

COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO



ECOWAS COMMISSION

COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO

MIDWA

Steering Committee

Dakar, Senegal - February 18, 2016

Report

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The first meeting of the Steering Committee of Migration Dialogue for West Africa (MIDWA) took place on February 18, 2016 at Novotel, Dakar.

2. The main purpose of the meeting was to establish the MIDWA Steering Committee and its executive bodies, including the MIDWA Permanent Secretariat, the National Secretariats and the Thematic Groups. The theme of the MIDWA 2016 was also included in the agenda.

The following Member States and technical and financial partners were represented at the meeting:

- Cabo Verde
 - Côte d'Ivoire
 - Ghana
 - Guinea
 - Mali
 - Niger
 - Senegal
- IOM and Switzerland attended the meeting as observers.

The list of participants is attached to this report.

II. OPENING CEREMONY

3. Mr. Sanoh N'Faly, Director of Free Movement of Persons and Tourism, ECOWAS Commission, welcomed the participants to the inaugural meeting of the MIDWA Steering Committee. He then thanked the technical and financial partners including the European Union, IOM and Switzerland for their commitment and continued support to ECOWAS in the implementation of the regional integration process. Mr. Sanoh finally clarified that this meeting was aimed at providing the ongoing Dialogue on migration issues in West Africa with an institutional framework that would allow actors to fully participate and to find consensus solutions. Faced with major issues of international migration and to take the best advantage of current and future funding opportunities, it would be necessary and urgent for West African Countries to consult and organize themselves through a structured dialogue platform. Mr. Sanoh emphasized that the establishment of a Steering Committee to oversee the MIDWA was now a requirement.

4. The Representative of the Ministry of African Integration, NEPAD and Promotion of Good Governance, Mr. Jean Antoine Diouf, Director of Regional Integration, on behalf of the high authorities, also extended a warm welcome to the participants in Senegal. He was pleased that his country was chosen to host the meeting of the MIDWA Steering Committee. He added that this is an eloquent testimony of the efforts made by Senegal to boost not only regional integration in West Africa but also and above all to advocate for ECOWAS interests on migration issues in international fora. To translate this real determination to promote regional integration within the Community, Mr. Diouf informed the meeting that Senegal had initiated a law establishing the ECOWAS National Biometric Identity Card



adopted in December 2015. Continuing, Mr Diouf acknowledged the need for the establishment of a Steering Committee for the Dialogue on Migration which he said was an important step in strengthening the regional consultative processes on migration. It is also an exhortation to Member States to discuss their common concerns in a regional context as only concerted approaches and synergies of action can enable them to face the many challenges of migration. In this perspective, he invited all participants to conduct meaningful discussions by defining the missions and the modus operandi of the Steering Committee in order to make it a real working tool that would contribute to setting the major guidelines on migration issues in the sub-region.

Mrs. Djoké Savoedo, Representative of the Swiss Cooperation during the meeting of the Steering Committee congratulated ECOWAS for having initiated the establishment of the MIDWA Steering Committee. This is a major imperative for ECOWAS to further strengthen the dialogue on migration within the Community, given the importance of flows estimated at about 84% and their socioeconomic impact. According to her, it is quite relevant that intra-regional mobility increasingly received real attention in ECOWAS policies and strategies on migration.

Mrs. Claudia Natali, IOM Representative at the meeting of the Steering Committee, recalled that the MIDWA is a good example of consultation process on migration issues which enables ECOWAS to have an effective institutional anchorage by giving possibility to all stakeholders to discuss common concerns and identify consensus solutions. The establishment of the Steering Committee by ECOWAS is an important step in improving the consultation framework on migration in West Africa.

III RESULTS OF THE MEETING

Mr. Sanoh made a presentation on the MIDWA instruments which must now stimulate dialogue on migration. Thus, he highlighted the need to ensure better coordination of migration issues at both national and regional levels based on structures at two levels:

National level: A National Secretariat, main focal point which will have the task to coordinate all actions and sectoral initiatives on migration and to monitor the implementation in relation to the national administrative bodies, local authorities, civil society actors and the MIDWA Permanent Secretariat.

Regional level: A MIDWA Permanent Secretariat: Regionally, its task will be to ensure the organization and facilitation of the ongoing dialogue on the one hand between all stakeholders of the region and on the other hand with third countries, and worthy African and European Institutions. In addition, the Permanent Secretariat will monitor the implementation of MIDWA programs, projects and activities.

Regarding the Steering Committee the presentation pointed out that it provides guidance and impetus to the MIDWA. It is composed of eight (8) ECOWAS Members States and Mauritania. The Steering Committee will meet twice (2) a year. In order to obtain a strong involvement of all States in the impetus of the MIDWA, it is proposed that the chairmanship of the meetings is assumed by the countries that host them. Members of the Steering Committee shall be compulsorily replaced at the end of their mandate. The European Union, IOM and Switzerland, traditional partners, have an observer status in the Steering Committee.

In addition, five (5) Thematic Groups are proposed to serve as a framework that will inform the debates of the MIDWA. These are:



Group I: Border management, trafficking and transnational crime

Group II: Diaspora, West African Communities and / or Nationals

Group III: Professional mobility and student exchanges

Group IV: Return, Readmission and Reintegration

Group V: Cooperation and partnerships

These five (5) themes cover much of the problem of migration. It can change over time depending on the needs. The number of groups may also increase.

After fruitful discussions on these proposals, the meeting has first of all appreciated the efforts made by ECOWAS for the establishment of a framework for structured and organized dialogue on migration issues. The meeting also made the following recommendations:

1. The establishment of the Steering Committee, the Permanent Secretariat and the National Secretariats is approved. The Free Movement Directorate is invited to initiate the validation process by the ECOWAS statutory decision-making bodies.
2. The National Secretariats shall include all state actors, those of the civil society and officials from border communities to maintain and strengthen the dialogue between them on migration issues.
3. The terms of reference, modus operandi, composition, responsibilities of the Thematic Groups must be further refined. All the members of the Steering Committee are invited to contribute by sending their proposals to ECOWAS.
4. There must be a turnover of half of the members of the Steering Committee at the end of the mandates.
5. The chairmanship of the Steering Committee must be assumed by the ECOWAS Member State which holds the ECOWAS chairmanship.
6. The Observer status to the MIDWA Steering Committee must be granted to all technical and financial partners without exception.
7. The Permanent Secretariat must prepare and submit to the Steering Committee all reports and other activities of the MIDWA.
8. The theme of the next meeting of the MIDWA 2016 shall focus on "socioeconomic impacts of the free movement of persons in West Africa." The related sub themes include the labour market information system in the region, remittances of migrants within the region and replication in other ECOWAS Member States of the Reception, Information and Orientation Centre of migrants from Côte d'Ivoire.

V. ADOPTION OF THE FINAL REPORT

The final report of the first meeting of the MIDWA Steering Committee was adopted after amendment.

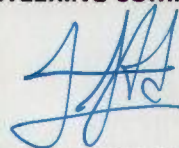


VI. CLOSING CEREMONY

After the meeting, Director Sanoh welcomed the results achieved. He committed to making MIDWA a powerful tool for dialogue for all States and other actors. As for the President of the Bureau, Mr. Jean Antoine Diouf, he thanked all participants for their outstanding work as evidenced by the significant recommendations. He wished all participants a safe journey to their respective destinations, before closing the first meeting of the MIDWA Steering Committee.

Dakar, February 18, 2016

FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE



JEAN ANTOINE DIOUF

