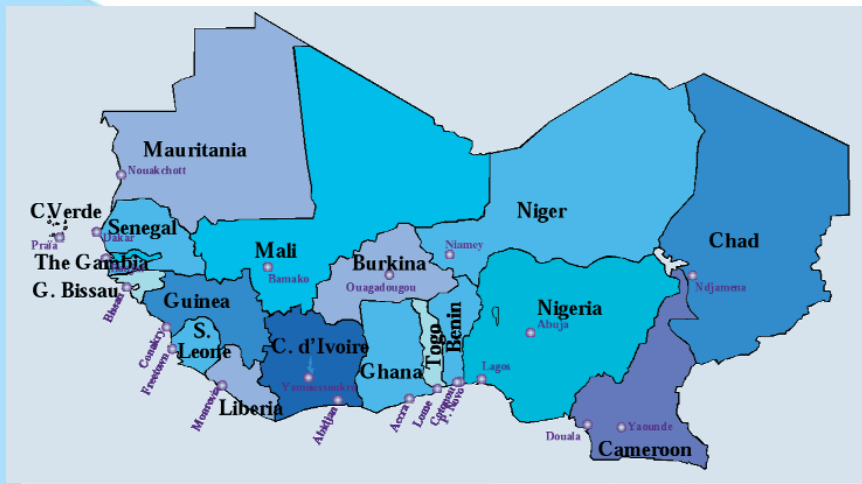


SUMMARY RECORD

Strategy and Policy Group Meeting
Berlin (Germany), 25 and 26 January 2007



March 2007/Or. Fre.

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SAHEL AND
WEST AFRICA CLUB



LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACP	Africa, Caribbean, Pacific
AfDB	African Development Bank
AEBR	Association of the European Borders Regions (Association des régions frontalières européennes - ARFE)
APF	Africa Partnership Forum
AU	African Union
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BMZ	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung
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CCNM	Centre for Co-operation with non-Members (OECD)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CILSS	Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (Comité permanent inter-Etats de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel)
CIP	Cross-border Initiatives Programme
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DDC	Direction du Développement et de la Coopération (Département fédéral des affaires étrangères de la Suisse)
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DGCD	Direction Générale de la Coopération au Développement (Ministère de la coopération au développement de la Belgique)
DGCID	Directorate General for international co-operation and development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France
DNF	Direction nationale des frontières (National Borders Directorate, Mali)
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ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Cease-fire Monitoring Group
ECOWAP	ECOWAS' Regional Agricultural Policy
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ENDA-Diapol	ENDA, Prospective et dialogues politiques
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreements EU-ACP
EU-ACP	Trade Agreements between the European Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific States
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FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCPN	Food Crisis Prevention Network
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FSIN	Food Security Information Note
<hr/>	
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Development Agency)
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INERA	Institut de l'environnement et de recherche agricole (Burkina Faso)
<hr/>	
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
<hr/>	
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
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ROPPA	West African Network of Farmers' Organisations and Agricultural Producers (Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest)
SNV	Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (Foundation of Netherlands Volunteers)
SPG	Strategy and Policy Group (SWAC)
SWAC	Sahel and West Africa Club
UEMOA	West African Economic Monetary Union (Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNOWA	United Nations Office for West Africa
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WABI	West African Borders and Integration
WALTPS	West African Long-Term Perspectives Study
WEU	Interparliamentary European Security and Defence Assembly
WTO	World Trade Organization

Table of Contents

LIST OF ACRONYMS	III
SUMMARY	1
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS	2
I. PRESENTATION OF THE 2006 PROGRESS REPORT	4
1.1 THE APPROACH	4
1.2 COMMUNICATIONS	5
1.3 STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE CLUB AND ECOWAS.....	6
II. THE FOUR AREAS OF CONCENTRATION	7
2.1 PRESENTATION OF THE MAIN INITIATIVES AND PERSPECTIVES	7
2.2 EXCHANGES WITH SPG MEMBERS	11
III. THEMATIC PRESENTATIONS	14
3.1 WHAT IS THE FUTURE FOR THE YOUNGER GENERATION IN WEST AFRICA?	14
3.2 THE CHALLENGES OF FOOD SECURITY IN THE SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA	14
3.3 MIGRATION IN WEST AFRICA: PERCEPTIONS AND REALITIES	15
3.4 HUMAN SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA: GOVERNANCE ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENT.....	16
IV. DISCUSSIONS	18
4.1 YOUTH IN WEST AFRICA	18
4.2 MIGRATION.....	18
4.3 CONFLICT PREVENTION.....	19
4.4 FOOD SECURITY	20
4.5 THE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS	20
4.6 AFRICAN FINANCIAL RESOURCES.....	21
4.7 THE NEXT TRAJECTORY OF THE SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA CLUB	21
GENERAL CONCLUSION	23
ANNEX 1: INTERVENTION BY MR. CHARLES GOERENS, PRESIDENT OF THE SWAC	25
ANNEX 2: INTERVENTION BY DR. HOFMANN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE GERMAN MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT	28
ANNEX 3: INTERVENTION BY DR. MOHAMED IBN CHAMBAS, PRESIDENT OF THE ECOWAS COMMISSION	30
ANNEX 4: INTRODUCTION BY NORMAND LAUZON, SWAC’S DIRECTOR	35
ANNEX 5: FINAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS	40

SUMMARY

The Sahel and West Africa Club's (SWAC) Strategy and Policy Group (SPG) met on 25 and 26 January 2007 in Berlin at the GTZ House, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Charles Goerens, with the participation of Dr. Michael Hofmann, Director General¹ of the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, representing the Minister Mrs. Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul; Dr. Matei Hoffmann, Ambassador of Germany to the OECD; Mr. William Awinador Kanyirige, Director of the Office of the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas; Mr. Musa Mbenga, Executive Secretary of the CILSS and Mr. Mamadou Cissokho, Honorary Chairman of ROPPA.

Representatives of Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands participated as well as several African Ambassadors to Berlin or their representatives (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Togo). Italy, Switzerland and the United States were unable to participate. For the complete list of participants, please see Annex 4 to this document.

This meeting was held over one and a half days, the first day 25 January being devoted to the 2006 Progress Report as well as an introduction by each Head of Unit to the following topics:

- *The Younger Generation's Future;*
- *Food Security Challenges;*
- *Perceptions and Realities of Migration;*
- *Governance and Human Security Development Issues*

After the presentations, there was a frank and open discussion between SPG members, partners and the SWAC team.

SPG members commended the SWAC team for the changes that have taken place over the last three years within the Club, for the complementarity of the work carried out between the various Units and the quality of its documents.

The morning of 26 January was devoted to financial and administrative issues at which only the donor countries participated. The report on the budget is contained in a supplementary document to this Summary Record.

¹ Director General responsible for global and sectoral policies, multi-lateral and European development policy for Africa and the Middle East.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Mr. Charles Goerens, President of the Sahel and West Africa Club

After thanking the host country and its cooperation agency, in German, for having invited the Club to hold its annual meeting in Berlin, Mr. Goerens shared his perception of the Club and his vision for the future at the end of his first year of presidency. He asserted that the Club has remained faithful to its missions in its regional approach, its strategic thinking on the medium and long-term perspectives of the region as well as the strengthening of partnerships in West Africa. Furthermore, the Club enhanced its approach which was in line with the recommendations made by its partners of both the North and South. He stressed the considerable efforts undertaken to raising visibility while there is still more room for improvement. He took this opportunity to thank Canada for its specific contribution which will help the Club strengthen its communications efforts.

According to Mr. Goerens, the Club's remarkable capacity to bring into dialogue actors from all parts of society (civil society, decision-makers, politics, the media, entrepreneurs, women, the younger generation, etc.) within the framework of workshops and forums that it organises in West Africa makes it unique.

Furthermore, he recalled that in 2006, considerable effort was undertaken to have more frequent meetings and deeper exchanges with high level Africans in order to raise awareness and garner support with regard to the Club's initiatives in order to transform them into actions on the ground.

In conclusion, Mr. Goerens stressed the Club's need to have stable financial resources so as to allow it to plan for the future while emphasising that in 2007 the Club shall set out its projects for the coming years. He also encouraged the Club's partners to renew their confidence. A copy of Mr. Goeren's intervention is annexed to this document.

Dr. Michael Hofmann, Director General to the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, representing the Minister, Mrs. Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul

Dr. Michael Hofmann welcomed the Club in Berlin for the second time in four years. While Germany holds both the Chairmanship of the G8 as well as that of the European Union, Dr. Hofmann underscored that the Federal Government is aware of the challenges facing the African continent and in particular West Africa.

Dr. Hofmann recalled that Germany will pay particular attention to destabilising factors such as transparency, good governance, illegal traffic of minerals and oil. He underscored the need to find new ways to cooperate with so-called vulnerable states in West Africa. He insisted on the importance of the Club's analyses with regard to good governance and the relevance of the Forums such as the Cotonou Forum of Political Parties, the Media and Civil Society which enabled actors to engage in dialogue. He hoped that this experience would be continued.

Dr. Hofmann also mentioned the work undertaken on cross-border issues and encouraged ECOWAS to pursue this work. He raised the crucial issue of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) which should be signed by the end of this year, recalling that ECOWAS asked for the signing to be deferred for three years. He reassured the African partners that this would be a transition phase during which clauses could be adapted. Dr. Hofmann encouraged the Club to follow the negotiations closely.

Dr. Hofmann concluded his intervention by commending the Club on the quality of its work stressing that Germany closely followed the Club's advice. He also praised Mrs. Sunhilt Schumacher, the Club's former Deputy Director. Ending on a positive note stating that despite the crises, West Africa has made extraordinary progress. Africa has succeeded in maintaining economic growth despite a serious population increase and that these indications should strengthen our optimism.

Mr. William Awinador Kanyirige, Director of Office of the President of the ECOWAS Commission, on behalf of Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas

The representative of ECOWAS, the SWAC's strategic partner, Mr. William Awinador Kanyirige, read the President's intervention. This was the third year in a row that ECOWAS has been invited to open the SPG meeting.

In his preliminary statement, the Chairman of the Commission expressed his satisfaction with the partnership initiated in 2004 with the SWAC which was made official in 2006 with the signing of the Partnership Agreement. He highlighted the various joint initiatives with the SWAC such as the Annual Report on West Africa; the creation of an internet site on the region; the organisation of a meeting within the OECD on NEPAD and ECOWAS; private sector development; cross-border cooperation and the implementation of the Cross-border Initiatives Programme with the holding of the first Africa-Europe Conference on Cross-border Cooperation; the Atlas on Regional Integration; the common agricultural policy; strategic thinking on the prevention of food crises; and the organisation of the second Forum of Political Parties, the Media and Civil Society. As many ongoing and future initiatives and events should contribute to helping the region meet a number of challenges such as regional integration, development, democracy, food security, political and economic stability. Dr. Chambas indicated that although West Africa remains one of the world's poorest regions, there has been considerable progress over the last thirty years, which provides hope for the future. He stressed the need to strengthen stability in countries, which according to him is the foundation for development of the region.

With this, ECOWAS has been significantly restructured aiming to reposition the institution in order to work on the origins of instability which affects a number of countries of the region. This institutional reform, entering into force on 1 January 2007, has transformed ECOWAS into a Commission of which Dr. Chambas is President. He indicated that more details on this restructuring would be provided at the next donor meeting foreseen for end-February to which all development partners present would participate. He concluded his intervention commending the Club Director, Mr. Lauzon who has greatly contributed to the close relationship between ECOWAS and the SWAC.

I. PRESENTATION OF THE 2006 PROGRESS REPORT

1.1 The Approach

In presenting the 2006 Progress Report, Mr. Lauzon asserted that this document is in line with the 2005 Work Plan Orientations, approved by SPG members in November 2004 and that the initiatives implemented in 2006 complied with the work that had been envisaged.

The Progress Report covers all of 2006 and follows the methodology implemented since 2004 focusing on the impacts of the work and results on the ground rather than listing products and activities. The Units used this approach in presenting their 2006 activities:

- Expected results;
- Methodological approach;
- Contribution to the understanding of the dynamics of change of the region;
- Achieved results within the framework of networks and partnerships in West Africa;
- Achieved results within the framework of networks and partnerships in the North;
- Contribution to the debates on strategic issues within each Unit;
- Impact on the policy enabling environment and action on the ground.

In implementing its 2005-2007 Work Plan the SWAC was guided by the SPG recommendations which aim to:

1. Focus the Club's actions within the framework of its four areas of concentration
2. Refine the results-based methodological approach
3. Ensure adequate follow-up to reviews/evaluations
4. Intensify resource mobilisation efforts
5. Strengthen partnerships
6. Improve visibility and communications

In his presentation, Mr. Lauzon highlighted several points including:

- Anchoring the SWAC's work on the ground while ensuring that it is responding to the needs expressed by the region;
- Anticipating the broad topics for strategic thinking that will feed into international debates over the next five years;
- Deepening strategic thinking and actions with regard to women and youth;
- Carrying out the Club's activities over a longer period of time;
- Strengthening the Club's partnerships with AfDB, the CILSS, ECOWAS, ROPPA, UEMOA, UNDP, UNECA and UNOWA, etc.

Mr. Lauzon recalled that the Club's approach was guided by always striving to provide useful input for countries and organisations with which it works. In order to achieve this, the SWAC has an open exchange with its partners and welcomes their suggestions. He praised the entire SWAC team for the quality and depth of its work.

Mr. Lauzon suggested several items for discussion with SPG members:

- The **evaluations** carried out by Germany in 2005 and by Canada which have been summarised in a matrix which is annexed to this document. He asserted that the suggestions and recommendations would be followed-up.
- **Partnerships:** In 2006, the Club initiated numerous founding partnerships with which to carry out concrete joint initiatives.
- **Communications:** As in 2006, raising the Club's visibility will remain a priority in 2007.
- **A five-year work programme:** as was suggested by some SPG members, the Club suggested adopting a five-year work programme for 2008-2012 with a flexible work plan allowing for annual adjustments according to needs.
- **Date change of the SPG meeting:** the SPG meetings could henceforth be held in January in order to present members with a complete progress report of the SWAC's activities carried out the previous year.
- **Choice of venue for the next SPG meeting:** Mr. Lauzon suggested holding the next SPG meeting in another European capital or in the United States, cognizant that the Club holds its thematic mid-year SPG meeting in a West African capital.

He reaffirmed that the Club should work at the regional level without neglecting the local and national levels, which in fact are complementary. He stated that the Club has a keen interest in the medium- and long-term while taking into account current situations (ex. the food crisis). He asserted that the Club should maintain its informality although in order to provide greater visibility to the organisations with which it works, the Club should have access to authorities and decision-makers at State level. One of the Club's objectives is to raise strategic questions for debate; to evoke difficult questions and to support strategic thinking and dialogue with Africans.

1.2 Communications

- In the area of communications, Mr. Lauzon has committed to raising the visibility of the Club's work in countries both in the North and South. He underscored that in 2006, particular emphasis was placed on the quality of documents, their hard copy and electronic dissemination as well as the updating and maintaining of the internet site. He asked again that SPG partners pass on the information and documentation to their representatives on the ground.
- In 2006, the SWAC held regular meetings with representatives of the West African diplomatic community based in Paris in order to keep them informed of the Club's activities and the missions being carried out in their respective countries.
- Mr. Lauzon visited several West African countries to meet with government authorities and representatives of the donor community on the ground as well as to gain insight of local realities.
- The SWAC also made it a priority to strengthen relations with development partner countries. By responding to several invitations, the SWAC was able to present its initiatives to cooperation agencies of OECD member countries dealing with West Africa.
- The SWAC strived to develop partnership links with United Nations bodies. Within this framework, it received support from UNDP for its missions on the ground and the distribution of its documentation in Africa.

1.3 Strategic Partnership between the Club and ECOWAS

The strategic partnership between the Club and ECOWAS initiated in 2004 was strengthened and solidified in 2006. Together they have organised several meetings and mutually contributed to their strategic thinking. This is construed in the following joint initiatives:

- Promotion of the **Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance** with a view to its ratification, dissemination and implementation.
- Implementation of the **ECOWAS Cross-border Initiatives Programme (CIP)** adopted by Heads of State at the Niamey Summit in January 2006.
- Publication of several chapters of the **Atlas of Regional Integration in West Africa**.
- Organisation of several **Workshops on human security, conflict prevention and post-conflict management** and the **Inter-generational Forum on Endogenous Governance** in Ouagadougou.
- Contribution to **the implementation of ECOWAP** through the organisation of regional strategic thinking on the challenges and opportunities of the livestock sector to strengthen the regional market, food security and reduce poverty.

All of these initiatives, which will be continued in 2007, provide a concrete dimension of a strategic partnership initiated between the two organisations.

In addition, at the end of 2007 (or first quarter of 2008) ECOWAS and the SWAC intend to produce an Annual Report on the situation in West Africa as well as the perceptions of the region expressed by Africans and their development partners.

II. THE FOUR AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

2.1 *Presentation of the Main Initiatives and Perspectives*

After a brief introduction, the Mr. Lauzon gave the floor to the Heads of Unit who each made an in-depth presentation on one of their initiatives carried out in 2006 and their prospects for 2007.

A more detailed presentation of the Unit's initiatives is available in the 2006 Progress Report.

Medium- and Long-term Development Perspectives

As there was not a Head of Unit in 2006, Mr. Lauzon and Mrs. Schumacher oversaw the Medium- and Long-term Development Perspectives Unit. The new Head of Unit, Mr. Raymond Weber², took up his functions at the beginning of January 2007.

- The Director recalled that requests from partners in the North as well as the South encouraged the SWAC to re-incorporate medium and long-term perspectives into its programme. This methodology follows on the WALTPS³ although the approach is slightly different. Furthermore, in 2006, partners asked that this study be updated. This issue will be examined in 2007.
- In addition, within the framework of South-South cooperation, the Unit pursued work begun in 2004 on the economic competitiveness in targeted sectors notably through the organisation of a Roundtable in Guinea on the economic opportunities of shrimp farming in West Africa and South-South cooperation. This led to a joint initiative with the Fisheries Division of the OECD's Trade and Agriculture Directorate on development policy coherence in the fisheries sector in West Africa
- With ECOWAS, strategic thinking was carried out on three broad themes:
 - Medium- and long-term food security stakes for the region;
 - Migration and youth employment;
 - The role of various development actors, notably women and youth.
- Furthermore, the Club produced a document for ECOWAS which will serve as a reference tool for the retreat with its new Commissioners foreseen for end-February 2007 in Ouagadougou.

Prospects for 2007:

- ✓ Production of an Annual Report on the region focusing on the topic, "Resources for Development", as well as configuring the internet site on West Africa with ECOWAS.
- ✓ Re-launching prospective strategic thinking based on the accomplishments of the WALTPS.
- ✓ The Unit shall examine more in-depth the issue of Aid around the question, "Where is Development Aid going?" It will carry out broader strategic thinking with regard to available financial resources in West Africa; the private sector; West Africa's position concerning international trade and the Economic Partnership Agreements.

Page internet: www.oecd.org/sah/devperspectives

² Former Director General of Lux-Development, Luxembourg Agency for Development Cooperation.

³ West Africa Long Term Perspective Study.

Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development

In 2006 the Unit was strengthened by the arrival of its new Head, Mr. Sibiri Jean Zoundi, agronomist, having worked at the *Institut de l'Environnement et de Recherches Agricoles du Burkina Faso*. Furthermore, in order to better reflect the complexity and complementarity of analyses, the name of the Agricultural Transformation Unit was changed to the Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development Unit which will focus on the future of the rural environment as well as links between the urban and rural environments.

Activities carried out by the Unit in 2006 focused on three broad areas:

- 1- Food security;
 - 2- Rural transformation;
 - 3- Agricultural and trade policies with regard to strengthening the regional market.
- With regard to food security, the Club co-manages with the CILSS the Food Crisis Prevention Network (FCPN). Within this framework, the Unit has developed a number of information tools like the regularly disseminated Food Security Information Note (FSIN), as well as the creation and co-management with the CILSS of the FCPN's Food Security website. All of the Club's initiatives in this domain encourage strategic thinking on the medium- and long-term food security stakes in order to avoid new crises while promoting decision-making for action.
 - The Unit intends to further integrate economic, spatial and political aspects into the agricultural transformation process. It has followed-up its work on cotton by examining the impact of this issue on poverty reduction.
 - In order to meet the challenges of food security, demographic growth and economic development, the Club is carrying out strategic thinking on rural transformation by 2025. This thinking covers numerous topics and gives priority to the key issue of the future of rural youth and the transformation of rural societies.
 - The SWAC intends to continue its cooperation with ECOWAS and other regional partners, notably with regard to the implementation of the Regional Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) adopted by Heads of State in January 2005, the negotiations on the Economic Partnership Agreements between the European Union and ACP countries as well as the medium- and long-term challenges of agricultural transformation notably in the prevention and management of food crises and other natural disasters in West Africa in order to ensure food security for all.

Prospects for 2007:

- ✓ Evaluation and review of the Food Aid Charter
- ✓ Co-management with the CILSS of the Food Crisis Prevention Network with the organisation of:
 - A restricted FCPN meeting in April 2007 in Paris;
 - The 23rd annual FCPN meeting in November 2007 in Brussels;
- ✓ Production of a "Food Security" Country Profile in two Sahelian countries;
- ✓ Co-management with the CILSS of the FCPN website;
- ✓ Strategic thinking on transformation of the rural environment by 2025;
- ✓ Analysis of policy coherence concerning fisheries in relation to sustainable halieutic resources management in West Africa.

Internet sites: www.oecd.org/sah/ruraltransformation
www.oecd.org/sah/devperspectives/shrimpfarming
www.food-security.net

Local Development and the Process of Regional Integration

- In the area of cross-border cooperation, the Unit headed by Mr. Laurent Bossard actively participated with ECOWAS in the implementation of the Cross-borders Initiatives Programme (CIP) adopted by the ECOWAS Heads of State in January 2006 at their Summit in Niamey. Within the framework of this programme, four pilot operations were launched on the ground under the auspices of ECOWAS and with the financial support of several donors. Furthermore, ECOWAS brought together experts from member States with regard to a draft legal regional cross-border convention; this draft will soon be submitted to Heads of State. The development of the West African experience has generated the interest of the Commission of the African Union who has asked the Club and the WABI network's African partners to participate in a Group of Experts responsible for "Border Programmes" at the African Union. Indeed, the European border regions have reaffirmed their support to the development of cross-border cooperation in West Africa. The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) has requested its members to be involved. The autonomous region of Extremadura (Spain) has agreed to finance the SWAC to develop an Afro-European dialogue.
- As concerns migration, the Club and ECOWAS have jointly produced a knowledge synthesis (a chapter for the Atlas on Regional Integration) which fed into various ECOWAS documents and meetings. The Club also produced an analysis of the regional and socio-economic context of migration which was widely disseminated in the region and to cooperation agencies. On this basis, ECOWAS asked the SWAC for its support in the creation and management of a Group of African Experts responsible with assisting member States in forming a common position. Each year this Group would present a Memorandum on West African migration to the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council. To supplement this Group's work, IRD⁴ Dakar, UCAD⁵, the SWAC and the NIDI⁶, have requested and obtained financing from the Commission of the European Union, aimed at setting up an on-line database on West African migration and to train regional and national administrations to maintain and develop this database.
- Jointly produced with ECOWAS, the Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa brings together and diffuses available knowledge on regional issues. In 2006, chapters on migration, cotton, the vulnerable Sahelian zone, Africa and China, languages transboundary river basins, oil and gas were produced. Chapters on population, health and fisheries are completed but not yet published. A joint SWAC/ECOWAS internet site presents the Atlas' main components (<http://www.atlas-ouestafrique.org/>).

⁴ *Institut de Recherche pour le Développement* (France).

⁵ *Université Cheikh Anta Diop* (Senegal).

⁶ *Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute*, (The Netherlands).

Prospects for 2007:

- ✓ The four cross-border pilot operations, implemented by WABI network members (<http://www.afriquefrontieres.org/>) with the support of several development partners have been regularly monitored by the SWAC and ECOWAS (next step meetings, analyses and dissemination of results and experiences/methods).
- ✓ Considerable effort will be made to place cross-border cooperation on the development policy and regional integration agenda. An approach aiming to create a West African regional financing fund will be explored under the auspices of ECOWAS in connection with several interested cooperation agencies. The Commission of the African Union will expand and support this approach throughout the continent and will organise a Ministerial Conference in May regarding cross-border initiatives. Within the context of this Ministerial Conference, ECOWAS, the AEBR⁷ and the SWAC will set up the first official contact between European and African border regions to provide the political drive needed to organise the first Europe-Africa Conference on Cross-border Cooperation which will be held in Accra in 2007.
- ✓ The SWAC will pursue efforts with ECOWAS to create and manage the Group of Experts responsible for supporting member States in defining joint positions on migration. The joint work with IRD Dakar, UCAD and the NIDI will begin at the end of April for two years.
- ✓ A dozen more Atlas chapters should be produced in 2007: - population – health – fisheries – coffee – cocoa – the rural environment – the urban environment – regional organisations – water – electricity – the media – rice – climate – borders. Strategic thinking will be carried out with ECOWAS with the aim to: 1) continue this undertaking with wider dissemination to support the regional concept and improve ECOWAS' image; 2) based on these achievements, to create a multi-annual programme based on strategic thinking on the results and perspectives of regional cooperation in West Africa.

Internet sites: www.oecd.org/sah/localregional
<http://www.atlas-ouestafrrique.org/>
<http://www.afriquefrontieres.org/>

Governance, Conflict Dynamics, Peace and Security

- Headed by Mr. Massaër Diallo, this Unit aims to better understand the dynamics of exit from crisis in West Africa, with the view to providing support through sharing experiences, perceptions and expertise of actors. It also contributes to identifying areas on which it can rely in building peace and democracy in West Africa. It seeks to strengthen partnerships and promote political dialogue while decompartmentalising various actors in order to interactively involve them in the promotion of democracy, peace and security.
- With regard to governance, the *Inter-generational Forum on Endogenous Governance* organised with ECOWAS support and held from 28 June to 1 July was a significant event in 2006. Bringing together 150 participants from 18 West African countries, it aimed to strengthen favourable factors for peace and the development of societies by capitalising on and sharing endogenous knowledge and capacities between generations.
- Furthermore, throughout the year, the Unit held a series of workshops bringing together representatives from the military and civil society, politicians, women and youth on issues such as governance, conflict prevention, human security, the regional approach to the DDR and post-conflict in West Africa.

⁷ Association of European Border Regions.

- These various initiatives are strongly supported by Women's Groups and the Youth Coordination Group whose roles have expanded with regard to democracy, peace and security. These groups were organised at the Cotonou Forum in 2005.
- Being highly involved in the Unit's various initiatives led ECOWAS to have a better understanding of its instruments with regard to democratic regulation, conflict prevention and governance. Joint actions aim to render these instruments more accessible to the general public and increasingly involve actors on the ground in their promotion and implementation.

Prospects for 2007:

- ✓ Meetings of the Regional Working Group established with ECOWAS on "the DDR, Post-conflict and Development". First meeting to be held in Praia, Cape Verde (28 February to 1 March 2007).
- ✓ Workshop focusing on the "Dissemination and Implementation of ECOWAS Instruments, and Endogenous Mechanisms of Democratic Governance and Conflict Prevention", Senegal (16 to 21 April 2007).
- ✓ Workshop launching the Human Security Network on the topic, "Conflict, Migration and Security in West Africa", Banjul, the Gambia, (19 to 21 June 2007).
- ✓ Preparation of the 2nd Forum of Political Parties, the Media and Civil Society on the topic, "What is the younger generation's future?" with ECOWAS the Women and Youth Coordination Groups of West Africa. Accra, Ghana (16 to 18 October 2007).
- ✓ 2nd Forum of Political Parties, the Media and Civil Society on the future of the younger generation in West Africa (2008)

Internet site: www.oecd.org/sah/governanceconflict

2.2 Exchanges with SPG members

All the SPG members paid tribute to Mrs. Sunhilt Schumacher, the SWAC's former Deputy Director. They then made remarks, suggestions and recommendations on the Club's initiatives which have been summarised below.

2.3.1 General Remarks

- SPG members underscored the quality of the **2006 Progress Report** highlighting that it provided interesting information on the region as did other documents that they had received. They remarked that the Report indicated the progress made and the concrete results achieved, revealing the Club's generating, managing and leadership capacities. This Report illustrated a very fruitful year for the Club with concrete results.
- They urged the Club to maintain its identity and role and to avoid overly standardised discourse.
- They asked the Club to consider taking into account **aid** and the Paris Declaration in their work.
- They also suggested addressing the sensitive issue of **reducing demographic growth**.
- SPG members would have liked to have previously had a more global view of the Club's programmed activities for **2007** in OECD member countries and in Africa. This would provide the Club's partners and representatives of cooperation agencies on the ground with a better understanding of the SWAC's work and help them to anticipate their support and participation in some of the activities.

Communications:

- SPG members noted that the recommendations made at the last meetings had been largely taken into account while much still remains to be done.
- Representatives of the West African diplomatic community posted to Berlin suggested that the SWAC raise the visibility of its work with their colleagues in other world capitals. They also asked to be kept apprised regularly of the Club's initiatives, stressing the importance for them of an often poorly documented regional approach. They believed that information provided by the Club could help diplomats in their negotiations with development partners.

Partnerships:

- Some members wondered whether by **increasing its number** of partnerships the Club might take on work going beyond their current realm. One of the dangers could be for the Club to take on requests on subjects of interest for development partners but not necessarily in the Club's orientations.
- West African partners highlighted the importance of the Club as a partner to regional and civil society organisations, and **its impact** with regard to sensitising decision-makers to issues that it addresses as well as its influence on policies.

Recommendations:

- Some members suggested that the SWAC be more involved in the implementation of the Regional Poverty Reduction Strategy implemented jointly by ECOWAS, the World Bank and donors.
- It was suggested that the 2007 Progress Report cover 2005-2007 and review the three-year Work Plan. This would pave the way for a five-year work plan.
- The 2007 Progress Report could place more emphasis on the strategic results which have genuinely contributed to changes undertaken by key partners and in the definition of policies.

2.3.2 Specific Remarks related to each of the SWAC's Units

✓ **Medium and Long-term Development Perspectives**

- As there was no Head of Unit, this Unit's initiatives were less developed in 2006, but that with the arrival of Mr. Weber, this situation should change.
- The strategic thinking carried out on the medium- and long-term development perspectives in 2005 within the framework of the Abuja Panel is interesting but would need to be harnessed and carried out over a longer period of time.
- The objectives of this Unit's initiatives should be clearer.

✓ **Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development**

- The name change of this Unit is pertinent and clearly demonstrates the need to take into account the rural environment in general (including transhumant pastoralism, sustainable natural resources management, land and non-agricultural activities) as well as coordination with the urban environment.
- Due to the numerous subjects, this Unit's work could be too dispersed. It would be better to demonstrate the Club's comparative advantage by what the Unit could provide to other actors or institutions through each of these topics.

- The collaboration between this Unit and OECD's Trade and Agriculture Directorate as well as POVNET is certainly very important and should contribute to high-level strategic thinking and encourage a number of adjustments.
- With regard to the transformation of the rural environment, how can Sahel 21 be followed up?
- With regard to livestock rearing, what will be the follow-up?

Recommendations:

- SPG members suggested working more on the future of the transformation of the rural environment.

✓ Local Development and the Process of Regional Integration

- The work carried out is particularly interesting and groundbreaking. Additional effort must be made so that the dynamics on the ground are slightly better known and the institutional dynamics become a bit more flexible and sensitive to the realities of the populations.
- SPG members stressed that the Club's work has contributed to making the regional integration process more concrete via cross-border cooperation through ECOWAS' Cross-border Initiatives Programme. This programme should henceforth provide the supplementary means in terms of follow-up and implementation.
- The availability on the website of Atlas chapters and maps is greatly appreciated.

Recommendation:

- The Club could increasingly support donors' strategic thinking with regard to regional integration in West Africa.

✓ Governance, Conflict Dynamics, Peace and Security

- Some SPG members encouraged the Club to continue the initiative launched during the Forum of Political Parties, the Media and Civil Society, in Cotonou in 2005 which brought together a wide range of actors. It was suggested that this dialogue be held annually. West Africa sorely needs such a structure in order for various actors of the region to enter into dialogue.
- Representatives from the West African diplomatic community were interested in the results of the Ouagadougou Final Declaration.
- It was suggested that the Club's comparative advantage in this domain be made more apparent.
- How does the Unit intend to capitalise on the information from the Ouagadougou Inter-generational Forum and retain the main themes?
- Is the Club going to carry out a study on child soldiers?

III. THEMATIC PRESENTATIONS

Following the general discussions on the 2006 Progress Report, the four Heads of Unit presented one of their Unit's themes:

3.1 *What is the future for the younger generation in West Africa?*

- **Mr. Weber's** presentation considered the future of the younger generation, which will be one of the anchors of this Unit's initiatives throughout 2007.

In his intervention, he highlighted the African younger generation's incredible resources. Mr. Weber contemplated how to provide them with hope for the future. He underscored the importance for the Club to examine this issue through a cross-cutting approach in order for these resources to become possibilities rather than problems.

One of the challenges for this younger generation, of which 85% has not experienced the struggles of independence, is underemployment, so as to avoid speaking of unemployment in Africa, which does not correspond to the socio-economic reality. Furthermore, Mr. Weber considered the youth's ability to create and innovate as an advantage on which to be capitalised. He mentioned that a number of texts and/or charters on youth exist in West Africa, some steps have been taken but follow-up was required.

He affirmed that the Club was considering the aspect of the younger generation in its initiatives. He stressed the importance of the Inter-generational Forum on Endogenous Governance (Ouagadougou, 2006) which was initiated within the framework of a Youth Coordination Network established following the Forum of Political Parties, the Media and Civil Society (Cotonou, 2005). Mr. Weber suggested this be pursued while integrating new topics.

He suggested considering this issue in the joint SWAC-ECOWAS Annual Report on West Africa which would enable the younger generation to share their aspirations.

Mr. Weber also encouraged strategic thinking on the younger generation's cultural rights as a resource for development. He concluded his intervention citing one of the greatest African visionaries, the writer Amadou Hampâté Bâ who wrote several notes to the youth with regard to building their future reminding them that some responses to their issues were based in African traditions.

3.2 *The challenges of food security in the Sahel and West Africa*

- **Mr. Zoundi** presented the Club's actions with regard to the food security challenges in West Africa, which has been one of the Unit's major concerns in 2006.

The report is distressing. As he affirmed, much has been done but nothing has been resolved. Indeed, food crisis does not only denote the stagnation of agricultural growth but it is also important to consider other parameters such as demographic growth as well as market- and poverty- related issues, etc. which have an impact on the accessibility and use of food resources.

Other significant factors also influence food production in the Sahel, notably the vulnerable ecological environment affected by climate change.

In addition, there are other issues related to agricultural and trade policies, conflicts and economic crises, which increasingly have an influence on food insecurity.

There are so many aspects that must be taken into consideration when addressing the food security issue. Therefore, in partnership with regional actors, in particular the CILSS, the Club's approach to this issue is based on seeking sustainable solutions to the structural causes of food insecurity:

- Mobilising and motivating regional actors and contributing to strengthening their capacities in order to prevent food crises;
- Contributing to analysis and promoting information for decision-making with regard to structural causes of food insecurity;
- Facilitating and supporting dynamics and policies aiming to better invest in actions with regard to structural causes of food insecurity.

With its partners, notably the CILSS, and other regional actors, and FCPN members, the Unit has launched an initiative on the evaluation and review of the Food Aid Charter with a view to adapting it to a new context. The Unit will carry out a series of analyses on "*Food Security Country Profiles*" which will present an analytical depiction of key indicators to provide decision-makers with information to engage in dialogue with development partners as well as civil society, but more importantly to undertake concrete actions.

Another initiative concerns the strengthening of regional capacities in order to establish a regional prevention, monitoring, warning and response mechanism for desert locusts while maintaining the support for dynamics which aim to reduce agricultural vulnerability, in particular through water management.

In conclusion, Mr. Zoundi reaffirmed that action was only possible through strengthening partnerships in order to mobilise all the regional actors around a common vision. He stressed the importance to increase investment in the agricultural sector, recalling notably that between 1990 and 2000 aid to this sector has been cut by half. He asserted that agricultural growth was insufficient and that everything also depended on the capacity of countries and regional economic organisations to: (i) create a favourable environment in order for at-risk populations to have better access to food resources; (ii) establish stock management mechanisms and promote the agricultural products market, highlighting in particular the tricky issue of agro-food transformation.

3.3 Migration in West Africa: Perceptions and realities

- **Mr. Bossard** presented Migration in West Africa. Based on the fact that migration is a sensitive issue in countries of both the north and South, he suggested supporting the development of a West African vision of this region and with this region. Considering that spatial and social mobility are drivers of development, Mr. Bossard recalled that ECOWAS member States were in the process of enforcing free circulation of goods and people within the ECOWAS zone. Looking at the recent past, he stated that Senegal's groundnut basin like the cocoa basin in Côte d'Ivoire were barely populated areas indeed empty but which were developed due to migration. Mr. Bossard also referred to the subtle re-population dynamic underway in the onchocerciasis-freed zones. The natural resources management problems would be incomparably worse than we have already experienced if it were not for mobility.

- As regards the definition of a migrant, which is a person 15 years and older living for more than one year in a country of which s/he is not a national, Mr. Bossard affirmed that currently there are an estimated 7.5 million migrants in West Africa (or 3% of the total population of the region as compared to 0.5% of European migrants in Europe). However this statistical definition of migrant is not very helpful in understanding the Sub-Saharan realities characterised by very rapid mobility. Each year in West Africa, 1 million people change countries. Most migration movements occur within the region. Migration towards the rest of the world and more particularly towards Europe is statistically insignificant.
- Mr. Bossard underscored that the geography of West African migration, after having been unchanged for a long time, is henceforth in rapid mutation. Sahelian migration towards Côte d'Ivoire has been reoriented towards other West African and African zones as well as towards Europe, notably Spain and Italy. Once only concerned by immigration, Senegal is now also a country of transit migration and emigration. Nigeria seems to be a transit country for populations from Central Africa, even Asia, towards Senegal and then Europe.
- One of the most important issues is that of the impact of migratory policies of northern countries – more particularly European – on West African intra-regional mobility. As more regional fluidity is encouraged, there will be less migratory pressure towards the North. Thus a dialogue between regional migratory zones, Schengen on one hand, the ECOWAS zone on the other, should be promoted.

With this, the current Chairman of ECOWAS, His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré asked for the SWAC's support in undertaking West African strategic thinking on migration. This request was confirmed by the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas. ECOWAS and the SWAC have therefore decided to establish a Group of West African Experts which they will co-manage over the coming years. This Group will be an integral part of a mechanism encouraging West African countries to adopt a joint approach. Following the policy evolutions and strategic thinking in OECD countries, more particularly European OECD member countries is an important element of the Group's mandate. This Group could facilitate as well as enhance dialogue and shared strategic thinking between Europe and West Africa. Bilateral initiatives and experiences could be monitored, compared and analysed. These analyses could be submitted to the ECOWAS high-level bodies and its member States.

3.4 Human security in West Africa: governance issues and development

Mr. Diallo addressed the security issue in West Africa with regard to governance and development. After briefly recalling the accomplishments of the region with regard to security (mechanisms, instruments and trends), he underlined the challenges and the relationship between security and development.

Mr. Diallo re-affirmed that, contrary to the image conveyed by the media, West Africa is not a region in conflict. Of the 18 countries covered by the Club:

- 13 are in a situation of peace even if it is fragile;
- 7 are not in crisis;
- 4 are in post-conflict situations;
- 3 are dealing with intense power struggles (Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea).

ECOWAS regional security system guidelines are an achievement which has inspired the African Union.

Furthermore, the region's politico-legal regional instruments foster the protection of human rights. All of these instruments hinge on security in the region. Mr. Diallo reaffirmed that the human security issue, recognised and adopted by ECOWAS and the African Union, needs to be disseminated and appropriated by member States and other actors.

He then presented the security challenges which were discussed in-depth with actors of the region at the Lomé Workshop on Human Security (March 2006):

- The fragile transition situation of States and societies;
- The persistence and major trends of insecurity dynamics like the increase of actors on the ground with the an abundance of armed groups, criminals, mercenaries and war-mongers in West Africa;
- The proliferation of light weapons and small arms (of the 8 million weapons in the region, at least half are not held by the national defence and security forces);
- Destruction of social and educative structures which lead to voluntary or involuntary enrolment of child soldiers, of which there are close to 15 000 in Liberia. This is a serious challenge to post-conflict and in the capacity to train the adults of tomorrow. Many of these issues were addressed at the inter-generational Forum;
- Health issues linked to malaria, HIV AIDS and tuberculosis: security also includes responding to the populations' health requirements;
- Displaced persons due to crises;
- Human catastrophes like the Joola shipwreck in Senegal, or environmental crises like that which occurred in Côte d'Ivoire or in Guinea;
- Issues linked to falling back into crisis like in Guinea. The State exists but unmanaged. Security forces become forces of insecurity.

All of these challenges show that there is still a lot to be done with regard to a security policy. This also highlights the need for a regional and united approach to security and development issues, to which ECOWAS and the African Union are already committed.

Mr. Diallo then presented the security prospects in West Africa which are focused on four areas:

- Coordinating, implementing and harmonising international, regional and national policies and mechanisms.
- Implementing security sector reform: ensuring that the army protects the population and does not foster insecurity.
- Greater strategic involvement by the international community in the logistical strengthening of regional security system capacities.
- The need for greater involvement of parliamentarians from various countries and at the regional level, as security as well as civil society actors.

In conclusions, he asserted that all of these issues would be pursued by his Unit at the Regional Working Group meeting in Praia on the DDR, Post-conflict and Development bringing together DDR actors of the region, civil society, development partners as well as international and regional organisations.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Youth in West Africa

Youth in West Africa was addressed from various perspectives: education, relaying values and their place in society.

- **Youth:** all agreed to say that the younger generation's perceptions should be further taken into account. The Club initiated dialogue through the Youth Coordination Group of West Africa following the Cotonou Forum (2005) which extended to the Inter-generational Forum in Ouagadougou (2006). This meeting between generations enabled various actors of the region to convene in order to underscore the challenges of relaying values, education and youth employment.
- The transformation of West African societies linked notably to the urbanisation and consequently the depopulation of rural zones raises the issue of **relaying values**. It seems that urban life makes it more difficult to relay values and traditions.
- **Education:** The promise of education made to generations after Independence was never kept. Parents were encouraged to register their children for school. Now, in West Africa, too many educated youth cannot find work corresponding to their qualifications.
- ECOWAS is more aware of the youth issue in the region and considers it important to pursue the debate between the younger generation and those slightly older in Forums like that of Cotonou and Ouagadougou.

Club's Remarks:

- The issue of the younger generation will be an integral element of the Club's 2007 initiatives, addressed through a cross-cutting approach examining through the perspective of migration, governance and urban/rural relationship.
- Furthermore, considered by donors as a needed forum for dialogue, the next *Forum of Political Parties, the Media and Civil Society* should address the crucial question, "What is the future for the younger generation in West Africa?".

4.2 Migration

Migration is a topic of interest to countries both in the North and South. In 2006, migration was the main focus at approximately twenty international meetings. Dramatic images seen on televisions throughout the world of young West Africans risking their lives for a better future have marked public opinion in northern as well as southern countries.

- Much still needs to be done in order to disseminate available information on the reality of migratory flows. International migration is a politically sensitive issue in the North and the South and debates on migration are often passionate, sometimes excessive and even dangerous.
- The work carried out on migration for the Atlas of Regional Integration presenting the facts on migration was greatly appreciated. It enabled a summing up of the situation regarding inter-regional as well as external migration.

- Furthermore, development partners believed that it could be worthwhile to have a better understanding of West African country migration policies. SPG members encouraged the Club to continue and deepen its strategic thinking on this issue, to take into account new aspects such as the Asian influence, between those who migrate in West Africa and those passing through West Africa to migrate to other continents.
- It was recalled that the CILSS (CERPOD) carried out a highly documented study on regional migration between 1988 and 1992 (REMUAO survey) and that it could be useful to reproduce this type of exercise.

Club's Remarks:

- There is an unsettling similarity between the maritime routes followed by pirogues carrying illegal African migrants towards Europe through the Canary Islands and the routes taken by boats to fish illegally in African territorial waters and then drop off their catch in Europe. In West Africa, there is the sentiment – justified or not – that European authorities spend more time fighting illegal migrants than pursuing illegal fishermen.
- Illegal emigration routes are constantly changing. When one route becomes “difficult”, another route opens. Passing through North Africa has been replaced by passageways through Mauritania, then through Senegal, now from Guinea. Other routes, even longer and more dangerous are surely opening.
- According to available surveys, illegal migrants towards Europe are not part of the poorest population. They are often young, mostly urban, professional, middle class and educated.
- It is astounding that the debate on migration involves essentially the insignificant flows of clandestine migrants towards Europe. The issue of fluidity in the West African region is however a principal stake for the region. The **free circulation of goods and people** as set out by ECOWAS should be high on the agenda.

4.3 Conflict Prevention

- The need to strengthen conflict prevention including relying on the European experience was underscored.
- Over the last 20 years, significant progress has been made to prevent violent conflict in West Africa. Certainly, the region still experienced crises but internal efforts and international partnerships have enabled peace dynamics to be strengthened and initiatives promoting democracy and security to be encouraged.
- The need to strengthen preventative actions by educating citizens was stressed as well as involving civil society in the appropriation of regional mechanisms, notably those of ECOWAS in the promotion of peace.

Club's Remarks:

- Donors need to consider the post-conflict issue as a development issue and no longer as an urgent situation as in the past. The case of Guinea Bissau is a key example: the DDR terminated after which there was no more financing whereas stabilisation, disarmament, and reinsertion still remain major challenges. In order to avoid this type of situation, the decompartmentalisation of development partner actions as well as post-conflict endeavours were more effective. It is with this in mind that the Club will bring together in Praia West African DDR and post-conflict actors along with cooperation agency representatives.

- With regard to security sector reform, the mechanism established by the African Stand-by Forces and regional approaches to maintaining peace must be sustainable and supported financially and logistically as already envisaged by the G8 and the European Union, among others.

4.4 Food Security

- Food security was an important element in the SPG discussions. As 8 million people in West Africa are in a precarious food situation, it remains a current issue in several countries of the region. A lot of money has been spent on urgent issues, but food security is rather a structural problem.
- One of the main challenges for the region is to be able to feed a rapidly expanding population. In Africa, one 12-member family produces enough for themselves, even less. In Europe, the ratio is 3 to 100. Furthermore, by 2020, more than 50% of the population will be living in urban areas, which will greatly reduce the agricultural workforce.
- With regard to increasing agricultural production, some SPG members believe that to feed its population, Africa needs to produce more. In order to do this, it needs to invest more in agricultural transformation without forsaking family farming.
- Development partners were asked to take this situation into account in their development aid policies and in their future investments.

Club's Remarks:

- In analysing the current food security environment, there are indeed many policies, like the CILSS' Strategic Framework for Sustainable Food Security (CSSA) with a view to poverty reduction in the Sahel⁸. But the true challenge remains mobilising actors for concrete actions. Consequently, the Club's commitment as co-manager of the FCPN with the CILSS is an opportunity to carry out strategic thinking on investment as a key action to be undertaken.

4.5 The Economic Partnership Agreements

- The Representative of ROPPA conveyed the concerns of West African populations with regard to the Economic Partnership Agreement currently being negotiated between the EU and ECOWAS. He commended ECOWAS for taking into account, for the first time, the request by civil society for Europe to postpone the signing of the Agreement so as to delay its implementation.
- Development partners encouraged the Club to support its African partners in the difficult negotiations. Being a long process, the EPA negotiations need to be supported by continued strategic thinking on the medium and long-term development perspectives of the region. In this regard, Mr. Mamadou Cissokho, Honorary Chairman of ROPPA and representative of civil society asked the Club to organise a policy dialogue on the EPA between West African civil society organisations and the EU. Through this dialogue, which should be chaired by Germany, West African civil society organisations would be able to have a direct exchange with the EU on their concerns and expectations with regard to the EPA.

⁸ Cadre stratégique de sécurité alimentaire durable (CSSA) dans une perspective de lutte contre la pauvreté au Sahel

- Germany, currently holding the EU Chair until June 2007, reassured the West African representatives present highlighting the importance of going from a bilateral framework to the regional level. Furthermore, in order to best pursue the work underway on these issues, Germany has created a working group within the OECD including countries that will take the chair of the EU over the next 18 months (such as Slovenia and Portugal) so that all countries have the same level of information on the Agreements. These Agreements could take years to implement.
- It seems that West African populations are not well-informed with regard to the Agreements that could have significant consequences on their standard of living over the next few years.
- ECOWAS, aware of the stakes, is also disseminating the necessary information to raise populations' awareness of the issues related to these Agreements.

4.6 African financial resources

- The issue of budgetary aid seemed to raise concern among West African civil societies who fear that all aid is allocated by governments without control and that aid would be re-centralised through State control.
- Development partners present provided some details. In effect, they asserted that civil society tended often to view budgetary aid as a negative outcome of the Paris Declaration, which recommends aid harmonisation. Now, budgetary aid only concerns a small part of aid and is only distributed in countries which fulfil the criteria of good public resources management. Furthermore, this aid to State budgets is not at odds with other forms of aid such as decentralised aid provided to local communities.
- Moreover, participants stressed the need to strengthen administrations' capacities to absorb and manage this aid. Too often, available aid cannot be allocated due to lack of absorption and management capacity.
- They asserted that donors increasingly turn to delegated cooperation or delegated management, which involves the management of interventions of other development partners present in a country in order to avoid overlapping aid.
- Some participants questioned the need to re-launch strategic thinking on aid and African financial resources. Updating and developing "Cooperation 21" would help sum up the most evident forms of aid over the last years, notably budget support. It would also be useful to further debate on some innovative approaches.
- In addition, some members underlined that in the past, the Club's work, in particular the publication "Finding Solutions to Fit the Problems"- which was a synthesis of the work carried out within the framework of Cooperation 21 – contributed to feeding strategic thinking on the aid effectiveness and harmonisation, and drafting the Paris Declaration.
- It was also suggested that the issue of remittances by emigrants to their country of origin be examined in-depth, notably on their economic impact in their country of origin in West Africa.

4.7 The next trajectory of the Sahel and West Africa Club

- Given the numerous topics of interest, the Club should not be submerged in new topics and should focus on its four areas of concentration set out in its 2005-2007 Work Programme. Members affirmed that some issues should be left to other institutions better equipped to address them. Nevertheless, they asked that the Club maintain its capacity to monitor and take action on urgent and current issues (desert locusts, food crises).

- An internal review will be carried out on the impact of the initiatives undertaken during 2005-2007. Based on these results, the broad lines of the 2008-2012 could be defined and presented to SPG members.
- It was proposed that the Club set up a working group which would include SPG members to carry out strategic thinking on the next 2008-2012 trajectory. This strategic thinking should be undertaken with the Club's African partners. Some members underlined that donors should focus more on expected results than on the Club's topics for strategic thinking.
- SPG members reaffirmed the need for the Club to pursue its initiatives focusing on its four areas of concentration while remaining flexible to current issues.
- The Mr. Cissokho reaffirmed that ROPPA, which brings together West African producer organisations, exists thanks to the partnership between the CILSS and the SWAC. He asked if the partnership between the SWAC and ROPPA could be part of the Club's five-year Work Plan. He recommended that the Club help the Women's Group and the Youth Coordination Group of West Africa become organised at the regional level as was done in the past for farmers. Furthermore, Mr. Cissokho presented a number of requests to the SWAC, notably:
 - to joint SWAC-ROPPA initiatives are part of the SWAC's next Work Plan and take into account ROPPA's concerns;
 - to participate in the evaluation of ROPPA;
 - to organise a roundtable in Paris of ROPPA's donors to discuss the financing of their future action plan;
 - to help ROPPA participate in the OECD Ministerial meetings.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

- SPG members thanked the German Government and notably the German Minister of Cooperation and Development, Mrs. Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, represented by Dr. Michael Hofmann, for hosting the SPG meeting in Berlin.
- SPG members paid tribute to the various speakers who introduced this meeting. They also thanked Mr. Goerens for his presentation.
- They praised Mr. Lauzon and Mrs. Schumacher, as well as the Unit Heads for their presentations and the entire Club team for the quality of its work presented in the documents.
- They acknowledged the 2006 Progress Report and made several remarks.
- They approved the Club's 2007 orientations as set out by Mr. Lauzon which involves mainly pursuing the activities carried out in 2006, with 2007 being the last year of the tri-annual work plan. Mr. Lauzon asserted that the SPG recommendations will be taken into account, as will the demands from the ground and development partners with a view to achieving results. He also stressed the need to mobilise new financial resources as quickly as possible in order to conclude certain ongoing initiatives.
- The representatives of the CILSS, ECOWAS and ROPPA reaffirmed their steadfast support for the SWAC and asked SPG members to continue their support so that together, we can create a better world for our children and future generations.
- Mr. Goerens suggested inviting high-level individuals from development partner countries to SWAC meetings and workshops and to open these meetings to these partner countries.
- He suggested that the SWAC be more present in large international events of interest for the region.
- Mr. Goerens was pleased with the Club's achievements and urged the Club to continue on this path.
- SPG members agreed to recommend to the OECD that Mr. Lauzon's mandate be renewed for two more years and favourably welcomed Mr. Bossard's nomination as Deputy Director.
- They endorsed the idea that the next SPG meetings would be held during the month of January.
- They stressed the importance to invite representatives of regional organisations, like civil society organisations, to this type of meeting.
- SPG members affirmed that they would prefer the next SPG meeting be longer and to leave more room for joint strategic thinking.
- The next SPG meeting will take place in January 2008, the location to be confirmed. Brussels was raised in the discussions as a possible venue.

ANNEX 1: INTERVENTION BY MR. CHARLES GOERENS, PRESIDENT OF THE SWAC

*Excellences,
Ladies and gentlemen, representatives of OECD Member countries and of the Club,
Ladies and gentlemen representatives of international and regional organisations,
Dear guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

First, I would like to thank the German Government and in particular Minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, Minister of Cooperation and Development, for hosting our SPG meeting in Berlin.

It is a great honour for the Club to organise its Strategy and Policy Group meeting in this beautiful capital, Berlin, just at the time when Germany is taking over the Presidency of the European Union as well as the G8. This clearly demonstrates Germany's interest in Africa and notably West Africa. (We also had the pleasure of meeting with the Representatives of German Parliament yesterday to present the Club and have an exchange of views regarding West Africa.)

I would also like to thank you, SPG members, for having accepted to participate at this important meeting of the Club and for West Africa. Our partners from the US, Switzerland and the UK send their messages of solidarity for this meeting as they are unable to participate this year. Mr. Kiyo Akasaka, OECD Deputy Secretary-General and Mr. Eric Burgeat, Director of the OECD's Centre of Cooperation with Non-Members, also would have liked to be here with us today but had to cancel due to last minute engagements.

Several high level personalities of regional and international organisations such as the African Union, UEMOA, UNDP, UNECA, and UNOWA also send their regrets as they are unable to join us due to scheduling constraints.

This year's SPG meeting in Berlin is especially significant. It marks the thirty years of the Club's existence and also my first year as President.

For the past year I have worked closely with the Club and I appreciate the crucial role that distinguishes it through its regional approach, its balanced reading which takes into account the progress in the region as well as the challenges and its medium- and long-term strategic thinking as well as the Club's capacity to react quickly to timely issues (desert locusts, food security, etc.).

As a facilitator, monitor and leader of open and constructive exchanges, the Club has established itself in the international debate as a leading advocate for West Africa. With the passing of time, its role, its scope of intervention and know-how have evolved. Today the Club is characterized by, in my opinion, its remarkable capacity to bring into dialogue actors from all parts of society (civil society, decision-makers, politics, the media, entrepreneurs, women, the younger generation, etc.). In 2006, I had the pleasure of participating in several workshops as well as the Forum which were organised by the Club. On these various occasions, I have been amazed that the Club has been able to bring together around the same table military, human rights activists, age-old enemies, politicians, and representatives from civil society, etc. in order to take part in a constructive and forward-looking dialogue. This dialogue is even more significant than that at the regional level. Imagine various actors from 18 countries of the region, from Cape Verde to Cameroon, Chad and Mauritania all at the same meeting.

The SWAC's Perception of the Region

The regional approach, which is at the centre of the Club's mandate, is compelling as it is not exclusive. Indeed, it takes into account the complementarity between the local, national and regional levels.

The Club shares the same view with that of the African Union, ECOWAS and UEMOA which is that in order for countries in the region to be able to fully capitalise on their potential and meet the challenges facing them they need to create a regional zone encouraging the adoption of joint policies, the implementation of complementary investment, food security, conflict management and prevention, inter-State cooperation and the promotion of the private sector and trade essential for ensuring rapid economic growth as well as job creation and income.

The SWAC's Medium- and Long-term Strategic Thinking

As you know, one of the Club's specificities is its medium- and long-term strategic thinking on the development of the region through exchanges and informed debates with actors of the region, taking into account the historic and prospective dimensions as well as the spatial, cultural and endogenous aspects. This strategic thinking essential for decision-makers and development partners does not imply that the SWAC is not concerned with pressing issues and short-term actions. In 2006, for example, the Club was highly involved with such issues as food crisis management, the avian flu, desert locusts which, in addition to long-term strategic thinking, require immediate action.

The SWAC's Network Approach and its Partners

Another distinctive feature of the Club, which is neither a research centre nor a consulting firm, is how it implements actions on the ground. Unlike projects such as those of cooperation agencies, the Club **supports dynamics on the ground and works in network** with West African actors representing governments, civil society, the private sector and development and research institutions. The Club also maintains close relations with West African development partners as well as regional and international organisations within the framework of joint initiatives in particular with ECOWAS, ROPPA, the CILSS, UEMOA, the African Union and Women and Youth Associations.

Furthermore, in 2006, considerable effort has been undertaken for more frequent meetings and deeper exchanges with **high level** Africans, in order to raise their awareness and garner support with regard to the Club's initiatives on the ground. The Club is convinced that action on the ground will have all the more momentum if it is taken on by decision-makers. Normand Lauzon has thus met with several Presidents and Heads of Government, Ministers and decision-makers at various levels. At the same time, the Club has strengthened its ties with the African Union and has signed agreements with its three closest partners thus formalizing the close relationships formed over the last few years with ECCOWAS, the CILSS and UNDP. Other agreements are foreseen for 2007, notably with the AfDB, ROPPA, UEMOA, UNECA and UNOWA. The idea is not to increase the number of the Club's initiatives but to mobilise the greatest possible number of partners in order to work together within the framework of joint initiatives of high priority for the region.

Thirty years already!

What a thirty years it has been! However, even if the overall view of the Club is positive, no institution can deny that it is essential to have its own niche, to produce results complementary to those being produced by other institutions and to effectively use the funds available. The Club is no exception!

Without going into detail, I would like to share with you the very positive evaluations of the Club carried out by Germany and Canada as regards the Club's relevance, utility and effectiveness.

Furthermore, it was emphasised that the Club's working methods contributed to the mobilisation and strengthening of analytical, decision-making and action-oriented capacities of various actors of the region.

We are aware that in order to ensure the follow-up of our joint initiatives with our partners on the ground and in developing countries, we need stable, foreseeable financial resources. We will have the opportunity to address this issue in detail tomorrow when we review the Club's financial and administrative issues.

In 2007, the Club will prepare its Work Plan for 2008 and beyond. The Canadian evaluation supported suggestions made by partners of the region as well as some of the Club's donors, to prepare a five year Work Plan as of 2008. This would imply more flexible planning which would help identify joint initiatives to undertake with partners over a period of time and to respond to the short, medium and long-term needs of the region. We will have the opportunity during this meeting to further examine this proposal.

Before concluding, please let me say a few words on the Club's capacity to raise its visibility. At the last few meetings, members had stressed the Club's need to make their work better known. In 2006, considerable effort was undertaken to better disseminate the results of the Club's work. But we are midstream. In 2007, we intend to step up our actions and improve our tools to raise the visibility of our initiatives and the concrete results of our work. I would like to thank Canada for its specific contribution as from 2007 to support our communications.

I indeed would like to thank our development partners who have provided and continue to provide the Club with intellectual as well as financial support over the last 30 years. We hope that we can count on you and continue this momentum over the next 30 years!

I thank you.

ANNEX 2: INTERVENTION BY DR. HOFMANN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE GERMAN MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

*President Goerens,
Director Lauzon,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Honour for my Ministry and for our implementing agency GTZ to host this meeting – **glad** that we mark the **30th anniversary of the Club** here in Berlin.

It's the **second time within four years** that the Club gathers in Berlin: Last time, in March 2003, you were discussing “**regional dynamics and crises in West Africa**” – the acuteness of this topic hasn't vanished.

At that time, it was the **crisis in Ivory Coast** that was at the centre of your discussions – **this time** it is the crisis in **Guinea** that has some prospects to play that role during the upcoming two days.

We are all very much **concerned** about the news that are coming from Conakry and the entire country since January 10 - the day when the **general strike** began. From what we hear we have to conclude that President Lansana Conté is about to turn his country into one more of those **fragile and failing states of the sub-region** that are marked by a stunning combination of abundant natural and mineral resources on the one side and extremely bad governance on the other. The result, all too often, is enduring civil war.

Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, now Guinea-Conakry – The map of West Africa is pock-faced with a **unique concentration of political fragilities** and conflicts. It is so unique that we at BMZ have created an own category “**Fragile states of Western Africa**” in order to demonstrate our awareness that we cannot continue business as usual with those countries. We want to “**stay engaged but differently**” – how exactly, is an **open question** (not only) to us.

This is where the Club comes in. Your role as an informal but efficient **think-tank**, as a **seismograph** of long-term challenges and a **laboratory** for political solutions is as valuable today as it was when the Club was created, more than 30 years ago.

The combination of **experience and dynamism** that you, **President Goerens**, introduced to the Club since you took office at the beginning of 2006 has been **playing a major role** in that.

The Club's contributions to our **conceptual work** at sub-regional level are countless. Like Western Africa as a whole, they rarely make it to the limelight of general attention, but they are effective and welcome **food for thought and action** to us. By the way: It even increases our sympathy for the Club that you focus on doing your work – and not on producing PR on it.

We especially appreciate what you are doing to **facilitate a basic political understanding** between governments, opposition parties and the civil society in the regional context as well as in each of our Western African partner countries.

I am picking out again one example from Guinea when I mention the **local forum** on political parties, media and the civil society that you organised **in Conakry in March 2005**, which helped, inter alia, pave the way for the opposition's participation in the local elections later that year. It was **not even a prominent event** among those you organised in that year, but if there ever was a recent **window of opportunity** for a peaceful **transition of power** in Guinea,

you took a major effort to helping open it. That just stroke my mind again – or those of my collaborators – when we started **discussing about Guinea** again these days.

The Club's final vocation is fostering **regional integration** in West Africa. The list of proposals for concrete **cross-border initiatives** in Western Africa that you identified are yet another **source of inspiration** for our development cooperation.

I am very pleased about the steps you took since 2004 to **harmonise** your working plan with the political agenda of **ECOWAS**. It is one of our visions for the Club to make it a persistent pillar of **support and capacity building** for ECOWAS; and I note that you have **well advanced** towards fulfilling that vision. The presence of **Mr. William Kanyirige** (*Kabinettschef von ECOWAS-Kommissionspräsident Chambas*) is a vivid indicator of that.

Partnership includes constructive criticism – You know that one of the priorities during our Presidency of the EU is to finalise the negotiations on **Economic Partnership Agreements**. I must say that the recent proposal of ECOWAS to **prolong the negotiations until 2010** and to delay the coming-into-force of the agreement until **2011** has been a **slap in the faces** of all those in the EU, including myself, who are fighting to shape EPAs as a **tool for development** through regional integration – and **not as a tool to open African markets** for European farmers and companies.

Would find it useful if the Club could accompany the **discussion about EPAs** during 2007, as it has always been **one of the Club's comparative advantages** (besides the work on its long-term studies) to **react swiftly to newly emerging topics**.

Key messages G8 / EU Presidencies

- Our **satisfaction with your achievements** and with the efficiency of your work – the term “**lean management**” could have been invented to describe the Club - brings us to **renew our financial commitment for the Club**. The **predictability of contributions** to the Club's core budget has been a constant subject of discussions in this forum – I am glad to announce that we will **continue our cooperation** with a contribution of 220.000 Euro p.a. for the years 2007 and 2008.
- I could hardly conclude without saying a word on **Mrs. Schumacher**, the **longstanding asset** of our cooperation with the Club (*Sunhilt Schumacher war bis zu ihrem Ruhestand im Sommer 2006 langjährige entsandte stv. Direktorin des Clubs*). I am glad to note that she is with us here today, and that she keeps feeding you with her **tremendous experience and good services** even after her retirement. She has done much more for **Germany's reputation at the Club** than the modest flow of our financial contributions could have ever achieved.
- My last word is on Western Africa – and it's positive. I share the **historic optimism** that President Goerens has pleaded for with regard to that region when he took office in 2006. **Who would have believed** 30 years ago that even in a year of accumulated crises as 2004/05, the vast majority of countries in the region (with the sole exception of Niger) would be able to organise their food supply **quite successfully** – and this for a population that has almost tripled in size since the 1970s. Regional organisations like **CILSS** and also the **SWAC** have contributed a lot to achieving that uncovered success story.
- In another 30 years, Western Africa will have more inhabitants than the EU (even if we incorporated Turkey). The region **still merits the special focus of a tailor-made forum** like the SWAC.
- **I wish you all the best** for your meeting and for your work ahead – doni, doni, as you use to say – slowly, slowly but persistently and with vigour.

**ANNEX 3: INTERVENTION BY DR. MOHAMED IBN CHAMBAS,
PRESIDENT OF THE ECOWAS COMMISSION**

ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF
WEST AFRICAN STATE



COMMUNAUTÉ ECONOMIQUE
DES ETATS DE L'AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST

**Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas
Chairman of the Commission of ECOWAS
(Intervention delivered by his Office Director, Mr. William A. Kanyirige)**

**STRENGTHENING THE PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE SWAC FOR ADVANCING THE ECOWAS AGENDA
IN 2007 AND BEYOND**

*The Representative of the Honourable Minister of Cooperation
and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany
Mr. Charles Goerens, President of the Sahel and West Africa Club,
Mr. Norman Lawson, Director of the Sahel and West Africa Club,
Distinguished Participants,
Colleagues and friends from the CILSS and ROPPA,*

It is with a great sense of hope that I speak to this year you on the theme "Strengthening the Partnership with the SWAC for Advancing the ECOWAS Agenda in 2007 and Beyond"

My optimism is driven by three key considerations. First, when we take stock of what ECOWAS has accomplished up until 2006, you will agree with me that we have been making some progress on virtually all fields, particularly in areas of peace, security and political governance.

In the peace and security sector, if for about two decades our sub-region, for reasons associated with civil wars in the Greater Mano River Basin, had been hit by a spell of instability and insecurity, this is no longer the case. At least, thanks to the strong political will of our regional leaders, their shared purpose coupled with the active support and vigilance of our peoples, there is no active war in West Africa today.

Within the domains of democracy and governance, the culture of pluralism and democratic elections is taking root, driven by an increasing commitment to constitutionality, democracy and the rule of law.

Regarding economic development, we have made some modest progress in the process of developing the basis for propelling regional infrastructural development capable of facilitating our productive capacity and regional trade. The West African Power Pool, the imminent launch of studies on railway inter-connectivity in West Africa, and the planned creation of a GSM roaming system in West Africa are but a few examples. Plans are also advanced to develop a regional airline on the same lines as ECOMARINE was created.

Yet, despite these gains amongst several others, our region remains, according to the latest UNDP Human Development Report, one of the poorest performers in the world in terms of socio-economic development.

For instance, of the 177 countries, the last 5 countries happen to be from West Africa, representing 1/3 of our member states.

Thus, acutely conscious of these stark realities and also aware that we cannot rest on our rather modest achievements in integration, ECOWAS leaders have shifted gear from containment to repositioning ECOWAS institutions such that these bodies can respond, in a timely and predictable manner, to the proximate and root causes of instability in an increasingly globalised and fluid world. The conflict prevention/development nexus drives the thinking here. Distinguished Participants, this is my second source of optimism as we look to the future.

Indeed already, the ECOWAS Community Parliament and Community Court of Justice have been re-organised to enable the legislative and judicial wings of the two institutions respectively concentrate on their core competencies and be more effective. Similarly, the ECOWAS Bank For Investment and Development (EBID) has also been re-structured and is already mobilising additional funds to support our priority integration programmes.

In the particular case of the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, it became a Commission effective January 1st 2007 with a President, Vice President and seven (7) Commissioners covering more focused and manageable sectoral areas.

The ECOWAS Commission has its agenda clearly set out in at least three priority challenges spelled out by the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government and articulated in the acceptance speech of the new Chairman of ECOWAS, President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso:

- Poverty reduction
- Development of basic infrastructure
- Trade negotiation capacity building to enable the participation of ECOWAS and that of Africa as a whole.

These three priority challenges will continue to be dictated by the need to promote and consolidate human security architecture in West Africa.

In all these challenges, the ECOWAS Summit of January 2007 in Ouagadougou recognised with gratitude the support to our development partners and it is our hope that we can continue to count on your commitment to our development agenda. This brings me to ECOWAS/Sahel and West Africa Club/OECD relations, my third source of optimism for the future.

ECOWAS-Sahel and West Africa Club/OECD Collaboration

The Club's 2006 Progress Report describes their efforts in the four areas of interest for the region and for the international community: (i) Medium-and Long- Term Development Perspectives; (ii) Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development; (iii) Local Development and the Process of Regional Integration; and (iv) Governance, Conflict Dynamics, Peace and Security. These areas of concentration correspond to the concerns for the region's future set out in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) the Vision of the African Union, and most notably, in the partnership framework recently signed last November (2006) between the SWAC and ECOWAS.

Over the past couple of years, ECOWAS has been rationalizing and deepening its relations with partners to mobilise the appropriate human and material resources as well as best practices with a view to helping drive our integration and development.

The Sahel and West Africa Club has actively participated in this process, helping the existing and thriving ECOWAS/Development Partners Coordination mechanism. More specifically, the ECOWAS/Sahel and West Africa Club partnership has significantly evolved since discussions began in 2004. With the signing of the SWAC-ECOWAS partnership framework, the SWAC has undertaken very significant reviews of critical sectors of prime importance to ECOWAS and underpinning human security in West Africa, including South-South Cooperation with Asia in aquaculture development, cotton trade policy, understanding intra and extra-regional migration, food security and most recently medium to long-term strategic thinking for ECOWAS as it begins its new existence as a Commission.

Within our partnership context, ECOWAS and the SWAC have identified five areas of cooperation. In addition to the joint initiatives in each of the four above-mentioned areas, several joint communication and information initiatives are being promoted.

Let me just briefly highlight some recent advances in these areas:

Medium- and Long-term Development Perspectives

As from the beginning of 2007, ECOWAS and the Club will co-produce an Annual Report on West Africa which will be comprised of three parts: (1) the first part will contain an analytical review of the region and the evolution of the economic, socio-cultural, political, institutional conditions; (2) the second part will compile a synthesis of the debates, decisions and actions on key issues related to medium-and-long-term development of the region; and (3) the third part will assemble independent contributions on issues of interest for the region's future. The African Development Bank (AfDB), UEMOA and other partners will be invited to participate in the drafting of this Report.

In addition, ECOWAS and the Club have agreed to launch a joint internet site on West Africa with a focus on regional integration which will regroup all regional and international data and information on the region, and serve as a public information tool which will evolve and adapt with the region.

This year the SWAC will organise an information workshop on NEPAD at OECD Headquarters to share the regional strategies, action plans, implementation process and financing mechanism of various field-level initiatives and their impact on development in the region. This workshop should help clarify NEPAD's objectives and *modus operandi* and assist development partners in identifying opportunities for coherent policies, programmes and partnerships.

In terms of private sector development, ECOWAS and the SWAC will work more closely together this year in areas of strategic importance for region, such as the private sector's role in the management of depleting natural resources like fisheries; access to energy and water resources and their relationship to climate change; and the promotion of investments for development, especially through South-South cooperation. South-South cooperation has become a major stake as regards sub-regional investment as we have seen with the rise of China. ECOWAS governments, through the implementation of NEPAD, have seen how a dynamic and competitive private sector is essential in order to stimulate economic growth, increase revenues and create the environment for investment.

Local Development and the Process of Regional Integration

The Club has been assisting ECOWAS in addressing the key challenge of developing the cross border concept. In 2007 the two institutions will launch two complementary processes aimed at ensuring a more effective mainstreaming of cross-border cooperation in the overall ECOWAS integration strategy.

Re-organising the cross-border cooperation work within ECOWAS aims to position this programme within the framework of ECOWAS' operational projects. ECOWAS indeed

implements a large number of programmes which are, in fact, cross-border programmes but which do not fully integrate this aspect. The objective is to be able to focus on some border areas as regards the actions and results of these projects (share border posts, transhumance corridors, health monitoring, shared management of socio-economic infrastructure, community radio⁹, etc.) while developing direct dialogue with local actors.

Preparing and holding the First Europe-Africa Conference on Cross-border Cooperation which will take place in Accra in June 2007. This Conference will be co-organised by ECOWAS, the SWAC and the AEBR. It will be an important step in building a political foundation and implementing financial and legal tools of cross-border cooperation in West Africa.

Another flagship project in the ECOWAS collaboration is the **Atlas on Regional Integration**, which has received some well-deserved financing. The SWAC and ECOWAS have worked closely together to produce the first chapter on transportation and telecommunications. During the first semester of 2006, the work on the Vulnerable Sahelian zones, migration, cotton, shared water basins, populations, languages and health chapters has been carried out by the SWAC and should be available during the year, after validation by ECOWAS.

The Regional Atlas will continue to be a critical tool for ECOWAS member countries in guiding our reflections on the question of medium- and long-term development perspectives.

Regional Agricultural Policy

Over the medium- and long-term, SWAC/ECOWAS joint strategic thinking will be based on the main issue of building and strengthening a West African regional market, as well as the impact of emerging countries (in particular, China and India) on Agricultural and Trade Policies. Strategic thinking will also continue to be carried out in other areas of interest for the region such as the implementation of ECOWAP and the ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET) as well as agricultural biotechnology policies and their impact on agricultural development in the region.

Within the framework of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (FCPN), the SWAC and ECOWAS in association with the CILSS, UEMOA and ROPPA will carry out further strategic thinking on the prevention and sustainable management of food crises in the Sahel and West Africa. Furthermore, the SWAC and ECOWAS will work on a strategy to ensure sustainable food security in West Africa based on the CILSS mechanism and in reference to the objectives set out in the ECOWAP framework.

Finally, medium- and long-term perspectives on Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development while strengthening the regional market will be an increasingly important area of joint work in 2007 and beyond.

Peace, Conflict Prevention and Democracy Programmes

The Club has also shown keen interest in support of our peace and democracy programmes and our cooperation in this area has deepened. Concerning the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, joint Action Plans concerning its ratification and implementation were developed by a joint working group chaired by ECOWAS at a meeting on 3 and 4 March 2005. This joint initiative has helped raise awareness through dissemination and advocacy in support of the ratification, appropriation and implementation of the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

This year, the Club and ECOWAS will jointly organise a second Forum for Political Parties, Civil Society and the Media as a follow-up to the very successful event the SWAC held the year before. It is gratifying to note that the West African sub-region is gradually turning

9 An experience is underway in the Sikasso – Bobo Dioulasso zone with support by the MDP

the corner with regard to violent conflicts. Both Sierra Leone and Liberia are currently in post-conflict peace-building phases, the latter having elected the first African woman President who is making great strides despite a very difficult political transition. With the lessons learned in these countries, ECOWAS has enhanced its capacity for early response, as amply demonstrated by its reaction to, and continued engagement in a number of member States.

Conclusion

At the inception of ECOWAS, our goal was to promote regional economic cooperation, growth and development. We never anticipated that so much energy and as many resources would be invested in political issues of peace, security, democracy and good governance. Of course, today we clearly see the inextricable linkages between human security and economic development, especially in making the link between good governance and much needed private investments for the future. As we improve upon and consolidate our democratic governance systems, there is a need to re-focus on the economic imperatives of sustainable growth – as some of the worst performing nations are located in West Africa and it remains one of the poorest regions in the world. Our efforts at promoting regional trade, monetary harmonisation policies, and regional infrastructures of roads, telecommunications, energy, and information technology should be consolidated and the processes are underway. The Club's Regional Atlas and other strategic analysis tools are essential in this area. In addition, the forthcoming Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and West Africa holds great promise for revitalising the trade-development relationship with the EU while helping to tear down external and intra-regional trade barriers. Nevertheless, it will be important to ensure that the steps towards liberalising ECOWAS markets are made progressively and that the gains are shared in ways that foster sustainable economic development and regional integration.

I would like to close this presentation by commending the distinguished President and Director together with their capable staff at the Sahel and West Africa Club, for their continued commitment in working alongside ECOWAS in its mission to advance regional integration, democracy, good governance, economic prosperity and human security for all West Africans. Indeed, the presence of the Director of the Club at the December 2006 ECOWAS Ministerial meetings and the January 2007 Summit in Ouagadougou, is further testimony of this thriving partnership which we cherish and are hopeful it will continue to flourish in the years to come.

I thank you for your kind attention.

ANNEX 4: INTRODUCTION BY NORMAND LAUZON, SWAC'S DIRECTOR

*Mr. Executive Secretary of ECOWAS,
Representatives of the German Government,
Mr. President of the Sahel and West Africa Club,
Dear Colleagues and friends,*

Gutten Tag!

Allow me to welcome you and sincerely thank you for accepting our invitation to join us in Berlin, Germany, which, as our President stated, has just taken up the Presidency of the G8 in January. I would like to thank the German Government and the entire GTZ team for hosting our SPG meeting in their offices in Berlin.

I will also take this opportunity to greet our former Deputy Director, Mrs. Sunhilt Schumacher, who recently left the Club to take well-deserved retirement. I would like to thank the President of the Club, Mr. Charles Goerens who, for the last year, consistently provided support notably in his efforts to mobilise resources.

We hope that in 2007 we will harvest all the seeds which were sown last year.

While presenting the broad lines of our 2006 Progress Report, sent to you at the beginning of January, I would like to make a few points so as to launch and deepen the debate on the Club's work that we will pursue today:

1. Presentation of the broad lines of the 2006 Progress Report

The format:

- As you can see, this year's report is quite vast. Considering the amplitude of the initiatives undertaken in 2006, we are presenting those which place particular emphasis on the impacts and perspectives for the years to come.
- Indeed, in 2006, we have attached particular importance to the impact of our work on the region and on development partners as was suggested by SPG members last year. Each Unit has chosen several ways to measure their impact some of which correspond to the way the Unit functions as well as the nature of its activities; while others correspond to the complementarity between the Club's various Units. The goal is for these impacts to be measured consistently.
- We have also examined the two reviews/evaluations carried out by Canada and Germany over the last months. In order to better take into account the remarks and recommendations set out in these two reports, we have decided to present them in two matrix tables which are annexed to this Report as well as the recommendations and remarks from the last SPG meeting in November 2005.
- Indeed, for clarity, this year the document contains a foreword providing a synthesis of the contents and enables those, who may find the document too voluminous, to understand our approach.
- We are open to all comments on how this document can be improved next year.

The content:

The Progress Report contains several important parts:

1. An introduction which recapitulates the broad lines of the Club's joint action as regards partnership, communication and resource mobilisation
2. The presentation of the initiatives within the four areas of concentration:
 - Medium- and Long-Term Development Perspectives
 - Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development
 - Local Development and the Process of Regional Integration
 - Governance, Conflict Dynamics, Peace and Security
3. A summary of the financial situation

My presentation will be organised in four sections:

- The main elements set out in the foreword (a presentation in addition to the text)
- A brief synthesis of the Introduction (a presentation in addition to the text)
- The key initiatives carried out by each of the Units and the main expected and foreseen results, including partnerships and communications (see text below)
- A brief summary of the Club's 2006 and 2007 financial situation, before going into more detail tomorrow morning (a presentation in addition to the text).

Medium- and Long-Term Development Perspectives Unit

Allow me first to present, for those who have not yet met him, the new head of this Unit, Mr. Raymond Weber, who was until recently the Director General of the Luxembourg Agency for Development Cooperation. We are pleased to welcome Raymond to the Club. He will strengthen the team's capacities with regard to prospective strategic thinking and more generally, the Club's competencies.

To come back to his Unit, composed of Ms. Sara Minard, who is here today, and Mr. Christophe Perret, two young economists, its aim is to provide elements to respond to the pivotal questions for the region which are: "Where and how will the 430 million West Africans live in 2020?" "What will be the future for the younger generation?" The responses to these key questions are sought in the formulation of horizontal strategic questions for the three other Units.

To cite a few:

Which West African political and social tools can strengthen the peace and security process in the region? How to better anticipate and address the population dynamics notably urban growth and population mobility? How to break away from recurring circumstantial food crises which the region has faced since the great droughts of the 1970s? How to render the education system more suitable to the actual needs? How to create jobs, improve productivity, reduce poverty? What respective role must be envisaged and reflected in the reality for the public and private sectors?

This year, the Unit launched initiatives on the prospects of sustainable aquaculture and fisheries policy coherence within the framework of activities with the private sector and South-South cooperation. It has begun working on the draft of a joint SWAC/ECOWAS Annual Report on the medium- and long-term development perspectives of the region.

Within the framework of these various initiatives which will be pursued in 2007, the Unit has strengthened its partnerships with organisations such as FAO, OECD's DCD, and private sector actors of the region and in Asia within the framework of South-South cooperation.

(Other details to be provided, notably on the creation of an internet site with ECOWAS on West Africa, based in Abuja, etc.)

Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development Unit

The Unit was strengthened in 2006 with the arrival of a new Head of Unit, Mr. Jean Zoundi, who until then was responsible for research at the Environment and Agricultural Research Institute in Burkina Faso and Ms. Khadidja Salah whose post is financed through a specific contribution provided by Switzerland. Furthermore, in order to better reflect the complexity and complementarity of the analyses, the Agricultural Transformation and Sustainable Development Unit was renamed the “Rural Transformation and Sustainable Development Unit.”

In 2006, the Unit’s initiatives essentially focused on the challenges linked to food security and poverty reduction, rural transformation, agricultural and trade policies in relation to strengthening the regional market.

With regard to food security, the Unit has focused its action around the following strategic question: *How to achieve sustainable food security and break away from recurring circumstantial food crises which the region has been facing since the 1970s?*

Within this framework, the Unit has undertaken three key initiatives:

- Re-launching, with the CILSS, of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (FCPN) by establishing a follow-up to the recommendations. This is demonstrated by the Club’s increased attention to the food security issue.
- Creating an independent FCPN web-site on food security.
- Producing periodically an Information Note on Food Security in order to facilitate decision-making and action.

Concerning agricultural and trade policies aiming to strengthen the regional market, focuses on the following questions: *Which policies should be implemented in order to attain the first MDG regarding poverty reduction? How to strengthen the regional market through improved coherence of agricultural policies with a view to enabling the region to benefit from the international and regional economic structural transformations?*

With various actors of the region, the Unit has produced a certain number of studies on:

- The future of livestock in the Sahel and West Africa within the framework of the establishment of the ECOWAS agricultural policy, ECOWAP.
- The impact of agricultural, food cooperation and trade policies on food security, with ROPPA in the framework of its Forum on Food Sovereignty.
- Analysis of land policies and reforms.
- Aquaculture and the sustainable management of fishery resources.

As the region is facing challenges of food security, demographic growth and economic development, the Club has undertaken strategic thinking on the transformation of the rural environment by 2025. This strategic thinking covers several themes, placing high priority on the key issue of rural youth and the transformation of rural societies.

Local Development and the Process of Regional Integration

In 2006, this Unit’s two major initiatives were the Atlas on Regional Integration and the cross-border cooperation pilot projects. These activities’ achievements confirm the notion that when a new idea is developed in Africa, it is easy to bring in African partners to support its development.

From the WABI network to the CIP adopted by ECOWAS, cross-border cooperation is now an idea which has gone all the way to the office of the President of the Commission of the African Union. These developments have encouraged us to organise in May the first Africa-Europe Conference on Cross-border Cooperation with the support of the European Union.

With regard to the Atlas, with active internal and external support, and the contribution of ECOWAS, the Unit has produced a number of chapters in 2006, notably on the vulnerable zone of Sahelian countries, cotton, migration, transboundary river basins, languages, Africa and China, petroleum and gas. Other subjects will be undertaken in the months to come such as rice, electricity, towns, tourism, regional organisations and large businesses.

The Atlas chapter on migration highlights the veritable nature of the exercise. It should enable the strengthening of capacities in the development of regional policies. It is within this framework that ECOWAS and the SWAC have decided to set up a group of experts to work on the migration issue aiming to help West African countries adopt a joint approach on this issue.

Governance, Conflict Dynamics, Peace and Security

In 2006, this Unit's initiatives were marked by a foot-hold on the ground through the organisation of several workshops bringing together various actors from 18 countries of the region; the establishment of a conflict prevention and management network; and the coordination of Women's and Youth Groups.

Three questions, three sectors and three areas of work summarise its involvement.

- *What are the ongoing dynamics of transformation and challenges which face West Africa as regards governance and democracy, conflict prevention and resolution, peace and security?*
- *What actions are to be undertaken in support of the various actors?*
- *What partnerships should be developed within this framework?*

At the request of ECOWAS, civil society and institutional actors, the Unit developed joint actions in the following areas:

- Governance and democracy, by the ratification, the dissemination and implementation of the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, the establishment of a regional policy dialogue, the valorisation of endogenous governance mechanisms and capacities.
- Conflict prevention and resolution, in collaboration with ECOWAS, the Regional Women's Group and WANSED.
- Reform of the Security Sector, and the promotion of human security, notably in the development of a regional approach with regard to DDR and building sustainable peace.

Concretely, this contributed to:

- Strengthening and valorisation of understanding through the organisation of workshops of various actors from 18 countries of the region and within the framework of networks with which the SWAC is involved. In 2006 there was a substantial contribution with regard to dynamics of exit from crises, DDR situations, human security, the situation of the younger generation and women and their involvement in democracy, conflict prevention and resolution.
- Decompartmentalisation of actors and the development of dialogue at the regional level as well as with development partners.

- Synergy in action and partnership development: within the various initiatives, the SWAC promoted the synergising of action and development of functional partnerships with among others WANSED, the Women's Group, the Youth Coordination Group, and various international and regional institutions. A strategic partnership with ECOWAS has been developed and consolidated. It will be strengthened in 2007 through the implementation of joint initiatives at ECOWAS' request.

2. What will these various activities lead to?

- ✓ The complementarity between the Units' various initiatives and areas of involvement.
- ✓ An unquestionable foot-hold in the region which enables us to work in partnership with various regional and international institutions on the ground, and fully play our facilitator role between countries of the region and development partners.
- ✓ The importance given to the impact of our initiatives. This is not about patting ourselves on the back but to responding – as much as we can – powerfully, by welcoming and considering ideas, by feeding strategic thinking, by making actors of the region heard, by facilitating exchanges and dialogue at the regional level.
- ✓ I would like to assure you that the entire SWAC team, at its modest level, works with determination towards building a stable and prosperous region.

If would also like to address today the issue of the Club's future, as it has just celebrated thirty years of existence. Over the course of this year, we will reach the conclusion of our 2004-2007 programme and should begin a new cycle. We would like your thoughts on this next programming period. Some countries have suggested a five-year programme. We think that a five year programme would indeed enable the Club to undertake initiatives over a longer period of time and better understand the impacts on the region.

Danke Sehr.

ANNEX 5: FINAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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BERLIN (GERMANY), 25-26 JANUARY 2007

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