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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA  
West African Sub-regional Conference  
on Economic Co-operation  
Accra, 27 April - 4 May 1967

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION  
FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF  
WEST AFRICA

The Signatories to these Articles of Association hereby confirm their Governments' desire to establish the Economic Community of West Africa and undertake to negotiate a Treaty by which the Community shall formally come into being, and to seek ratification of this Treaty by the Member States.

Pending ratification of the Treaty by the Member States, the Signatories being duly constituted as the Interim Council of Ministers do hereby accept on behalf of their Governments these articles of association.

The Community notes that within the sub-region the existing inter-governmental organizations for co-operation on a geographical basis have made a notable contribution to the attainment of its objectives and deems it necessary to co-operate effectively with them.

These Articles of Association shall constitute a transitional arrangement governing the means of co-operation between the Member States prior to the formal establishment of the Community.

ARTICLE I  
AIMS OF THE COMMUNITY

1. The aims of the Community shall be:
  - (a) to promote through the economic co-operation of the Member States a co-ordinated and equitable development of their economies, especially in industry, agriculture, transport and communications, trade and payments, manpower, energy and natural resources;
  - (b) to further the maximum possible interchange of goods and services between its Member States;

- (c) to contribute to the orderly expansion of trade between the Member States and the rest of the world;
- (d) by all these efforts and endeavours to contribute to the economic development of the continent of Africa as a whole.

## ARTICLE 2

### GENERAL UNDERTAKINGS

1. In order to achieve the aims of the Community, the Member States shall:
  - (a) work in close co-operation with one another and endeavour to co-ordinate and harmonise their economic policies, both within and outside the Community,
  - (b) keep each other informed and furnish the Community with the information required for the achievement of its aims,
  - (c) within the Community, establish among themselves consultation on a continuous basis, carry out studies and, in their light, determine the areas and lines of economic development to be undertaken jointly or in common,
  - (d) eliminate progressively customs and other barriers to the expansion of trade between them as well as restrictions on current payment transactions and on capital movements,
  - (e) take measures which render their products relatively competitive with goods imported from outside the Community and seek to obtain more favourable conditions for their products in the world market,
  - (f) endeavour to formulate and adopt common policies, and negotiate and conclude agreements between themselves or through the medium of the Community, designed to serve the achievement of its aims, including the development jointly or in common of specific branches of industry and agriculture, the joint operation of specific transport and communications services, the development and the joint use of energy, joint research, training of manpower and the implementation jointly or in common of all other projects designed to promote the objectives of the Community, as well as common trade and payments arrangements, and
  - (g) ensure, both within and outside the Community, that the common policies that have been adopted and the agreements that have been concluded for the achievement of the aims of the Community are carried out.

2. Member States shall take all steps, particularly by the provision of budgetary and other resources, required for the implementation of the Decisions and Recommendations of the Community, duly adopted.

### ARTICLE 3

#### CO-OPERATION BETWEEN MEMBER STATES AND WITH OTHER BODIES

1. Nothing in these Articles of Association shall impair the right of individual Member States to take, both within and outside the Community, measures of economic co-operation without the agreement of other Member States, provided that such measures do not prejudice the aims of the Community.
2. Member States which belong to or join other systems of economic co-operation shall inform the Community of their membership and of those provisions in their constituent instruments that have a bearing on these Articles of Association.

### ARTICLE 4

#### STRUCTURE

1. The Community, when established shall have such principal organs and subsidiary bodies as may be required for the attainment of its objectives.

### ARTICLE 5

#### INTERIM COUNCIL OF MINISTERS - COMPOSITION POWERS AND PROCEDURES

1. Pending the conclusion and entry into force of the Treaty an Interim Council of Ministers is hereby established.
2. Membership of the Interim Council of Ministers of the Economic Community of West Africa shall be open to all such Members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa as fall within the area known as the West African sub-region, comprising Dahomey, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, the Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and the Upper Volta.
3. The Interim Council shall have as its principal task, the drafting of the Treaty governing the Economic Community of West Africa, its submission to Member States and the initiation of action as may be deemed necessary and appropriate to facilitate the entry into force of the Treaty.

4. The Interim Council of Ministers shall have power to establish a provisional Secretariat, an Interim Economic Committee, and any other subsidiary bodies as may be appropriate.
5. The Interim Council of Ministers, shall determine those areas of economic development to be undertaken jointly or in common by Member States., the manner and degree of such development and the time required therefor.
6. The Interim Council of Ministers, shall establish, through its subsidiary bodies, links with existing inter-governmental organizations for economic co-operation in the sub-region, whose activities are restricted to that geographical area. In particular, these organizations shall participate, in an advisory capacity, in the work of such Committees as may be established by the Interim Council. The Interim Council of Ministers may also establish such relations as it deems fit with any other African inter-governmental organizations such as, the African Development Bank, and Lake and River Basin Development Organizations, whose activities are in line with the objectives of the Community.
7. The Interim Council of Ministers may invite to its meetings, in an observer or consultative capacity, representatives of other African sub-regions and of any non-African donor countries or organizations in its consideration of matters in which such sub-regional representatives and those of donor countries or organizations for technical and financial assistance may be of particular assistance to the West African sub-region.
8. A quorum for the meetings of the Interim Council of Ministers shall be a simple majority of the Member States. In the event of its inability to attend, a Member State may authorize another Member State to represent it; No Member State can represent more than one other State.

#### ARTICLE 6

#### INTERIM COUNCIL OF MINISTERS - DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Each member of the Interim Council of Ministers shall have one vote.
2. Decisions, resolutions and recommendations taken within the framework of the terms of reference of the Interim Council of Ministers as agreed by these Articles of Association shall be taken by a simple majority vote.

ARTICLE 7

FINAL PROVISIONS

1. These Articles of Association may be signed by Member States of the West African sub-region and shall come into force when signed by a simple majority of the Member States.
2. The original of these Articles of Association, the English and French texts of which are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the United Nations who shall forward certified true copies to all the Member States of the sub-region.
3. The Interim Council of Ministers shall cease to exist upon the entry into force of the Treaty.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries, being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have appended their signatures to these Articles of Association.

Done in the City of Accra  
this Third day of May  
Nineteen Hundred and Sixty-seven.