

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE
COMMITTEE (AFC) AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE ECOWAS ADMINISTRATION
AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Freetown, Republic of Sierra Leone

July 2026

Honourable Ministers,

Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission,

Members of the Administration and Finance Committee,

Heads of ECOWAS Institutions and Agencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure and a deep sense of responsibility that I welcome you all to Freetown, Sierra Leone, for this meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee as part of the 2026 ECOWAS Mid-Year Statutory Meetings.

On behalf of the Government and People of the Republic of Sierra Leone, and in my capacity as Chairman of the Administration and Finance Committee, I extend our warmest greetings and appreciation to all delegations for your presence and commitment to the ideals and objectives of our Community.

This meeting is taking place at a significant moment in the history of our Community. As we commemorate the 50th Anniversary of ECOWAS, we are called upon to reflect on our collective achievements, assess the challenges before us, and renew our commitment to a more integrated, peaceful, prosperous and people-centred West Africa. Recent ECOWAS engagements have emphasized stronger governance, financial discipline, transparency and institutional effectiveness as key priorities for the Community.

Distinguished delegates,

The Administration and Finance Committee occupies a central place in the ECOWAS institutional architecture. It is entrusted with the critical responsibility of reviewing administrative, financial and budgetary matters, ensuring prudent management of Community resources, and strengthening accountability mechanisms across ECOWAS institutions. The Committee's work contributes directly to the effectiveness, credibility and sustainability of the Community's programmes and interventions

Over the coming days, we shall examine important reports and proposals relating to the administration, finance, human resources, budget execution and institutional performance of our Community institutions. The decisions and recommendations emerging from our deliberations will shape the efficiency of ECOWAS operations and support the realization of our regional integration agenda.

As Chair of this Committee, I encourage all participants to engage in constructive, objective and forward-looking discussions. Let us approach our work with a spirit of cooperation, mutual respect and collective responsibility, guided by the interests of the Community and the aspirations of the peoples of West Africa.

The challenges confronting our region—including security threats, economic vulnerabilities, climate change, youth unemployment and the need for stronger regional institutions—require that we continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of ECOWAS. This can only be achieved through sound financial management, responsible stewardship of resources and enhanced institutional performance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sierra Leone is honoured to host these statutory meetings under the Chairmanship of His Excellency Dr. Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Chairman of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS. In accordance with ECOWAS practice, the Chair's country presides over statutory meetings of the Community during its tenure.

We remain committed to working with all Member States, the ECOWAS Commission and Community Institutions to advance the objectives of regional integration, peace, security and sustainable development.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the ECOWAS Commission, the Government of Sierra Leone, development partners and all stakeholders whose efforts have contributed to the successful organization of this meeting.

It is my expectation that our deliberations will be fruitful and that the outcomes of this session will further strengthen the institutional and financial foundations of ECOWAS.

On this note, I declare the Meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee officially open.

Thank you for your attention.

Long live ECOWAS.

Long live regional integration.

*Long live the Republic of Sierra Leone.