



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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ECOWAS Citizens' Forum on Free Movement of Goods and Persons

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (6th July, 2014) – A forum for citizens of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), dubbed *Regional Citizens' Forum*, was organized at the Ouaga 2000 Conference Center in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, July 3 – 5, 2014, to consider concerns of non-state actors and to put together proposals for the implementation of community legislation. The Forum will also provide a platform for the setting up of a Task Force on the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS).

At the 43rd ordinary session of their Conference held on 17th – 18th July, 2013 in Abuja, Nigeria, the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS made the observation of the very modest results achieved in terms of integration of the common market and persons. Determined to ensure the effective implementation of the ECOWAS Protocols on the free movement of persons and goods, they decided to entrust the responsibility of monitoring this important initiative to His Excellency Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso.

The Forum is, therefore, part of the mission entrusted to the Head of State of Burkina Faso. The main objectives of the Forum were to: make a comprehensive inventory of all the challenges associated with the application of community legislation on the free movement; examine and consider concerns of non-state actors; and put together proposals for an effective implementation of the community legislation.

The Task Force formed is to ensure an effective implementation of the Scheme within the ECOWAS zone. Its responsibilities include: reviewing quarterly reports on the state of operation of the intra-regional trade submitted by the ECOWAS Commission; making recommendations to the statutory organs of ECOWAS on the free movement of goods; carrying out advocacy activities in Member States to get them to apply the Community texts on the ETLS; and undertaking any other actions or activities upon request of the President of the ECOWAS Commission.

The Borderless Alliance is pleased to have been involved in this initiative of the ECOWAS Commission, whose results contribute to the attainment of its vision, namely, promoting trade across West Africa by promoting best practices to international standards for trade in West Africa.

The Borderless Alliance is a regional alliance of private companies in West Africa with a key objective to improve and facilitate regional and international trade.

Additional information on the activities of the Borderless Alliance is available at www.borderlesswa.com

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