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COMMITTEE**

Dakar, 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2016

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**MEMORANDUM ON THE STATUS OF ESTABLISHMENT OF THE  
ECOWAS LOGISTICS DEPOT IN LUNGI, SIERRA LEONE**

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## **BACKGROUND**

1. Due to the logistics challenges faced by the ECOWAS Operations (ECOMOG) in the 1990s, the first meeting of ECOWAS Defense and Security Commission (DSC) Meeting in Accra, Ghana in 2000 recommended to the Mediation and Security Council (MSC) the establishment of a permanent base for ECOWAS Peace Support Operations (PSO) Missions.
2. The Ministerial Meeting of the MSC in Abuja, Nigeria, on 4th October, 2000, directed the Chairman of the MSC and the ECOWAS Commission to undertake consultations with Member States with a view to establishing two (2) logistics bases, one in a coastal state and the other in a land locked country.
3. In 2004 the Government of Sierra Leone offered to host the Depot and this was endorsed by the 28th (Twenty-eighth) Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government Meeting in Accra, Ghana on 19th January 2005. The Government of Sierra Leone identified an initial site at Hastings Airfield Complex which deemed to be unsuitable given that it failed to meet certain bench marked criteria set by the African Union for the establishment of regional and continental depots.
4. Consequently, an alternative site was offered in December 2009 by the Government of Sierra Leone at the Lungi International Airport, for the construction of the Logistics Depot and staff accommodation. Following the acceptance of the offer, a reviewed Headquarters Agreement on the operational and administrative use of the Facility was signed between the ECOWAS Commission and the Government of Sierra Leone at the thirty-seven (37th) Ordinary Session of Heads of State and Government Summit in February 2010, in Abuja, Nigeria. The land was officially handed over to the ECOWAS Commission in July 2010.

## **CONSTRUCTION OF THE LOGISTICS DEPOT**

5. The ECOWAS Logistics Depot at Lungi, Sierra Leone is expected to be constructed in three (3) phases over a three-year period. The facilities contained under the various phases are as follows:
  - Phase 1: fencing of the designated parcels of land; construction of Security Post on designated parcels of land; construction of Administration building; construction of Generator House for the Administration building; and water supply system.

- Phase 2: construction of communication structures and facilities; construction of motor pool for 50 light vehicles; general supplies warehouse/hangers; vehicle maintenance warehouse and workshop; generator warehouse and workshop; motor pool for 100 heavy-duty vehicles; clinic/sick bay; and fuel depot.
- Phase 3: training block; dormitory for students on logistics training courses; canteen/kitchen; and site development works.

6. At the sixty-third Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers meeting in Abuja, November 2009, Council approved the sum of two million US Dollars (\$2,000,000) for the construction of the ECOWAS Logistics Depot at Lungi.

7. Sequel to the Meeting of the Experts of the Ad -Hoc Ministerial Committee on the Construction of the Headquarters of Community Institutions which held in Freetown, Sierra Leone from 16th – 18th July 2012 and the meeting of the Technical Unit of the ECOWAS Permanent Tenders Board held at the Commission from 8th-17th October 2012, the contract for the construction of phase 1 of the ECOWAS Logistics Depot in Lungi, Sierra Leone was awarded to Messrs HAVAGE Nigeria Limited for a total sum of \$1,730,933.00(One million, seven hundred and thirty thousand, nine hundred and thirty-three US Dollars, only. The construction work has commenced and the phase 1 commenced in April, 2013 and was completed by December 2014.

8. The ECOWAS Commission deployed in Sierra Leone, from 24 to 29 October 2015, a mission to take-over the first phase of the Lungi Logistics Depot. The mission engaged with the relevant authorities in Sierra Leone on some challenges facing the construction process and made some recommendations which are being considered.

### **OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE LOGISTICS DEPOT**

8. At this stage, the depot cannot be made operational as it requires the construction of a few of the facilities contained in the second phase such as the motor pool, vehicle maintenance workshop and the general supplies warehouse.

9. In addition, depot management is a unique and specialized function that requires appropriate structure and areas of core competencies for its efficient operations. Therefore, the ECOWAS Commission is reflecting on options for

identifying, sourcing or building the required competencies and the necessary skill set for the management of the depot.

9. It is also critical to determine and source for the appropriate type of equipment required for the efficient operation of the Logistics Depot. In this regard, the ECOWAS Commission officially received on 24 March 2016 the non-lethal military equipment magnanimously donated by the Government of the Peoples' Republic of China to the ECOWAS Standby Force. The donation is worth about five (5) Million US Dollars and comprises among others Personnel Protective Equipment, a high-capacity Generator, Tents and Tentages, IT and Communications Equipment as well as 8 motor transport vehicles including 3 Command Vehicles, 2 Buses, one Ambulance, one Fuel Tanker (10,000 Litres capacity) and one Water Tanker (10,000 Litres capacity). The equipment are temporarily stored in a military facility graciously provided by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Were the Lungi depot operational, these items would have been received and stored in that facility.

#### **CHALLENGES IN THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE LUNGI LOGISTICS DEPOT**

10. The construction, equipment and operationalization of the Lungi Logistics Depot are affected by financial constraints facing the ECOWAS Commission due to the low level of collation of the Community Levy.

11. In 2015, the ECOWAS Commission made a budgetary provision for the second phase of the construction of the depot. Unfortunately, the poor cash-flow situation at the Commission did not make it possible. Similarly, provision has been made in the 2016 budget for the same purpose and it does not appear this will be feasible, again due to the financial constraints.

12. In addition, further to the completion of the phase 1, some challenges are to be addressed namely, the maintenance of the sites, the supply of electricity and the payment to the security personnel

13. The operationalization of the Lungi Logistics Depot requires the availability of the appropriate equipment that will make the depot functional. While the determination of appropriate seize and type of equipment is being finalized, the modalities to acquire them remains a challenge in view of the current financial constraints.

## **WAY FORWARD**

14. As soon as the financial situation of the Commission improves, the Commission will initiate action on the execution of the second and subsequently the third phases of the depot.

15. in the meantime, the ECOWAS Commission has requested the ECOWAS Office in Sierra Leone to take responsibility for securing the facility, as contained in the Memorandum of Understanding between the ECOWAS Commission and the Government of Sierra Leone

16. The Commission is also preparing to deploy a high-level mission to Sierra Leone ascertain the progress made so far and propose concrete options for the next phases of the construction and plans for the acquisition of the equipment and operationalization of the Lungi Logistics Depot.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

17. In view of the above and on a transitional basis, it is recommended that the ECOWAS Unit in Sierra Leone be authorized by the AFC to assume responsibility for the maintenance of the two (2) sites of the Lungi Logistics Depot, using the 4.5 reimbursement of the Community Levy made to Unit to fund the relevant activities.