

**Declaration of a Moratorium on Importation, Exportation, and  
Manufacture of Light Weapons in West Africa**

*October 31, 1998*

**WE, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS);**

**CONSIDERING the principles and objectives embodied in the revised ECOWAS Treaty, the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity, and the United Nations Charter;**

**CONSIDERING the fact that the proliferation of light weapons constitutes a destabilising factor for ECOWAS Member States and a threat to the peace and security of our people;**

**CONSIDERING the resolutions of the United Nations conference on conflict prevention, disarmament and development held in Bamako in November 1996;**

**CONSIDERING the directives of the fourth extraordinary session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government which took place in Lomé, on 17 December, 1997, relating to the establishment of a sub-regional mechanism for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping and security;**

**CONSIDERING the recommendations of the meeting of ECOWAS Ministers of Foreign Affairs; Defence, Internal Affairs and Security held in Yamoussoukro on 11 and 12 March 1998;**

**CONSIDERING the reaffirmation of the commitment made by the ECOWAS Member States at the Oslo Conference held on 1 and 2 April 1998, and the declared support of the international community for the proposal to place a moratorium on light weapons in West Africa;**

**CONSIDERING the repeated encouragement of the United Nations for disarmament in West Africa as stipulated in the relevant Resolutions of the 50th, 51st and 52nd Sessions of the General Assembly;**

**CONSIDERING the outcomes of the meetings of Ministers of Defence, Internal Affairs and Security and of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Banjul on 23 and 24 July 1998, and in Abuja on 26 to 29 October 1998 respectively, endorsed by us in Abuja on 31 October, 1998;**

**CONSIDERING the unqualified approval demonstrated by Member States of the Wassenaar Arrangement and on other arms manufacturers for a moratorium on Light Weapons in West Africa;**

**HEREBY SOLEMNLY DECLARE A MORATORIUM ON THE IMPORTATION, EXPORTATION AND MANUFACTURE OF LIGHT WEAPONS IN ECOWAS MEMBER STATES WHICH SHALL TAKE EFFECT FROM THE FIRST DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1998 FOR A RENEWABLE PERIOD OF THREE (3) YEARS.**

**DIRECT the ECOWAS Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the United Nations system to convene a meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of experts to launch the operational framework for the associated measures of the moratorium under the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED).**

**SEEKING TO ENSURE the success of the Moratorium;**

**HEREBY SOLICIT the assistance of the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations and the international community in implementing the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED).**

**Direct the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with PCASED, to convene a meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to assess and evaluate the moratorium at the end of the initial three-year period.**

**IN FAITH WHEREOF, WE THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES HAVE SIGNED THIS DECLARATION.**

**DONE AT ABUJA, THIS 31ST DAY OF OCTOBER, 1998 IN SINGLE ORIGINAL IN THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH LANGUAGES BOTH TEXTS BEING EQUALLY AUTHENTIC.**

**H.E Mathieu Kerekou- President of the Republic of Benin**

**Hon.Ablasse Ouedraogo- Minister of Foreign Affairs for and on behalf of the President of Faso**

**Hon. Carlos Alberto Wahanon de Carvalho Veiga-Prime Minister of the Republic of Cabo Verde**

**H.E. Henri Konan Bedie- President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire**

**H.E. Col. Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh- President of the Republic of the Gambia**

**H.E. (Rtd) Flt.-Lt Jerry John Rawlings- President of the Republic of Ghana**

**H.E. General Lansana Conte- President of the Republic of Guinea**

**H.E. Joao Bernardo Vieira- President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau**

**H.E. Charles Taylor- President of the Republic of Liberia**

**H.E. Alpha Oumar Konaré- President of the Republic of Mali**

**S.E. Mohamed A. Ould Moine- Ambassador for and on behalf of the President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania**

**H.E. Ibrahim Mainassara Bare- President of the Republic of Niger**

**H.E. General Abdulsalami Abubakar- Head of State, Commander-in-Chief-of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria**

**H.E. Abdou Diouf- President of the Republic of Senegal**

**H.E Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah- President of the Republic of Sierra Leone**

**H.E. Gnassingbe Eyadme- President of the Togolese Republic**