



A Cross Section of Members of Parliament During Consideration of the 2022 Community Budget.

## Parliament Passes UA 393m Community Budget for 2022

Parliament's statutory budget session has adopted the sum of UA 3 9 3 , 6 1 2 , 4 0 0 Draft Consolidated Community Budget 2022, as presented to it by The Administration and Finance Committee (AFC) of ECOWAS at the end of its thirtieth meeting. The adoption came into effect on December 8, 2021 at the Second Ordinary Session of ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja.

The adoption is sequel to the Draft Resolution presented by the Ad-Hoc Committee on the

Consideration of the Draft Consolidated Community Budget for year 2022, which was made up of several relevant Committees, but led by the Committee on Administration and Finance, all of which diligently examined the Draft Budget of the Community

After exhaustive deliberations by The Plenary, forming a Committee of the whole house, a favorable opinion to adopt the Draft 2022 Consolidated Community Budget was arrived at by consensus, with the Plenary noting that it was

balanced in revenue and expenditure.

The Community Budget is envisioned to address the exogenous shocks of COVID-19 pandemic and security challenges in the sub region as well as stimulate the regional economy.

The Speaker, Rt. Hon. Mohammed Sidie Tunis, noted this as he transmitted the Parliamentary Resolution and the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the Authority of Heads of State and Government, via the Office of

the President of the Commission for adoption and implementation.

This entire process is in consonance with the provisions of Parliament's Rules of Procedures as well as Article 15 of the Supplementary Act, giving power to pass Resolutions. Also relevant here is Article 2 of Regulation C/REG.17/06/17 of the Council of Ministers establishing the schedule and procedure for consideration and adoption of the budget.

The Community budget, which is domiciled in the West Africa Unit of Accounts (UA) showed a total of approved expenditure of UA 321,150,318 for institutions of the Community.

The breakdown shows an allocation of: UA 206,669,465 to the ECOWAS Commission; UA 21,005,052 to the ECOWAS Parliament; Community Court of Justice, UA 16,287,335; WAHO, UA 59,744,474; GIABA, UA 10,634,021 and Office of the Auditor General UA 6,809,972.

Total approved expenditure for Statutory Obligations is UA 11,711,966 and UA 30,436,264 for Special Programmes and Interventions in Member States.

Peace and Security was voted a total expenditure allocation of UA 30,313,851.

The breakdown of income generated by the Community shows: UA 152,163,209 from Community Levy; UA 66,188,824 revenue estimates from 2022 Year-end Bank Balances; UA 58,389,968 from Arrears of Community Levy

Proceeds and UA 798,130 from Other Income; UA 116,073,269 from External Funding.

The income projection in the 2022 Draft Budget represented a decrease of 1.1% from the approved 2021 budget. This decrease could primarily be attributed to the 23.1% decrease in Arrears of Community Levy Proceeds, and a 100% decrease in Arrears of Contribution. Members of Parliament however noted the high income figures recorded from external funding and expressed concerns on its possible threat or influence on the independence of the Community

Following the stance on external funding for any part of the Community Budget, the Chairman of the Administration and Finance Committee (AFC), Nurudeen Ismaila, during the meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Consideration of the Draft Consolidated Community Budget, was quick to clarify that the Community is an interdependent region and may not be able to do without external funding because of eventualities not envisaged such as the COVID-19 pandemic, insecurity, terrorism, etc.

The Community's main source of revenue is the Community Levy, therefore, the draft 2022 budget is based on projection of Levy assessments taking into consideration the performance up to Q3 2021, projected up to December 31, 2021, vis-a-vis the expected 2021 economic growth of the sub-region.

A breakdown of the 2022 allocations as detailed in the Community Budget Draft for Special Programmes and Interventions revealed the allocation of-

- ECOWAS Regional Food and Agricultural Fund - UA 2,000,000. This represents ECOWAS' contribution to the fund in fiscal year 2022.
- Rural Electrification and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Initiative - UA 2,100,841.
- ECOWAS Regional Food Reserve - UA 1,448,152.
- ECOWAS Trade Fair - UA 615,322
- ECOWAS Regional Training Centre - UA 500,000
- ECOWAS Logistics Depot (Lungi) - UA 6,185,880.
- Construction of New Headquarters - UA 13,795,620 and represents the grant offered by the Chinese Government for the construction of the new ECOWAS Commission Headquarters.
- Youth Entrepreneurship in ICT - UA 543,953
- Water Projects in Rural Areas - UA 700,000
- Special Projects under the General Administration and Conference - UA 2,546,496, to be directed to the under listed projects:
  - Humanitarian Depot -

## As Budget Session Ends, Speaker Declares Direct Universal Suffrage Top Priority of the 5th Legislature



Photocredit: parl.ecowas.int

**T**he Speaker of the Parliament, Rt. Hon. Sidie Mohammed Tunis has reaffirmed the commitment of the current Legislature towards achieving direct universal suffrage. Speaker Tunis who disclosed that this is the thrust of the Fifth Legislature, while declaring closed, the Second Ordinary Session of 2021, tagged, the “Budget Session” at the Seat of Parliament in Abuja, Nigeria.

"As you are aware, the election of Members by direct universal suffrage remains the cardinal objective of the current Legislature. We are optimistic that attaining that feat would lead to a more formidable and stronger Parliament", Speaker Tunis stated.

He reiterated that the 5th Legislature, under his leadership, would continue to work assiduously towards the realization of that aspiration.

According to him, "We would continue to work for its realization, especially considering the enormous support we appear to be receiving from major stakeholders. This support and

encouragement provide us a great light of hope".

The Hon. Speaker seized the opportunity to commend his colleague MPs for their commitment and hard work, saying "Permit me to use this medium to extend my gratitude to all Colleague Members of Parliament for participating in the Session and for your robust contribution, both physically and intellectually. I remain amazed at the level of commitment and doggedness that you display towards matters that better the lives of West African citizens".

Continuing, the Speaker stated that "The end of this Session also signaled the end of the year 2021 parliamentary activities. I wish to categorically state that without mutual cooperation and understanding between and among Members, it would have been impossible to record the many accomplishments in our service to the people during the year ending.

In a display of optimism for the ensuing year, Speaker declared that, "I am confident that in the year 2022, we would achieve a lot, considering that it would mark the middle of our tenure.

With the level of enthusiasm we displayed in 2021, I have no doubt that it would be a fruitful year. I appreciate your unwavering commitment and wish to commend you for your untiring services to the Community and its people".

Speaker Tunis expressed deep appreciation to President Muhammadu Buhari, his government and people of Nigeria for their support, especially for being a gracious host of the seat of Parliament.

"In closing, let me once again thank His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari GCFR, the Government and the wonderful people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for the hospitality and the welcoming atmosphere, which enabled us carry out our tasks to the West African citizens in peace and harmony", he remarked.

Additionally, he extended "warm gratitude to members of staff of the ECOWAS Parliament, Staff of the ECOWAS Commission and other stakeholders and service providers alike" and applauded the corporate efforts that culminated into the Parliament's record of a successful session.

In conclusion, the Speaker outlined the first Parliamentary activities of 2022 to include "a Parliamentary Seminar from 26th to 28th January and our First Extraordinary Session, from 31st January to 4th February, in Lome, the Republic of Togo".

# COVID-19: Speaker Tunis urges citizens to vaccinate

**D**r. Sidie Mohammed Tunis has sent out a clarion call to all ECOWAS citizens and residents to endeavor to vaccinate against COVID-19, in order to mitigate further spread within the Community.

Speaker Tunis also commended Members of Parliament for the passage of the 2022 Community Consolidated Budget, as well as the adoption of the ECOWAS Vision 2050 and other referrals from various ECOWAS Institutions.

While addressing The Plenary at the closing ceremony of the 2021 Second Ordinary Session of the Parliament in Abuja, Nigeria, he stated that, "The COVID-19 pandemic continued to remain a challenge to the world. The new variant calledOMICRON, is going to be another test for the coming year. I urge everyone to stay strong, steadfast and faithful to the fight against COVID-19. We must ensure we get vaccinated, and keep all the protocols to mitigate the spread of the deadly virus. We have weathered through similar phases in the past and will continue to win". Reminiscing, Speaker Tunis

recalled the process that led to Parliament's adoption of the Community budget, stating that, "Principally, we assembled to consider the consolidated community budget. It is gratifying to note that we achieved that task successfully. As you may recall, the Budget was presented by the AFC Chairman, supported by the ECOWAS Commissioner for Finance. We set up an ad-hoc Committee to consider the budget and it came up with its recommendations, leading to the final adoption by this Parliament, of the budget and the accompanying resolution"

In addition, the Speaker lauded the work done by Parliament, saying: "I must congratulate us all for our doggedness and our commitment towards ensuring that we fulfilled our mandate, even whilst working within a limited time period. In addition to the consideration of the Community budget, the Session also dedicated time to examine several referrals from the ECOWAS Commission. One of which was the draft Vision 2050".

"Here again, I must admit how proud I am with the seriousness with which we

approached the assignment. We were able to consider the document and make our recommendations within the shortest time possible", he added.

"Let me remind us all that the Vision 2050 document is very central to the future of our region. Its proper implementation would go a long way in determining the peace, security, stability and socio-economic development of the region in the next 30years".

Specifically on Parliament's 2022 Budget, Speaker Tunis noted that "It is gratifying to announce that the Parliament's Budget for the year 2022 has been adopted by the ECOWAS Council of Ministers.

"It promises to achieve long lasting effects, especially in areas of youth and gender development. I wish to pledge that we would utilize the funds appropriately, towards meeting the objectives of promoting gender-based issues within the general framework of our current Strategic Plan", he explained.

## Nigeria applauds ECOWAS Parliament's citizen-driven initiatives



**President Muhammadu Buhari,  
President, Federal Republic of Nigeria**

Photocredit: fmic.gov.ng

The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari has called on all Member-State legislatures to support the on-going ECOWAS Parliamentary interventions. Speaking during the Opening Session of the Second Ordinary Session of the Parliament in Abuja, the President who was represented by the President of Nigeria's Senate, Ahmad Lawan, gave this charge while declaring the event open.

President Buhari stated that democracy is a priceless system of government, noting that engendering good governance, transparency and accountability remains a sure way for the growth of democracy in the sub-region.

He emphasized that “Parliamentarians are the bastion of the culture of democracy”, adding that, strengthening democracy is significant.

The Nigerian President advocated, concerted efforts that are citizen-centric as panacea to the nagging challenges of insecurity, insurgency, banditry, human trafficking, arson, rape and a host of other crimes.

Identifying, sharing of intelligence as key to combating crimes, he observed that apprehending perpetrators would always serve as a deterrent and ultimately, eradicate the menace.

In a similar tone, the Nigerian leader observed that the impact of Climate Change on our lives, livelihoods and environment are serious. He then advised that there are urgent and compelling reasons for regional and community remedial actions that must be effective and sustainable, to mitigate these consequences.

He recommended synergy among the Community Member-States in developing solutions.

“The issues may be divergent, but there should be synergy in the development of solutions. I am confident we have the right attitude to discuss them as Parliamentarians, not only to broaden perspectives, but to be specific on solutions”, President Muhammadu Buhari added.

*...Contd from page 2*

Perimeter fencing, engineering studies and architectural design  
- New ECOWAS Headquarters – Project Supervision and construction of borehole  
- Renovation of President's Residence

Breakdown of allocation to Peace and Security - UA 6,700,000 in line with the approval from the December 2003 Summit of Heads of state and government that took place in Accra, Ghana.

International Coordination Centre (ICC), Yaounde, a Centre that was established by ECOWAS, ECCAS and GCC to combat maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea - UA 621,455 was also allocated to the ICC budget represents ECOWAS's share of the cost of funding the operations of the Centre.

- Deployment of Troops in Guinea Bissau (ECOMIB) - UA3,911,347.

- Deployment of Troops in the Gambia - UA 17,855,586; a budgetary provision that will fund feeding of troops, cost of troops deployment, and hardware refund to member states contributing equipment.

- AFISMA - UA1,225,463  
While Parliament noted the existence of a special fund to combat terrorism in the sub-region, It called on the Authority of Heads of State and Government to assist in accomplishing the desired level of compliance in the application of the Community Levy Protocol. Moreover, It called on MPs to take advantage of its decentralized meetings as

sensitizing platforms in Member-States on the importance of paying the Community Levy promptly and completely.

On alternative sources of income, Members of Parliament urged for more collaboration by the Commission and Parliament, in order to persuade Member-States to improve on their internal sources of funds for the Community's programmes.

Parliament implored Member-States to finance part of the external sources of funds so as not to be unduly influenced by some Development Partners.

The programme-based budgeting and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) will take effect from year 2023.

# Highlights of Country Reports:

## - Sierra Leone committed to human capital development

The 5-member delegation of Members of Parliament from Sierra Leone has reported the Member State's high level of commitment to human capital development. One of the indicators of that commitment as contained in its Country Report to Parliament, presented by Hon. Shiaka Musa Sama, at the second ordinary session of the 5<sup>th</sup> legislature, is that the government of Sierra Leone has maintained its 21% budgetary allocation to the education sector.

The Report attributed the

progressive increase in the enrolment rate of pupils in government and government assisted schools to the country's Act of Parliament - "the Sierra Leone Students Loan Scheme Act 2021". The Country Report stated that this Act is aimed at facilitating and enhancing access to funds to support tertiary education.

However, the Report noted that while the government has made progress in this sector and in the promotion of labour rights, access by Sierra Leoneans, to clean and safe water, has remained a challenge for most communities,

particularly during the dry season.

On human rights, the Report noted that Sierra Leone, as a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, remains committed to monitoring and managing human rights issues. Driving home its point, the Country Report further stated that, every year, Sierra Leone produces its mandate on human rights and presents a report to the President on the state of human rights, after which it is subsequently laid before the Parliament.

## EVENTS IN PICTURES



**The Speaker of ECOWAS Parliament in a chat with the President of ECOWAS Commission, His Excellency Jean-Claude Kassi Brou.**



**A cross section of MPs & Dignitaries at the opening ceremonies of the Second Ordinary Session of ECOWAS Parliament. Flanked on both sides 4th (R-L) First Deputy Speaker Ahmed Idris Wase, Speaker ECOWAS Parliament Rt. Hon. Sidie Mohamed Tunis, Third Deputy Speaker Memounatou Ibrahim, The Senate President, Nigeria Senate, Sen. Ahmed Lawan & The President of the ECOWAS Commission H.E Jean-Claude Brou and others.**

## EVENTS IN PICTURES



**The Nigeria Senate President, Sen. Ahmed Ibrahim Lawan with the executive members of ECOFEPA during a courtesy visit.**



**R-L Secretary-General Dr. John Azumah, Third Deputy Speaker Hon. Ibrahim Memounatou, Speaker, ECOWAS Parliament Rt. Hon. Sidie Mohamed Tunis, Senate President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Sen. Ahamed Lawan, First Deputy Speaker Ahmed Idris Wase & President of ECOWAS Commission H.E Jean Claude Kassi Brou & two other dignities during the 2021 Second Ordinary Session in Abuja Nigeria.**



**Plenary of ECOWAS Parliament during the Second Ordinary Session.**



## EVENTS IN PICTURES



**Presentation of Award to the Nigerian Ambassador to ECOWAS Amb. Sani Nuhu by Amb. Zubairu Dada as Speaker Tunis applauds.**



**L-R Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament Rt. Hon. Sidie Mohamed Tunis, Hon. Lynda Chuba-Ikpeazu, Sen. Abiodun Olujimi during presentation as Patron of ECOFEPA to Mr Speaker.**



**A tour of the proposed site for the construction of the ECOWAS Headquarters in Abuja by the FCT Minister, Malam Muhammed Musa Bello, with the Speaker ECOWAS Parliament & First Deputy Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament.**

## EVENTS IN PICTURES



Third Deputy Speaker Memounatou Ibrahima during plenary.



Courtesy visit by the Speaker ECOWAS Parliament to the President of Nigeria.



MPs at Plenary observing meditation/prayer.

## - 'Nigeria's new electoral bill will enhance public trust' – Country Report



Nigeria new electoral act bill

Photocredit: thisdaylive.com

The new Electoral Bill passed by the Nigerian National Assembly, which is awaiting presidential assent, is geared towards enhancing public trust in the electoral process. This was the message from Nigeria's 35-member country delegation to the ECOWAS Parliament, in its Country Report delivered to the Plenary, the highest body in the ECOWAS Parliament.

Presenting the Report on behalf of her colleagues, at the 2021 Second Ordinary Session of the Parliament in Abuja, Hon. Lynda Chuba-Ikpeazu explained that the country, in its efforts to improve the political environment decided to push for a new electoral bill to

enhance public trust in the electoral system of the country.

"It is believed that the new electoral bill would enhance public trust in the electoral system and ensure free and fair elections through the incorporation of technological innovations", she stated.

The Report read in part, that: "With the passing of the electoral bill in July, 2021, by both houses of the Nigerian National Assembly, it awaits presidential assent".

On the challenges militating against the electoral process, the delegation reported that there were some problems, citing examples of the just concluded gubernatorial elections in Anambra state.

"It is noteworthy that the Anambra gubernatorial elections conducted in October, 2021 has been trailed by allegations of faulty Biometrics, Voter Accreditation System (BVAS)".

The Report further stated that, "The Nigerian political space has been agog with expectations of an invigorated electoral process which needs to be improved upon".

The Nigerian delegation acknowledged the efforts of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in its efforts to refine electronic voting, stating that, "The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) of Nigeria in September 2021 presented a roadmap to strengthen electronic voting and integrate electronic transmission of election results, to enable Nigerians view polling unit results in real time".

The delegation however, assured that the new electoral bill will be implemented in the next elections; stressing that, "It is believed that these new improvements would be made to the system before the 2023 Nigerian general elections".

## - Nigeria remains stable despite insecurity

Nigeria's Country Report also showed that its government has recorded several victories in the fight against insurgency and banditry and the country remains stable despite pockets of insecurity incidents.

On Boko Haram insurgency, the delegation also reported that on August 2021, through intensive efforts of the Nigerian Army, the Member State recorded a mile-stone in the

fight against local terrorism, in an "unprecedented mass-surrender", where at least, 186 members of ISWAP and Boko Haram surrendered to the Nigerian troops, leading to "security incidents in their operating areas of the North-East have significantly dwindled".

"In September 2021, the Nigerian Army also raided an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) materials hub in Borno

and Yobe States and also succeeded in arresting a high-profile Boko Haram member. The operation carried out by the Joint Task Force North-East Operation HADIN KAI (OPHK)", the Country Report disclosed.

It also indicated reduced security incidents of herder-farmer clashes, attributed to the anti-open grazing ban declared by Governors in the southern States of the country, earlier in

the year.

To buttress the above point, the report cited the example of Nigeria's South-South State of Bayelsa which confirmed that the enforcement of the anti-open grazing law effectively restored calm in the State; reducing the constant frictions between herders and other residents of the State.

Similarly, the Report stated that insecurity occurrences, largely from activities of the proscribed group, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and criminal elements who tried to take advantage of the situation,

have wreaked havoc in the South-East zone of Nigeria, recording over 200% increase in killings and violent attacks on civilians and government forces since the capture of IPOB's leader in June 2021. The leader of the group has since been charged with treason amid mixed reactions from the Nigerian society, the Report said.

However, the Report concluded that despite increased security incidents in the South-Eastern States, the geo-political zone has remained stable.

On maritime security, Nigeria's

Report noted that, as a significant player in the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOCWA), the Member State established the Integrated National Maritime Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure tagged "Deep Blue Project", in June 2021.

Citing a report by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), Nigeria's Report to The Plenary indicated that security incidents in the Gulf of Guinea significantly reduced from the same period.

## - COVID-19: 'More than 3 million Nigerians fully Vaccinated So Far'



### 3 million Nigerians vaccinated so far

Photocredit: news.un.org

In its quest to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, the Nigerian government has so far vaccinated 3,938,945 million of its population across the 36 states including the FCT, according to Nigeria's Country Report presented to The Plenary.

The Report reflected a 98% utilization of the 4,024,000 doses of the Oxford

AstraZeneca Vaccine, with first and second doses administered to 2,534,205 people and 1,404,205 people respectively. In her presentation, Hon. Lynda Chuba-Ikpeazu explained that "Nigeria's vaccination program had from the outset, been trailed by a number of setbacks. From challenges around production rights, distribution bottlenecks, to widespread apathy amongst Nigerians towards the vaccine.

Notwithstanding these initial challenges, we are making giant strides in ensuring that a considerable number of Nigerians are vaccinated in the shortest possible time."

The Report revealed that despite stringent efforts put in place, the first confirmed case of the Delta variant was detected in Nigeria within the second quarter of 2021, "On 8th July 2021, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) recorded the first confirmed case of the SARS-CoV-2, Delta Variant in Nigeria. The variant was detected in a traveler to Nigeria, following a routine travel test required of all international travelers, at the NCDC National Reference Laboratory, Abuja.

"This has prompted the Federal Government of Nigeria to

double its efforts to stem the risk of the spread through the Presidential Steering Committee (PSC), in addition to establishing a set of safety guidelines to mitigate the rate of infection”.

According to the Report, the Federal Government took further proactive measures in the form of a \$400 million credit approval from the World Bank's Board of Directors, through its International Development Association

(IDA).

“This is to provide upfront financing for the acquisition of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, as well as to strengthen the country's health system interventions, such as enhancing health-emergency response capacity, and cold chain equipment, disease surveillance, data management, and laboratory testing for the long-term”.

The Report also showed that

the Nigerian government is taking active strides to reach 'herd immunity' levels, by targeting the vaccination of 40% of its eligible populace by the end of 2021. To achieve this, it has kick started a mass COVID-19 vaccination campaign that is projected to exponentially increase the statistics of vaccinated people by 50% before the end of January 2022.

## - Liberia Celebrates Its Bicentennial Anniversary



**Liberia's bicentennial anniversary after 200 years of Americo-Liberians repatriation**

Photocredit:mnn.ng

December, 2021, marks Liberia's bicentennial anniversary, according to the Country Report presented by its 5-member delegation to Parliament. “Liberia will celebrate 200 years of existence when the first batch of freed slaves of African descent known as Americo-Liberians was repatriated to

their motherland in Africa, specifically Liberia”, stated the Report, which was presented on behalf of the delegation by Hon. Stephen J.H. Zargo,

According to the Report, this milestone event is not only geared towards reclaiming and heralding Liberia's leadership role in Pan-Africanism, but also for rebranding the country after

its recent checkered history, while also celebrating its rich cultural heritage and showcasing the vast tourism attractions it is naturally endowed with.

“It is an event that sets to reinforce our social coexistence and cohesion as a nation of a triple African heritage, thereby leading to the fostering of peace, unity and solidarity in the creed of one nation and one people under God, with liberty and justice for all”, the Report added.

In a dispensation, when people of African descent were seeking freedom and self-determination, the founding fathers of Liberia, “the Black Republic”, which gained independence in 1847, stood as the clear indication that Africans were capable of self-rule, the Report asserted.

## - Benin Scores Country High on Implementation of Protocol on Free Movement

The 5 - Member Parliamentary delegation from the Republic of Benin have reported that the Member State surpassed all other Member States of the region in the implementation of the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, Goods and Services.

The Benin Country Report, presented on behalf of the delegation by Hon. Bida Nouhoume Youssoufou Abdouramani, stated that the ranking was contained in the ECOWAS Commission Task Force in its latest report.

According to the Country Report, “The latest report of the ECOWAS Task Force indicates that Benin has surpassed all other Member States of the ECOWAS region with regard to free movement of persons and goods, making it the best student in the community in this

regard”.

The Report stated that, “This performance earned the Head of State of Benin, President Patrice Talon, congratulations and recognition from the Authority of Heads of State and Government”

It specified that Benin has so far applied “Protocol A/SP.1/1/05/79 of June 25, 1979 on the movement of persons, the right of residence and establishment; Protocol A/SP.1/1/03 of January 31, 2003 relating to the definition of the concept of “products originating” from ECOWAS Member States; and the Convention on the Inter-State Road Transit (ISRT) of 1982 relating to the creation of a customs road transit regime between ECOWAS Member States to facilitate the movement of goods”

According to the Report, also applied is the “Convention on the regulation of the ECOWAS Inter-States Road Transport, known as the 1982 ISRT Convention, defining the conditions under which road transport must be conducted between ECOWAS Members States (technical standards for vehicles, routes, etc)”.

Additional conventions applied by Benin as stated by the Report, include, “The Accra Memorandum of Understanding of September 11, 2007 between ECOWAS, the Member States of the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor (Benin, Togo, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Ghana) and the Abidjan- Lagos Corridor Organization (OCAL), relating to the facilitation of transport and road transit on the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor”.

## - The Gambia Signs into Law, National Assembly Service Act 2021

The Gambia's Country Report showed that as part of efforts to deepen West Africa's democracy, the Member State has enacted the National Assembly Service Act of 2021. Presenting its Country Report during the Second Ordinary Session, Hon. Fatoumatta Njai enthused that Gambians considered this step as the latest glory for democracy in the country.

The Report stated that the Information Bill, reported to the Plenary during the First

Ordinary session in May, 2021, has also been passed by the Gambian National Assembly and assented to by the President, giving the National Assembly Service, the financial and administrative autonomy it has long craved for.

In addition, the Report disclosed that the Republic of The Gambia held its presidential election on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December 2021, in which, Adama Barrow emerged the winner and was declared President by the Independent

National Electoral Commission.

It affirmed that the just concluded election was peaceful and has been acclaimed by observers as free and fair.

Touching on the security situation, the Report added that the implementation of the reform is to transform the country's security sector into an effective, vibrant and professional force capable of defending the supremacy of the constitution at all times.

# Towards ECOWAS Parliamentary Awards -AWALCO/Orderpaper seek support

The Association of West African Legislative Correspondents (AWALCO) has made a proposal to ECOWAS Parliament, for the institution of a Parliamentary Awards to

launch of the signature ECOParl Anniversary Magazine, broadcast of a Legacy multi-media Documentary and a research study on 20 years of the ECOWAS Parliament in 2022, culminating into an

According to him, some of the benefits include advocacy opportunities for cardinal institutional reforms; expanding the support base of the Parliament; galvanizing citizens of the Community for initiatives of the Parliament; improving and enhancing the public profile of the Parliament; and positioning the Fifth Legislature as reforms champion, especially in its quest for actualizing direct Universal suffrage as the means of electing members into the Parliament and reinforcing the critical conviction of elections as a vehicle for legitimacy in democracy.



Prince Kanayo C. Nwajei, Lead Consultant, AWALCO/ Orderpaper Consortium

outstanding and deserving Members of Parliament, who have made significant contributions towards advancing the mandate of the institution as well as, the general progress of the legislative body.

The Maiden Awards, are projected to be part of the 20<sup>th</sup> plus Anniversary Celebrations of the Parliament and is expected to form the basis for inducting deserving Members into the ECOWAS Parliament's Hall of Fame.

The initiative which is driven by a Consortium of AWALCO and OrderPaper, working with support from the ECOWAS Parliament, would include, the

authoritative publication that will serve to enlighten the populace about its journey so far.

The Consortium's Project Lead Coordinator, Prince Kanayo C. Nwajei disclosed this in his presentation to the Plenary, with Speaker of the Parliament, Rt. Hon. Dr. Sidie Mohamed Tunis presiding, during the recently concluded 2021 Second Ordinary Session in Abuja.

Speaking on behalf of the Consortium, Prince Kanayo said their proposition offers a coterie of benefits to the ECOWAS Parliament in the short, medium and long term.

"On the other hand, our proposition also offers a stream of unique benefits to perceptive institutions and organizations that would key into the Project", he stated.

The Project Lead Consultant said "The Consortium, therefore, specifically and humbly requests an instrument of endorsement from His Excellency, the Speaker, ECOWAS Parliament, Rt. Hon. (Dr.) Mohammed Tunis, to facilitate our approach to prospective sponsors. This request is based on our belief that this Project can be implemented at no cost to the Parliament".



L-R: Speaker Rt. Hon. Sidie Tunis receiving Award as “ECPFEP Patron” Hon. Lynda Chuba Ikpeazu and Sen. Abiodun Olujimi on behalf of ECOFEPA Executive Members.

Nwajei further appealed that "We respectfully, request the Secretary General to provide institutional support and endorsement to the Consortium to enable it explore a variety of sponsorships opportunities in the Public, Private and Development Sectors across the sub-region.

“We believe that many organizations and institutions will be keen to identify with the ECOWAS Parliament on this auspicious occasion for which His Excellency, the Speaker of ECOWAS Parliament, the Rt. Hon. Dr. Sidi Mohammed Tunis, had declared a Year-Long Anniversary Celebrations”.

AWALCO is a professional

body with membership across Member states and its leadership is representative of the entire sub-region, protecting the interests of journalists, covering the Parliament from various media organizations across the ECOWAS sub-region.

AWALCO is working in collaboration with OrderPaper, a renowned Nigerian independent organisation, promoting research-based citizen engagement on the legislature, with support from the Communications Division of the ECOWAS Parliament, as well as other prospective partners in the civil society, with pedigree around the works of parliaments from Member States.

## EDITORIAL TEAM

**Editor in Chief:**  
John Azumah  
(Secretary General)

**Editor:**  
Uchenna Duru-Nwaotule  
(Ag. Chief Communication Officer)

**(Communication Officer)**  
Adama Savadogo

**(Communication Assistant)**  
Anaeto Ogonna Justin-Fred

### Contributing Sub-Editors:

Nwajei Kanayo C.  
Philip Nyam

### Editorial Contributors:

Oludare Richards  
David Osuji  
Nancy Udeogu  
Zainab Ogaji  
Bilikisu Folorunsho  
Peter Onogwu  
Binta Isimbabi

**Social Media:**  
Ngozi Esther Udoba

**Photography/Graphics:**  
Raphael O. Duru  
Christie Jalija

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