



UNION
AFRICAINNE

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي

UNIÃO
AFRICANA

COMMUNAUTE
ECONOMIQUE
DES ETATS DE
L'AFRIQUE
CENTRALE

ECCAS - CEEAC



Addis Abéba, Ethiopie, B.P: 3243 Tél.: (251 11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org,
situationroom@ausitroom-psd.org

B.P. 2112 Libreville (GABON) – Tél. : (241) 44.47.31 – Fax : (241) 44.47.32 – E-mail :
infosecgene@ceeac.org /
ceeac.orgsr@inet.ga

**REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR CENTRAL AFRICA
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION
BORDER PROGRAMME
AND ON THE ECCAS BORDER PROGRAMME**

**LIBREVILLE, GABON
21 - 23 MAY 2009**

CONCLUSIONS

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR CENTRAL AFRICA ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION BORDER PROGRAMME AND ON
THE ECCAS BORDER PROGRAMME**

LIBREVILLE, GABON, 21-23 MAY 2009

1. As part of the follow-up to the Declaration on the African Union Border Programme (AUBP) and its implementation modalities, as adopted by the Conference of African Ministers in charge of border issues, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 7 June 2007, and subsequently endorsed by the Executive Council of the African Union (AU) at its 11th ordinary session held in Accra, Ghana from 27 to 29 June 2007, a regional workshop for Central Africa on the implementation of the AUBP was jointly organized by the AU Commission and ECCAS, in Libreville (LAICO OKOUME PALACE), Gabon from 21 to 23 May 2009. The workshop was opened by His Excellency the Minister Delegate to the State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, Francophonie and integration. Statements were also made by the Head of the AUBP from the Conflict Management Division of the Peace and Security Department of the AU Commission and the Deputy Secretary-General of the Department of Human Integration, Peace, Security and Stability of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).
2. The Workshop was attended by the following Member States of the Central Africa Region: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Sao Tome and Principe.
3. The following Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and regional organizations were also in attendance: ECCAS, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the Commission Internationale du Bassin Congo-Oubangui-Sanga (CICOS), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).
4. In addition, GTZ, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) were also represented at this workshop.
5. The Workshop provided an opportunity to review progress in the implementation of the AUBP in the Central Africa Region. Discussions focused in particular on the concrete actions taken at the level of Central Africa to monitor aspects of the AUBP related to delimitation and demarcation, cross border cooperation and capacity building, regional security and to other aspects of the Program on its outreach, partnership, capacity building and resource mobilization.

a) ECCAS Border Programme (ECCAS-BP)

6. The participants welcomed the initiative of the General Secretariat of ECCAS to establish a Border Programme within the framework of the AUBP and to implement its objectives, taking into account specificities of Central Africa. They noted the relevance of the programme proposed by the General Secretariat, stressing the need to ensure that its implementation is carried out in synergy and complementarity with the actions undertaken by the RECs and similar initiatives across ECCAS.

7. On this basis, the Workshop reached the following recommendations:

b) Delimitation and Demarcation

8. The workshop highlighted the need to accelerate the delimitation and the demarcation of land, river and maritime boundaries, both between countries in the region between them and neighboring countries, stressing the need to delimitate and demarcate in priority areas rich in natural resources. In this context, the Workshop:

(i) calls on Member States of ECCAS to accelerate the process of delimitation and demarcation of borders that have not yet been, taking into account the time set by the Heads of State and Government of the continent in the Protocol Agreement of the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA), adopted at the OAU Summit held in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002, which provides for the completion of this operation on the continent by 2012. The General Secretariat of ECCAS and the countries concerned are encouraged to take the AU regularly informed of measures taken by them in achieving this objective;

(ii) urges Member States of ECCAS that have not yet done so to accelerate the transmission to the AU Commission the completed questionnaire on the status of African borders that have been sent in April 2008. The Commission will send back the questionnaire to facilitate the completion of this operation by the end of 2009;

(iii) encourages Member States to create structures in charge of borders and other border agencies and to transmit to the AU Commission their contact details, as well as those from borders experts of the region, within the framework of the response to above-mentioned questionnaire, in order to facilitate inter-African cooperation in the field of delimitation and demarcation of borders, through the exchange of experiences and the provision of experts;

(iv) calls on Member States to explore all options, including the use of African legal mechanisms and processes of conflict resolution, in case of border dispute;

(v) encourages Member States to acquire up-to-date maps and map information, as well as modern survey equipment to facilitate the process of delimitation and demarcation;

(vi) encourages Member States to set up joint boundary commissions with their neighbors for the delimitation and demarcation of their borders and seek in the colonial

archives the records in respect of their borders;

(vii) encourages the General Secretariat of ECCAS to make a detailed inventory of internal and external borders of Member States and to transmit the results to the AU; and

(viii) encourages the General Secretariat of ECCAS to become involved in the implementation of technical equipment, including the establishment of a permanent GPS station in the sub-region, in conformity with the African Geo-Reference System to assist in the delimitation and demarcation, and encourage each Member State to set up its own station.

c) Cross-border cooperation

9. The Workshop noted the need to encourage the Central African States to actively promote local initiatives for cross-border cooperation as well as large scale regional as a means of deepening the integration process.

10. On this basis, the Workshop recommended the following:

(i) adoption of measures for the implementation of local cross-border cooperation initiative, including through the development of appropriate legal instruments, the creation of regional funds, as advocated by the Declaration on the AUBP in June 2007, and the encouragement of decentralized cross-border cooperation. Meanwhile, the AU Commission should facilitate the exchange of experiences with other African and world regions, especially Europe, to work towards capacity building and resource mobilization;

(ii) the promotion and development of areas of economic, social and cultural contacts in cross-border areas. Member States are encouraged to establish joint Commission for the management of common resources.

(iii) encouraging, where appropriate, joint management of transboundary natural resources, drawing on relevant experiences in the rest of the continent. The AU Commission should facilitate the exchange of positive experiences in this regard.

d) Capacity-building

11. The Workshop stressed the importance of capacity building for successful implementation of the AUBP in Central Africa and the ECCAS-BP through, amongst others, training, exchange of experience and research to deepen understanding of issues related to borders and create a solid knowledge base, and through collaboration with relevant bodies outside the continent.

12. The Workshop recommended that:

(i) an inventory of research and training institutions dealing with borders in central Africa

be undertaken. In this regard, the countries of the region and the General Secretariat of ECCAS are encouraged to provide the cooperation and support to the consultancy the AU Commission intends to undertake, in due course, as part of initial steps to launch the AUBP as set forth in the Declaration adopted at Addis Ababa in June 2007;

(ii) networking of institutions in Africa, both among themselves and with other similar institutions outside the continent. The countries of the region and the General Secretariat of ECCAS should regularly inform the AU Commission of measures taken in this regard;

(iii) development of curricula and training in border management in the academic and training centers for State's civil servants, police and military of the region. The General Secretariat of ECCAS is invited to facilitate the development of curricula for this purpose.

e) Popularization of the AUBP and follow-up with Member States

13. The workshop stressed the need for an effective popularization of the AUBP to facilitate ownership at regional, national and local levels, as well as a continuous interaction between the AU Commission and Member States in the process of implementation of the Program. To this end, and as part of the communication strategy being implemented by the AU Commission, the Workshop recommended the following:

(i) organization by Central Africa states, as soon as possible of national workshops bringing together all stakeholders to raise awareness on the AUBP and its implementation within the ECCAS-BP;

(ii) the organization, with the support of the AU Commission and other agencies, of training workshops and awareness on the AUBP and ECCAS-BP to the authorities and populations of borderland areas in order to facilitate the implementation of the Programme;

(iii) the use of national media and other institutions to popularize the activities undertaken under the AUBP, including the translation of papers in some African languages;

(iv) the appointment / designation by the Central African States of focal points for the AUBP and ECCAS-BP before the end of 2009;

(v) the submission by Central Africa States of regular reports on the implementation of the AUBP and ECCAS-BP. The first reports should be submitted before the end of 2009.

f) Partnership and resource mobilization

14. The Workshop noted with satisfaction the measures taken by the AU Commission

to build the necessary partnerships and to mobilize the resources required for implementation of the AUBP, in accordance with the initial measures identified by the Declaration in order to launch the programme. It expressed its gratitude to the partners who provided technical and/or financial support (notably Germany, through GTZ). The workshop encouraged the Commission to continue its efforts and pledged to mobilize even greater support in both Africa and outside the continent.

15. The Workshop expressed its appreciation to the European Union, through the PAPS project, for supporting the launch of the ECCAS-BP. It urged the EU to continue its support for the implementation of the ECCAS-BP under the 10th European Development Fund.

g) Regional Security

16. The workshop provided the opportunity to assess the challenges to security in the Central Africa region. It stressed that the ECCAS-BP will significantly help to reduce insecurity in the region which constitutes a major obstacle to cross-border cooperation and regional integration. The Workshop also noted that improving the security situation in the region requires concerted action of Member States of ECCAS and neighboring countries, which belong to all of the RECs.

17. The Workshop made the following recommendations:

(i) the organs of the AU, RECs, organizations and regional groupings, and Member States should actively pursue their advocacy work to establish a lasting political stability in the Central Africa region;

(ii) cooperation between Central Africa countries and between them and neighboring countries should be strengthened in the field of prevention and fight against local transboundary crime;

(iii) the efforts of ECCAS should be expanded and strengthened, in cooperation with regional bodies, such as the Gulf of Guinea Commission, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the neighboring RECs and their Member States, in order to implement comprehensive and collective initiatives to establish a maritime safety in the Gulf of Guinea. The AU could assist in this process by organizing a conference on security in the region.

18. The Workshop expressed its deep gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Gabon for hosting this meeting and for their support which has greatly contributed to the success of this event.