

**DECISION A/DEC.2/01/06 RELATING TO THE ADOPTION OF THE CONCEPT OF BORDER COUNTRIES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANS-BORDER COOPERATION WITHIN THE ECOWAS REGION**

**THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT;**

MINDFUL of Articles 7, 8 and 9 of the ECOWAS Treaty establishing the Authority of Heads of State and Government and defining its composition and functions;

NOTING that populations with socio-economic and cultural links live in geographical areas that cut across two or more neighbouring States;

CONSCIOUS of the increasing role of the populations of trans-border towns and villages in the enhancement of the regional integration process through daily initiatives for the concerted management and the common and informal sharing of socio-economic infrastructure located across the border areas;

CONVINCED that cross border integration constitutes a factor in the acceleration and enhancement of regional integration;

ANXIOUS to transform the proximity of local communities separated by borders into dynamic areas of development and peace;

CONVINCED of achieving this objective by encouraging the free and unhindered movement of the populations of trans-border towns and villages and by facilitating the development of economic and cultural activities within these areas through dialogue, solidarity and complementarity;

DESIRING therefore, to recognise trans-border communities as contact and trade zones, and develop institutional intermediaries at the national and local levels, with a view to ensuring greater efficiency of initiatives for the joint management of the everyday problems of populations located along the borders;

ON THE RECOMMENDATION of the fifty-fourth session of the Council of Ministers, held in Abuja on 23 June 2005;

**DECIDES**

**ARTICLE 1**

1. The concept of border countries is hereby adopted.
2. Border countries are defined as a geographical area cutting across two or more neighbouring States inhabited by populations with socio-economic and cultural links.
3. They constitute an important element of trans-border cooperation within the ECOWAS region.

**ARTICLE 2**

The concept of border countries forms part of the regional integration strategy and is taken into account in ECOWAS programmes of activities.

**ARTICLE 3**

In order to enable border countries effectively strengthen regional integration, ECOWAS shall focus efforts on developing trans-border cooperation. To this end, the Executive Secretariat shall:

- (i) prepare trans-border cooperation programmes that should take the following aspects into account:
  - identification and preparation of inventory of trans-border initiatives;
  - creation of permanent trans-border frameworks for dialogue between local and regional authorities and/or groups on either side of the borders;
  - exchanges of experiences, sharing of best practices in trans-border cooperation;
  - involvement of national structures charged with trans-border matters, elected officers of trans-border communities and relevant socio-professional organisations;
  - management of problems of the everyday life of the populations of trans-border towns and villages;
  - mobilisation and support of partners;

- (ii) set up a community fund to facilitate trans-border cooperation;
- (iii) submit proposals in view of establishing an Observatory of border countries.

#### ARTICLE 4

This Decision shall be published by the Executive Secretariat in the Official Journal of the Community within thirty (30) days of its signature by the Chairman of the Authority. It shall also be published by each Member State in its Official Gazette within the same time-frame.

**DONE AT NIAMEY,  
THIS 12TH DAY OF JANUARY 2006**



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**H.E. MAMADOU TANDJA  
CHAIRMAN  
FOR THE AUTHORITY**

#### **DECISION A/DEC.3/01/06 RELATING TO THE EXTENSION OF THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD FOR THE PRINTING AND CIRCULATION OF NATIONAL PASSPORTS SIDE BY SIDE WITH THE ECOWAS PASSPORT**

#### **THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT;**

MINDFUL of Articles 7, 8 and 9 of the ECOWAS Treaty establishing the Authority of Heads of State and Government and defining its composition and functions;

MINDFUL of Decision A/DEC. 1/5/2000 relating to the adoption of an ECOWAS Passport;

CONSIDERING that the five (5) year transitional period during which Member States were authorized to continue to print and put into circulation their national passports side by side with the ECOWAS Passport expired on 28 May 2005;

CONSIDERING that by virtue of Decision A/DEC. 1/5/2000, national passports ceased to exist at the end of the transitional period;

NOTING that most of the Member States are to date, yet to print and put into circulation, the ECOWAS passport;

DETERMINED to take appropriate measures to ensure that Member States that are yet to implement Decision A/DEC.1/5/2000 effectively do so;

DESIRING therefore, to extend the transitional period;

UPON RECOMMENDATION of the fifty-fifth session of the Council of Ministers, held in Niamey from 7 to 8, and 11 January 2006;

#### **DECIDES**

##### **Article 1**

The transitional period, during which Member States shall continue to print and put into circulation their national passports side by side with the ECOWAS Passport, is hereby extended for two (2) years with effect from 31 January 2006;

##### **Article 2**

To enable Member States that are yet to issue and put into circulation the ECOWAS Passport in accordance with the features stipulated in Decision A/DEC1/5/2000, to effectively do so within the next