexus existed between violent internal conflicts, sparked largely by bad governance, identity crises and poor resource management on the one hand, and collective developmental efforts on the other. Barely a decade after the creation of ECOWAS, violent internal conflicts erupted in Liberia (1989) and Sierra Leone (1991) as a new phenomenon not confined to the borders of individual nation states, but with serious regional implications, both in their causes and effects. Later, ECOWAS was to be confronted with similar conflicts in Guinea Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire (2002). Starting off as internal struggles for power and control over resources, these devastating conflicts soon took on a regionalized character, fuelled by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, as well as private armies of warlords, mercenaries, dispossessed youths and bandits who fed off

the illegal exploitation of natural resources. The ripples of these so-called internal conflicts were instantly felt far beyond national borders in the form of refugee flows, severe deterioration of livelihoods, health and nutrition standards, disrupted infrastructure, and the proliferation of weapons, violence and trans-national crime.

24. The interventions of the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia (1990) and Sierra Leone (1997), and the ECOWAS Missions in Liberia (ECOMIL) in 2003 and Côte d'Ivoire (ECOMICI) in 2002 were classic military operations designed to stop wars or monitor cease-fires, thus creating space for peace negotiations and humanitarian operations. Indeed, ECOMOG interventions in West Africa have often created the bridgehead for the subsequent deployment of larger UN peacekeeping and international humanitarian missions. In the process, ECOWAS has always acted in concert with the African Union and UN.
25. ECOWAS has developed a comparative advantage in the area of peace-keeping and peace enforcement, and has become a model for the continent. Under the aegis of the African Union, a Pan-African Stand-by Force (ASF) is in the process of being established. Designed for rapid preventive deployment and peace-keeping, this force will comprise five brigades, one brigade to be provided by each of the five Regional Economic (Integration) Communities (RECs). ECOWAS is well placed to be the first REC to deliver its brigade and it is the lead organization in the development of the ASF Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) designed to create harmonization and interoperability within ASF.
26. As the region repositions itself to prevent the recurrence of violent conflicts, ECOWAS Member States have a responsibility to ensure sustainable peace and security by implementing measures and initiatives that go beyond violence management. In other words, military intervention should constitute only a segment, and ideally a measure of last resort, within the broader peace and security architecture. Emphasis should now be placed on prevention and peace-building, including the strengthening of sustainable development, the promotion of region-wide humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness strategy and the culture of democracy. This calls for the re-examination of the relationships between internal factors that provoke violence and the ECOWAS instruments, including its early warning and response mechanisms. The ECPF constitutes a response to this new challenge.

SECTION VI: AIM, OBJECTIVES AND OUTPUTS

27. The overall aim of the ECPF is to strengthen the human security architecture in West Africa. The intermediate purpose is to create space within the ECOWAS system and in Member States for cooperative interaction within the region and with external partners to push conflict prevention and peace-building up the

political agenda of Member States in a manner that will trigger timely and targeted multi-actor and multi-dimensional action to defuse or eliminate potential and real threats to human security in a predictable and institutional manner.

28. The ECPF sets the following objectives:
- a. Mainstream conflict prevention into ECOWAS' policies and programs as an operational mechanism.
 - b. Increase understanding of the conceptual basis of conflict prevention, and in so doing, interrelate conflict prevention activities with development and humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness.
 - c. Build awareness and anticipation, and strengthen capacity within Member States and civil society to enhance their role as principal constituencies and actors in conflict prevention and peace-building.
 - d. Increase understanding of opportunities, tools and resources related to conflict prevention and peace-building at technical and political levels within Member States, the ECOWAS system and beyond.
 - e. Increase awareness and preparedness for cooperative ventures between ECOWAS, Member States, civil society and external constituencies (RECs, AU, EU, UN, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and development/humanitarian agencies) in pursuit of conflict prevention and peace-building.
 - f. Strengthen capacity within ECOWAS to pursue concrete and integrated conflict prevention and peace-building facilitation, and concomitant activities such as development and humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness, in Member States using existing resources, such as the Departments of the Commission; the Early Warning System; supporting organs of the Mechanism, including the Council of the Wise and Special Mediators; and other ECOWAS institutions.
 - g. Enhance ECOWAS' anticipation and planning capabilities in relation to regional tensions.
 - h. Extend opportunities for conflict prevention to post-conflict environments through targeted restructuring of political governance, conflict-sensitive reconstruction and development, as well as humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness, and related peace-building initiatives.
 - i. Generate a more pro-active and operational conflict prevention posture from Member States and the ECOWAS system.

29. OUTPUTS

This framework document:

- a. sets practical guidelines on conflict prevention to which ECOWAS and Member States can refer in their cooperation and in their engagement with partners.
- b. sets practical guidelines for cross-departmental and cross-initiative cooperation and synergy within ECOWAS on conflict prevention.
- c. provides practical guidance for cooperative ventures between ECOWAS, Member States, civil society and external partners in pursuit of conflict prevention and peace-building.
- d. incorporates an ECOWAS strategy on resource mobilization, advocacy and communication to underpin the initiatives with respect to conflict prevention and peace-building.
- e. creates the necessary bridge linking everyday conflict prevention initiatives to structural (strategic) conflict prevention.
- f. shall be supplemented by a Plan of Action and Logical Framework with identified priority activities to be undertaken by ECOWAS, Member States, civil society, the private sector and external partners in the short, medium and long term.

SECTION VII: ECOWAS MANDATE AND LEGITIMACY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION

30. ECOWAS draws its mandate and legitimacy to shape conflict prevention policies and practices in West Africa from diverse but related regional and international normative framework documents. These include foundation and related legal documents of ECOWAS, AU, NEPAD and UN.
31. Since the inception of ECOWAS (ECOWAS Treaty, 28th May 1975), the principles of cooperation, mutual assistance and non-aggression have provided the ethos for organizational behavior within the Community and with external partners. It is within this context that ECOWAS adopted the Protocol on Non-Aggression (1978) and the related Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defense (1981). Building on these foundation documents, the Community has adopted groundbreaking instruments in response to the demands for conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building.
32. The Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment (1979) with its associated supplements sets out the principles,

definitions, criteria, obligations and codes of movement and settlement, as well as citizenship within the Community. It sets out to create a borderless region with a common community citizenship of equal rights.

33. The Declaration of Political Principles (1981) reaffirmed the commitment of ECOWAS Member States to guarantee fundamental human rights, individual freedoms, the rule of law, and responsive and responsible governance to their citizens.
34. The Revised Treaty of ECOWAS (24th July, 1993) conferred the status of supranationality on ECOWAS. Paragraph 2 of Article 58 of the Revised Treaty on Regional Security 'commits Member States to cooperate with the Community for the purposes of reinforcing the appropriate mechanisms to ensure the timely prevention and resolution of inter and intra-state conflicts'.
35. The principal objective of the Declaration of the Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons (31st October, 1998) was to facilitate conflict-sensitive development through preventive disarmament initiatives. The Moratorium has, since June 2006, been converted into a binding instrument – the Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials.
36. The Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security (10 December 1999) constitutes the most comprehensive normative framework for confronting the threats to peace and security in the region on a more permanent basis by boosting the conflict prevention capabilities of ECOWAS to pre-empt potential outbreak of violence, resolve conflicts when they occur and to engage more effectively in post-conflict reconstruction in places, where peace has been restored. The Mechanism establishes inextricable links between the primordial *raison d'être* of the Community, i.e. the economic and social development of the peoples, and the security of the peoples and Member States [Article 2(a)]; and tasks ECOWAS Member States with the responsibility to manage and resolve internal and inter-State conflicts [Article 3(a)], as well as manage humanitarian, natural and environmental crises. Finally, the Mechanism identifies the institutions and supporting organs responsible for implementing its provisions and sets out the procedures in this regard.
37. The Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (21 December, 2001) was adopted to reinforce the Declaration of Political Principles and the Mechanism. It sets out the constitutional convergence criteria to be fulfilled by Community members based on the principles of good governance – respect for the rule of law, the separation of powers, the independence of the judiciary, the promotion of non-partisan and responsible press and the democratic control of the armed forces. It also commits Member States to ensure poverty alleviation, uphold, defend and promote international norms regarding basic human rights, including the rights of minorities, children, youth and women.

38. The Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance also advocates for the strict adherence to constitutional norms in electoral practices that reject unconstitutional accession to or maintenance of power and sets the parameters for the conduct of peaceful and credible elections that are free, fair and transparent. The Protocol further tasks ECOWAS to assist Member States in electoral matters.
39. Without prejudice to other regional and international legal instruments, the Mechanism and the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance provide the principal basis and justification for the ECPF.
40. A firm legal basis underpins the relationship between ECOWAS, the African Union and the United Nations on the cardinal issue of peace and security. The African Union is a Regional Organization recognized by the UN, the guarantor of global peace and security, while ECOWAS constitutes one of the five Regional Economic Communities under the AU architecture. The three bodies cooperate on the issues of peace and security on the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Thus, key ECOWAS normative standards that speak to conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building broadly radiate from the Constitutive Act of AU and the UN Charter, and the related normative standards on peace and security as well as on specific issues relating to women, youth, children, the environment, terrorism and trans-national crime.
41. Beyond legal instruments and guidelines, however, the unacceptable levels of deprivation in West Africa, as well as the destructive nature and spill over effects of contemporary regionalized internal upheavals, place specific moral obligations on ECOWAS Member States to act. Thus, ECOWAS is imbued with the necessary supranational powers (acting on-behalf of and in conjunction with Member States, AU and UN), as well as the legitimacy to intervene to protect human security in three distinct ways, namely:
 - a. The Responsibility to prevent – actions taken to address the direct and root causes of intra and inter-state conflicts that put populations at risk.
 - b. The Responsibility to react – actions taken in response to grave and compelling humanitarian disasters.
 - c. The Responsibility to rebuild – actions taken to ensure recovery, reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation in the aftermath of violent conflicts, humanitarian or natural disasters.

SECTION VIII: COMPONENTS, ACTIVITIES AND BENCHMARKS OF THE ECPF

42. The ECPF comprises fourteen components that span the chain of initiatives

designed to strengthen human security and incorporate conflict prevention activities (operational and structural) as well as aspects of peace-building.

They are: [1] Early Warning; [2] Preventive Diplomacy; [3] Democracy and Political Governance; [4] Human Rights and the Rule of Law; [5] Media; [6] Natural Resource Governance; [7] Cross-Border Initiatives; [8] Security Governance; [9] Practical Disarmament; [10] Women, Peace and Security; [11] Youth Empowerment; [12] ECOWAS Standby Force; [13] Humanitarian Assistance; and [14] Peace Education (The Culture of Peace).

43. Given the interconnectedness of the initiatives, components and activities under conflict prevention may be replicated in peace-building interventions
44. **EARLY WARNING:** To facilitate the realization of Articles 3(d), 19, 23 and 24 of the Mechanism, the Early Warning component sets the objective to furnish incident and trend reports on peace and security, as well as real-time preventive response options, to ECOWAS policy makers to ensure predictability and facilitate interventions to avert, defuse or creatively transform acute situations of conflict, instability, disruptions and disasters.
45. To achieve the objective of Early Warning, activities shall be undertaken in the following areas:
 - a. The Department of Early Warning (DEW) shall refine the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) into a more convivial, integrated and operational instrument to guide the zonal bureaux and focal points in their data collection and processing efforts.
 - b. The Department of Early Warning shall prioritize effective collaboration with the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Human Development and Gender, and other departments of the Commission as may be necessary, in the analysis of data and the preparation of reports and briefings for policy makers. The Department of Early Warning shall ensure the coordination of information flow on crisis among ECOWAS field missions including feedback between field missions and ECOWAS Commission desk officers.
 - c. The Department of Early Warning shall harmonize and coordinate the development of ECOWARN and coordinate its operations with the African Union and the United Nations in order to generate the necessary synergy within the framework of the operationalization of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS).
 - d. The Zonal Bureaux for Early Warning shall adopt a participatory regional approach in data gathering by building and strengthening cooperation with Member States and civil society, including but not limited to NGOs, traditional groups, diverse interest groups, women and youth organizations.

- e. The Zonal Bureaux, under the authority of the Department of Early Warning, shall work closely with members of the ECOWAS Council of the Wise and ECOWAS National Units in their respective zones, as well as with local peace constituencies in the design and implementation of initiatives to resolve local disputes arising from gathered data.
 - f. Member States and civil society shall actively cooperate with the Zonal Bureaux in the collection and processing of data, and actively engage in local conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building initiatives.
46. The benchmarks for assessing progress and success in Early Warning shall include the following:
- a. The elaboration of an effective strategy for information gathering and analysis, including a format for relevant indicators and reporting.
 - b. Well resourced Department of Early Warning and its Zonal Bureaux with sufficient numbers of field agents, analysts and volunteers equipped with modern information gathering, processing, storage and transmission capability.
 - c. The establishment of operational focal points within Governments, civil society and research institutions as well as effective links with ECOWAS resources in the zones.
 - d. The production, analysis and appropriate dissemination of incident and situation reports, as well as the articulation of policy and crisis response options and assessment criteria
 - e. The creation of effective links with the continental early warning system and collaboration with AU, other RECs, the United Nations system and development partners on early warning.
 - f. The elaboration of annual needs assessments and concise training plans for efficient and evolving human capacity building.
 - g. The production of periodic early warning reports.
47. To facilitate the achievement of the Early Warning objective, the following capacity requirements shall be met:
- a. Recruitment of the full complement of staff, including researchers, analysts and advisers, in the Office and departments of the Commissioner of Political Affairs, Peace and Security.
 - b. Provision of information gathering, processing and communication equipment to the Department of Early Warning and the Zonal Bureaux.

- c. Training of the staff of the Department of Early Warning and Zonal Bureaux and focal points in information gathering, data management, research and analysis and mediation techniques.
 - d. Training of local peace constituencies in conflict analysis and management and provision of resources and equipment for grassroots peace initiatives with the assistance of development partners and regional resources.
48. **PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY:** Aimed at operationalizing the relevant provisions of Article 58 of the Revised Treaty; Articles 3, 8-27, 31-32 of the Mechanism; and Article 36 of the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance; the objective of Preventive Diplomacy shall be to defuse tensions and ensure the peaceful resolution of disputes within and between Member States by means of good offices, mediation, conciliation and facilitation based on dialogue, negotiation and arbitration. Usually applied in the face of imminent crisis, preventive diplomacy shall also be applicable in the management, resolution and peace-building phases of conflict.
49. To achieve the objective of Preventive Diplomacy, the following activities shall be undertaken:
- a. The Offices of the Special Representative and Envoys of the ECOWAS President as well as the Zonal Bureaux through the Department of Early Warning shall regularly update the President on tensions that may threaten peace and security in Member States and offer options to defuse them.
 - b. Members of the Council of the Wise shall alert the President of the Commission on looming crises in their States of origin and propose measures for containing such threats
 - c. The Mediation and Security Council may appoint one or more of its members or eminent personalities for high-level mediation and arbitration within and between States.
 - d. The Mediation and Security Council may authorize the preventive deployment of ESF to the territory of a Member State for the purpose of preventing the degeneration of conflict into violence or to serve as buffer between belligerents during periods of high tension, mediation or peace-keeping operations as stipulated by Article 27 of the Mechanism.
 - e. The President of the Commission, in consultation with the Chairperson, shall deploy a Special Mediator, Special Envoy or Member(s) of the Council of the Wise to any Member State in a situation of potential crisis on a fact finding mission for the purposes of studying the situation on the ground and advising the President on options for defusing any tensions.

- f. ECOWAS shall build a database of potential mediators and resources in the region and beyond.
 - g. ECOWAS and Member States, taking account of gender equity, shall facilitate the active involvement of former Heads of State, Eminent and high-profile personalities in mediation, conciliation and facilitation as ECOWAS Special Envoys and Ambassadors.
 - h. ECOWAS shall build a mediation facilitation capacity within the Commission to promote preventive diplomacy interventions in the region through competence and skills enhancement of mediators, information sharing and logistical support.
 - i. ECOWAS may either establish or shall facilitate capacity enhancement of relevant institutions of the Community to undertake mediation and arbitration activities within and between Member States.
 - j. ECOWAS shall facilitate the enhancement of the competence and skills of the appropriate state institutions and civil society institutions within Member States to undertake mediation, conciliation and arbitration activities.
 - k. Member States shall cooperate with and facilitate the work of fact-finding missions, special envoys, mediators and any such entities as may be deployed in their territory for the purposes of mediation, conciliation and facilitation.
 - l. Member States shall work closely with the Zonal Bureaux, the Council of the Wise and the Offices of the Special Representative through the ECOWAS National Units to mobilize local resources, including eminent persons, traditional rulers, religious leaders, community groups, women's organizations, other civil society organizations, the private sector and any such actors as may be necessary, for the purposes of mediation, conciliation and facilitation to resolve local disputes.
50. Progress and success in Preventive Diplomacy shall be assessed with the help of the following yardsticks:
- a. Measurable reduction in the incidence of violent conflicts at the national and local levels within Member States.
 - b. The establishment of functioning mediation facilitation capabilities within the ECOWAS Commission and institutions.
 - c. The setting up and regular updating of resources in the region and beyond on mediation, facilitation and arbitration.

- d. Regular interactions between ECOWAS National Units and other State authorities, decentralized ECOWAS institutions and local peace constituencies.
 - e. Greater predisposition to creative conflict transformation and expanded base of conflict management resources at the regional, national, local and community levels.
 - f. Peaceful resolution of disputes becomes a norm in the region.
51. The following capacity needs shall be met to facilitate the achievement of the objective of Preventive Diplomacy:
- a. Recruitment of political, legal and security analysts and the provision of equipment for the Offices of the Special Representatives.
 - b. Provision of secretariat services and operational allowance for the members of the Council of the Wise and Special Mediators.
 - c. Retreats for Special Mediators, Special Representatives of the President, Council of the Wise and high ranking officials of Member States in the techniques of conflict analysis and diagnosis; and the generation of options.
 - d. Capacity-building workshops (and equipment) for ECOWAS institutions and other relevant institutions in mediation, facilitation, and provision of resources and know-how for the establishment of a database of mediation resources
 - e. Training in conflict analysis and mediation skills for relevant state institutions in Member States
 - f. Capacity-building workshops and seminars on mediation and alternative dispute resolution for local peace constituencies, particularly traditional rulers, religious leaders, women groups, youth groups and other civil society organizations
 - g. Financial and technical support to local peace constituencies for targeted interventions in local disputes, including those involving chieftaincy, land/water, ethnicity, religion, gender and youth.
 - h. Experience-sharing visits by Mediators and the conduct of Lessons Learned workshops on peace processes and mediation in the region.

52. **DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL GOVERNANCE:** Without prejudice to other Protocols and Decisions of Heads of State and Government, this component shall set the objective of facilitating the realization of the relevant provisions of Article 58 of the Revised Treaty; the relevant provisions of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment; The Declaration of Political Principles (1991); Articles 2(A), 42-1, 44 (B) and 45 of the Mechanism; and in particular, the provisions of the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. To this end, the objectives of Democracy and Political Governance shall be: [i] to create space and conditions for fair and equitable distribution and exercise of power and the establishment and reinforcement of governance institutions; [ii] to ensure the active participation by all citizens in the political life of Member States under common democratic, human rights and constitutional principles articulated in ECOWAS Protocols, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, NEPAD principles and other international instruments.
53. To achieve the objectives of Democracy and Political Governance, the following activities shall be undertaken:
- a. ECOWAS shall facilitate, and Member States shall ensure, the strengthening of the Executive, Legislature and the Judiciary of Member States to promote efficient delivery, the enhancement of separation of powers and oversight responsibilities in governance.
 - b. ECOWAS shall assist Member States to promote the professionalization of governance institutions by building and strengthening transparent, nonpartisan, efficient and accountable national and local institutions, in particular the civil service.
 - c. Member States, in cooperation with ECOWAS and with the full participation of civil society organizations, shall assist political parties with financial resources and know-how to strengthen internal party democracy and participation, and to mobilize resources to assist political parties in the crafting of manifestos that promote national cohesion, consensus, participatory democracy and sustainable development.
 - d. ECOWAS shall facilitate, and Member States shall adopt and implement targeted programs to enhance the active involvement of women in decision making, seeking elective offices and participating in the electoral process.
 - e. In post-conflict environments, ECOWAS shall facilitate the creation of mechanisms to help former guerrilla movements and other non-state armed groups to make the transition to exclusively peaceful means of political contest, including the creation, capacity enhancement and financing of political parties.

- f. ECOWAS shall facilitate the provision of assistance to Member States and local constituencies in the preparations for credible elections, including technical and financial support for the conduct of census, voter education, enactment of credible electoral codes, compilation of voters' registers and training of electoral officials, monitors and observers.
- g. ECOWAS shall facilitate the enactment and enforcement of statutes in Member States to strengthen the capacity of all political parties to effectively compete in elections and minimize the impact of the incumbency factor in elections.
- h. Member States shall establish and ensure the functioning of mechanisms and processes for power decentralization, including the strengthening of local government structures and assisting traditional rulers to effectively oversee community development and engage in mediation and alternative dispute resolution. They shall undertake to assign specific self-governance roles to local government authorities.
- i. Member States shall encourage the establishment of permanent platforms that bring together electoral management bodies, political parties, security services, the media and civil society for the exchange of views, formulation of electoral codes of conduct and modalities for the peaceful resolution of election-related disagreements.
- j. Member States shall facilitate the active involvement of civil society organizations, including NGOs, traditional structures and community-based organizations in electoral and governance processes.
- k. Civil society organizations shall carry out activities to promote credible and transparent electoral and governance processes, including awareness-raising, training workshops for political parties, electoral management bodies, the media, security services, election monitors and observers.
- l. Civil society organizations shall assist Member States to establish mechanisms to strengthen the capacity of the media, security services and the judiciary to deliver efficient electoral oversight, security and arbitration.
- m. ECOWAS and Member States shall develop after-office roles for out-going incumbents and former Heads of State
- n. Member States shall allocate resources and training to enhance the effectiveness and fairness of traditional courts to complement the work of the justice system.
- o. Member States and civil society organizations shall undertake to popularize and educate citizens on ECOWAS Protocols relating to Democracy and Good Governance.

54. The benchmarks for assessing progress in the promotion of Democracy and Political Governance shall include the following:
- a. Adoption and/or enforcement of national constitutions that reflect the constitutional convergence principles contained in the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, the African Charter on People's and Human Rights, and international norms and standards.
 - b. Grassroots awareness of supranational and international norms and standards of democracy and good governance, and the determination of national stakeholders to defend and promote democratic gains.
 - c. Public confidence in governance structures at all levels.
 - d. Adoption and/or enforcement of anti-corruption policies and enhanced transparency and accountability in the public sector.
 - e. Adoption and/or enforcement of policies and mechanisms to enhance participation at all levels in the governance process.
 - f. Availability and application of affirmative policies on minorities, women, youth and the marginalized, including quota systems and waivers for women, as well as incentives for pro-women parties.
 - g. Minimum regional norms and standards set and applied for elections and electoral administration.
 - h. Vibrant political party activity during non-electoral periods.
 - i. The existence of a reliable and credible voters' register
 - j. Increased confidence in the electoral management bodies.
 - k. Increased vibrancy and non-partisanship of the media that do not propagate hatred.
 - l. The holding of predictable and credible elections to determine the accession to, retention and exercise of power.
 - m. Reduced incidence of electoral fraud, disputes and violence.
 - n. Increased willingness to accept electoral verdicts and relinquish power peacefully.
55. Stakeholders shall meet the following capacity needs under the Democracy and Political Governance component:

- a. Recruit staff and governance experts for the Department of Political Affairs, and equip the Department with tools to facilitate interventions in the area of democracy and political governance.
 - b. Strengthen the conflict prevention capacity of the Office of the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security as well as the capacity of the Electoral Assistance Unit with personnel, financial support and relevant equipment to lead interventions in electoral processes across the region.
 - c. Develop training packages and organize workshops for the legislature to enhance their capacity in following and analyzing developments and know-how in parliamentary procedures, the art of motion passing, parliamentary debate, law enactment and oversight.
 - d. Organize targeted refresher and reorientation courses for the leadership of the civil service, state administration and local government in modern administration and management techniques.
 - e. Equip the leadership of local government structures, traditional structures and community groups with training and tools in decentralization.
 - f. Provide established networks of regional electoral management bodies with resources and expert support.
 - g. Organize training programmes to enhance the capacity of political parties to promote internal democracy, self-organization, sustainability and elaboration of manifestos.
 - h. Organize capacity-building workshops for political parties and women organizations, and provide them with resources to enhance the participation of women at all levels of politics.
 - i. Leverage resources for national and community programmes targeting the promotion of common citizenship and ethnic harmony.
 - j. Identify and fund roles in mediation and advocacy for former Heads of State and Government.
56. **HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW:** Drawing inspiration from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the Human Rights and Rule of Law component sets out to facilitate the implementation of the relevant provisions of Article 58 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty; the relevant provisions of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment; Articles 2(D, E), 31-1, 25(D) and 45 of the Mechanism; and Articles 29-39 of the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy

and Good Governance. The objective shall be to ensure equal protection and access to justice and social services for all before the law, and strengthen the institutions of human rights and justice in the region to this end.

57. To achieve the objective of Human Rights and Rule of Law, ECOWAS and Member States shall undertake the following activities:
- a. ECOWAS shall facilitate the harmonization of policy and practice with regard to human rights, the rule of law and access to justice across the region through networking and sharing of best practices among national human rights and judicial institutions based on regional and international norms.
 - b. ECOWAS shall facilitate the adoption, reform and enforcement of national constitutions and human rights instruments to promote human rights, access to justice and social services for all, and shall monitor compliance by Member States.
 - c. ECOWAS shall facilitate the adoption and enforcement of human rights policies in favor of the marginalized, including ethnic and religious minorities, women and youth, particularly in the areas of popular participation, and political, inheritance and property rights.
 - d. Member States shall create space and structures to address issues of past and present justice to promote reconciliation and unity, especially in post-conflict and post-authoritarian settings.
 - e. Member States shall adopt and implement specific policies to promote child rights, including the right to education, measures against human trafficking and child labor.
 - f. Member States shall pass, reform and enforce legislation against outmoded and discriminatory practices, including forced marriage, modern slavery and caste discrimination.
 - g. Member States shall adopt and implement specific measures to ensure girl child education, including the promotion of girls' schools and compulsory primary education for all.
 - h. Member States shall respect and enforce constitutional provisions that guarantee the independence, transparency and fairness of the Judiciary and human rights institutions.
 - i. Member States shall adopt and implement security governance reforms to ensure that the practices of security agencies and prison services are in strict conformity with the requirements of human rights and the rule of law, and are subject to democratic control.

- j. Member States shall adopt, reform and implement Constitutions and related instruments to promote human rights and guarantee access to justice for all citizens.
 - k. Member States shall ensure that criteria for citizenship are fair, equitable and in conformity with ECOWAS instruments, including criteria for registration of deaths and births, naturalization, inheritance rights and the right of residence and establishment.
 - l. Member States shall implement measures to guarantee access to justice for all, including the recognition, assistance to and modernization of the traditional, religious and community justice delivery systems, and shall ensure their conformity with the Constitution and other national statutes.
 - m. Member States shall prioritize infrastructure development and job creation in partnership with the private sector and implement measures to increase the population's access to social services such as education, health, water and energy.
 - n. Member States shall adopt and implement freedom of information legislation and media policies that promote inclusiveness and sanction hate media.
 - o. Civil society organizations shall actively participate in the adoption, reform, implementation and evaluation of human rights policies and practices in Member States.
 - p. Civil society organizations shall monitor Member States' compliance with human rights instruments, and shall popularize and raise awareness about ECOWAS Protocols, regional and international instruments relating to human rights and the rule of law.
58. The benchmarks for assessing progress in the promotion of Human Rights and Rule of Law shall include the following:
- a. Establishment of a functioning and accountable regional network of human rights institutions and measurable compliance of Member States with regional norms on human rights and rule of law
 - b. Capacity and action within the ECOWAS Commission, including PAPS, the Legal Department and the Department of Human Development and Gender to facilitate the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law in Member States
 - c. Active role of the Community Parliament, Community Court of Justice and the Arbitration Tribunal in monitoring compliance of Member States' with human rights and rule of law instruments.
 - d. Existence of transparent and affordable avenues at regional level and in

Member States for airing and seeking redress to grievances and injustice.

- e. Absence of or measurable reduction in tensions relating to citizenship and ethnicity.
 - f. Positive public perception and confidence in the formal and traditional judicial and arbitration systems.
 - g. Reduction in the cost of access to justice.
 - h. High public awareness of ECOWAS and international legal instruments and active civil society involvement in judicial matters and debates.
59. The capacity requirements for the promotion and protection of Human Rights and Rule of Law shall include the following:
- a. Training workshops for the ECOWAS Legal and Political Affairs Departments, the Human Rights Committee of the Community Parliament, as well as the ECOWAS National Units in the elaboration of 'model' Human Rights legislation for adoption, modification and application by Member States; and also in judicial reform and interpretation of statutes.
 - b. Training of the ECOWAS Legal and Political Affairs Departments, in tracking compliance
 - c. Training of the Community Parliament and the Arbitration Tribunal in tracking compliance and making rulings on human rights cases.
 - d. Training workshops for national parliaments and national human rights commissions in harmonization of instruments and oversight functions.
 - e. Workshops and seminars for officials of the traditional justice system on the penal code, marital laws, the customary code, the land tenure system and related legislation.
 - f. Human Rights training for security forces and services, including the military, police, military police, gendarmerie and prison service officials.
60. **MEDIA:** In the efforts to operationalize the provisions of Articles 65 and 66 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty and Articles 1 (K), 32 and 37 of the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, the objective of the Media component of the ECPF shall be to forge an enabling West African information landscape of freedom, transparency and accountability, where the electronic and print media shall become veritable watch dogs of human security, and platforms for mobilization and discourse on the processes to promote human rights and the rule of law, common citizenry, social cohesion and integration, social harmony, democracy and development.

61. Towards the attainment of this objective, the following activities shall be undertaken:
- a. ECOWAS shall facilitate the emergence of a network of media practitioners in the region, including the Media Commissions, journalists associations, media owners and oversight bodies as a vehicle for the establishment of ECOWAS minimum norms and standards for media practice and the promotion of interaction and cooperation among journalists and media practitioners in the region.
 - b. ECOWAS shall conduct feasibility studies with a view to promoting the establishment of a region-wide news channel “ECOTV” and “ECORADIO” in cooperation with regional media houses and with the active support of the private sector.
 - c. ECOWAS shall promote and defend media practice by facilitating the enactment, enforcement and propagation of freedom of information laws and codes of conduct for media practitioners across the region.
 - d. ECOWAS shall enhance the capacity of West African media to lend visibility to ECOWAS activities and interventions. To this end, ECOWAS shall develop a scheme to invite journalists and media houses on a rotational basis to be part of ECOWAS missions and activities.
 - e. ECOWAS shall facilitate workshops for journalists through Regional and National Journalists Associations to enhance their capacity to interpret and inform about ECOWAS policies and activities in regional integration, democracy, peace and security.
 - f. ECOWAS shall, with the active involvement of Member States, promote the establishment of ‘EcoPeace’ Community Radios along sensitive borders to promote community spirit, regional integration and combat cross-border crime.
 - g. Member States shall adopt, apply and ensure respect for freedom of information laws and discourage the persecution of media practitioners by ensuring strict adherence to the independence of the judiciary, the rule of law and due process.
 - h. Member States shall facilitate the acquisition of media equipment, newsprint and other relevant materials by media houses.
 - i. Member States shall adopt and enforce targeted laws to combat hate media and shall promote programmes in support of national reconciliation and regional integration based on common citizenship and justice, particularly in post-conflict settings.

- j. Member States shall facilitate the creation of regulatory and ethical bodies to oversee and monitor compliance with codes of conduct and other laws relating to media practice
62. In assessing progress in the media landscape with respect to peace and security, the following yardsticks shall be employed:
- a. The availability of and adherence to an ECOWAS Code of Conduct for the Media in Member States and freedom of information laws in Member States.
 - b. The existence of a diverse and vibrant media landscape where responsibility, fairness and objectivity, as well as the promotion of national unity and regional integration, guide media practice.
 - c. Reduced incidence of persecution of journalists.
 - d. Greater popular awareness within the Community about ECOWAS protocols and interventions to promote regional integration, peace and security.
63. Stakeholders in the ECPF shall endeavor to meet the capacity needs of the Media component with all available means, including the following:
- a. Financial support and expertise for the creation and functioning of networks of National and Regional media practitioners.
 - b. Financial and expert support to organize targeted workshops and monitor media practice in the region.
 - c. provide appropriate support to the disadvantaged media to encourage pluralism, particularly in post conflict environments so that they can be used to promote national reconciliation.
 - d. Funding the establishment and provision of expertise and training for 'EcoPeace' community radios in sensitive border communities.
64. **NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE:** Designed to facilitate the implementation of Articles 25 and 29-31 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty and Article 3 (i), (j) of the Mechanism, the objective of Natural Resource Governance shall be to ensure that the management processes for natural resources, including the identification (exploration), contract award and exploitation, as well as the disbursement and use of benefits accruing from such resources, are transparent, equitable, environmental-friendly and ensure balanced and sustainable development, social cohesion and stability. For the purposes of the ECPF, natural resources refer to land, water, the environment and all material

objects, natural or synthetic, found on and below the land, in and beneath water masses and in the atmosphere, and which can be transformed to produce value.

65. Stakeholders shall carry out the following activities in the efforts to achieve the objective set under the Natural Resource Governance component:
- a. ECOWAS shall facilitate the establishment of a network of relevant governmental institutions, the private sector, resource-monitoring NGOs and community structures to develop and apply regional norms and standards in natural resource governance, and which shall draw from existing national, regional and international regulatory mechanisms such as the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) and other transparency and responsibility pacts.
 - b. ECOWAS shall facilitate, and Member States shall undertake, the mapping of resource endowments in Member States and in the region through an audit of current reserves and projections into the future by Member States.
 - c. ECOWAS shall facilitate the audit of current legal and legislative frameworks underpinning resource governance policies and practices in the region with the view to ascertaining their level of transparency, response to social justice and equity.
 - d. ECOWAS shall develop a regional strategy to address the management and monitoring of shared resources between States, forest and marine resources, pastoral activities and land tenure.
 - e. ECOWAS shall facilitate, and Member States shall carry out, the study of environmental hazards and risks associated with the exploitation of natural resources with a view to adopting and implementing risk reduction strategies resulting thereof.
 - f. ECOWAS and Member States shall establish transparent mechanisms, such as arbitration panels, for the peaceful resolution of disputes and the clash between local claims, national interests and regional concerns with regard to natural resources.
 - g. Member States shall, with the cooperation of civil society organizations, develop, capitalize and apply government and corporate social responsibility pacts to underpin resource exploitation in the extractive sector.
 - h. With the active involvement of civil society, Member States shall undertake to establish community resource governance committees, particularly in sensitive internal enclaves and common border areas, to promote the transparent, equitable and environmentally friendly use of land, water and forest resources, and enhance inter-communal harmony.

- i. ECOWAS shall promote, and Member States shall establish community projects, including community peace radios, social, health and educational centers, to serve as rallying points for inter-communal and cross border communities on resource governance.
 - j. ECOWAS shall promote value addition to natural resources in the region.
 - k. Member States shall undertake to prioritize adding as much value as possible to natural resources for local consumption and export.
 - l. Member States, with the facilitation of ECOWAS, shall adopt and strictly apply measures against the dumping of goods, toxic waste and other dangerous products in the Community.
 - m. To this end, ECOWAS shall facilitate the establishment and proper functioning of 'Dump-Watch' within the framework of cross-border initiatives to monitor Community entry points and space as a safeguard against the dumping of goods and hazardous materials.
66. The following benchmarks shall be employed to assess progress in the assurance of good Natural Resource Governance:
- a. The adoption/reform, capitalization and application of regional and national norms and standards in relation to natural resource governance.
 - b. Increased transparency in natural resource governance through regular parliamentary, national and media debates, regular publication of terms of contracts, receipts and disbursement of proceeds from natural resources in the media.
 - c. Progressive expansion of infrastructure, employment opportunities, social amenities and visible signs of improved living standards.
 - d. Reduction of national and communal tensions emanating from the scramble for resources.
 - e. Visible reduction in environmental pollution, deforestation and desertification.
 - f. Greater public awareness about, and involvement in, decision-making and implementation in the sphere of natural resource management.
 - g. Enhanced food security at the regional, national and community levels.
 - h. Disaster risk reduction and response strategies developed and implemented.

67. The capacity requirements for the Natural Resource Governance component shall include the following:
- a. Establishment of an Advisory Board at ECOWAS level to guide interventions in natural resource governance.
 - b. Equipment, expert and financial support to facilitate the work of stakeholders' forums on natural resource governance.
 - c. Training in business (contract) transactions, oversight functions and budgetary processes for relevant stakeholders from the national level (legislature) to the community levels (local government and community groups).
 - d. Financing of 'rallying projects', including land tenure training projects, disaster prevention and preparedness projects, community radios, community and youth centers to support local initiatives in resource governance.
 - e. Buying air-time and newspaper space to publish contract details, receipts, royalties and disbursement of proceeds from natural resource contracts.
 - f. Financial and technical support to train personnel and sustain the work of 'Dump-Watch'.
68. **CROSS-BORDER INITIATIVES:** The objectives of Cross-Border Initiatives shall be to reduce tensions, fight cross-border crime and enhance communal welfare and harmony, as well as Community citizenship as espoused by relevant ECOWAS Protocols, including the Revised Treaty, the Mechanism, the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance and the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Goods, Right of Residence and Establishment. These objectives are intrinsically intertwined with initiatives regarding natural resource governance, gender equality, humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness, youth empowerment, and the fight against money laundering, drug and human trafficking and weapons proliferation.
69. ECOWAS and partners shall undertake the following activities under the Cross-Border Initiatives component:
- a. ECOWAS shall set up an inter-departmental committee within the Commission to map out the challenges at sensitive borders and identify specific threats to peace, security and human well-being at different cross-border zones in the region, with special attention to the situation in island and landlocked Member States, criminality and threats to women's livelihoods.

- b. ECOWAS shall actively cooperate with the UN system and other institutions working on cross-border issues in the region for the purposes of harmonization and capitalization.
- c. ECOWAS shall facilitate the strengthening and smooth functioning of the West African Police Chiefs' Committee (WAPCCO) and other networks of security agencies as platforms for effective cooperation between the police, the gendarmerie, the intelligence services and other institutions working on security, and shall facilitate the harmonization and coordination of interventions to fight cross-border crime.
- d. ECOWAS shall actively involve decentralized ECOWAS institutions and resources (the Zonal Bureaux, Council of the Wise, National Units, Offices of the Special Representative and specialized agencies), as well as community groups in the design, implementation and monitoring of cross-border initiatives.
- e. ECOWAS shall promote the establishment of model 'common border settlements' built around quick impact employment opportunities for the youth, citizenship forums, and health, recreational and information centers.
- f. ECOWAS shall facilitate the study of specific threats to island and landlocked Member States with a view to adopting measures to counter criminality in island States and facilitate free movement of persons, goods and services to and from landlocked States.
- g. ECOWAS shall prioritize and facilitate infrastructure development, including intra-regional trunk roads, rail networks and telecommunication as conflict prevention tools, with the cooperation of Member States and resources from the private sector and development partners.
- h. ECOWAS shall promote the establishment of 'EcoPeace' community Radio Stations at sensitive borders to serve as rallying points for cultural exchanges, communal harmony, information sharing and combating cross-border crime.
- i. ECOWAS shall assist Member States to take steps to protect their territorial integrity from external threats, secure their borders against criminality and aggression, and promote good neighborliness with countries bordering ECOWAS territory.
- j. Member States shall promote cross-border cooperation, facility and intelligence sharing, as well as joint operations, between security forces (border guards, police, custom officials, gendarmeries) along common borders.
- k. Member States shall enforce compliance with the Protocol on Free

Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment among security and custom agencies, and shall sanction extortion and erection of illegal check points along regional routes and at crossing points.

- l. Civil society organizations shall promote awareness about regional integration and peace enhancement processes through 'EcoPeace' Radio stations, workshops, seminars, sporting activities and other such platforms.
 - m. Civil society organizations shall undertake conflict prevention and peace building activities in sensitive border areas, including civil-military cooperation; initiatives against human trafficking, drug trafficking, banditry and other cross-border crimes; promotion of the harmonious distribution and use of land, forest and water resources; promotion of ethnic harmony; youth empowerment and the fight against HIV/AIDS and STDs.
 - n. Civil society organizations shall undertake advocacy and mass awareness campaigns around the Protocol on Free Movement, against roadblocks and extortion at crossing points.
70. The following benchmarks shall be used to assess progress in the implementation of Cross-Border Initiatives:
- a. Elimination of, or reduction in, 'no man's lands' or border zones considered as safe havens for lawlessness and crime.
 - b. Measurable reduction in money laundering, weapons and human trafficking and other criminal activities in the border areas within the Community, particularly in vulnerable border areas.
 - c. Increased security of the external borders of the Community
 - d. Enhanced inter-communal harmony and cooperation, as well as greater opportunities and better livelihoods for all, in multi-ethnic environments.
 - e. Increased safety at crossing points and the elimination or reduction of roadblocks and extortion.
 - f. Increased awareness about ECOWAS values, particularly with regard to regional integration and Community citizenship.
 - g. Agreed cross-border arrangements to support humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness as part of comprehensive approach to foster communal welfare and harmony.
71. The underlisted capacity requirements shall facilitate the attainment of the goals set under Cross-Border Initiatives:

- a. Financial and expert support for the study and capitalization of challenges facing sensitive internal and external borders.
 - b. Transfer of expertise and financial support to the West African Police Chiefs' Committee (WAPCCO) and other security networks for the coordination of information sharing, cooperation and networking between the police, gendarmerie, the intelligence services and other security agencies.
 - c. Training, financial and equipment support, including X-ray technology, night vision equipment, detectors and transport to facilitate joint cross-border cooperation by security agencies.
 - d. Resources and training to support community policing initiatives in sensitive border areas.
 - e. Capacity-building workshops for decentralized ECOWAS institutions, traditional/community leaders and NGOs on land tenure, community development and alternative/traditional dispute resolution.
 - f. Provision of funds and equipment as well as training to support advocacy and quick impact projects, including EcoPeace Radios; entrepreneurial training for youth; micro-credit facilities; recreational, health and educational centers.
 - g. Resources and expertise for cross-border humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness strategies and activities.
72. **SECURITY GOVERNANCE:** The objectives of Security Governance shall be: [i] to eliminate threats to individual and group rights, safety, life, livelihoods, and property, and the protection of the institutions and values of democratic governance, human rights and the rule of law under a human security umbrella; [ii] to orient the focus and capacities of individuals, groups and institutions engaged in the security system to make them responsive and responsible to democratic control and adhere to basic human rights and the rule of law; [iii] to ensure the emergence and consolidation of accountable, transparent and participatory security systems in Member States. The purpose of this component is to facilitate the implementation of the relevant provisions of Article 58 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty; the relevant provisions of the Mechanism and Protocol on Free Movement; and particularly Articles 1 (C, E) and 19-24 of the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

73. Target groups for Security Governance shall include the following:
- a. Statutory institutions legally mandated to stock, manage and apply the instruments of coercion, such as the armed forces, police, gendarmerie, intelligence units, border guards, custom and immigration services, paramilitaries and forest rangers.
 - b. Statutory and non-statutory institutions responsible for the administration of justice and the penal code, such as the judiciary and the prison service, as well as customary and traditional justice systems.
 - c. Statutory and non-statutory bodies and organizations responsible for security sector policy, financing, regulation and oversight, such as the executive and advisory bodies on national security, the Legislature, the Ombudsman, relevant ministries and civil society organizations.
 - d. Legal and informal non-statutory security sector actors, such as militias, vigilantes and neighborhood watch outfits.
 - e. Private security providers, arms brokers and suppliers (local and foreign).
 - f. Local, foreign and international institutions implementing or supporting Security System Reform in the region.
74. To achieve the objectives set under Security Governance, the following activities shall be undertaken by stakeholders:
- a. ECOWAS shall develop a security governance framework with a Plan of Action that takes into account peculiarities of the region to feed into continental and global processes on Security System Reform. Towards this objective, an expert group composed of relevant ECOWAS departments, experts and NGOs shall be established by the Commission.
 - b. ECOWAS shall facilitate the conduct of a study into the military and security agencies as part of SSR needs analysis for West Africa to identify and define areas of intervention.
 - c. ECOWAS shall develop, adopt and facilitate the implementation of a regulatory framework with a sanctions regime on non-statutory armed groups, including militias, vigilantes, and private security outfits.
 - d. ECOWAS shall develop, adopt and enforce prohibition legislation on mercenary and terrorist activities, and other cross-border criminal activities.
 - e. ECOWAS shall develop and promote the implementation and monitoring of a set of practical guidelines to govern the activities of all actors implementing or supporting SSR initiatives in the region.

- f. ECOWAS shall facilitate the mainstreaming of security governance into relevant conflict-sensitive initiatives, including DDR, practical-disarmament, cross-border programmes, youth empowerment and the promotion of human rights and the rule of law.
- g. Member States shall launch initiatives to restructure and right-size national security agencies in post-conflict environments with the facilitation of ECOWAS and the support of UN agencies and specialist NGOs.
- h. Member States shall ensure that demobilized combatants and retrenched or retired soldiers and officers are adequately retrained, reintegrated, rehabilitated or compensated under restructuring and DDR exercises.
- i. Member-States shall develop, reform and implement policies on prisons, spelling out minimum acceptable conditions for detention camps, prisons and rehabilitation centers, access to legal aid and corrective programmes, gender sensitivity in prisons, and all other rights of prisoners and detainees, as well as the responsibilities of prison guards and wardens.
- j. Member States shall adopt or reform policies to ensure that the recruitment, promotion and entitlements of members of the armed forces and other security agencies are transparent, equitable and on merit, and that reflect ethnic balance and gender sensitivity.
- k. Member States shall guarantee competitive emoluments and ensure the supply of adequate equipment to the security forces and services.
- l. Member States shall adopt and implement policies to discourage the use of the military in policing activities.
- m. Member States shall promote the holding of workshops on the rights and responsibilities of security agencies, with the active cooperation of specialized civil society and research institutions.
- n. Member States, in cooperation with specialized civil society organizations and research institutions, shall organize capacity-building workshops on the command structure, military ethics and the functioning of the security apparatuses for oversight bodies, including the parliamentary committees on security and defense budgeting, justice and other security-related ministries.
- o. Member States shall develop, with the assistance of the private sector and civil society, youth empowerment schemes designed to engage the youth in gainful endeavors, community and national development.
- p. Specialized NGOs and research institutions shall develop or adapt training

packages and organize workshops on civil-military/security cooperation, community policing and practical-disarmament for community leaders, the youth, the police, the military and related security agencies.

- q. Relevant ECOWAS Bodies, specialized NGOs and research institutions shall promote dialogue, exchanges and other joint activities between security agencies and communities to enhance confidence-building and mutual trust.

75. The following shall constitute the benchmarks for assessing progress in Security Governance:

- a. The existence of an operational ECOWAS security governance framework.
- b. The existence of transparent and competent oversight institutions, policies and procedures on security.
- c. Increased predisposition of the armed forces towards democratic control.
- d. Increased confidence and trust between oversight bodies and the military/security hierarchy.
- e. The elimination of the incidence of military incursions into politics and drastic reduction in armed brutality or recourse to arms to resolve disputes.
- f. Positive public perception of, and increased confidence in, the security agencies.
- g. Increased mutual trust and respect between the community and security agencies.
- h. Reduced crime in the community.
- i. Reduced incidence of prison congestion, detention without trial and second time offenders.
- j. Frequency of national dialogues on SSR, which are consultative and predicated on participation of all critical stakeholders including security providers (both statutory and non-statutory) and oversight bodies including civil society and vulnerable groups.
- k. Armed forces and security services whose composition reflects ethnic, geographic and gender balance.

76. The following capacity needs shall be met in undertaking the activities outlined under Security Governance:
- a. Training and recruitment of DDR and SSR experts to build expertise on security governance facilitation within the ECOWAS Commission.
 - b. Expertise and equipment support to build a database of SSR resources in the region and beyond.
 - c. Provision of a package of resource materials, incentives and tools to accompany SSR and DDR initiatives in Member States.
 - d. Extension of financial and legal aid to underpin judicial and prison reforms.
 - e. Provision of financial and technical support for community policing and practical-disarmament initiatives.
77. **PRACTICAL-DISARMAMENT:** The aim of the Practical Disarmament component of the ECPF is to facilitate further implementation of Articles 50-51 of the Mechanism and, particularly, the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials (2006). Consequently, the component sets the objective to drain the region of illegal small arms and light weapons (SALW) and other related materials, and to prevent the excessive and/or illegal accumulation of SALW, ammunitions and related materials in the region.
78. To ensure successful practical disarmament in the region, stakeholders shall undertake the following activities:
- a. ECOWAS shall, through the Small Arms Unit, facilitate the development of programmes to enhance the capacity of National Commissions and Focal Points on SALW in Member States to underpin national initiatives in practical disarmament.
 - b. ECOWAS shall ensure capacity within the Small Arms Unit to monitor and enforce the ECOWAS regulatory framework on brokering and the acquisition of SALW by State and non-state actors.
 - c. Member States shall, through the National Commissions on SALW, broaden the base of the campaign against the proliferation and misuse of SALW by actively involving the police, private road transport unions, fishermen/boat operators, the media, militias, blacksmiths and other civil society groups.
 - d. Member States shall promote 'weapons-for-development' projects in collaboration with the ECOWAS Small Arms Project (ECOSAP),

development partners and with the active participation of community-based organizations and security agencies.

- e. Member States shall promote the collection, registration and destruction of illegal and excessive weapons at community and national levels.
 - f. In post-conflict environments, Member States, peacekeeping missions and civil society organizations shall prioritize SALW collection, registration and destruction in DDR processes.
 - g. Member States shall, with the assistance of the Small Arms Unit and ECOSAP, develop and implement disarmament initiatives in cross-border communities that incorporate quick impact 'weapons-for-development' projects.
 - h. National Commissions and civil society organizations shall launch and sustain awareness campaigns around the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons.
79. The benchmarks to measure the progress and success of Practical Disarmament shall include the following:
- a. Functioning national and local structures, including state and civil society institutions, dedicated to the fight against SALW proliferation.
 - b. Increasing awareness within the Community about the harmful effects of SALW proliferation and commitment to prevent it.
 - c. Greater transparency in the acquisition of SALW between ECOWAS, Member States and SALW exporting countries and other suppliers.
 - d. Reduction in the number of SALW in circulation and in unauthorized possession.
80. To enhance the capacities of stakeholders to undertake effective practical disarmament, the following needs shall be met:
- a. Financial and technical support to the Small Arms Unit to set up a monitoring capability, including databases for the verification of end user certificates, marking and tracing.
 - b. Financial and technical support to communities for quick impact projects to underpin community arms collection and destruction.
 - c. Functional detectors (on vehicles, animals and persons), night vision equipment and training to cross-border security agencies to protect the external borders of the Community from illegal weapons proliferation.

- d. Resources and technical support for registration and destruction of weapons.
 - e. Resources for the production, dissemination and use of educational materials within the framework of awareness enhancement.
81. **WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY:** This component aims to facilitate the realization of the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1325; the relevant provisions of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty, in particular Article 63; the relevant provisions of the Mechanism; and the provisions of Articles 40 - 43 of the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. The objective of the Women, Peace and Security component of ECPF shall be to propel and consolidate women's role and contribution to centre stage in the design, elaboration, implementation and evaluation of conflict prevention, resolution, peace-building and humanitarian initiatives while strengthening regional and national mechanisms for the protection and advancement of women.
82. To enhance the role, visibility and impact of women in peace and security, the following activities shall be prioritized:
- a. ECOWAS shall, through the Department of Human Development and Gender and the Gender Development Center, and in collaboration with identifiable networks of women organizations in West Africa, conduct an evaluation of literature and focused study on the gendered impact of violent conflicts on women and map out their role in the emerging ECOWAS security architecture. The study shall take into consideration the contribution and positive roles played by women in peace processes and peace-building, and the need to include women in the leadership of peace missions and negotiations, and mainstream gender in all aspects of the ECOWAS peace and security architecture.
 - b. ECOWAS shall facilitate the development and implementation of targeted programs to enhance the leadership, negotiation and dispute resolution skills within women organizations.
 - c. ECOWAS shall take practical steps to increase the number of women in senior decision making positions on peace and security matters within the Commission and other ECOWAS institutions.
 - d. ECOWAS shall adopt a regional policy to combat discrimination against women in all its forms, including inheritance, property rights, dehumanizing cultural practices, pay differentials, female genital mutilation (FGM), arranged and forced marriages, and child labor.
 - e. ECOWAS shall facilitate the development of a regional strategy to combat

gender-based violence (GBV) and the strengthening of legislative and judiciary measures, awareness and training on GBV in Member States.

- f. ECOWAS shall facilitate the adoption and implementation in Member States of affirmative policies to enhance girl-child education and female literacy and numeracy.
 - g. ECOWAS shall facilitate the establishment of 'Young Women's Fellowship' programmes with the collaboration of institutions of higher learning and the private sector within the ECOWAS region and other regions working on peace and security.
 - h. Member States shall take practical steps to increase the number of women in senior positions on peace and security matters within Government institutions at all levels.
 - i. Member States shall develop, enhance and build on existing programmes to strengthen the capacity of women organizations in project design and implementation, and support them with targeted financial packages and equipment.
 - j. Member States shall take practical steps, including legislative reform and affirmative measures, to promote the recruitment of women into the armed forces and other security agencies, and their active participation in the military and civilian components of ESF.
 - k. Member States shall adopt practical measures to put women organizations at the forefront of community and cross-border initiatives, including programmes to combat human trafficking, HIV/AIDS and STDs.
 - l. Civil society organizations shall develop and implement pro-women programmes in Member States, including capacity building for women, awareness raising and advocacy on women empowerment.
83. The following shall constitute benchmarks for assessing progress under the Women, Peace and Security component:
- a. Adoption and implementation of affirmative policies in favor of women at the regional and national levels.
 - b. Greater visibility of women and their organizations at regional, national and local levels of peace and security activities.
 - c. Special emphasis on the adoption and practical implementation of measures to prosecute violence against women in national and regional penal codes.
 - d. Progressive reduction in gender-based discriminatory practices.

- e. Greater self reliance and independence of women in the social and economic spheres.
 - f. Narrowing of the parity gap between boy and girl child school enrolment.
84. To promote interventions in favor of women in the peace and security domain, stakeholders shall provide capacity in the following priority areas:
- a. Expertise, financial and equipment support to ECOWAS departments and agencies working on gender to enable them spearhead regional interventions.
 - b. Financial and expert support to women organizations for capacity building workshops.
 - c. Facilitation of access to micro-credits and equipment for women in the region.
 - d. Creation of a special fund to support girl-child education and fellowships through advocacy and the establishment of pilot model girl schools in select vulnerable settings.
85. **YOUTH EMPOWERMENT:** The aim of Youth Empowerment is to realize the goals of the relevant provisions of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty and the Mechanism, and in particular Articles 41 - 43 of the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. The objective is to develop self-reliant, responsible and socially accountable role players and to discourage behavior, actions and ventures that engender violence and insecurity in communities and within the region by adding value and building the capacities of young people (Age bracket 15 - 35).
86. To achieve the objective set under the Youth Empowerment component, ECOWAS, Member States and partners shall undertake the following activities:
- a. ECOWAS, in collaboration with the UN Regional Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and other partners, shall adopt appropriate and targeted policies on the status of the youth in the region.
 - b. ECOWAS shall equip its Youth and Sports Development Centre in Ouagadougou to facilitate targeted interventions in the region in favor of the youth, drawing from recommendations from the ECOWAS Youth Policy, UNOWA Report on Youth Unemployment and Insecurity and related resources.

- c. ECOWAS and Member States shall promote investment in labor-intensive and medium to long term agricultural and infrastructure programmes as a sustainable avenue for skill development and employment for young people.
 - d. ECOWAS shall facilitate the establishment of Joint ECOWAS /UNOWA-EU in-country pro-youth initiatives in partnership with Ministries responsible for youth and sports, institutions of higher learning and the private sector.
 - e. ECOWAS shall facilitate the establishment of a youth volunteer program to actively engage young people in infrastructure development, environmental initiatives and other local development activities, and to serve as a forum for youth mobilization in times of crises and emergencies.
 - f. Member States shall establish and strengthen national youth councils to serve as forums for youth-youth interaction and platforms for channeling youth-specific concerns into national and regional policy.
 - g. Member States shall promote projects aimed at skills development, particularly in Information and Communication Technology, sports, music, art, micro-enterprise; employment/placement referrals; peace education; and leadership/citizenship training.
 - h. Member States shall promote, with the cooperation of civil society organizations and the full participation of the youth, awareness campaigns around 'Youth and Violence' with a special focus on irregular migration and dissuading the youth from creating or joining non-state armed groups.
 - i. ECOWAS and Member States shall mainstream youth involvement in conflict mediation, resolution and peace-building strategies, and shall actively target the youth as facilitators and subject of sustainable DDR initiatives in post-conflict reconstruction strategy.
 - j. Member States shall strengthen the mandate, capacity and resource base of youth ministries for the design and implementation of youth empowerment policies, and for effective cooperation and coordination with other ministries on youth issues.
87. Progress and success under the Youth Empowerment component shall be assessed with the help of benchmarks that include the following:
- a. The adoption and application of a regional policy framework on youth empowerment and orientation.
 - b. Focus on job creation for the youth as a central feature of contractual

obligations of the private sector, particularly in the extractive and construction industries.

- c. Diversification of educational curriculums in West Africa to incorporate nontraditional syllabuses for quick-impact training in entrepreneurship.
 - d. Visible waning of interest among the youth in enterprises of violence.
 - e. Reduction in banditry, armed violence and criminality in the communities.
 - f. Reduction in irregular youth migration within and outside the region.
88. ECOWAS and partners shall mobilize resources to provide needed capacities in the following areas to empower and motivate the youth for productive ventures:
- a. Strengthen the capacity of the Department of Human Development and Gender as well as the Youth and Sports Development Centre with expertise, equipment and financial resources to facilitate regional interventions in youth empowerment.
 - b. Financial, equipment and expert support to ECOWAS and Member States to create and update databases on the state of youth unemployment, job opportunities, regional resources for youth empowerment, including institutions and persons from civil society organizations, eminent persons and celebrities, to underpin interventions.
 - c. Training, financial and equipment support targeting youth-related institutions in Member States.
 - d. Leveraging resources from the private sector to fund targeted interventions in sustainable job creation and employment.
 - e. Materials and literature to underpin the ECOWAS awareness drive on youth empowerment.
89. **ECOWAS STANDBY FORCE (ESF):** The ECOWAS Standby Force component aims to facilitate the implementation of the relevant provisions of Article 58 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty; the provisions of the Mechanism, in particular those set out under Article 21 and Chapters V – IX; and the provisions under Section IV of the Supplementary Protocol. The objective of ESF under the ECPF is to guarantee peace and security in situations of conflict and disaster through effective observation and monitoring, preventive deployment and humanitarian intervention, and to train and equip multi-purpose composite standby units made up of military and civilian components in Member States within the framework of the African Standby Force arrangement.

90. To achieve the objective set under the ESF component, ECOWAS Member States and partners shall undertake the following activities:
- a. ECOWAS shall reinforce the capacities of the Departments of Peacekeeping and Regional Security and Humanitarian Affairs with personnel, funds, equipment and training to spearhead the elaboration and implementation of an ECOWAS strategy on the rapid development of the civilian component of ESF and the modalities for preventive and humanitarian deployment, with the assistance of ECOWAS' centers of excellence in Ghana, Nigeria and Mali.
 - b. ECOWAS shall coordinate ESF strategy with the African Union, promote exchanges between the two institutions and other RECs, and ensure that ESF activities in the region are in harmony with those of the African Standby Force.
 - c. ECOWAS shall strengthen its Mission Planning and Management Cell (MPMC) with trained civilian elements to facilitate strategic planning and infusing the principle of democratic control, humanitarian and human rights laws into ESF strategy.
 - d. ECOWAS shall reinforce the capacities of the Offices of the Special Representatives and Special Mediators through retreats and workshops on peacekeeping operations, mission planning and oversight and the military and humanitarian law, to improve their oversight functions.
 - e. ECOWAS shall facilitate the rapid development of the civilian component of ESF in Member States by earmarking, training and preparing civilian standby elements for deployment. The target groups shall include the police, experts from relevant government ministries, medical personnel, engineers, construction workers, logisticians, information and media practitioners, legal experts, social workers, humanitarian experts drawn from NGOs, and any other groups that may be identified.
 - f. ECOWAS shall utilize the collective expertise of specialized institutions and think tanks in the region to facilitate the training of military components of the ESF on key civilian concerns relevant to the operational environment, including child protection, HIV/AIDS, malaria, gender and human rights, among others.
 - g. ECOWAS shall facilitate the holding of refresher workshops and the development of a package of incentives for the standby units in-between missions.
 - h. ECOWAS shall facilitate the stocking of the ECOWAS Logistics Facilities with equipment, relief supplies, medicaments and other humanitarian needs.

- i. Member States shall actively promote the enlistment of their citizens into the civilian component of the ESF.
 - j. Member States and development partners shall support the ESF with financial, technical and logistical resources to enhance the humanitarian capability of the region.
 - k. Civil society organizations shall promote the ESF concept through awareness-raising programs and campaigns to solicit enlistment.
 - l. The UNHCR, regional, local and international humanitarian and human rights organizations shall facilitate the preparedness of ESF units by promoting capacity-building workshops on relevant deployment matters, including mission planning, civil-military cooperation, field assistance, disaster management, humanitarian and human rights law, communication, and HIV/AIDS and STDs.
91. Progress and success in developing the ESF shall be assessed with the help of benchmarks that include the following:
- a. The availability and application of an ECOWAS strategy and plan of action on ESF, particularly in relation to recruitment, the logistical and training needs, as well as the modalities for deployment of the civilian component.
 - b. The existence of well-stocked logistics facilities in the region.
 - c. Community awareness of the ESF concept and popular participation in its activities.
 - d. Willingness of Member States, local and international organizations and development partners to cooperate with ECOWAS on the ESF.
 - e. Verifiable preparedness of the civilian units for rapid deployment.
92. In the efforts to develop the ESF with emphasis on its civilian component and prepare standby units for rapid deployment, stakeholders shall provide capacity in the following priority areas:
- a. Recruitment of civilian peace-keeping and humanitarian experts, as well as funds and technical support for the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Mission Planning and Management Cell (MPMC) to lead strategic planning and the preparation of training manuals for ESF.
 - b. Financial resources and expertise to develop a database of resources for the civilian component of ESF
 - c. Transport facilities, financial and equipment support for the ECOWAS

humanitarian facilities.

- d. Resources for developing training manuals and incentive packages for the ESF program.

93. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: Intended as an operational tool in the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Mechanism, in particular the provisions set out under Article 31 and Chapters VIII and IX, the Humanitarian Assistance component of the ECPF sets the following objectives: [i] Mitigate the impact of humanitarian disasters and emergencies that could result in social and political upheaval; [ii] Serve as a bridge between relief/emergency assistance and medium term rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in post-conflict and disaster settings; [iii] Protect sustainable development, including individual and community livelihoods, through effective crisis prevention and preparedness activities; and [iv] Foster interregional harmony and security through cooperative arrangements to ensure effective humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness programs.

94. To fulfill the objectives set under Humanitarian Assistance, ECOWAS and partners shall undertake the following activities:

- a. ECOWAS shall build up the humanitarian crisis capacities of the Departments of Humanitarian Affairs, Political Affairs, Peace-keeping and Regional Security, as well as the capacities of ESF and decentralized agencies with personnel and technical assistance for strategic planning and engagement with Member States on humanitarian matters.
- b. ECOWAS shall enhance the capacity of the Early Warning System to enable it to relate political, socio-economic and geo-physical trends to humanitarian crisis propensities in the region.
- c. ECOWAS shall mainstream essential humanitarian crisis prevention, preparedness and response activities into the ECOWAS peace and security architecture.
- d. ECOWAS shall prioritize the establishment and stockpiling of a humanitarian depot as an integral part of the ECOWAS Logistics Facilities to support humanitarian interventions, including relief and quick-impact projects.
- e. ECOWAS shall facilitate the training and equipping of ESF standby units, particularly the civilian component, in Member States in humanitarian relief and sanitation, as well as the design and implementation of quick-impact and reconstruction projects, for their incorporation into missions wherever and whenever required.

- f. ECOWAS and Member States shall facilitate the emergence of a regional humanitarian capability by leveraging resources to promote the emergence of humanitarian NGOs in the region.
 - g. Member States shall take practical steps to support regional humanitarian crisis prevention and mitigation efforts with all available resources, including personnel, finances, transport and logistics.
 - h. Member States shall promote the incorporation of humanitarian crisis prevention, preparedness and response initiatives into community and cross-border cooperation programmes.
 - i. In post-conflict and disaster settings, Member States shall actively encourage institutions and citizens to take ownership of regional humanitarian crisis response initiatives to ensure sustainability.
 - j. Civil society organizations shall actively engage in regional humanitarian crisis prevention, preparedness and response initiatives by raising awareness, promoting volunteering and holding training workshops.
95. The benchmarks for assessing progress in the achievement of the objectives set under the Humanitarian Assistance component shall include the following:
- a. ECOWAS policy and regional strategy for humanitarian crisis prevention, preparedness and response systems.
 - b. ECOWAS Early Warning System configured to deal with multi-sectoral approach and analysis pertaining to short and longer-term humanitarian threats, including relevant EWS training capacities.
 - c. ECOWAS anticipatory and response capacities to perform humanitarian functions, including the preparedness of standby units in Member States, contingency planning, training packages, systems and logistical back-up.
 - d. Protection of civilians, livelihoods and property as an operational constant in ECOWAS interventions in crises.
 - e. Awareness about humanitarian imperatives within the region and humanitarian assistance capability in Member States.
 - f. Willingness of Member States, development partners and humanitarian institutions to cooperate with ECOWAS on humanitarian and disaster response, particularly in capacity building and resource mobilization.

96. The capacity needs of the Humanitarian Assistance component shall include the following:
- a. Assistance from bilateral and multilateral partners as well as international humanitarian agencies in undertaking capacity assessments, strengthening the human resource base in ECOWAS, preparing relevant strategies and arrangements for regional and national humanitarian activities and for training systems.
 - b. Transfer of skills from the UN system and international humanitarian agencies to ECOWAS institutions engaged in humanitarian matters, including the Departments and ESF, as well as to Member States, regional and national humanitarian-related institutions and organizations.
 - c. Financial and logistical support from bilateral and multilateral partners to establish and develop the ECOWAS Logistics Facilities.
97. **PEACE EDUCATION (CULTURE OF PEACE):** Guided by the provisions of Articles 58 and 62 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty, Article 51(A) of the Mechanism and Articles 29-31 of the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, the objective of Peace Education shall be to transform the psyche, orientation and behavioral pattern of the population, particularly those of children, the youth and policy makers, decisively in favor of exclusively peaceful means of thought, action and interaction.
98. In the efforts to achieve the Peace Education objective, ECOWAS and partners shall undertake the following activities:
- a. ECOWAS shall facilitate the elaboration and adoption of modules on Regional Integration, Conflict Analysis and Peace Education to be incorporated into the curriculum of primary, secondary and tertiary institutions, with the cooperation of Community educationists, UNESCO and UNICEF.
 - b. ECOWAS shall mainstream citizenship awareness in all reconciliation and reintegration programmes.
 - c. ECOWAS and Member States shall facilitate the propagation of the ideals of regional integration and Community citizenship in the media.
 - d. ECOWAS shall facilitate cultural and educational exchanges among the youth in Member States to promote peer learning and a Community spirit in the youth.
 - e. Member States shall promote leadership and citizenship training in formal and informal educational settings and youth institutions.

- f. ECOWAS and Member States shall promote the involvement of eminent persons, intellectuals and celebrities as role models in leadership and citizenship training.
 - g. Member States shall promote mediation and reconciliation committees at community, district and national levels, with the active cooperation of community and civil society organizations.
 - h. Educational institutions and the Media shall expose the youth to the rich cultural diversity of different ethnic and religious groups of Member States.
 - i. Civil society organizations shall carry out awareness raising and peace education activities through workshops on national reconciliation, interethnic/religious harmony, identity and citizenship.
99. Progress in promoting a culture of peace in the region shall be assessed using yardsticks that include the following:
- a. Peace and citizenship training as an integral part of formal and informal upbringing.
 - b. Reduction in prejudices and stereotyping against different ethnic/religious groups and nationalities in Member States.
 - c. Greater disposition towards peaceful dispute resolution among the youth.
 - d. Reduced violence, particularly against women and children, cultism, bullying and gun culture on school compounds, campuses and neighborhoods.
100. To support activities under the Culture of Peace component, the following capacity needs shall be met by stakeholders:
- a. Financial resources and expertise to develop and customize peace education manuals.
 - b. Financial resources, expertise and incentives to educational establishments to embrace peace education in curriculums.
 - c. Financial resources to facilitate cultural exchanges among the youth.
 - d. Incentives to attract role models.

SECTION IX: ENABLING MECHANISMS OF THE ECPF

101. The enabling mechanisms of the ECPF shall include Advocacy and Communication; Resource Mobilization; Cooperation; and Monitoring and Evaluation.
102. **ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION:** Since inception and particularly since 1990, ECOWAS has achieved measurable and commendable success in peace and security, both at the normative level (adopting appropriate protocols) and at the operational level (multi-faceted interventions to prevent violence, restore peace where violent conflict has broken out and to stabilize the political situation in post-conflict environments). Laudable and impressive as its track-record is, ECOWAS has, nonetheless, not been able to capitalize sufficiently on its successes by selling its achievements to the wider public in Member States and within the international community.
103. To correct this imbalance, ECOWAS shall develop an aggressive advocacy and communication strategy, including initiatives already outlined under the Media component. In addition, ECOWAS shall promote the following activities:
- a. **Awareness promotion:** ECOWAS shall launch a mass awareness drive around concrete ECOWAS protocols and activities in collaboration with the media, eminent persons and celebrities drawn from the region. In this exercise, ECOWAS shall work with local authorities, civil society organizations, youth and women's associations and FM Radio Stations.
 - b. **Branding the ECOWAS product:** ECOWAS shall ensure the production and wide distribution of ECOWAS-related audio-visual material, including documentaries on ground-breaking initiatives, posters, slogans, face-caps, T-Shirts, CDs, songs, jingles, calendars, pens, radio, and TV jingles and advertisements.
 - c. **Selling the ECOWAS product:** [i]. ECOWAS shall secure the cooperation of regional and national news networks to ensure that speeches, interventions and appearances by the Chairperson, President and the hierarchy of ECOWAS secure prime time news slots in the major channels across the region. [ii]. ECOWAS shall broaden 'ECOWAS Day' activities to include greater media coverage, sponsored polls on policy issues, cultural and school activities in Member States. [iii]. ECOWAS shall facilitate the incorporation of 'Regional Integration' as a compulsory read in the school curriculum during the first two years of secondary education and in the first year of University education in Member States.
 - d. **Documentation and Publication:** ECOWAS shall take immediate steps to produce, publish and disseminate an annual analytical journal '*Human*

Security in West Africa (conflict analysis in West African Clusters corresponding to the Zonal Bureaux demarcations) and '*Conflict Prevention & Peace-building in West Africa*' (Report of ECOWAS interventions, partnerships, tools, perspectives).

- e. **Partnerships:** ECOWAS shall maintain and reinforce partnerships with development partners, research institutions and civil society organizations with a view to sharing and selling views and best practices as well as reinforcing mutual capacities in advocacy and communication.
104. The benchmarks for assessing progress in Advocacy and Communication shall include the following:
- a. Well-stocked libraries (physical and electronic) and documentation centers with up-to-date information on all aspects of ECOWAS activities at the Commission, decentralized structures and other institutions of ECOWAS.
 - b. Up-to-date literature on ECOWAS in schools and institutions of higher learning in Member States.
 - c. The emergence of the ECOWAS brand as a reference point and recurrent theme in the press and in international discourse.
 - d. The emergence of an ECOWAS-friendly population in West Africa.
 - e. Greater international interest in ECOWAS and greater goodwill of development partners towards the institution.
105. To achieve the goals set under Advocacy and Communication, stakeholders shall undertake to provide capacity in the following areas and form:
- a. Strengthen the capacities of the Communication and Documentation Departments with experts, particularly in public relations, editing, production and translation, and with state of the art audio-visual and documentation equipment.
 - b. Reinforce the capacities of PAPS, the Departments of Communication and Human Development and Gender, and other relevant units to produce publications on ECOWAS interventions in peace and security.
 - c. Capacity-building workshops on publication and documentation for relevant departments.
 - d. Media and publicity consultants to assist in documentation and advocacy.
 - e. Financial resources to ensure regular and timely distribution of ECOWAS products to client institutions.

- f. Financial support to civil society organizations in Member States for the production, dissemination and popularization of abridged versions of ECOWAS Protocols, Conventions and related legal and policy documents.
106. **RESOURCE MOBILIZATION:** Securing adequate funding from internal, regional and international sources is a sine qua non for sustainable peace and security interventions and the success of the ECPF. ECOWAS has demonstrated its capacity to leverage financial resources and has applied innovative approaches to attract resources to finance interventions, including the mechanisms of the Community Levy, bilateral and multilateral donations. ECOWAS shall adopt all necessary measures to expand its resource base and establish a dedicated fund for conflict prevention and peace-building, including for unforeseen interventions. ECOWAS shall source enhanced funding for interventions through the following channels:
- a. Allocations from the ECOWAS Core Budget and Community Levy.
 - b. Allocations from the Peace Fund and Pool Fund.
 - c. Supplementary bilateral and multilateral assistance from non-traditional partnerships by exploring South-South cooperation and Asian sources.
 - d. Facilitating resource mobilization by Member States and promoting intra-ECOWAS assistance to post-conflict Member States.
 - e. Fundraising from the private sector and individual donations.
 - f. Fundraising activities, including fanfares, raffles, dinners and appeals, as well as the sale of ECOWAS products.
107. Towards this end, ECOWAS shall take the following measures:
- a. Reinforce capacities within the Commission, including the capacity of the Monitoring and Evaluation and Peace Fund units to enhance the absorptive capacity of ECOWAS and reinforce coordination with development partners.
 - b. Seek the cooperation of the African Union, the NEPAD Secretariat and the African Development Bank in resource mobilization for conflict prevention and peace-building interventions at the regional level and in Member States.
 - c. Facilitate intra-regional assistance to post-conflict Member States for capacity enhancement and technical support.

- d. Facilitate the convening of conferences with the participation of development partners to mobilize resources for peace-building in post-conflict Member States, and apply pressure on partners to honor pledges made at conferences.
108. Member States shall undertake the following activities:
- a. Develop and implement national strategies for the mobilization of internal human, financial and material resources for conflict prevention and peace-building, including for unforeseen interventions, through the creative utilization of proceeds from national endowment and engagement with the private sector, bilateral and multilateral partners.
 - b. Incorporate resource mobilization strategies into poverty reduction and security system reform strategies, peace agreements and post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation strategies.
109. **COOPERATION:** Cooperation under the ECPF shall be premised on the provisions of Chapter XX of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty on relations with third-party States and Organizations as well as the provisions of Chapter XX of the Mechanism relating to cooperation with the African Union, the United Nations and other International Organizations.
110. Cooperation among stakeholders of the ECPF shall be underpinned by the following considerations:
- a. The core value of the ECPF is human security.
 - b. The central purpose of the ECPF is to create space and the conditions within Member States and the region for the promotion and consolidation of human security.
 - c. Priority-driven programming.
 - d. Subsidiarity and complementarity.
 - e. Local ownership, local context and sound analysis.
 - f. Sustainability.
 - g. Transparency, accountability, mutual respect and trust.
111. Cooperation between stakeholders shall aim at building synergies for coordinated interventions in conflict prevention and peace-building, taking into account the comparative advantage of each partner and the need for division of labor to add value to the collective efforts of all stakeholders.

112. Within the framework of the principles set out in Paragraphs 109 - 111, any stakeholder may initiate cooperation with partners under the ECPF.

113. Intra-ECOWAS Cooperation

Cooperation within the ECOWAS system is a *sine qua non* for effective cooperation with other partners and for the success of the ECPF. To achieve the necessary synergy within the Commission and with other ECOWAS Institutions, the following actions shall be taken:

- a. ECOWAS shall raise awareness within all departments and institutions of the ECOWAS system about the cross-cutting essence of conflict prevention, peace-building and the ECPF as a strategic document which derives from the peace and security imperatives of the ECOWAS Vision.
- b. All Departments, Centers, Units, decentralized and autonomous institutions of ECOWAS shall take ownership of the ECPF and the Plan of Action that shall derive from it as a framework for intra-ECOWAS cooperation on peace and security in the region.
- c. The Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Units as well as the Department of External Relations of ECOWAS in the Office of the ECOWAS Vice-President shall ensure the capitalization of the ECPF and its Plan of Action as a point of reference in strategic planning and relations with Member States and other partners with regard to conflict prevention and peace-building.
- d. ECOWAS shall take practical steps, including information sharing, joint planning and delegation of responsibilities, to involve the Community Parliament and Court of Justice more actively in the interactions between ECOWAS and the Community population, notably in electoral and democratic processes and human rights and justice matters.

114. ECOWAS – Civil Society Cooperation

Cooperation between ECOWAS and civil society shall take the following roles and responsibilities into consideration:

- a. Member States and civil society within them shall bear the principal responsibility for peace and security. To this end, civil society organizations and the private sector shall constitute valued and bona fide partners at the regional (ECOWAS), national (Member State) and local (community) levels in the implementation and evaluation of the ECPF and in cooperation arrangements with external partners.

- b. ECOWAS shall facilitate [i] the periodic evaluation of the West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOFF) and other partner civil society networks in the region with a view to strengthening internal democracy, inclusiveness, programming and oversight; [ii] the establishment of a mechanism similar to the UN ECOSOC with modalities for Memorandums of Understanding and different levels of accreditation to serve as an interface with civil society networks; [iii] Information sharing with civil society networks and setting up of communication channels for civil society inputs into ECOWAS policies and programmes.
- c. Civil society organizations shall [i] contribute to the conceptualization, development, implementation and monitoring of ECOWAS policies and programs on peace and security; [ii] mobilize and channel civil society concerns and findings into ECOWAS initiatives; [iii] lead advocacy in Member States through awareness raising, lobbying and campaigns around ECOWAS resources, including the Community Court and Parliament, policies and interventions; [iv] spearhead conflict prevention and peace-building activities in Member States, especially at the national policy and community levels; [v] provide, alongside the private sector, technical and financial support for the implementation of activities within the ECPF.

115. **ECOWAS – Member State Cooperation**

Cooperation between ECOWAS and Member States shall be based on the principles of supranationality, complementarity and the division of labour. Consequently, Member States shall:

- a. be the principal implementing agencies of conflict prevention and peace building initiatives. To this end, they shall take the lead in the identification of priorities and create conditions for the full and active participation of all citizens and their organizations, particularly women, the youth and community groups, in the conception, elaboration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of conflict prevention and peace-building initiatives;
- b. take active steps to incorporate regional and international statutes on peace and security into national legislation and ensure that the communities and institutions at the national and decentralized levels are abreast with developments at the regional level;
- c. take regional dimensions of peace and security and ECOWAS instruments into account in the design and implementation of national programs, as well as in bilateral and multilateral relations;
- d. promote the active participation of ministers of Member States in the ECOWAS policy-making process;

- e. Strengthen the capacities of ECOWAS National Units to serve as the conduit for permanent dialogue and interaction between the Commission and Member States;
 - f. Prioritize the capitalization of internal financial, human and technical resources as the first step in the mobilization of resources for conflict prevention and peace-building interventions.
116. In its cooperation with Member States, ECOWAS shall:
- a. be responsible for facilitation, the crafting of overarching regional policies, monitoring and evaluation;
 - b. facilitate the mobilization of financial and technical resources from regional sources, bilateral and multilateral partners to support interventions under the ECPF in Member States;
 - c. act in partnership and cooperation with the AU, UN and other partners to identify entry points, leverage resources for capacity building to facilitate in-country and cross-border activities, and enhance the visibility and legitimacy of ECPF initiatives.

117. Cooperation with the African Union and United Nations

ECOWAS initiatives under the ECPF take into account the realities of the region but constitute a building block and integral part of the continental and global security architecture defined under the relevant provisions and derivative statutes of the Constitutive Act of AU and the UN Charter. Consequently, cooperation between ECOWAS, AU and the UN shall be informed by the following considerations:

118. Within the overall framework of AU-ECOWAS cooperation, the African Union shall:
- a. work in partnership with ECOWAS to identify conflict prevention and peace-building opportunities for cooperative action with ECOWAS and Member States;
 - b. work in partnership with ECOWAS to create space and facilitate resource mobilization for capacity-building and the implementation of the ECPF in Member States;
 - c. facilitate the enhancement of ECOWAS capacity for the implementation of the ECPF.

119. Within the overall framework of UN-ECOWAS cooperation, the United Nations shall:
- a. provide political legitimacy for the realization of ECOWAS goals within the framework of the ECPF;
 - b. cooperate with ECOWAS in creating space and mobilizing financial and technical support to implement the priority areas of human security in the region;
 - c. render support for capacity-building of ECOWAS, Member States and civil society to undertake conflict prevention and peace-building activities.
120. **Cooperation with Development Partners:** The financial and technical support from development partners has contributed significantly to the sustainability of peace and security in the region. To build on the successes of this contribution, both parties shall:
- a. work towards the harmonization of practices and procedures of engagement in conformity with the provisions of the Paris Declaration on Aid Efficacy.
 - b. hold regular coordination meetings to harmonize diverse interventions by development partners to maximize outcomes;
 - c. ensure that financial and technical support for conflict prevention and peace-building is made within the framework of the ECPF and its Plan of Action.
 - d. shall take practical steps to ensure the efficient disbursement of financial assistance and enhance the absorptive capacity of ECOWAS.
121. ECOWAS shall encourage development partners to release funds pledged at donor conferences to support peace building

SECTION X: PLAN OF ACTION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

122. **PLAN OF ACTION:** The ECPF shall be accompanied by a four-year Plan of Action to be developed by the Commission. The Plan shall be supported by performance indicators and a reporting plan. It shall be elaborated in a logical framework that shows detailed activities to be carried out, the actors and target groups involved, inputs, expected outcomes and impacts, and the time frame for the activities.
- 123 **MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E):** The purpose of the Monitoring and

Evaluation process shall be to assess the progress of all aspects of the ECPF on a regular basis with a view to gauging impacts on the conflict landscape in West Africa and applying corrective, incremental or reinforcing measures, wherever and whenever necessary, to maximize outcomes. The following measures shall be undertaken in the M&E process:

- a. The Commission shall make an annual report on the level of implementation of the ECPF at the end of year summit of the Authority of Heads of State and Government.
- b. M&E shall become an integral part of the ECOWAS peace and security strategy.
- c. M&E shall be continuous, participative and transparent.
- d. M&E shall be carried out on components as well as the totality of the Framework.
- e. The M&E Department of ECOWAS shall oversee the monitoring and evaluation process with the active participation of all stakeholders.
- f. M&E shall be carried out at the grassroots (community), national and regional levels.
- g. The processes and outcomes of the M&E exercise shall be made available to all stakeholders and shall constitute the subject of lessons learned and capacity enhancement workshops for the stakeholders of the ECPF, including the ECOWAS system, Member States, civil society organizations, other Regional Economic (Integration) Communities, the UN system, the AU Commission and development partners.

SECTION XI: OBLIGATIONS BY MEMBER STATES

124. This Regulation shall be published by the Commission in the Official Gazette of the Community within 30 days of its signature by the Chairman of the Mediation and Security Council. It shall also be published by each Member State in its Official Gazette within the same deadline.
125. This Regulation shall enter into force upon its publication. Consequently, all ECOWAS Member States and Institutions shall commence the implementation of the Conflict Prevention Framework upon the entry into force of this regulation.

DONE AT OUAGADOUGOU THIS 16th DAY OF JANUARY 2008

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DJIBRILL YIPÈNÈ BASSOLE', written over a horizontal dotted line.

H.E. Djibrill Yipènè BASSOLE
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of FASO
Chairman of the Mediation and Security Council

For and on behalf of the Mediation and Security Council