



## SUB-REGIONAL FISHERIES COMMISSION

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### PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

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#### Report of the Seventeenth Extraordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers

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Hotel King Fahd Palace - Dakar (Senegal)  
05 - 06 March 2015

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#### OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Seventeenth Extraordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) was held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, from 05 to 06 March 2015. The session was attended by all member States except Sierra Leone. The list of participants is attached to this report (annex 1).
2. The opening ceremony was presided over by His Excellency Mr. Lousény CAMARA, Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture of the Republic of Guinea, Chairman of the Conference of Ministers.

3. His Excellency Mr. Oumar GUEYE, Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Economy of the Republic of Senegal expressed, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Senegal, his deep satisfaction at the organization of this present session in the country of "Teranga" and welcomed all delegations.

He conveyed, in particular, the greetings of His Excellency Mr. Macky SALL, President of the Republic of Senegal.

After providing a brief background on the SRFC's creation and its impact on fisheries cooperation at the regional and international levels, Mr. Oumar GUEYE presented the current situation on the institutional crisis being faced by this institution. Pursuant to instructions of Heads of State, committed to the smooth functioning of the SRFC, he emphasized the need to find a solution to the crisis and hence allow the SRFC to regain its dynamism for the exclusive benefit of stakeholders in the fisheries sector, especially since the latter is confronted with considerable pressure on resources and limited capacities in the fight against IUU fishing.

He further pointed out that sustainability of this institution, a fine example of cooperation, is the only way out for member States at a time when expectations are high and tremendous issues are at stake.

He stated his conviction that this present session, coinciding with the SRFC's 30th anniversary, the age of maturity and reason, will reach a consensual decision. He congratulated the Permanent Secretariat staff for their efforts despite the numerous difficulties affecting the Organization.

4. In his opening address, the current Chairman of the Conference of Ministers thanked the Senegalese authorities for accepting to host this session and for facilities extended in accordance with the values of "Teranga".

He recounted the numerous challenges faced by the fisheries sector including over-exploitation of fisheries resources and IUU fishing.

Addressing these challenges requires greater cooperation and synergy between member States in order to restore the effectiveness of the SRFC, currently in a precarious situation due to the failure to appoint a Permanent Secretary.

He then provided the following overview of the Republic of Guinea's presidency of the Conference of Ministers:

- Recruitment of the international consulting firm, "APAVE", for pre-selection of candidates to the position of SRFC Permanent Secretary;

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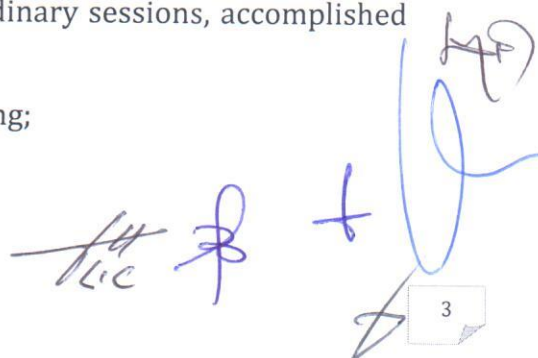


- Launching of a strategy with AFD (French Development Agency) for continued implementation of the Co-management/MPA project;
- Application, rejected by the European Union, for continuation of the project on strengthening sub-regional cooperation for monitoring, control and surveillance of fisheries activities in the SRFC zone;
- Organization of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth extraordinary sessions of the SRFC Conference of Ministers:

At the fifteenth session, the Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Economy of Senegal was mandated to appoint an Acting Permanent Secretary to conduct the day-to-day affairs of the SRFC, and the current Chairman mandated to pay a visit to Heads of State and/or Governments for the speedy appointment of a Permanent Secretary as well as a Deputy Permanent Secretary in the future. Appointment of a Permanent Secretary on a rotational basis could be adopted. However, this rotational system for the appointment of the Permanent Secretary is not applicable to the on-going process.

At the sixteenth Extraordinary Session, the Acting Permanent Secretary's term of office was extended for a period of three (03) months renewable once. The current Chairman was given a mandate to conduct a mission to Heads of State with the aim of facilitating decision-making on the appointment of a Permanent Secretary. Instructions were given to the Acting Permanent Secretary to initiate the revision process of SRFC statutory texts and invite member States to put forward recommendations.

- Collaborative discussions were held with JICA for registration of the SRFC as an observer to TICAD-III as well as with ECOWAS for the establishment of a cooperation framework;
- An SRFC mission was conducted to Hamburg to participate in oral arguments at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea pursuant to the SRFC's request for advisory opinion;
- A working session was held, on the margins of the ATLAFCO ordinary session in 2014, with SRFC ministers in charge of fisheries to renew the Acting Permanent Secretary's term of office;
- Discussions were held between the European Union, UNDP and member States on the extension of the project on governance in the fisheries sector;
- The Coordinating Committee, meeting in four extraordinary sessions, accomplished the following:
  - Validation of a regional plan to eliminate IUU fishing;



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- Preparation of oral arguments to be presented before the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, validation of the final request for advisory opinion, and establishment of the related mission's strategy;
- Review of the SRFC's revised statutory texts;
- Validation of development projects on artisanal fisheries.

In his conclusion, Mr. Lousény Camara, current Chairman of the Conference of Ministers, congratulated the Coordinating Committee and expressed the Conference of Ministers' satisfaction at the quality of work performed by the Permanent Secretary and her collaborators.

He thanked technical and financial partners for their constant support to the SRFC.

He then declared open the Seventeenth Extraordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers.

Following the opening ceremony, the Conference of Ministers met in closed session.

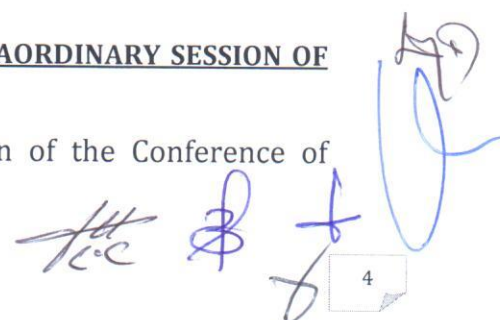
#### **DECISIONS OF THE CLOSED SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS**

5. At the end of the closed session, members of the Conference of Ministers adopted the following decisions:

- The Conference of Ministers shall be chaired by the Republic of Guinea-Bissau for a period of two years;
- The next Ordinary Session shall be organized by Guinea-Bissau no later than 31 May 2015;
- The term of office of the SRFC Acting Permanent Secretary is extended through 31 May 2015;
- The current Chairman of the Conference of Ministers, Mr. Lousény CAMARA, accompanied by at least one of his peers, is mandated to conduct a visit to Heads of State and Government with a view to facilitating decision-making for the appointment of a Permanent Secretary;
- The Acting Permanent Secretary is authorized to implement operational expenditures of the Permanent Secretariat pending adoption of the 2015-2016 budget;
- Member States are invited to settle their contributions to the SRFC budget.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE FINAL REPORT OF THE SEVENTEENTH EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE SRFC CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS**

6. The final report of the Seventeenth Extraordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers was unanimously adopted.



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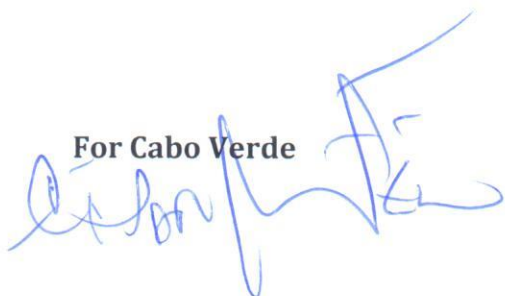
## **CLOSING CEREMONY**

7. The opening ceremony was presided over by His Excellency Mr. Lousény CAMARA, Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture of the Republic of Guinea.
8. The vote of thanks to the Republic of Senegal was read by the Republic of Cabo Verde and is attached to this report (see annex 2).
9. The session was closed on 6 March 2015 at 1800 hours.

**Done in Dakar, on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of March 2015**

### **The Conference of Ministers**

**For Cabo Verde**

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**For Guinea Bissau**

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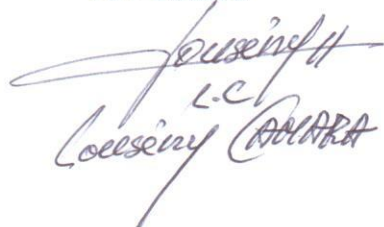
**For The Gambia**

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**For Mauritania**

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**For Guinea**

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**For Senegal**

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## ANNEX 1

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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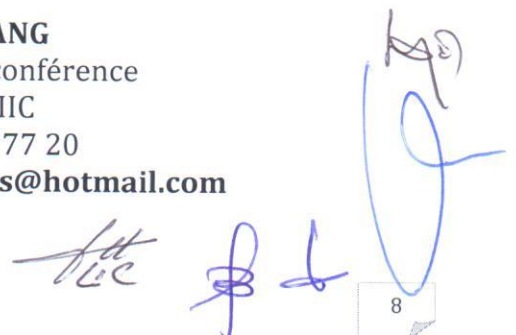
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## ANNEX 2

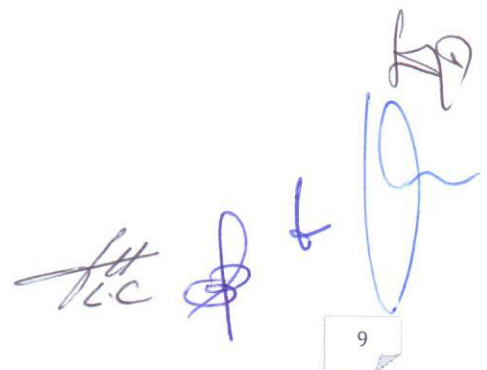
### VOTE OF THANKS TO THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL

The Conference of Ministers of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission meeting from 5 to 6 March 2015 at its Seventeenth Extraordinary session;

Expresses its gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Macky SALL, President of the Republic of Senegal, the Government and People of Senegal, for the attention and generous hospitality extended to them during their stay in Senegal;

Notes with satisfaction the excellent working conditions of delegations resulting in the success of the seventeenth Extraordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers.

Gratitude is also extended in particular, to His Excellency Mr. Oumar GUEYE, Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Economy of the Republic of Senegal who spared no effort in ensuring the excellent conduct of this present session.



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