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FIFTH MEETING OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION FOR COOPERATION
IN THE PROTECTION, MANAGEMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARINE
AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE
WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN REGION
Accra, 20-24 March 2000

REPORT OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
FOR COOPERATION IN THE PROTECTION, MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
OF THE MARINE AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE
WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN REGION

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Between 20 and 24 March 2000, Ghana hosted a series of meetings of experts and Ministers from the West and Central African region on the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region (Abidjan Convention) and related issues. The four-part programme consisted of the following meetings:

(a) Joint International Maritime Organization (IMO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Meeting of National Experts on the Abidjan Convention's Protocol concerning Cooperation in Combating Pollution in Cases of Emergency (the Emergency Protocol);

(b) Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Abidjan Convention;

(c) Technical segment of the fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention; and

(d) Ministerial segment of the fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention.

The present document constitutes the report of those meetings.

II. BACKGROUND

The Abidjan Convention and its Emergency Protocol constitute the legal component of the West and Central African (WACAF) Action Plan. The Convention expresses the legal commitment of the Governments of the WACAF region to deal individually and jointly with common marine and coastal environmental problems. The Convention also provides an important framework through which national policy makers and resource managers can implement national control measures in the protection and development of the marine and coastal environment of the WACAF Region. The Emergency Protocol was designed with an orientation towards combating and operationally responding to marine pollution in case of emergency.

3. The need has been felt, in view of the current situation, to update the Convention and develop new protocols that address current global concerns. The meeting, comprising national environmental experts of the Contracting Parties, was jointly organized by IMO and UNEP, with financial and technical assistance from the French Government and was hosted by the Government of Ghana.

4. The Abidjan Convention was adopted by countries of the region in 1981 and entered into force on 5 August 1984 when the requisite number of countries had ratified it. The Convention covers the marine environment, coastal zones and related inland waters falling within the jurisdiction of the states of the WACAF region that have signed and ratified the Convention.

5. The fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention was held within the framework of the various interventionary measures on the marine and coastal environment that had taken place on the African continent. Those were the Pan-African Conference on Sustainable Integrated Coastal Management (PACSICOM) in Africa, held in Maputo in July 1996, and the Cape Town Conference on Cooperation for the Development and Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment in Sub-Saharan Africa, held in December 1998. Both meetings urged the Parties to the Abidjan Convention to take action to bring the Abidjan Convention into effective operation.

6. The challenges before the Governments participating in the fifth meeting of the Abidjan Convention included the following:

(a) To agree on the exhaustive restructuring and updating of the Convention and its Protocol;

- (b) To determine the elements of a new work programme, that would be realistic, sustainable and effective to the Contracting Parties;
 - (c) To agree on concrete measures to be taken immediately and in the short-term to develop and put in place a sustainable financing mechanism for the Convention;
 - (d) To agree on new and more cost-effective regional coordination arrangements for overseeing the implementation of the decisions of the meetings of the Contracting Parties.
7. The meeting also considered how to forge closer coordination of activities between the Abidjan Convention and the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region (Nairobi Convention). (The Nairobi Convention relates to countries in East and Southern Africa.)
8. Since its entry into force, Parties to the Abidjan Convention and its Protocol have undertaken a number of activities aimed at ensuring the sustainable management of the region's maritime and coastal environment. These have included the following:
- (a) Development of marine and coastal priority issues for the region;
 - (b) Development of programmes for marine pollution prevention, monitoring and control in cooperation with IMO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA);
 - (c) Development of a programme for monitoring, controlling and combating coastal erosion;
 - (d) Development of national environmental impact assessment programmes for particular coastal sites;
 - (e) Development of national environmental legislation and its harmonization with the Abidjan Convention, in cooperation with FAO and IMO.

III. JOINT IMO/UNEP MEETING OF NATIONAL EXPERTS ON THE EMERGENCY PROTOCOL TO THE ABIDJAN CONVENTION

A. Introduction

9. The joint IMO/UNEP meeting of National Experts on the Emergency Protocol to the Abidjan Convention was convened in Accra from 20 to 22 March 2000, in accordance with the provisions of a memorandum of understanding signed by IMO and UNEP, and as a response to the needs expressed by the WACAF countries for the revitalization of the Abidjan Convention.

10. The main objectives of the meeting were:

(a) To prepare a medium-term programme for the development of regional cooperation for preparedness and response to accidental marine pollution and to examine how it could be implemented;

(b) To consider amendments to the Protocol, taking into account international developments since its adoption in 1981, and to propose follow-up actions.

B. Opening of the meeting

11. The Minister for Environment, Science and Technology of Ghana, Mr. Cletus A. Avoka, officially opened the meeting. He expressed his appreciation to IMO and UNEP for inviting Ghana to host the meeting. He noted that water bodies constituted very important sources of social and economic livelihood for the populations of the region. There was thus the need to use them sustainably. He recounted the constraints facing the implementation of the Abidjan Convention as well efforts made by Ghana in addressing some of the problems locally. He called for greater cooperation among all stakeholders to ensure the implementation of the Convention and the other global conventions on the environment. The complete text of his address is attached as annex III of this report.

12. Mr. Jean-Claude Sainlos, Senior Deputy-Director, Marine Environment Division, IMO, speaking on behalf of Mr. W.A. O'Neil, Secretary-General of IMO, welcomed the participants to the meeting and expressed his gratitude to the Government of Ghana for its support. He recalled the role of IMO and the importance of its regulatory work and, specifically, its impact on the enhancement of maritime safety and prevention of marine pollution. He drew attention to the importance of effective implementation of the provisions of international maritime safety and marine environment related treaties. He acknowledged the efforts already made by the countries of the region in ratifying and implementing the relevant treaties and the further need for them to increase their efforts in this direction. He stressed the importance of the theme to be considered by the meeting and expressed his firm conviction that the meeting would make it possible to create the necessary conditions to enable the operationalization of the Abidjan Convention, especially its Emergency Protocol, in the very near future. He reminded the meeting that under the UNEP Regional Seas Programme, IMO played an essential role in the implementation of the emergency protocols to the regional conventions.

13. In his opening statement, Mr. Halifa Drammeh, on behalf of Mr. Klaus Topfer, the Executive Director of UNEP, thanked the participants for accepting the invitation to participate in the meeting. He recalled the role given to UNEP by the secretariats of the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions. He further stressed the need for the involvement of both the ministries of transport and of the environment in the implementation of the Convention, to ensure that this was carried out effectively. He expressed the hope that the collaboration established between IMO, UNEP and the Government of Ghana would ensure success in the revitalization of the Abidjan Convention.

14. In his statement, Mr. Magnus Teye Addico, Secretary-General of the Maritime Organization for West and Central Africa (MOWCA), stressed the renewed interest of the region in maritime issues. He said MOWCA was dedicated to maritime safety and marine pollution prevention and informed delegates of

specific measures taken by MOWCA with a view to enhancing member States capabilities in this area. He made reference to 11 projects developed under the IMO Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme, for which an appeal for funding of about \$5.5 million was made to the international donor community. He also referred to the signing of a memorandum of understanding on port State control by the MOWCA member States in 1999 with a view to eradicating substandard shipping. He suggested the possible establishment of an integrated coast-guard authority in the region with multiple functions including pollution surveillance, search and rescue.

15. The Chair for the meeting was Mr. Abbey-Sam, Chief Director of the Ministry of Roads and Transport, who outlined the commitment of the Ministry to the issues to be discussed at the meeting.

C. Election of officers

16. The participants unanimously elected the following as officers for the meeting:

<u>Chair</u>	-	Mrs. Rahanatou Anki Dosso, Deputy Director, Merchant Marine Department, Benin
<u>Vice-Chair</u>	-	Mr. E.P.D Barnes, Chief Director, Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology, Ghana
<u>Rapporteur</u>	-	Mr. A. Ganon, Director of Legislation and Maritime Administration, Côte d'Ivoire

D. Participants

17. The meeting was attended by participants of the national competent authorities from the following WACAF countries: Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. A delegation from South Africa also participated. The participants were from the Ministries responsible for maritime transport and the environment, more specifically those officers directly responsible for preparedness and response matters.

18. Representatives from the following United Nations Organizations also participated in the meeting: IMO, UNEP, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), IOC/UNESCO.

19. Representatives from the following intergovernmental organizations also attended the meeting: MOWCA, Port Management Association of West and Central Africa (PMAWCA), Agreement for Cooperation in Dealing with Pollution of the North Sea by Oil and other Harmful Substances (Bonn Agreement).

20. The complete list of participants is given in annex XV of this report.

E. Adoption of the agenda and organization of the meeting

21. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening ceremony;
2. Election of Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur;
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of the meeting;
4. Review of the status of ratification/accession to the Abidjan Convention and its Emergency Protocol and to relevant global conventions;

5. Review of the status of emergency planning in the West and Central African Region;
6. Amendments to the Emergency Protocol;
7. Medium-term programme for regional cooperation;
8. Preparation of an IMO/industry workshop;
9. Any other business;
10. Adoption of the report.

F. Review of the status of ratification/accession to the Abidjan Convention

22. The IMO representative introduced document IMO/UNEP (WACAF) WG.1/2 on the status of ratification and accession to the Abidjan Convention and its Emergency Protocol and to relevant global conventions by WACAF countries. He stressed the importance of States that were not yet Parties to the Abidjan Convention acceding to the Convention and its Protocol. The following table represents the current status of ratification/accession to the Convention and its Protocol.

Status of Ratification by WACAF Countries of the Abidjan Convention as of 1 March 2000

Parties	Date of Signature	Date of deposit of instruments		Date of entry into force
Angola	-	-	-	-
Benin	23 Mar.1981	-	-	-
Cameroon	-	Accession	1 Mar.1983	5 Aug. 1984
Cape Verde	-	-	-	-
Congo	23 Mar. 1981	Ratification	19 Dec.1987	19 Feb. 1983
Côte d'Ivoire	23 Mar. 1981	Ratification	15 Jan.1982	5 Aug.1984
D. R. of the Congo	-	-	-	-
Equatorial Guinea	-	-	-	-
Gabon	-	Accession	13 Dec.1988	11 Feb.1989
Gambia, The	23 Mar.1981	Ratification	6 Dec. 1984	5 Feb.1985
Ghana	23 Mar.1981	Ratification	20 July 1989	18 Sep.1989
Guinea	23 Mar.1981	Ratification	4 Mar. 1982	5 Aug.1984
Guinea-Bissau	-	-	-	-
Liberia	23 Mar.1981	-	-	-
Mauritania	22 June 1981	-	-	-
Namibia	-	-	-	-
Nigeria	23 Mar.1981	Ratification	6 June 1984	5 Aug.1984
Sao Tome and Principe	-	-	-	-
Senegal	23 Mar.1981	Ratification	10 May 1983	5 Aug.1984
Sierra Leone	-	-	-	-
Togo	23 Mar.1981	Ratification	16 Nov.1983	5 Aug.1984

23. The IMO representative also highlighted the importance for WACAF countries in becoming contracting parties to the main IMO conventions such as those dealing with maritime safety and the protection of the marine environment. He stressed the importance of the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation, 1990 (OPRC Convention), the 1992 Protocol to the

International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage and of the 1992 International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution, including for those countries presently Parties to the Civil Liability Convention. Participation in those agreements, he said, would be important for each country individually as well as to guarantee the receipt of assistance and international cooperation in case of a pollution incident.

24. While many participants highlighted the various activities that they had undertaken towards ensuring implementation of those agreements, a number also observed that inadequate coordination between the relevant national administrations hampered the ratification of or accession to international conventions. In many cases it was not even known which national institution had responsibility for the conventions in order for the necessary steps to be taken for their ratification or accession.

25. Concluding the discussions, the IMO representative emphasized that IMO had a specific role in assisting in the development of regional cooperation under the emergency protocols to the regional Conventions.

26. The meeting agreed that the attention of Governments of the WACAF region should be drawn to the importance of becoming Parties to the Abidjan Convention and its Protocol and to the various global conventions adopted under IMO auspices.

G. Review of the status of emergency planning in the West and Central African region

27. It was noted that the information in the document DOC. IMO/UNEP (WACAF) WG.1/3 did not reflect the current situation. Delegates were invited to provide the IMO secretariat with additional and updated information on this issue to enable IMO to prepare a more comprehensive information document on the status of preparedness and response in the WACAF region.

28. Members noted that in a number of countries, several departments were involved in the national emergency system. In cases where no lead agency had been designated, this had given rise to problems in the coordination of response actions.

29. The meeting concluded that where it had not already been done, the allocation of responsibilities to the various departments involved in the national emergency system in each country should be concluded as soon as possible, since such decisions would be essential to the success of response actions within individual countries and for international cooperation. The meeting further agreed that the allocation of such responsibilities should be adapted to the existing situation in each country. Depending on the country, some cooperation between the sectors responsible for defence, the merchant navy and the environment would be necessary.

30. In countries with offshore exploration and oil exploitation activities, it was noted that local plans for installation of equipment were more or less adequate and that the relevant administrations were very keen on monitoring these installations to ensure consistency among local plans and their coordination with national plans.

31. To ensure the operationality of contingency plans, the need for regular testing of those plans and their modification as determined by the result of these tests was recommended.

H. Amendments to the Emergency Protocol

32. A document introduced by the IMO representative (DOC. IMO/UNEP (WACAF) WG.1/4) set the tone for discussion on amending the Emergency Protocol of the Abidjan Convention. Since the adoption of the Emergency Protocol in 1981, new developments had taken place, especially the adoption of the OPRC Convention. It was felt necessary, therefore, to amend the Emergency Protocol to take into account the OPRC Convention as well as experiences gained in various regions of the world with preparedness, response and cooperation.

33. The meeting was invited to start the process of revision of the Emergency Protocol and to request Contracting Parties to initiate the necessary steps toward achieving this. The meeting was also invited to examine each proposition in the document under discussion with a view to agreeing whether it was necessary.

34. There was unanimous agreement on the necessity to revise the Protocol and to propose to the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention to start the process towards a revision of the Protocol. The detailed organization of such work would be the responsibility of Contracting Parties to decide. It was, however, recommended that a meeting of experts be convened to prepare the draft to be presented to a meeting of the Contracting Parties and that those experts work on the basis of the document and the comments made during the current discussions.

35. The meeting agreed to have a preliminary discussion on the following propositions:

(a) Proposition 1: A new article 4 bis was proposed to describe the minimum requirements for Contracting Parties, to include the designation of a competent national authority or authorities. It was further stressed that the Emergency Protocol dealt with all types of pollution, including pollution from oil and other harmful substances (including nuclear substances or residues of such substances). However, it would be necessary to introduce a time frame to allow Contracting Parties to meet such requirements in the case of hazardous and noxious substances, and the issue should be considered further in the process of revision;

(b) Proposition 2: A new article 4 ter was proposed to introduce contingency planning for offshore units, seaports and handling facilities. The proposed article was unanimously accepted. The following two points were to be examined further in the process of amending the Emergency Protocol. One was to consider whether reference should be made to the competent national authority or to competent national authorities as in article 4 bis. The other dealt with the link between plans requested under this draft article and what is mentioned under article 4 bis. Should the contingency planning be "coordinated" with the national system established or "integrated" into the national system?

(c) Proposition 3: This dealt with the format for writing reports on pollution or threat and was unanimously agreed to. Delegates requested that assistance be provided for the drafting of national laws on offshore structures, ports and handling facilities. Such assistance could be provided under the mid-term programme, discussed under agenda item 5;

(d) Proposition 4: It was proposed and accepted that Contracting Parties should follow up on reports received;

(e) Proposition 5: This proposition dealt with the need for Contracting Parties to prepare and harmonize their customs and immigration requirements to facilitate cooperation among countries in the region. This important feature of cooperation was unanimously approved;

(f) Proposition 6: This proposition aimed at the establishment of financial relationships between an assisting and a beneficiary country before an incident takes place and the type of assistance required. The provision was agreed to, as was the text, which was from the OPRC Convention. It was emphasized that being Parties to the international regimes for liability was essential in this matter and that the secretariat of the IOPC Fund established under the 1992 Fund Convention had developed guidelines for submitting compensation requests which were set out in a claims manual. The topic would be further discussed at a workshop envisaged as a follow-up to the meeting. It was also noted that reference to those international treaties should be made in the preamble to the Emergency Protocol in order to encourage their ratification by WACAF countries;

(g) Proposition 7: The need for an article on assistance to the secretariat was acknowledged;

(h) Proposition 8: The need for a provision dealing with subregional agreements was also acknowledged.

36. In conclusion, it was agreed to recommend to the Contracting Parties that they start the process of amending the Protocol on the basis of the document discussed and the comments made. The full text of the agreed propositions is contained in annex IV of this report.

37. During the discussion of this agenda item, the delegation of the Federal Ministry of State for Environment, Nigeria, made a statement outlining the following:

(a) The concurrence of the Nigerian Government with the IMO and UNEP initiative to amend the Emergency Protocol to the Abidjan Convention and its acceptance, in principle, of the propositions as contained in the annex to document IMO/UNEP (WACAF) WG.1/4, subject to the outcome of the discussions, and any modifications resulting therefrom, by the meeting;

(b) The creation of a new Federal Ministry of Environment in Nigeria vested with substantial powers on matters related to marine pollution. The Ministry of Environment would work closely with the IMO focal point and the Ministry of Transport of Nigeria and the delegation requested that this be reflected in all appropriate references and documents related to the Protocol.

I. Medium-term programme for regional cooperation

38. The IMO representative introduced document IMO/UNEP (WACAF/WG.1/5), containing the proposition for a medium-term programme for regional cooperation under the Emergency Protocol to the Abidjan Convention. It was emphasized that the actions proposed when adopted by Contracting Parties could be used as the basis for preparing project documents for funding by Governments or donor agencies such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

39. Countries that had received support from IMO or IMO/Industry Global Initiative expressed their appreciation.

40. An issue of concern to many delegates related to the financing of uncompleted action programmes. Members wondered whether a trust fund would be established for this purpose or whether industry would contribute to their implementation.

41. The meeting was informed that MOWCA had adopted a new system of financing subregional projects and programmes through a modest service charge of \$0.10 per freight ton of water-borne cargo, payable by the shipping lines serving the region.

42. The meeting deliberated on the following individual actions proposed in the medium-term programme:

(a) Accession to global conventions. This action was supported by all delegates. It was pointed out, however, that the number of countries that could receive support for developing their national legislation for the implementation of international conventions would depend on the resources available. The suggestion was made to ask countries to identify possible legal experts in their countries and have them trained at the International Maritime Law Institute established in Malta under the auspices of IMO. This had been done for the island States of the Indian Ocean. It was further noted that though very often the expertise did exist in the countries concerned, ratifying the conventions and introducing the necessary national legislation was difficult because of their low priority within the countries. Linked with the question of ratification of liability and compensation regimes, the question was raised as to the possible identification of the polluter when an oil slick was detected. This could lead to having further action adopted to establish guidance for the identification of the polluting product and its source. Such guidance could be prepared on the basis of existing systems for identifying oils by their fingerprints on the basis of the work carried out by North Sea countries within the Bonn Agreement;

(b) Development of contingency plans. The action related to the development of national contingency plans was supported but the need to have parallel action towards developing regional or subregional contingency plans simultaneously was emphasized. It was also stressed that, when approaching potential donor agencies, project proposals should preferably be presented as regional initiatives;

(c) Relations with industry. This action was supported;

(d) Mobilizing industry stockpiles. This action was supported;

(e) Subregional contingency plans. This action was supported;

(f) Establishment of an information exchange system. The meeting agreed on the need to establish an information exchange system to:

(i) Facilitate the transmission of urgent messages between Parties in situations where urgent assistance is required in case of accidents or where an accident affecting one country could also affect another country;

(ii) ~~Exchange data on incidents in the same way as the information which would be gathered on port State control.~~

The MOWCA observer informed the meeting that the Centre for Information and Communication of the Abuja Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control was being established in Abidjan and suggested that that could be taken into consideration in deciding on the regional entity to undertake work on establishment of an information exchange system.

(g) Administrative aspects of mutual assistance. The need for such action was accepted by the meeting.

(h) Training of personnel and testing of plans. The absolute necessity of such cooperative action was emphasized.

The meeting concluded that the actions summarized in annex V should be introduced into the general work programme to be adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention and that those actions should be transformed into projects to be financed either within the budget of cooperation under the Convention or by submitting them to donor agencies or Governments.

43. Institutional arrangements: The meeting exchanged views on institutional arrangements but considered it premature to deal with the matter and suggested that it might be considered during the meeting of experts to prepare the meeting of the Contracting Parties.

44. The approved medium-term programme is included in annex I of this report.

J. Preparation of IMO and industry workshop

45. The meeting took note of the information provided in document IMO/UNEP (WACAF/WG.1/6) on the IMO/industry workshop, to be held in the year 2000 as a follow-up to the Joint IMO/UNEP Meeting of National Experts on the Emergency Protocol to the Abidjan Convention.

46. The paper gave an idea of the subject areas to be addressed during the workshop. The topics, it was noted, were geared towards the strengthening of WACAF countries' capabilities in the field of pollution preparedness and response.

K. Any other business

47. It was announced that South Africa would be coordinating a training course on oil spill response, including contingency planning, sensitivity mapping and response management, from 10-14 April 2000 in Cape Town. The course was part of a project funded by the World Bank and was aimed at developing oil spill response capability in the Indian Ocean islands. The course was, however, open to other participants. Three vacancies were still available. The course would be presented in French and English. There would be no course fee, although those wishing to attend would have to pay their own travel to and from Cape Town and make provision for their accommodation and subsistence. Further details were to be provided by the South African delegation.

48. The representative of the Bonn Agreement gave an overview of his organization's structure, objectives and mode of operation. He also shared with the meeting some of the experiences gained by his organization in the past few years. He further indicated his intention to report to his organization on the outcome of this meeting.

L. Adoption of the report

49. — The meeting approved the text of the present document and its annexes as the report of the Joint IMO/UNEP Meeting of National Experts on the Emergency Protocol to the Abidjan Convention.

M. Closure of the meeting

50. The Chair, Mrs. Rahanatou Anki Dosso, declared the meeting closed on Wednesday, 22 March 2000.

IV. MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE ABIDJAN CONVENTION

A. Introduction

51. The ninth meeting of the Steering Committee of the Abidjan Convention, comprising the member countries listed below, met on 22 March 2000, to deliberate on challenges confronting the implementation of the Abidjan Convention and its Emergency Protocol. The meeting preceded the meeting of the technical segment of the fifth meeting of the Abidjan Convention.

52. The following member countries were represented: Benin; Cameroon; Côte d'Ivoire; Gabon; Gambia; Ghana (Chair); Guinea; Senegal; Togo.

B. Opening of the meeting

53. In his opening remarks, Mr. E. P. D. Barnes, Chief Director of the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology, Ghana, and Chair of the Committee, welcomed delegates to the Steering Committee meeting after the joint IMO/UNEP meeting. He acknowledged the hard work put into the past two days by delegates and hoped that despite this they would be in a position to address the task ahead of them with the diligence necessary. He said that the delegates had very critical issues ahead of them which needed to be discussed seriously with appropriate decisions to be taken for the consideration of the Ministers. He hoped they would show the same zeal that they exhibited during the joint IMO/UNEP meeting.

54. In his remarks, Mr. Halifa Drammeh, the UNEP representative, urged the participants to consider the critical issues before them, deliberate on them thoroughly and come up with a focused number of issues that would advance the objectives of the Convention. The Committee should also come out with clear, workable and achievable guidelines to help in the implementation of the Convention. Mr. Drammeh informed delegates that a representative of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) had been invited to the meeting to share experiences in the implementation of that Convention with them.

C. Agenda of the meeting

55. The delegates adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (b) Organization of the work of the meeting;
 - (c) Election of officers.
3. Briefing by the representative of the Barcelona Convention.
4. Critical policy issues relating to the future of the Abidjan Convention requiring urgent measures and decision by Governments:

(a) Updating and restructuring the Abidjan Convention: Key challenges and implications;

- (b) New work programme: Basis and justification;
 - (c) Sustainable financing mechanism and arrangements for the Abidjan Convention;
 - (d) More effective regional coordination arrangements and mechanisms;
 - (e) Priority areas of cooperation and coordination between the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions and between African regional conventions and global conventions;
 - (f) Organization of the preparatory process for the partnership conference on the protection, management and development of the coastal and marine environment (to be held in late 2000 or early 2001).
5. Status of existing and evolving projects financed by the Global Environment Facility and relevant to the coastal and marine environment of West and Central African Region.
 6. Suggested draft decisions for the consideration of the fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties.
 7. Other matters.
 8. Closure of the meeting.

D. Recommendations

56. The Steering Committee, after its deliberations on the agenda items, arrived at the following recommendations to be submitted to the ministerial meeting:

- (a) Membership of seven: The Bureau of the ministerial segment should be re-organized to comprise seven members to replace the existing membership of ten, given that a smaller number would be easier to manage and more cost-effective to convene. Members of the Bureau would be assigned specific roles and be held accountable for such roles. Membership would be limited to those Contracting Parties that had acceded to or ratified the Convention and its Protocol and had demonstrated their commitment by paying their contributions;
- (b) Legal framework: Regarding the fact that the current legal framework for the Convention established the membership of ten for the Steering Committee, an appropriate amendment for the change would need to be incorporated into the current rules of procedure of the Convention. That would also address the issue of the specific roles of each of the seven members.
- (c) Change of name: It was agreed that a suggestion be made to the Ministerial Segment to change the name of the Steering Committee to "Bureau".
- (d) The Partnership Conference: The indefinite postponement of the Partnership Conference was noted. It was agreed that a specific date in 2000 be placed before the Ministerial Conference for convening the Partnership Conference.
- (e) The participation of South Africa in the Abidjan Convention: The request by South Africa to be part of the Abidjan Convention would require an amendment to the articles establishing the geographical scope of the Convention. The legal experts updating the articles of the Nairobi Convention were to be asked to include the drafting of such an amendment for consideration at the meeting.

E. Working groups

57. The following working groups were established to discuss in detail the various issues as outlined above and present their reports to the Steering Committee:

(a) Working Group I

- (i) Members: Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Senegal (Chair).
- (ii) Mandate: To prepare a comprehensive list of suggested decisions of the meeting.

(b) Working Group II

- (i) Members: Benin, Gambia (Chair), Ghana, Nigeria, Togo.
- (ii) Mandate: To prepare a work programme and consider a specific date for the partnership conference.

(c) Working Group III

- (i) Members: Cape Verde, Congo, Ghana, Nigeria (Chair).
- (ii) Mandate: To develop a policy on sustainable financing that would enable the Convention to generate funds for its programmes.

(d) Working Group IV

- (i) Members: Angola, Ghana, Guinea Conakry, Liberia.
- (ii) Mandate: To draft Accra agreement to incorporate about six problem areas on which the Ministers would take specific actions.

58. It was agreed that the membership of the working groups would be open to allow other interested members to participate in their deliberations. It was agreed that delegates from UNESCO and IMO could participate in the meetings of the working groups.

F. Rules of procedure

59. Some delegates expressed concern about some aspects of the rules of procedure. They wondered why the current meeting of the Contracting Parties should be referred to as the fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties when it had been reported that the fourth meeting of the Contracting Parties, which took place in 1995, lacking a quorum, could not be convened as such. Thus, describing the current meeting as the fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties appeared to be historically incorrect and, therefore, misleading. They felt that the current meeting should be legitimately referred to as the fourth meeting of the Contracting Parties.

60. Delegates also noted that important documents for this meeting were either not received early enough for perusal and adequate preparation, or were only received at the meeting venue.

61. The secretariat acknowledged that a quorum was not realized at the fourth meeting of the Contracting Parties held in 1995. However, participants at the meeting agreed to set aside the rules of procedure and meet as the Conference of Parties. A report of the meeting was subsequently issued and circulated to all Contracting Parties as the report of the fourth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention. Subsequently, all the preparations and documentation with respect to the current Accra meeting referred to

it as the fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties without any objections. Moreover, when documents were submitted to members inviting them to the fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties, no one considered the numbering to be inappropriate or disputed the sequence. The Contracting Parties deemed it acceptable to call the Accra meeting the fifth one because the preceding one was held despite difficulties such as lack of a quorum.

62. The secretariat noted the concerns expressed by members regarding preparation for the Accra Meeting, including early submission of documents, and explained that some of those lapses were due to communication gaps, such as incorrect e-mail addresses, transfer of personnel and other administrative difficulties. However, having noted these concerns, the secretariat urged members to tackle the more critical issues at hand and seize the opportunity of the current full-house attendance of this joint meeting to discuss issues and take decisions that would move the Convention forward toward the realization of its objectives.

G. Briefing by the representative of the Barcelona Convention

63. Mr. Arab Hoballah, Deputy Coordinator, UNEP Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Action Plan, shared the experiences of the Barcelona Convention with delegates in a paper entitled "Lessons from experience for sustainable financing."

64. His presentation highlighted the key parameters for sustainable financing of regional conventions and programmes. The full text of his presentation is included as annex V of this report.

H. Critical policy issues relating to the future of the Abidjan Convention

65. The recommendations of the working groups are duly reflected in the decisions in annex I adopted by the ministerial segment of the fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties.

V. THE MINISTERIAL SEGMENT OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE
CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE ABIDJAN CONVENTION

66. The ministerial segment of the fifth meeting of the Abidjan Convention was held on Friday, 24 March 2000.

A. Opening of the segment

67. The ministerial segment was officially opened by Ghana's Minister for Environment, Science and Technology, Mr. Cletus A. Avoka. He acknowledged the important role the maritime industry plays in the regional programme for the protection, development and management of the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem. He also noted that the implementation of the Abidjan and Nairobi conventions had not proceeded as expected and recalled that UNEP had been asked to evolve strategies to reactivate these two conventions. He particularly noted the major problems facing the implementation of the Abidjan Convention as relating to the level of ratification of the Convention and its Protocol and inadequate financial support given to the implementation of the programmes under the Convention. He stated that discussions were in progress to expand the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem Project, which had involved six participating countries of the Convention, to cover all the 21 countries covered by the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem. He called for synergy among institutions of the region addressing marine and coastal environment problems as well as with the various economic bodies like the Economic Community of West African States and the African Development Bank in the areas covered by the Convention. He reminded the meeting of the Partnership Conference originally scheduled for the year 2000 and requested participants to seriously consider holding the meeting before the year 2002 which is the year scheduled for the ten-year review of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro.

68. Statements were made by the representative of the Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Halifa Drammeh; the representative of UNIDO, Mr. Chidi Ibe; the representative of IMO, Mr. Jean-Claude Sainlos; the Ivorian Minister for Construction and Environment, Mr. Vincent Essoh Lohoues; the Gambian Secretary of State for Presidential Affairs, Mr. Edward Singhatey; the South African Deputy Minister for Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Mr. Rejoice T. Mabudafhasi; the Nigerian Minister of State of the Federal Ministry of Environment, Mr. Imeh T. Okopido; and the Nigerian Minister of State of the Federal Ministry of Transport, Mr. Bello Usman.

69. The full texts of the statements are presented in annexes VI to XIV of this report.

B. Election of the Bureau

70. Ghana was unanimously elected the Chair for the ministerial segment.

C. Attendance

71. The ministerial segment was attended by Ministers from Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa, senior officials and experts from Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Togo as well as officials from the following United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations: UNEP, UNIDO, UNESCO, FAO; the Commission of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR); MOWCA; the Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS).

D. Adoption of the agenda

72. The Ministers adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening:
 - (a) Statement on behalf of UNEP Executive Director Mr. Klaus Topfer by Mr. Halifa Drammeh;
 - (b) Statement by the Chair of the Steering Committee, Mr. Cletus A. Avoka;
 - (c) Statements by Ministers and Heads of Delegation.
2. Organizational Matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (b) Organization of the work of the meeting;
 - (c) Election of officers.
3. Consideration of recommendations and decisions of the preparatory meeting (20-23 March 2000).
4. Any other business.
5. Closing.

E. Consideration of the recommendations and decisions of the preparatory meeting

73. Mr. Halifa Drammeh presented the recommendations and decisions of the Steering Committee meeting to the ministerial segment. The Chair then invited the ministers and the delegates to study the recommendations and decisions as presented to them by the working groups of the technical experts.

74. In the ensuing discussions, a motion was tabled by Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa, Rejoice T. Mabudafhasi, for the adoption of the decisions. The motion was seconded by the Minister for Construction and Environment of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Vincent Essoh Lohoues.

75. The delegates who were not present at the meeting during which the Steering Committee was established expressed misgivings about the composition of the Steering Committee. They noted that since they were representing their countries, it was important for them to understand the rationale behind the composition of the Committee.

76. Mr. Halifa Drammeh explained that in order to save on time while delegates were meeting at their working group levels, the Ministers held a separate meeting simultaneously to discuss the follow-up arrangements, at which the decision on the composition of the Steering Committee was taken. In a similar vein, the Ministers clarified the situation, explaining that it had been expedient to take advantage of the time lapse to hold a meeting. They urged delegates to accept that the arrangements were made in the general interest of the meeting, and that what was crucial was for every country to play its respective role effectively in order to move the objectives of the Convention forward.

77. The composition of the Steering Committee was accepted after those explanations.

F. Date and venue for the next meeting

78. The meeting decided that the Steering Committee should communicate the date and venue for the next meeting to all Contracting Parties. The Chair entreated delegates to request their Governments to ensure full participation at the next meeting.

G. Closure of the meeting

79. Closing the ministerial segment, the Chair, Cletus A. Avoka, Minister for Environment, Science and Technology, acknowledged the sponsorship provided by IMO and UNEP to the fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention. He was happy that the meeting had attracted five ministers and expressed the hope that ministers from all the countries involved would participate in the next meeting. While not underrating the capabilities of the technical representatives who participated in the meeting, he reiterated the importance of ministers participating personally in such august meetings on the continent, as that would sensitize them on the issues deliberated upon to facilitate their ultimate implementation.

80. The Chair also urged the participants to impress upon their ministers the importance of the impending meeting in Abuja of African ministers of environment so that they could all attend. Crucial issues would be discussed for which they would be required to take a common stand against the problem of environmental degradation militating against Africa. Standing together and speaking with one voice was the sure way towards progress for the continent.

81. The Chair lauded the hard work of the participants during the meeting and praised delegates for the transparent manner in which discussions were carried out. He hoped UNEP and IMO would keep in close contact with the Steering Committee secretariat in order to begin early implementation of some of the decisions.

82. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair declared the meeting closed on Friday, 24 March 2000.

Annex I

DECISIONS OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION FOR COOPERATION IN THE PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARINE AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN REGION

The Contracting Parties,

Taking note of the challenges that have faced the Abidjan Convention during the past 19 years resulting in the setback of this regional seas programme in attaining its objective of protecting the marine and coastal environment within the Convention region for a sustainable development,

Conscious of the need to take urgent measures to halt and reverse this downward trend by revitalizing the Abidjan Convention,

Recalling that African Governments agreed on an African Process for the Protection, Management and Development of the Coastal and Marine Environment in the Maputo Declaration on the Pan-African Conference on Sustainable Integrated Coastal Management, held in Maputo 18 to 24 July 1998, and the Declaration on an African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment, particularly in sub-saharan Africa, Cape Town from 30 November to 4 December 1998,

Taking note of the Governing Council decision 19/14 A of 7 February 1997 to, inter alia, strengthen the regional seas programmes and coastal zone management approach, as called for in the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities,

Welcoming United Nations Environment Programme and International Maritime Organization efforts to update the Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Pollution in Cases of Emergency,

Hereby:

CP.5/1 Ratification, updating and/or restructuring of the Abidjan Convention

1. Request the Bureau, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme, to facilitate the accession to and ratification of the Convention by the countries who are not yet Contracting Parties;
2. Decide to provide the Regional Coordinating Unit with the requisite managerial and professional expertise, institutional support and other requirements to make it more functional;
3. Also decide, on the basis of the desire of new members to join the Abidjan Convention, to:
 - (a) Amend articles 1 and 26 to expand the geographical scope of the Abidjan Convention to enable the participation of countries such as South Africa;
 - (b) Expand membership under article 1 to include accession to the Convention by relevant institutions and bodies;
 - (c) Consider expansion of membership under Article 1 to include accession to the Convention by relevant institutions and bodies, such as the Economic Community of West African States, Central African Economic and Monetary Community, Southern African Development Community and others;
4. Further decide, in accordance with article 17 of the Convention, to establish thematic working groups comprising technical and legal experts charged with:
 - (a) Providing advisory services;

- (b) Identifying relevant regional institutions referred to in paragraph 3 (c) and defining ways and means for their accession to membership;
- (c) Developing and implementing the work programme in conjunction with the activity centre;
- (d) Taking into consideration the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Joint International Maritime Organization and United Nations Environment Programme Meeting of National Experts in updating the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Combating Maritime Pollution in Cases of Emergency;

5. Request Contracting Parties to:

- (a) Designate and/or reconfirm within three months, by the end of June 2000, national focal points for the Convention to facilitate collaboration and coordination with the Regional Coordinating Unit;
- (b) Identify, for the consideration of the Bureau, activity centres on issues related to the marine and coastal environment and to cooperate, participate and be responsible for specific components of the new programme of work.

CP.5/2 New programme of work

1. Decide and authorize the Bureau, in collaboration with United Nations Environment Programme and the thematic working groups, to develop and implement a detailed work programme based on the outline;
2. Request United Nations Environment Programme and International Maritime Organization to strengthen their collaboration in assisting the Parties in the implementation of the programme, particularly on aspects relating to the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Combating Pollution in cases of Emergency;
3. Adopt the activities and outputs for the biannual work programme for the Abidjan Convention annexed to the present decision;
4. Further adopt the medium-term programme for regional cooperation under the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Combating Pollution in Cases of Emergency and annex to the present decision.

Annex

ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS FOR THE BIENNIAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE ABIDJAN CONVENTION

Theme 1. ASSESSMENT

Goal: Better understanding (knowledge) of the coastal and marine environment

COMPONENT 1: COASTAL EROSION AND SHORE LINE CHANGES

(geographical location of problem - Nigeria, Gambia, Senegal, Benin, Togo, etc.)

OBJECTIVES	MAIN ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	COLLABORATORS/PARTNERS	REFERENCE
Long-term monitoring of the coastal area for improved decision making	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and assess existing national/regional data and information related to coastal erosion and changes in shorelines and the causes of the coastal erosion. 2. Harmonize existing regional methodologies in assessing coastal erosion. 3. Review existing national/regional policies, institutional arrangements and legislation on coastal erosion. 4. Assess the effect of erosion on specially protected areas such as highly sensitive coastal ecosystems and species. 5. Create a regional network and database on coastal erosion issues. 6. Identify and implement a long-term monitoring programme within identified critical areas in the region. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Status report on the causes of coastal erosion and changes in shorelines within the region indicating gaps in data policies and legislation at the national and regional levels 2. Programme for long-term monitoring of coastal dynamics and processes along the region 3. Harmonized regional manual for assessment of coastal erosion 	National governments, UNEP, IOC/UNESCO, UNDP, FAO.	

COMPONENT 2: FISHERIES, MANGROVES AND ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	COLLABORATORS/PARTNERS	REFERENCE
<p>Sustainable use and conservation of fish habitats, marine biodiversity and associated ecosystems.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Source and review existing documents, data and activities related to critical fish habitats, mangroves and associated ecosystems. 2. Produce maps/atlasses of important and critical fisheries/nursery grounds to include mangroves and associated ecosystems (wetlands, etc). 3. Assess impact of fishing operations on endangered species, e.g., turtles, and provide recommendations for their conservation. 4. Assess distribution, diversity, uses and threats to mangroves within the region. 5. Assess existing national policies and legislation on mangroves and associated ecosystems. 6. Assess regional networking mechanism for monitoring and management of fisheries, mangroves and associated ecosystems. 7. Conduct workshop of experts to discuss assessment methodologies and mechanisms for data-sharing related to the implementation of the above. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Status report on critical fish habitats and endangered marine biodiversity and associated ecosystems (gaps and hotspots problematic areas) 2. Regional database, including sensitivity maps, on fisheries, mangroves and associated ecosystems, including protected areas and endangered species 3. Recommendations for sustainable use and conservation of fish habitats 4. Status report on regional networking mechanisms with recommendations for improvement 5. A portfolio of implementable project proposals 	<p>UNEP, UNESCO, World Conservation Union (IUCN), National governments, IOC, FAO, United Nations Development Programme</p>	

COMPONENT 3: LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES IMPACTING ON COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	COLLABORATORS/PARTNERS	REFERENCE
Sustainable use and protection of the marine and coastal area from land based activities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess capacity at national level to develop policies and strategies related to waste management. 2. Evaluate national strategies for the management of discharges from rivers, estuaries, coastal establishments and outfalls, coastal dumping or any other sources. 3. Organize regional training workshops in the development of policies and strategies in waste management. 4. Assess the effectiveness of existing awareness mechanisms relative to waste minimization, reuse, recycling, composting. 5. Organize regional training workshops to promote the use of intermediate technologies for industries within the context of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). 6. Assess and develop a regional networking mechanism for monitoring implementation of national policies and strategies. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Status report on capacity development needs at the national level 2. Effective national capacities, policies and/or strategies on waste management (Activities 2 and 3) 3. Awareness-building on waste management (Activities 3 and 4) 4. Capacity developed within the context of CDM (Activity 5) 5. Regionally networked monitoring system 	<p>UNEP, IUCN, national governments, UNIDO, GEF, GEF/United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</p> <p>Local/international non-governmental organizations</p>	

COMPONENT 4: MARINE-BASED ACTIVITIES IMPACTING ON COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	COLLABORATORS/PARTNERS	REFERENCE
Protection of marine and coastal areas from sea based activities (shipping, oil exploration and exploitation)	Evaluate sources of pollution and risk assessment. Develop sensitivity studies, sensitivity mapping and prediction models.	Databases for the development of contingency planning Priority zones for response to pollution accidents	UNEP, IMO, industry	

THEME 2: MANAGEMENT

Goal: Sustainable use and protection of the marine and coastal environment

COMPONENT 1: FISHERIES, MANGROVES AND ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	COLLABORATORS/PARTNERS	REFERENCE
Improvement of management, protection and sustainable use of fisheries, mangroves and associated ecosystems	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review status and effectiveness of management structures for fisheries, mangroves and associated ecosystems in the region. 2. Based on the results of the review, implement effective management structures where non-existent. 3. Inventory and review existing expertise in the region with a view to setting up a database of experts and their fields of competence. 4. Promote capacity-building and exchange of expertise. <p>FISHERIES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor and survey organic and inorganic pollutants and their effects on fisheries in general. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2. Harmonization and adoption of best management practices 3. Skilled human and technical resources for MPA management 4. Standardization of regional guidelines <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mitigation of impacts of marine pollution on fisheries 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National institutions 2. STRC/OAU 3. FAO 4. IEAA 5. IOC/UNESCO 6. UNEP 7. IMO 8. IUCN 	

	<p>2. Create inventory and database of institutions and experts specializing in physico-chemical, chemical and bacteriologic analyses.</p> <p>3. Elaborate and implement action plans for mitigating marine pollution.</p> <p>4. Promote capacity-building.</p> <p>5. Promote Public awareness.</p> <p>MANGROVES AND ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS</p> <p>1. Inventory mangrove sites to be restored, with particular emphasis on critical areas.</p> <p>2. Promote public awareness on the impact of the deforestation of mangroves on fish spawning grounds, fauna and the loss of productivity.</p> <p>3. Organize national and regional training workshops for all relevant stakeholders, in particular community-based associations and non-governmental organizations.</p> <p>4. Based on existing studies, develop action plans for restoration of mangroves.</p>	<p>2. Guidelines on appropriate methodologies for mitigation of impacts of marine pollution on fisheries</p> <p>1. Maps of critical mangrove sites</p> <p>2. Dissemination of information amongst all stakeholders</p> <p>3. Skilled and qualified people on mangrove management</p>		
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COMPONENT 2: COASTAL EROSION AND SHORELINE CHANGES

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	COLLABORATORS/PARTNERS	REFERENCE
<p>Reduction and mitigation of natural and anthropogenic impacts of coastal erosion</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review status and effectiveness of management structures related to coastal erosion in the region. 2. Based on the results of the review, implement effective management structures where non-existent. 3. Inventory and review existing expertise in the region with a view to set up a database of experts and their fields of competence. 4. Promote capacity-building and exchange of expertise. 5. Implement cost-effective, practical methodologies. 6. Monitor and survey shoreline changes to establish management plans in sensitive areas prone to erosion. 7. Standardize the above methodologies. 8. Promote public awareness on the impact of coastal erosion and shoreline changes. 9. Organize national and regional training workshops for all relevant stakeholders. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1-4. Recommendations for improvement of institutional capacities in the region 5. Demonstration and pilot projects to restore habitats affected by coastal erosion using "soft" mitigation measures (eroded areas to be restored with the use of "soft methods") 6. Sensitivity maps of the shoreline 7. Guidelines on appropriate methodologies for mitigation of coastal erosion 8. Dissemination of information 9. Skilled and qualified people on erosion mitigation methodologies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National Institutions 2. STRC/OAU 3. UEMOA 4. UNIDO/GEF/GOGLME 5. IOC/UNESCO 6. UNEP 7. IOI/South Africa 8. SANCOR/South Africa 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Abidjan Convention 2. PACSICOM

COMPONENT3: LAND BASED ACTIVITIES IMPACTING ON COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	COLLABORATORS/PARTNERS	REFERENCE
Reduction of the extent and impacts of pollution from domestic and industrial effluents, dumping and marine litter in the coastal marine environment	<p>1. Inventory and review existing institutional and legislative framework related to the management of land-based sources of pollution of the coastal and marine environment at the national and regional levels.</p> <p>2. Based on the above, elaborate and develop institutional and legislative frameworks where non-existent.</p> <p>3. Inventory centres, institutes, laboratories, equipment and experts relevant to the analysis of land-based sources of pollution.</p> <p>4. Elaborate and develop a protocol for the management of land-based sources of pollution for consideration by the sixth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention.</p> <p>5. Develop and implement policies that promote introduction of measures for waste management, recycling and cleaner technologies.</p> <p>6. Collect up-to-date information on land-based sources and dumping activities in the region.</p> <p>7. Based on the above, assess land-based sources and pollutants at national and regional levels.</p> <p>8. Develop and implement pilot recycling projects at the community level.</p>	<p>1-2. Regional and national policy and legislation</p> <p>3. Directories of centres and experts in related fields</p> <p>4. Submission of the draft protocol to the sixth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention for adoption</p> <p>5 – 7. List of priority sectors for introduction of demonstration projects using cleaner technologies</p> <p>8. Identification, formulation and implementation of pilot projects in selected areas involving local communities</p>	<p>1. National institutions,</p> <p>2. UNEP,</p> <p>3. IMO</p> <p>4. UNIDO</p> <p>5. IEAA</p> <p>6. FAO</p> <p>7. GEF/World Bank</p> <p>8. Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft (London Convention)</p>	<p>1. Abidjan Convention,</p> <p>2. PACSICOM,</p> <p>3. GPA,</p> <p>4. Regional GPA for WACAF,</p> <p>5. GIWA,</p> <p>6. GEF,</p> <p>7. World Bank,</p> <p>8. IMO.</p>

COMPONENT 4: MARINE-BASED ACTIVITIES IMPACTING ON COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

GOAL: Preparedness and response to marine pollution incidents

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	COLLABORATORS/PARTNERS	REFERENCE
<p>Implementation of the medium-term programme for regional cooperation under the Emergency Protocol aimed at improving the capacity of WACAF countries to combat accidental marine pollution</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accede to global conventions. 2. Develop contingency plans. 3. Develop relations with industry. 4. Mobilize industry stockpiles. 5. Promote elaboration of subregional contingency plans. 6. Establish an information exchange system. 7. Address administrative aspects of mutual assistance. 8. Train personnel and test plans. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National legislation in fields essential to meet objectives 2. Preparedness and response at national, sub-regional and regional levels 3. Requirements for oil exploration/exploitation 4. Enhancement of cooperation between Governments and industry 5. Availability of equipment and expertise from industry stockpiles to WACAF countries after a pollution incident 6. Improvement in cooperation between countries with direct common interests 7. Availability of immediate information: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) when pollution off the coast of one country could affect another country; b) when assistance is required from other Parties to the Abidjan Convention 8. Elimination of delays in assistance because of legal or administrative constraints 9. Elaboration and implementation of effective plans and adequate training of personnel 	<p>National administrations, IMO, International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Union (IPIECA) (IMO/Industry global initiative), International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Limited (ITOPF), other regional agreements, donor Governments and agencies</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Abidjan Convention, 2. PACSICOM, 3. GPA, 4. Regional GPA for WACAF, 5. GIWA, 6. GEF, 7. World Bank, 8. IMO <p>Convention and Protocol of the IMO/UNEP Meeting of Experts on Emergency Protocol. IMO/UNEP Meeting Report</p>

THEME 3: COORDINATION AND LEGAL ASPECTS

Rationale

An analysis of the current status of the marine and coastal environment of the West and Central African Region reveals a rapid degradation of the natural resources located in this area which provides a support mechanism for an improved livelihood of the coastal inhabitants and a sustainable development. This situation, which calls for urgent remedial actions, has been focused on by many within the continent. In this direction, a major strategy from the recommendations of the PACSICOM and Cape Town Conferences was the revitalization of the Abidjan and Nairobi conventions.

In view of recent developments in the international sphere there is an urgent need to review and update the Abidjan Convention in order to ensure that this important regional initiative can effectively play its role in addressing the complex and common problems of the marine and coastal ecosystem.

The WACAF region covers 22 countries; 12 are signatories to the Abidjan Convention and its Protocol, of which 10 have presented ratification acts. An integrated management approach can only be achieved if all countries within the region ratify the convention and actively participate in the implementation of the programme.

The relatively large number of states within this region has led to a multiplicity of programmes and institutions that are dedicated to facing the complex challenges of the region. Major demonstration projects at national levels, with transboundary effects and applying large marine ecosystem concepts, have been of great significance. These initiatives have been executed in partnership with international organizations/institutions and non-governmental organizations. However, duplication of efforts has been identified in certain areas, thus raising the issue of coordination, which needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

It is in this framework that the fifth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention, in its work programme for the biennium 2000/2001, considers as a priority the need to ensure the ratification and revision of the Abidjan Convention and its Protocol as well as the definition of new areas of great importance for new protocols to be developed. Urgent measures necessary for effective coordination within the Convention area and with other conventions and partners are also required for the protection of vital ecosystems in the WACAF region.

Goal

To facilitate the ratification of the Abidjan Convention and develop an adequate legal and institutional framework for its effective and coordinated implementation

Components

1. Ratification and review of Abidjan Convention and related protocols;
2. Coordination within the convention area, with other conventions and partners;
3. Cross-cutting issues.

Component One: Ratification and review of the
Abidjan Convention and its Protocol

The transboundary characteristics of the problems that threaten the marine and coastal environment of the region justify the need to reach out to all countries of the WACAF region for a wider and active participation in the regional effort to tackle its common problems. In this regard, contact missions with governments by the Bureau and the secretariat will be undertaken to sensitize and facilitate the accession to and ratification of the Abidjan Convention and its action plan.

Implementing this action plan within the framework of major international instruments requires that consideration be taken of relevant conventions and action plans such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas, Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Basel Convention and relevant IMO conventions for the protection of the marine environment, e.g., the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation 90, CLC, International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage 92, FUND 92, IMO Protocol of 1992 to amend the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund to compensation for Oil Pollution Damage, London Dumping Convention, Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter). For a harmonized approach in the effort to ensure the protection and management of the coastal and marine environment, there is a need to comprehensively review and update the Abidjan Convention and its Protocol.

As identified within this work programme, degradation and pollution resulting from land-based activities, as well as liability and compensation issues resulting from environmental damage, constitute major problems for which a firm regional approach needs to be defined through protocol agreements.

OBJECTIVE 1: To ratify, review and update the Abidjan Convention and its Protocol and develop protocols in new priority areas.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Contact missions for accession and ratification;
2. Comprehensive revision and updating of Abidjan Convention and its Protocol;
3. Development of new Protocols on:
 - (a) Land-based activities;
 - (b) Liability and compensation;
4. Development of background papers for each protocol;
5. Development of draft protocols;
6. Convening of the sixth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention for submission of updated and new instruments;

Publishing and distribution of updated and new instruments.

Component 2 : Coordination within the convention area, with other conventions and with partners

To coordinate and harmonize programmes of the region the Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) needs to be restructured. For the RCU to effectively play its role, it is necessary to establish a structure that can effectively liaise with all the countries within the region. Building capacities for communication with national focal points is a priority for this purpose.

Within the context of the African process for the protection of the coastal and marine environment, the adoption of a joint implementation mechanism with the Nairobi Convention would provide a cost-effective mechanism for the implementation of the action plan. The defined options for this purpose will include joint meetings of the parties to the conventions, and a joint implementation unit will need to be put in place. As an advisory body to these units, a joint *ad hoc* technical and legal working group will be set up. In this regard, consultation meetings will be carried out to ensure the establishment of these units.

Coordinating with other regional seas programmes will provide an opportunity for sharing experiences necessary for the implementation of this work programme. Regional Seas Programmes such as the Kuwait Action Plan, the Mediterranean Action Plan, the Black Sea Action Plan, OSPAR, the Baltic Marine Environment Commission of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea, the Antarctic Action Plan, etc., constitute important partners required to provide much needed assistance in the implementation of the Abidjan Convention work programme. Twinning arrangements and memoranda of understanding with these programmes will be negotiated and drawn up. With regard to global conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (BASEL), IMO, MARPOL, OPRC, CLC and the Fund Convention, thematic regional annexes will be established with the secretariats of these conventions.

Objective 2:

To ensure a cost-effective and harmonized implementation of the Nairobi Convention through intergovernmental dialogue, coordination with regional and international conventions/programmes in consultation with relevant partners.

Activities:

1. Coordination within WACAF region:
 - (a) Restructure the RCU;
 - (b) Strengthen the coordinating capacity of RCU.

2. Coordination with other conventions:
 - (a) Establishment of joint implementation mechanism with the Nairobi Convention:
 - (i) Preparations for joint Contracting Parties/Bureau meetings;
 - (ii) Formation/functioning of joint implementation unit and the joint ad hoc legal and technical working group;

 - (b) Establishment of legal instruments for coordination with other regional seas programmes:
 - (i) Carrying out consultations;
 - (ii) Drafting twinning agreements/memoranda of understanding;

 - (c) Establishment of legal documents for coordination with global conventions:
 - (i) Establishing memoranda of understanding;
 - (ii) Drafting thematic annexes;

3. Coordination with partners:
 - (a) Consultation with collaborators/partners for Abidjan Convention;
 - (b) Consultation with partners for Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions.

CP.5/3 Sustainable financing mechanism and arrangements

1. Agree on an estimated annual budget of \$500, 000 to which the Contracting Parties are requested to contribute, based on the current scale of assessment set out in the table annexed to the present decision, within the first three months of the budgetary year to develop and implement a detailed work programme;
2. Invite the Contracting Parties and other concerned parties to facilitate the implementation of the activities by providing additional voluntary contributions;
3. Decide that Contracting Parties acceding to the Convention as from March 2000 are under no obligation to pay arrears but that they shall, however, be required to pay fully for their assessed contribution within the first three months of the budgetary year in the amounts set out in the table annexed to the present decision;
4. Recommend that countries acceding simultaneously to the Abidjan Convention and the Nairobi Convention shall pay 50 per cent of the assessed contribution payable to the respective conventions and within the first three months of the accession;
5. Mandate the Regional Coordinating Unit to look for and secure technical and financial support from United Nations Environment Programme to submit project proposals to donors as a means of securing funds for operationalizing and sustaining the Convention.

Annex

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL APPORTIONMENTS BETWEEN COUNTRIES FOR THE TRUST FUNDS
(ABIDJAN AND NAIROBI CONVENTIONS)

	DATE ACTION PLAN ADOPTED	DECISION-MAKING BODY FOR ACTION PLAN AND LOCATION OF SECRETARIAT	CRITERIA USED IN APPORTIONMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS BY COUNTRIES	FINAL APPORTIONMENT EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS																																												
ABIDJAN CONVENTION	1981	<p>Intergovernmental meetings of the Parties to the West and Central African Action Plan, held annually to determine progress with the Action Plan and financial implications.</p> <p>Secretariat located in Côte d'Ivoire.</p> <p>A Bureau monitors the action plan between intergovernmental meetings.</p>	<p>(a) A combination of 60 per cent United Nations scale and 40 per cent lump sum divided equally between the countries.</p> <p>(b) Since 1993, countries have agreed to contribute on a voluntary basis: no fixed amount has been decided and no formula used for apportionment.</p>	<p>(a) 60 per cent United Nations formula and 40 per cent lump sum divided between the countries as follows:</p> <table> <tbody> <tr> <td>Angola</td> <td>3.72</td> <td>Guinea</td> <td>3.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Benin</td> <td>3.72</td> <td>Liberia</td> <td>3.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cameroon</td> <td>3.72</td> <td>Mauritania</td> <td>3.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cape Verde</td> <td>3.72</td> <td>Namibia</td> <td>3.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Congo</td> <td>3.72</td> <td>Nigeria</td> <td>22.01</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Côte d'Ivoire</td> <td>6.16</td> <td>Senegal</td> <td>3.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Equatorial Guinea</td> <td>3.72</td> <td>Sierra Leone</td> <td>3.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gabon</td> <td>4.94</td> <td>Togo</td> <td>3.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gambia</td> <td>3.74</td> <td>Sao Tome and Principe</td> <td>3.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ghana</td> <td>6.16</td> <td>Zaire</td> <td>4.94</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Guinea-Bissau</td> <td>3.72</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>(b) Since 1993, no formula has been in place.</p>	Angola	3.72	Guinea	3.72	Benin	3.72	Liberia	3.72	Cameroon	3.72	Mauritania	3.72	Cape Verde	3.72	Namibia	3.72	Congo	3.72	Nigeria	22.01	Côte d'Ivoire	6.16	Senegal	3.72	Equatorial Guinea	3.72	Sierra Leone	3.72	Gabon	4.94	Togo	3.72	Gambia	3.74	Sao Tome and Principe	3.72	Ghana	6.16	Zaire	4.94	Guinea-Bissau	3.72		
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NAIROBI CONVENTION	1985	<p>Intergovernmental meetings of the parties to the East African Action Plan, held annually to determine progress with the Action Plan and financial implications</p> <p>Secretariat located in Seychelles.</p>	United Nations scale of assessment	<table> <tbody> <tr> <td>Comoros</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>France</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kenya</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Madagascar</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mauritius</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mozambique</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Seychelles</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Somalia</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>United Republic of Tanzania</td> <td>15</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Comoros	4	France	25	Kenya	15	Madagascar	7	Mauritius	10	Mozambique	15	Seychelles	4	Somalia	4	United Republic of Tanzania	15																										
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CP.5/4 Strategic partnerships

1. Invite Côte d'Ivoire and other Contracting Parties to assist the Bureau in convening, by July or August 2000, a consortium of cooperation partners, representatives of regional development and financial institutions or mechanisms, private sector and civil society, as well as donors with relevant programmes to enlist their support in the revitalization of the Abidjan Convention and the implementation of its work programme;
2. Authorize the Bureau to explore the possibility of accession to the Abidjan Convention by relevant subregional groupings, organizations and other institutions.

CP.5/5 Cooperation, coordination and collaboration arrangements

1. Request the Chair of the Bureau to share the contents of these decisions with the Contracting Parties and secretariat of the Nairobi Convention as a follow-up to the recommendations of the Cape Town Declaration on an African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa;
2. Further request the secretariats of global conventions to explore the possibility of developing regional annexes, within the context of their mandates, to address coastal and marine environmental issues of concern to the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention;
3. Mandate the Regional Coordinating Unit and the technical working group to seek the support of the United Nations Environment Programme in:
 - (a) Developing a comprehensive portfolio of project activities under the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities and the Global International Waters Assessment;
 - (b) Developing comprehensive portfolios of project activities for Global Environment Facility funding;
 - (c) Exploring possibilities of developing twinning arrangements with the developed regional seas conventions such as the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, the Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North Atlantic and the Helsinki Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea.

CP5/6 Partnership conference

1. Support the decision in the Cape Town Declaration to prepare and convene a partnership conference (envisaged for the year 2001), which will, inter alia, submit action proposals aimed at strengthening cooperation through relevant conventions, programmes, and institutional mechanisms, and urge the Preparatory Committee to submit a programme for convening the meeting.

CP5/7 Amendments and conditions for eligibility

1. Decide that for the purpose of the revitalization of the Abidjan Convention the rules of procedure as applicable to the election of Members to the Bureau of the Convention at its fifth meeting shall include the following conditions for eligibility:

- (a) Countries which have ratified, or are in the process of accession, in the course of 2000 and 2001;
- (b) Regular payments of their assessed contributions to the Trust Fund for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the West and Central African Region, effective the year 2000;
- (c) Relevant regional and other institutions which are parties or intend to become parties and are further willing to fulfil the conditions of eligibility in (b) above;
2. Authorize the Regional Coordinating Unit to collaborate with the Preparatory Committee of the Partnership Conference, and the Governments concerned.

CP5/8 Follow-up arrangements

1. Decide to put in place arrangements to supervise the implementation of the decisions of the Contracting Parties;
2. Also decide to assign roles to the new Bureau under the chairmanship of Ghana, which was charged with the overall direction and coordination of the activities under the Convention while the seven vice-chairs were respectively charged with the responsibilities below:
- | | | | |
|-----|---------------|---|--|
| (a) | Côte d'Ivoire | - | Work programme; |
| | Cameroon | - | Relations with the Nairobi Convention; |
| | Gambia | - | Global Environment Facility matters; |
| | Nigeria | - | Resource mobilization and sustainable financing; |
| | Senegal | - | Programme activities; |
| | South Africa | - | Partnership conference. |
- (b) The rapporteurs (Benin, Congo, Gabon) are to keep the records of the meetings of the Bureau and, where appropriate, the records of other organs of the Convention.
- (c) The Regional Coordinating Unit, with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme, will prepare a paper outlining the benchmarks and targets for each of the tasks indicated above.
3. Further decides that the Steering Committee shall:
- (a) Provide the Parties with half-yearly progress reports on the status of implementation of these decisions;
- (b) Submit a comprehensive report to the sixth meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Annex II

THE ACCRA AGREEMENT OF THE MEETING OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES
TO THE ABIDJAN CONVENTION

1. In accordance with the agenda for the Steering Committee and in order to crystalize in a more focused manner the critical issues facing the Contracting Parties, the following points were highlighted to constitute the Accra Agreement adopted by the Contracting Parties.

1. Sustaining the future of the Abidjan Convention

2. To revitalize the Abidjan Convention, it will be necessary for the Contracting Parties, at their current meeting, to enunciate their determination to support the vision outlined in the Cape Town and Maputo Declarations. It will be necessary to set in motion a process that will ultimately, and in short order, lead to the realization of that vision. The responsibilities must be shared. It must be a burden shared between the Parties, the identified partners, the private sector and the international community at large. The Parties to the Abidjan Convention have a responsibility to assume in the revitalization of the Convention and to ensure the emergence of a Convention equal to that challenge.

3. Such is the challenge before the Parties and their partners. All those concerned could do no greater service in this early stage of the twenty-first century than to reconfirm their specific commitments to the redoubling of support for the Convention and ensure that it is positioned for success over the coming years. The current meeting is critical for the future of regional cooperation on the Abidjan Convention as conceived in the principles of partnership built into the African process for the protection, management and development of the coastal and marine environment in Western and Central Africa.

2. Challenges

4. The challenges facing the Contracting Parties are:

- (a) To revitalize the Abidjan Convention and bring it into full operation by the end of this year;
- (b) To provide the RCU with the requisite managerial and professional expertise as well as essential operating conditions;
- ~~(c) To put in place a sustainable and predictable financial mechanism.~~

3. Agenda for action

5. We, the Ministers of the countries participating in the Abidjan Convention agree:

- (a) To replenish the Abidjan Convention Trust Fund through immediate contributions by all countries. Our target for the year 2000 is \$500,000;
- ~~(b) To ensure full ratification by all 22 countries participating in the Abidjan Convention;~~
- (c) To establish a sustainable financial mechanism and arrangement;
- (d) To establish a contact group comprising the members of the Bureau for the purpose of generating concrete responses to our appeal for:
 - (i) Ratification of/accession to the Convention (where appropriate) by all countries;

(ii) Contribution to the Trust Fund of the Abidjan Convention.

(e) To launch immediately a special resource mobilization initiative involving a consortium of Governments, regional financial institutions, notably the African Development Bank, industries dependent on resources of the coastal, continental shelf and marine environments and the private sector as well as the cooperation partners of the region.

Annex III

KEYNOTE ADDRESS OF THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT,
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (GHANA), CLETUS A. AVOKA, MP

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Representatives of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP),
Colleague Ministers,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I deem it a great honour to be here this afternoon to deliver the keynote address at the opening of the Joint Meeting of Experts from the International Maritime Organization/United Nations Environment Programme on the Emergency Protocol of the Abidjan Convention. Let me also join earlier speakers in welcoming you all to Ghana and to invite you to enjoy the warm and friendly Ghanaian hospitality. It is my hope that despite your tight schedule, you will find time to visit some of the places of interest in Accra. Of course, with the marine and coastal environment very near to you, it should be possible to see in practical terms some of the issues you will be discussing over the next few days.

Mr. Chairman, I also wish to extend my appreciation to the International Maritime Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme for inviting Ghana to host this joint IMO/UNEP meeting. With this meeting preceding that of the Conference of Parties to the Abidjan Convention, I do believe that it will provide us with a good basis for the discussions that we are going to have this week. All this should help us in evolving satisfactory strategies for addressing the problems posed by the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are all aware of the environmental degradation around us as our various countries initiate actions towards promoting the social and economic development of our people. We have also come to realise that with the world having become a global village, the issue of the environment also needs to be seen in this context. We cannot operate as islands. As it is said, we need to think globally and act locally. Such regional forums provide us with the opportunity to think of the common environmental problems we have so that we can take appropriate actions to address them.

Water constitutes about 71% of the earth's surface. Paradoxically water bodies, especially the oceans, have become the recipients for all kinds of waste and other forms of pollution such as:

- Discharges from ships and aircrafts;
- Discharges from land-based sources;
- Activities related to oil exploration;
- Testing of nuclear weapons;

The water bodies also constitute very important sources of social and economic livelihood for our populations. For countries with coastlines, the marine environment provides the essential source of protein for most of the population while the fishing industry is the mainstay of the economy.

Unfortunately, most of our countries have not been able to strike the right balance between the marine environment as a source of social and economic livelihood for our populations and the negative consequences associated with our various development actions.

Mr. Chairman, the need for us to take a critical look at the marine environment around the West and Central African Region gave birth to the Abidjan Convention in 1981. Associated with the Convention was the Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Pollution in Cases of Emergency, which is going to be the subject of discussion among you experts over the next two days.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we need to see the Abidjan Convention in the broader context of the concern about the need to evolve mechanisms to ensure that we use sustainably the global seas we have around us. Let me confess that despite the initial commitment that countries of this region had for the Convention and its associated Protocol, our programmes for implementation have not given us the desired results. Our various countries have not ratified or acceded to the Convention in order to become Contracting Parties of the Convention as quickly as we would have wished. Thus, only ten (10) out of twenty-one (21) countries are Parties to the Convention.

Mr. Chairman, the Abidjan Convention has also encountered a number of constraints when we look at the implementation of the activities of the Convention. These include:

- Lack of commitment of member countries to the implementation of the Action Plan;
- Although Country Parties agreed in 1981 to establish a Trust Fund to support the action, payment of contributions to the Fund has been inadequate and not up to date;
- Lack of effective coordination of programmes at the national and regional levels; and
- Failure to integrate the goals of the Convention in national development policies and programmes.

I will like to emphasize that Ghana considers the Abidjan Convention as the framework, which should form the basis of all activities in the marine and coastal environment in the West and Central African Region. It is with this at the back of our minds that we signed and ratified the Convention.

Mr. Chairman, Ghana has endeavoured to be part of the global efforts towards addressing issues of the marine and coastal environment by signing and ratifying other critical Conventions, especially those relating to pollution of the marine environment. These have included the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) and the International Convention for the Prevention of Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (CLC). Currently, Parliament has ratified the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness Response and Cooperation (OPRC). The necessary administrative procedures are being undertaken to make it possible for the Instrument of Ratification to be deposited appropriately.

Furthermore, Ladies and Gentlemen, some of our laws are being reviewed to internalise the Conventions that Ghana is Party to. Thus, the Merchant Shipping Act of 1963 is being overhauled to address all matters concerning shipping in the country, while the new Maritime Authority Bill will provide the institutional framework for the protection and management of our marine and coastal environment.

Ghana is also reviewing the 1972 Protocol on the Civil Liability Compensation Fund in order to have it renounced to make it possible for us to accede to the 1992 Protocol.

Ghana has put in place an Oil Spill Contingency Plan and has started the sensitivity mapping of the coastline and the Volta Lake with the assistance of the International Maritime Organization.

Ghana has also signed the Port State Control Agreement for countries in the West African subregion and is putting in place the necessary administrative infrastructure for its implementation.

Mr. Chairman, all these actions are being taken in view of the importance, which the country, as a coastal state, attaches to the marine and coastal environment. We are also ensuring that all stakeholders actively participate in our programmes to promote ease of implementation. I am sure that your various countries have also taken positive steps to ensure that you address the issue of the marine and coastal environment in a very holistic manner.

Distinguished Participants, as you discuss the issue of the Emergency Protocol of the Abidjan Convention I wish to draw your attention to the possible impact of maritime accidents and pollution of the marine environment to other critical global environmental conventions. I wish to refer more specifically to the Biodiversity Convention and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

I know that in your normal activities you may not take note of these two conventions. However, you will need to remember that accidents at sea do not only affect fishery resources but also sensitive ecological zones in our countries with critical and important biological resources. With the sea being a major carbon sink, the more we pollute it, the more we reduce its ability to absorb carbon dioxide. I will thus like to see greater cooperation being developed both at the national and regional levels in the implementation of all these conventions. It is only through this that we will be able to make use of the synergy, which is associated with all the conventions.

Finally, Distinguished Participants, let me mention an issue, which should be of great interest to us all in our march towards the more effective implementation of the Emergency Protocol. This is the exchange of information and experiences as well as the definition of roles for the various institutions. I will want to see an important outcome of your meeting a strategy for the effective coordination of activities at the national level. This will then be linked to the regional and subsequently global levels. This strategy will go a long way towards minimising the duplication of efforts, even sometimes, the inaction associated with the implementation of the various Conventions and Agreements on the marine and coastal environment.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Participants, with these observations, it is now my honour and privilege to declare this Joint IMO/UNEP Meeting of National Experts on the Abidjan Convention duly opened.

I wish you very fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.

Annex IVPOSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO THE EMERGENCY PROTOCOL AND THEIR
UNDERLYING PROPOSITIONSProposition 1

The existing Protocol in article 5 deals with cooperation between Governments but does not specify what would be the minimum requirements for preparedness for individual Governments. Taking into account article 6 of the OPRC Convention, an article such as the following could be added before article 5:

Article 4 bis

1. "Each Party shall establish a national system for responding promptly and effectively to pollution incidents. This system shall include as a minimum:

- (a) the designation of the competent national authority or authorities with responsibility for pollution preparedness and response; the national operational contact point or points which shall be responsible for the receipt and transmission of pollution reports and an authority entitled to act on behalf of the State to request assistance under this Protocol or to render the assistance requested;
- (b) a national contingency plan for preparedness and response which includes the organizational relationship of the various bodies involved, whether public or private.

2. In addition, each Party, within its capabilities either individually or through bilateral or multilateral cooperation, and, as appropriate, in cooperation with industry, port authorities and other relevant entities, shall establish:

a minimum level of pre-positioned combating equipment commensurate with the risk involved, and programmes for its use; a programme of exercises for pollution response organizations and training of relevant personnel."

Proposition 2

The three sources of accidental pollution are ships, offshore structures and ports (the latter including other handling facilities). They should be prepared to act whenever an incident takes place which could produce pollution or a threat thereof. Such obligations exist for ships under MARPOL 73/78. It is necessary that offshore structures and ports have their own contingency planning which should be compatible and coordinated with the national contingency plan as described in article 4 bis. Taking into account article 3 of the OPRC Convention, an article such as the following could be introduced after the one in proposition 1:

Article 4 ter

- 1. "Each Party shall require operators in charge of offshore installations under its jurisdiction to have contingency plans to combat accidental pollution which are co-ordinated with the national system established in accordance with article 4 bis and approved in accordance with procedures established by the competent national authority.

2. Each Party shall require that authorities or operators in charge of sea ports or other handling facilities under its jurisdiction have pollution emergency plans or similar arrangements which are coordinated with the national system established in accordance with article 4 bis and approved in accordance with procedures established by the competent national authority.”

Proposition 3

Article 7, paragraph 1 of the Protocol deals with reporting in cases of pollution threat. In the case of ships such reports are required by MARPOL and guidelines were established by IMO (they will be made available to the meeting). It would therefore be useful to add a new sentence at the end of article 7 paragraph 1 as follows:

“Ship reports shall be made to the extent required by and in accordance with the applicable provisions of relevant international agreements. National law should establish the format and conditions of reports by ports or handling facilities and by offshore units.”

Proposition 4

Article 7, paragraph 2, deals with the dissemination of information on incidents by one Party to others likely to be affected by the incident. In view of the urgency of such information, the fastest means should be used and this means direct information between Parties, using the contact points referred to above. Article 7, paragraph 2, could be amended as follows:

“Any Party receiving a report in accordance with paragraph 1 above shall assess the information received and the nature and extent of the possible pollution incident, then without delay inform all States whose interests are affected or likely to be affected by such pollution incident together with the result of its assessment and information on action it envisages to take.”

Proposition 5

Article 8, paragraph 2 (d), provides for requests by one Contracting Party to another to facilitate movements of personnel and equipment. As such facilitation has to be prepared and cannot be decided as a matter of urgency (in particular when police or customs matters are concerned), legislation should be established prior to the accident. In line with article 7-3 of OPRC, the following could be decided:

Delete paragraph 2 (d)

Add a new paragraph 2 bis:

“In accordance with applicable international agreements each Party shall take necessary legal or administrative measures to facilitate the arrival and utilisation in and departure from its territories of ships, aircraft and other modes of transport engaged in responding to a pollution incident or transporting personnel, cargoes, materials and equipment required to deal with such an incident; and the expeditious movement through and out of its territory of such personnel, cargoes, materials and equipment.”

Proposition 6

The Protocol has no provision as regards the costs of assistance. In order to avoid any delay for rendering assistance due to settling how it would be reimbursed, it is necessary to have provisions to that effect before an incident happens and assistance is necessary as a matter of urgency. The following text for an additional article is largely a reproduction of the annex to the OPRC Convention.

Article 8 bis

1. (a) Unless an agreement concerning the financial arrangements governing actions of Parties to deal with pollution incidents has been concluded on a bilateral or multilateral basis prior to the pollution incident, Parties shall bear the costs of their respective actions in dealing with pollution in accordance with subparagraph (i) or subparagraph (ii);

(i) If the action was taken by one Party at the express request of another Party, the requesting Party shall reimburse to the assisting party the cost of its action. The requesting party may cancel its request at any time, but in that case it shall bear the costs already incurred or committed by the assisting Party; and

(ii) If the action was taken by a Party on its own initiative, this Party shall bear the costs of its action.

(b) The principles laid down in subparagraph (a) shall apply unless the Parties concerned decide otherwise in any individual case.

2. Unless otherwise agreed, the costs of action taken by a Party at the request of another Party shall be fairly calculated according to the law and current practice of the assisting Party concerning the reimbursement of such costs.

3. The Party requesting assistance and the assisting Party shall, where appropriate, cooperate in concluding any action in response to a compensation claim. To that end, they shall give due consideration to existing legal regimes. Where the action thus concluded does not permit full compensation for expenses incurred in the assistance operation, the Party requesting assistance may ask the assisting Party to waive reimbursement of expenses exceeding the sums compensated or to reduce the costs which have been calculated in accordance with paragraph (2). It may also request a postponement of the reimbursement of such costs.

4. The provisions of this Convention shall not be interpreted as in any way prejudicing the rights of parties to recover from third parties the costs of actions to deal with pollution or the threat of pollution under other applicable provisions and rules of national and international law."

Proposition 7

~~The programme of cooperation to be discussed at the meeting will request secretariat assistance to be developed. A provision to that respect should therefore be introduced in the Protocol. It is, however, premature to present any draft of the relevant article.~~

Add an article on secretariat functions to be drafted later.

Proposition 8

In some regional seas, subregional agreements have been prepared. Considering the enormous size of the WACAF area, such agreements would surely be of use; it would be worthwhile for the Protocol to encourage them. An article might be useful. A partial text follows. Depending on the way secretariat functions would be carried out, support could be provided for the development of such subregional agreements. It is premature to prepare any final draft on this support.

Article 10 bis

"The Parties should develop and maintain appropriate bilateral or multilateral subregional agreements in order to facilitate the implementation of this Protocol. Upon request, [] could act as technical coordinator in the process of developing and implementing these subregional agreements."

Proposition 9

A meeting of the Contracting Parties or any Party could propose further amendments or additional articles. In either event, depending on the substantial amendments which would be adopted a general review of the definition in article 1 would probably be necessary.

Annex V

THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (MAP): THE BARCELONA CONVENTION

Paper presented by Mr. Arab Hoballah, Deputy Coordinator, UNEP Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Action Plan.

I. EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE

- A. The MAP and Barcelona Convention and their activities are experiences that should be of interest for assessing the past and prospecting or preparing for the future. However, it must be seen as a specific regional context, hardly replicable, although some guidance and lessons may be learnt.
- B. To sustain momentum of programmes, there must be exchange of experiences between regional Conventions and this should be improved regularly. This, as in the case of the Barcelona experience, may be done formally through collaborations with UNEP or funding agencies.
- C. ~~UNEP to provide framework, incentive and guidance with limited (decreasing) financial and technical support.~~
- D. The Mediterranean Action Plan developed regional seas programmes with clear objectives to be achieved in phases:
1. 1975-80: Focus on regional level;
 2. 1980-95: Focus on regional seas;
 3. 1990-2000: Priority to Global Level;
 4. ~~1998: Re-focus on and increasing interest for regional level as bridge between global and national programmes. There was also multi-national/regional cooperation.~~
- E. Objectives of the Convention and work programmes should focus on country priorities and states; this way, interest in the Convention activities will be heightened.
- F. Issues of common interest should be catalyzing factors in working programmes.
- G. ~~Regional activities with clear feedback and benefits should be shared at the national and local levels and vice-versa.~~
- H. Adequately staffed and active regional coordinating unit (RCU) should be in place, preferably hosted by the Convention Party, not UNEP.
- I. Activities should be mostly implemented by national experts (learning by doing process), with ad hoc external assistance.
- J. ~~Specific thematic working groups should be established, hosted and partly paid for by Contracting Parties.~~
- K. Programmes should be mainly country-driven, rather than driven by external sources. Ownership by Contracting Parties is key in fostering commitment.
- L. National contributions must be key: this should be ordinary and voluntary, sine qua non condition, for minimum staff and seed funds;
- M. ~~Necessary additional third party support, from regional/international concerned partners.~~

- N. Projects for which funds are required should be specific.
- O. Civil society is an important source of funding if made to be associated with programmes and projects.
- P. Private sector is a source of funding: it should be made aware and be part of the joint responsibility. Supervision is needed in this regard.

II. INTERVENTIONS BY DELEGATES

Members acknowledged the clarity of the presentation and the fact that the Mediterranean Action Plan and the Barcelona Convention had achieved a level of success worthy of emulation.

1. The MAP financing was comprehensive with various elements of a long-term sustenance, as against the WACAF situation where lack of funding was crippling the implementation of the Convention action plans.
2. Some members raised questions regarding the scope and functions of the MAP, and whether it addressed issues such as biodiversity, climatic changes, and marine pollution. The MAP representative explained that their initial strategy was to focus on marine pollution, and then, later, they enlarged their scope to cover other environmental degradation problems such as urban waste, radioactive exploitation, accidents at sea, and biodiversity.
3. In reference to the Abidjan Convention, the need for an active, on-going working group was stressed as being a way out of the inactivity. Such an on-going group could help keep the Contracting Parties working towards achieving the goals and objectives of the Convention. The MAP representative revealed that, indeed, part of their success story was that they set up working groups that coordinate the activities of the various Conventions.
4. The role of economic and political groups in the Convention was also identified, such as ECOWAS in the WACAF region. ECOWAS, for instance, has a unit that deals with environmental problems and issues, which could collaborate with the Convention towards achieving the same goals.
5. The Mediterranean experience also highlighted their partnership with a consortium of partners such as scientific research organizations that cooperate with them on specific projects. Their strength lies in being focused. Through their partnership they are able to coordinate and harmonize the programmes of isolated organizations that deal with environmental concerns. Such as an example was seen as laudable and could be identified with.

Annex VI

STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UNEP, KLAUS TOPFER

The most critical policy issue facing the current meeting of the Contracting Parties relates to the re-orientation of the Abidjan Convention, the role of the meetings of their Contracting Parties and coordination mechanisms, as well as partnership arrangements.

There is a universal recognition of the role that the Parties to the Abidjan Conventions should play in that reorientation. At the same time, most Governments, as well as observers, agree on the need for urgent measures to address the shortcomings in the current arrangements.

To counteract those chronic weaknesses, highlighted in the documentation before the current meeting, many would like to see the establishment of conditions, which allow the Abidjan Convention to flourish, develop a stronger identity and remain relevant. Regaining that credibility, however, deep and far-reaching organizational and operational reforms are needed.

Central to any attempt to bring about that reform is discussions regarding the following:

- a. Reviewing and updating the terms of reference of the meetings of the Contracting Parties and their Bureau to enable them become more authoritative advocates of the needs of the Abidjan Convention and also to be directly involved in mobilising partnership arrangements.
- b. Promoting closer collaboration between and among the various Conventions.
- c. Establishing a joint implementation mechanism for both the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions.
- d. Promoting the existing Regional Coordinating Units to give them responsibilities for consensus-building, intergovernmental dialogue and resource mobilisation, including undertaking the necessary work for the partnership conference;
- e. Establishing a consortium of relevant intergovernmental bodies to support the Abidjan Convention.
- f. Bringing into the consortium the major partners in the region currently supporting the management efforts of Governments in coastal and marine environmental management;
- g. Extending such membership to the relevant United Nations agencies, the private sector and bilateral agencies and ensuring that GEF and its special projects are part of the partnership agreements to revitalize the Abidjan Convention;
- h. Bringing existing regional institutions which have demonstrated, over the years, solid scientific and technical leadership to the centre stage of the life of the Abidjan Convention and their partnership arrangements; and
- i. Ensuring appropriate staff for the 2000-2001 biennium.

The current meeting may also wish to consider the additional measures required, including:

- a. Twinning arrangements with the developed Conventions, e.g. Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention);

- b. Bilateral agreement with developed countries;
- c. Formal request to selected African countries such as Nigeria and South Africa to provide leadership and resources;
- d. Approaches to the African Development Bank; and
- e. Request for assistance from the European Union and its subsidiary bodies.

With regard to the subregional coordinating units, the Governments hosting them should provide office space and also designate a senior government official to head the unit. The respective Trust Fund should provide support to the units. A concerted endeavour must be made to achieve the goal of revitalising and reviving the Abidjan Convention. Agreement must also be reached, at the current meeting, on two other crucial points, namely, an acceptable formula for contributions to the Trust Funds and arrangements for making available start-up funds for effecting, immediately, the decisions to be adopted by the Contracting Parties.

The importance of the current meeting of the Contracting Parties cannot be underestimated. The meeting should be an expression of optimism in the endeavour to ensure a sustainable future for the Abidjan Convention. Efforts must be made to ensure that the specific outcome of the current meeting represents a vote of confidence in the regional cooperation efforts called for in the Maputo and Cape Town Declarations. It should represent a firm undertaking to build consensus on the measures required to revitalize the Abidjan Convention.

The attention of all concerned is drawn to the Cape Town Declaration, which the Governments of Africa adopted in December 1998. The Declaration clearly recognises the urgency of the measures to be taken. It is to be hoped that the Parties, and all concerned, will rise to meet the challenges.

Thank you.

Annex VII

OPENING ADDRESS DELIVERED BY CLETUS A. AVOKA, MP, MINISTER FOR
ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND CHAIR
OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE.

Colleague Ministers,
Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Maritime
Organization and other regional and international bodies,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government and people of Ghana, I wish to welcome all delegates to the
Ministerial Session of the Fifth Conference of Parties to the Abidjan Convention. We in Ghana
deem it a great honour to be hosting this meeting, especially since our last attempt in 1995 was
not as successful as had been expected.

Today's meeting has been preceded by a Joint Meeting of Experts of the International Maritime
Organization (IMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on the
Emergency Protocol for the Abidjan Convention and the Experts Meeting of Contracting Parties
to the Abidjan Convention.

Colleague Ministers, the Joint IMO/UNEP meeting has brought to the fore the important role the
maritime industry plays in our regional programme for the protection, development and
management of the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem.

As has been noted in various forums, the implementation of the Abidjan and Nairobi
Conventions has not proceeded as satisfactorily as most of us would have wished. This is why in
both Maputo and Cape Town, there was great emphasis on the need for the United Nations
Environment Programme to evolve strategies to help in reactivating these two Conventions,
which are threatened with extinction. The first of these initiatives took place in Mauritius last
year with the meeting of the Nairobi Convention and the Steering Committee of the Abidjan
Convention. Today we are meeting here in Accra to take a critical look at our Abidjan
Convention.

Ladies and Gentlemen, various problems have militated against the implementation of the
Abidjan Convention and its Protocol. The first problem relates to the ratification of the
Convention and Protocol. As we all know, only ten (10) out of the twenty-one (21) countries
identified under the Convention have ratified it. Definitely, this is not a positive way to address
a Convention, which is intended to promote the regional management of this all-important and
critical natural resource, that is, the sea around our twenty-one countries. I will like to use this
opportunity to appeal to my colleagues here whose countries are yet to ratify or accede to the
Convention and its Protocol to take the necessary steps to have this done. The success of our
efforts to address problems of the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem will depend greatly
on the political will and support that we give to the Convention.

The other issue relates to the financial support we give to the implementation of programmes
under the Convention. In 1994, it was decided to wipe clean the slate in relation to our
indebtedness to the WACAF Trust Fund. It was our hope that after that date, we would be in a
position to restart our contributions to the Fund.

The situation, Dear Colleagues, has, however, not changed. We still do not have the resources in the Trust Fund to undertake any meaningful programmes. Despite the goodwill of the global community to support us in our various activities, it is also imperative that we provide our widow's mite to show our own commitment to the ideals of the Convention.

I am happy to note that our technical experts have made some proposals on the sustainable financing of the Convention and its Protocol. Let us critically examine these and give our commitment to the decisions we take. We should know that without adequate funding we cannot implement the Convention. While not pre-empting the recommendations of the technical experts, I believe one area we should look at is how to get the private sector in our countries to take on some of the financial burden for managing our marine and coastal environment.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, over the years a number of projects have been taking place in our countries and in the region aimed largely towards improving the state of the Gulf of Guinea. Though they may not all have been identified as projects specifically aimed at the implementation of the Abidjan Convention, in broad terms they have served to promote the objectives of the Convention. A notable one among these projects, which has involved six participating countries of the Convention, has been the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem Project, which was funded primarily by the Global Environment Facility, with UNIDO as the implementing agency. This Project, the first phase of which ended in April last year, provided the six countries with useful information on how to maintain the biological sustainability of the Gulf of Guinea. Discussions are currently going on towards the expansion of project activities to cover all the twenty-one countries covered by the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem. I will like all of us to see this Project as being part of the process of implementing the Abidjan Convention. The broad experiences that we have obtained from the implementation of this Project should enhance our implementation of the Abidjan Convention.

There are definitely a number of such projects addressing transboundary maritime or coastal problems involving participating countries of the region. I do believe that these all should serve as good examples of how we can manage this important resource, which is at our disposal. What is important is to use the institutional mechanism provided by the Convention to help us exchange ideas and experiences so that we can have a better idea of who is doing what within this ecosystem.

Colleagues, I am aware that a lot is being done in our respective countries towards ensuring that our marine and coastal environments are managed sustainably. In most of our countries, various institutions are addressing specific aspects of our marine and coastal environment problems. Unfortunately, we do not have the mechanism to co-ordinate these activities nationally for us to benefit very well from the synergy, which such projects provide. In many cases we do not even know which institution is doing what for us to be able to relate well with it. This arrangement unfortunately gets transferred to the regional and international levels.

This is where the Regional Co-ordination Unit as envisaged under the Convention becomes very important for us. I am aware that there have been problems in making the Unit functional for it to play the role expected of it. Let me use this opportunity to appeal to my colleague Minister for the Environment from La Côte d'Ivoire and all of us to see what we need to do to make the Unit operate satisfactorily. We cannot succeed in the implementation of the Abidjan Convention without an effective and efficient Co-ordination Unit.

Another area of concern to us is our relationship with the various economic bodies operating in the area covered by the Convention. Primarily, these are the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its Central African equivalent. We also have as a critical partner, the African Development Bank. How do we make such important institutions as partners in our programmes for the sustainable management of our marine and coastal environment. In as much

as I appreciate the role that bodies like the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility are playing in this region, I do believe that we should be looking at strategies as to how we can bring our regional institutions into our environmental programmes.

Distinguished Colleagues, the Cape Town Conference on Cooperation for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine by the year 2000. This was later shifted to March 2001. Indications are that the Conference may have to take place in the year 2002. I am very much aware that the preparatory process for the Conference is very much involving, especially with respect to obtaining the necessary financial resources to organise the Conference. Unfortunately, we need to remind ourselves that in the year 2002 the main thrust of global discussions on the environment will be the Ten-Year Review of the Earth Summit. Our Partnership Conference could end up being marginalised.

I would like colleagues to give serious thought to this Conference and propose a more satisfactory date on which it should be held. I do believe that constant changing of the date for the Conference will give wrong signals to the partners we want to involve in the process.

Let us also remember that our Heads of State and Government in endorsing the Cape Town Declaration essentially agreed to the convening of the Partnership Conference in the year 2000. The Secretary-General of the OAU is to report on the various actions relating to the Declaration at the next appropriate meeting of the OAU. I do not believe that this will be indefinite.

Ladies and Gentlemen, our meeting is taking place at a very opportune time. The Eighth (8th) Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) is due to be held in Nigeria from 3rd to 6th April this year. We will be in a position to raise for the consideration of our colleague Ministers of Environment the outcome of this meeting and seek their support for our various decisions. I appeal to all ministers to be in Abuja for this important meeting.

We have initiated actions towards revitalising this important Convention at the beginning of a new century and millennium. This is a period where issues of the environment may be said to have taken centre stage in the global development agenda. This augurs well for us and we should take advantage and ensure that our decisions do not gather dust in our offices but become tools, which will be implemented for the good of our people.

We have to acknowledge the social and economic importance of the marine and coastal environment to our peoples. We also have to remember that we can only resolve the problems associated with the marine and coastal environment holistically if we work together as a team. Let us resolve today to make the Abidjan Convention and its Protocol work. As we implement the Convention, we should also remember that we can only succeed in its implementation if this is complemented by the implementation of other Conventions dealing with the marine environment. I will thus urge all countries to ratify the various regional and global Conventions and Agreements dealing with the marine environment.

As I have said earlier, what we need to do at this meeting is to provide the political will to move the process for revitalising the Abidjan Convention. On my part, I wish to assure Colleagues of Ghana's full commitment to the ideals, which led to Convention coming into being in 1981. I will like to see the same commitment from my colleagues so that the management of our Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem can be spoken of in the same light as the management of the Mediterranean Sea.

Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, with these remarks I now have the honour of declaring open the Ministerial Session of the Fifth Conference of Parties to the Abidjan Convention.

Thank you.

Annex VIII

STATEMENT BY THE IVORIAN MINISTER FOR CONSTRUCTION AND ENVIRONMENT, VINCENT ESSOH LOHOUES

Your Excellency Mr. Cletus Avoka, Minister for Environment, Science and Technology and dear brother;

Your Excellencies Ministers and dear Colleagues of Member Countries of the Abidjan Convention;

The Representative of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme;

Ladies and Gentlemen, Representatives of the United Nations Organization present in Accra;

Ladies and Gentlemen, Representatives of Development Organizations;

Your Excellencies Ambassadors;

Distinguished Participants;

I would like, in my capacity as Vice President, to thank you for coming in your numbers this morning for a new take off for the Abidjan Convention.

I seize this opportunity to express my special gratitude to the government of Ghana, the host country, for the warm welcome accorded me and the members of the delegation accompanying me, and for having accepted, without hesitation to host this meeting. The objective of which is to strengthen regional cooperation in the protection and enhancement of the marine environment, a part of our environment.

Do allow me also to single out in particular Mr. Klaus Topfer, Executive Director of UNEP for his untiring efforts at UNEP. It is a result of the discussions held under his leadership and the initiatives taken by UNEP that we are today witnessing the rebirth of our common instrument for cooperation, the Abidjan Convention.

It will be recalled that since the adoption of the Abidjan Convention and its Protocol on 23rd March 1981, the Abidjan Convention has remained on the ground with no appreciable results. This is why I would like to invite the representatives of the contracting Parties to the Convention, to unite our efforts in order to achieve the objectives we have set for ourselves, namely to:

1. Agree on the main thrust of restructuring and updating the Convention and its Protocol;
2. Identify the components for a new programme for cooperation which is more realistic and closer to the concerns of governments;
3. Agree on short and medium term measures to adopt for financing the said Convention;
4. Agree on the tools for better supervision for the implementation of resolutions that we will define during this Fifth Conference of Contracting Parties.

After a series of joint meetings held in 1998 in Maputo (Mozambique) and Cape Town (South Africa), then in 1999 in Nairobi (Kenya) and New York (United States), the Accra meeting gives me hope at last of seeing, all the States of the West and Central African region, working towards a policy for the sustainable development of coastal areas, guided by true willingness for cooperation and the concern for solidarity in future actions.

The World Water Forum which has just ended in the Hague, Netherlands, witnessed an exceptional participation of Africa through the development of documents on the regional Vision for the year 2025 on water, life and the environment, puts us on the right track of current concerns.

Water as source of life, must not bring about competition, but rather be a crucible for solidarity and mutual exchange to the benefit of the people we are representing here.

As head of the Department in Côte d'Ivoire in charge of environmental issues, including every natural area, and human establishments, I would like to assure our Conference of my willingness to implement and to apply all the resolutions resulting from our deliberations.

The "new water policy" of my country, is based, quite rightly, on the concept which is now well accepted by all, that water is a common asset for humanity which must be protected and distributed at all cost. This policy purposely takes into account concerns for the protection and development of coastal areas by ensuring that priority is given to the integrated management of coastal areas and the marine environment.

Côte d'Ivoire acknowledges that to achieve the objectives we have set ourselves for the revitalization of the Abidjan Convention, a lot of effort still needs to be made, individually and collectively, to ensure rational ecological management of coastal areas and the resources found there.

The development of the tourism sector, conservation of endangered species and fragile ecosystems, exploitation of resources of the marine environment in our region will depend on the guidelines and decisions that we will be taken.

More and more development projects are being established in marine waters and coastal areas. There is the need to systematically resort to prior environmental impact studies, which alone will enable an assessment of the risks to the environment and to the people. This is why I am calling on this meeting, which is an opportunity to pave the way for real cooperation, based on the spirit of sharing, to avoid the hidden conflicts we have already indicated on an international scale.

But above all, I would like to stress on information, education and communication for all stakeholders, in order to raise collective awareness on the fragile nature of the environment, of interest to us today, and its paramount role in our respective economies.

To conclude, I would like to call on Parties to draw up realistic programmes and projects, the implementation of which will enable us to face the challenges that globalisation poses to us today in all areas of economic activity.

Your Excellencies Ministers and dear Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to end my speech by renewing the willingness of the Ivorian government, to support the revitalization process of the Abidjan Convention, which is an exemplary instrument for regional cooperation for us.

Thank you.

Annex IX

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS OF THE
GAMBIA, EDWARD SINGHATEY.

May I seize this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation for the very warm reception and hospitality of our Ghanaian hosts who have made our stay in this country a memorable one. Having said this, Mr. President, I wish to also say that it is indeed with great pleasure and honour on behalf of His Excellency Yaya A. J. J. Jammeh, the President of the Republic of The Gambia, who is also the Chairman of the our National Environment Management Council, to address this august assembly today, and to make a statement on the occasion of the 5th Conference of Parties to the Convention For Cooperation In The Protection And Development Of The Marine And Coastal Environment Of The West And Central African Region – The Abidjan Convention.

You will recall that following the adoption of the Convention in 1981, and its subsequent entry into force in 1984, a regional action plan for the control of marine pollution and the management of marine and coastal resources developed under the auspices of the regional seas programme of UNEP. Under this programme, activities carried out included the monitoring of the water quality with regard to biological and physico-chemical parameters and pesticide residues.

The activities progressed satisfactorily in the initial years, but could not be sustained due to budgetary constraints experienced.

Mr. President, considering the work already undertaken within the framework of the initial plan of action, it would indeed be a waste if the valuable experience and information gathered during those years are not utilised to meet the aims and objectives of this Convention which is a very important aspect of our subregional environmental protection interventions. It must be emphasized however that to consolidate on the gains made so far, it is imperative that we have a clear vision, which will direct our future interventions regarding the implementation of the Convention. To this end, Mr. President, it is necessary to take stock of what has been achieved and to identify challenges for the future identified, taking into account lessons learnt, present and future needs.

In addition to having a clear vision for the future, Parties should demonstrate in concrete terms, their commitment to the successful implementation of the Convention. In this regard therefore we need to focus on the following issues:

A first requirement is the development of a functional institutional and financial framework to facilitate the implementation of the Convention and its Protocol. A functional secretariat is necessary to serve the administrative requirements of the Conference of Parties and a funding mechanism needs to be defined to support and sustain the implementation of programmes developed under the Convention.

At this meeting we must take stock of the performance of the Convention since its adoption in terms of its structure, focus, and its relevance.

Mr. President, the least we can do is to empower the Bureau to be more authoritative and proactive in pushing the interest of the Convention forward. We need a more dynamic Unit and Bureau to be in the forefront in mobilising resources (both financial and human) for the implementation of at least the core activities of the Convention if we are to achieve our goal. As I speak of course I know that in all our countries we are experiencing serious financial and resource constraints, but it is important that we meet our obligations towards the Convention if any of our environmental and natural resource management plans are to bear fruit.

Mr. President, the initial years of implementation of the Convention has indicated that we need to be more focused in the development of future indicative programmes taking into account capacities of member countries for effective implementation of the plans. This realization could well be in the form of collaboration and cooperation with other international and regional and subregional agreements to promote synergies and the efficient use of scarce resources. This meeting should therefore explore this possibility. Cooperation with other regional conventions relating to the protection of the marine environment would promote the sharing of experiences and information and would help in furthering the advancement of the ideals of this very important Convention.

In this regard, the most logical is to develop a closer and stronger linkage between the Abidjan and the Nairobi Conventions. The two regions have many common issues to contend with, and there is no doubt that we can draw from each other's experiences and inspire each other to seek effective solutions to our common problems.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I must thank Dr. Klaus Topfer, the Executive Director of UNEP for extending full support to the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions as well as facilitating this meeting in the Ghanaian capital of Accra.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Annex X

STATEMENT BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND
TOURISM, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Minister of Environment, Science and Technology of Ghana, Mr. Cletus Avoka, Your Excellencies, the distinguished representative of UNEP, the distinguished representative of IMO, distinguished government representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of South Africa and the South African delegation, I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the invitation to participate in this very important and historic meeting. I also wish to place on record our sincere gratitude to the Government of Ghana for their willingness to host this particular meeting.

When you negotiated the two important legal instruments, the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions, my country lived under the yoke of apartheid and could not participate in the work, which led to their adoption. However, as you know, South Africa borders both the Indian and the Atlantic Oceans, and derives significant benefits from its coastal and marine resources, especially in terms of tourism and fisheries. This is why my country was more than willing to embrace its African sister States in organising, together with UNEP and the Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS) the Cape Town Conference on Cooperation for Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. We are proud that that Conference produced the Cape Town Declaration, subsequently endorsed by the OAU Summit in Algiers, and which is now at the centre of all UNEP documents relating to further development of the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions.

South Africa expressed its willingness to accede to the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions and their Related Protocols. I can report that we are now in the final stages of accession and my Government hopes that this step will encourage other contracting parties in their ongoing efforts to strengthen these two legal instruments.

Mr. Chairman, as we gather here to discuss the future strategy for the vitalisation of the Abidjan Convention, let us keep in mind that elsewhere, people are beginning to pick up the pieces of their lives after ravaging floods. Here we think in particular of people in the northern part of South Africa, our neighbours Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia and also Madagascar. This calls again for a united action for the improvement of our disaster management systems to act swiftly to minimize loss of life. In this regard, we welcome the suggestion here that the Protocol on Marine Emergencies be updated and encourage Contracting Parties to take the necessary steps to make the Protocol operational.

I would now like to elaborate on some of the most important issues which we have to address and which are on the agenda of this meeting.

1. Updating and restructuring the Abidjan Convention: Key Challenges and Implications and New Work Programme.

Mr. Chairman, updating and restructuring of the Abidjan Convention is indeed a priority as has been mentioned by a number of my colleagues present here. In Africa today, environmental problems cannot be considered in isolation from the crucial economic, social, and wider political processes. Endorsement is therefore necessary at the highest political level, even beyond the ministries of environmental affairs. If this is to be achieved, and it must be achieved, then evidence must be provided of those work programmes and institutional capacities which will strengthen sustainable development.

We need to be scrupulous in our examination of a new work programme, if we are serious about making the Abidjan and the Nairobi Conventions make a difference in the sustainable livelihoods of our people. Concrete actions are required through practical, workable and implementable work programmes. We have repeatedly highlighted the problems facing our nations. It is now time that we implement our solutions. Work towards possible solutions will also be found in the activities, which were placed on the agenda of the programme of the Preparatory Committee.

2. Sustainable financing mechanism and arrangements for the Abidjan Convention.

It is encouraging to note the carefully thought-out ideas on this topic. However, if there is no political will and commitment from countries to contribute to the Trust Funds of both the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions, then I am afraid it is doomed to failure. We as proud sovereign nations should boldly take this initiative forward by convincing our governments of the importance of these conventions for our continent. We cannot always be seen to be begging for financial assistance, but should be able to avail our national resources for the advancement of the goals of legal instruments such as these conventions.

3. More effective regional co-ordination arrangements and mechanisms.

Following the Cape Town Conference, the debate began on closer co-ordination between the two African Regional Conventions, which have much in common. We fully support this ongoing debate.

This will avoid duplication and certainly ensure the pooling of resources, which lead to better co-ordination. We must make use of expertise and organizations in the region, many of them who have expressed their willingness to assist.

4. Priority areas of cooperation and co-ordination between the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions and between the regional (Africa) Conventions and the global Conventions.

There is no doubt that African countries along the Indian and Atlantic Oceans face similar problems, including institutional and financial problems. It is thus important that we draw on experiences and lessons learned in the two regions to seek effective solutions. It is also logical to establish close links between the two sub-Saharan regional conventions and the Convention on Climate Change as well as Biodiversity, the work of the Global Programme of Action on Land-based sources (GPA) Secretariat in The Hague, the Global International Water Assessment (GIWA), Technical Cooperation Programme of the IMO and the London Convention.

However, in order to be successful in tackling the issues on our agenda, it is crucial to win the political support at the top.

5. Organization of the preparatory process for the Partnership Conference on the African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to be able to announce that the African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, of which South Africa chairs the Preparatory Committee, enjoys the full support of our head of State, His Excellency, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, who opened the Ministerial segment of the Cape Town Conference. Environment Ministers alone cannot deliver and implement the environmental agenda. In my country, we amalgamated environmental affairs and tourism to demonstrate that we believe that economic development is not possible in a sustainable manner without environmental protection.

As part of South Africa's overall commitment to the African Process, we are already contributing in the order of US\$80,000 to the African Process by providing the Secretariat. I have assumed the duty of Chairperson of the Preparatory Committee for the Partnership Conference and I look forward in working very closely with all stakeholders in this important process. I am aware that the Preparatory Committee has already agreed on an action programme, but I will caution any haste in convening the dates for the Partnership Conference. Whilst we do not wish to lose momentum, we must understand that by definition – the Partnership Conference involves a dialogue between us, African countries, and bilateral and multilateral partners.

Whilst we must warmly salute the decision of the Chief Executive Officer of GEF, Mr. Mohamed Al-Ashri to allocate half a billion US dollars to the portfolio of international waters, we need good and concrete projects, based on the agreed priorities if we are to win the support of the partnership community. I am much comforted to see that we have in our midst, Minister Okopido, a most dynamic and eloquent spokesman for the entire continent as we approach the Abuja Conference where he will preside over AMCEN for the next biennium. AMCEN is also represented on the Preparatory Committee and he and I will work very closely together, not the least because both of us also act as Vice-Presidents of ACOPS, which was nominated to act as facilitator to the African process. I want to make it quite clear here that whilst we wish to make use of the international diplomatic connection of ACOPS, this organization works in Africa under the guidance of its African political leaders, who also include the Foreign Minister of Seychelles and the outgoing President of the National Assembly of Senegal.

I am also glad to note that some misunderstandings which existed in the earlier draft of the document before the ministerial segment have now been cleared. May I reiterate that the chair country and another country from the Nairobi and WACAF region, respectively, represent all countries in the region. Therefore, it is my intention to take the necessary decisions in consultations with members of the Preparatory Committee who, in turn, I expect to be consulting their colleagues in the region. It is in accordance with South Africa's foreign policy to act in concert with its sister States in Africa. However, I am confident that when it comes to the timing of the Partnership Conference that you will agree with me that the last thing Africa needs is another Resolution generating Conference. Great expectations were placed before the Partnership Conference in terms of providing long-term investments from both private and public sector from the partnership community and this is what we must aim to produce.

It was said on a number of occasions that we must not lose momentum. I could not agree more. However, some of the time, if not momentum, was lost because of elections and the resulting changes in several key countries on the Preparatory Committee, including no less than Chairperson (South Africa), Vice-Chairman (Mozambique), Côte d'Ivoire and also in the designated host country (Senegal). My President, his Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, has supported my role as Chairperson of the Committee on behalf of South Africa because he wants the Partnership Conference to be a veritable success, which requires careful preparations and close cooperation with external partners.

Lastly, I sincerely hope that as many of you as possible will urge your leaders who will attend the Euro-African Summit in Cairo to take advantage of an opportunity to impress upon the largest single partner, namely, the European Union, to dedicate significant resources to protecting our coastal and marine environment.

I thank you.

Annex XISTATEMENT OF THE NIGERIAN MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, CHIEF
(DR) IMEH T. OKOPIDO.

Mr. Chairman,

Since we are taking the floor for the first time, permit me on behalf of my Delegation and my humble self to congratulate you and your Bureau on your election to steer this Meeting of COP5 on which many of us place great hopes for very tangible outcomes including the revitalisation of the Abidjan Convention and its Protocol(s). My Delegation wishes to thank UNEP for efforts deployed in convening this meeting while recognising the leadership role played by Ghana, which has also made enormous sacrifices as host country.

Mr. Chairman,

Our initial comments will focus on the blue book entitled "Critical Policy issues relating to the future of the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions, etc." While we appreciate the hard work of the UNEP Secretariat in preparing this document which contains some sweeping recommendations, we regret that an important document of this nature was distributed only two days to the Ministerial level meeting, therefore depriving Delegations of the opportunity to avail themselves of the widest consultations at home, necessary to build consensus and support for some of the provisions in the document. For reasons of brevity, we would refrain from commenting in detail at this stage following the issues as stated. Instead, we would confine ourselves to certain general principles we believe will provide the over-arching framework for our deliberations.

The Abidjan and Nairobi conventions are two separate Conventions with their own governing bodies and conceived to respond to the specificities of two Regional Sea areas in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans respectively. The original considerations for developing the two Conventions as separate regional initiatives will remain valid. For this reason, we view the interpretation of one of the clauses in the Cape Town Declaration as contained in paragraph 17-22 of the blue pamphlet as going way beyond the letter and spirit of the clause under discussion.

A merger of the two Conventions with a single co-ordinating unit is highly undesirable and the bureaucracy it seeks to create will constitute another administrative inconvenience and a definite additional financial burden. To our minds, the Joint implementation mechanism called for refers to the process of Revitalisation of the Convention, perhaps more specifically, to such joint initiatives as the organization of the Partnership Conference. AMCEN or the OAU (STRC) could ensure any need of coordination beyond what currently exists. Our attention should therefore be focused on calling on host nations to the Conventions to urgently provide adequate facilities and some measure of staffing for the effective take off of the Regional Co-ordination Units. Even where staff (interim or permanent) are made available to the host nations, they must meet certain profiles including previous experience with International Organizations, etc. We call on UNEP to define such profile and circulate them for approval by Conference of Parties. As soon as funds permit, the posts of Regional Coordinators should be widely advertised, interviews organised and selected candidates should be cleared.

In respect of funds to support the functioning of the Conventions, we must be honest to confess that the Trust Fund mechanism has not worked in the past. Unless we can leave this room with pledges on possible contributions, I doubt the situation of the Trust Fund would be any brighter in the future than it has been in the past. I would therefore urge that we attempt to make such pledges before we leave this meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

Beyond the Trust Fund mechanism, the surest way to our mind of financing the Programmes and Activities of the Abidjan Convention will be through externally financed projects such as the ongoing or stalled projects on the Canary, Guinea and Benguela Currents Large Marine Ecosystems. Some of the administrative and overhead provisions of these projects should be contributed by the respective Executing Agencies in support of the functioning of the Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU). In this respect, we wish to stress the necessity to exercise caution in the word of the documentations for the Partnership Conference.

In this respect, we wish to stress the necessity to exercise caution in the wording of the documentations for the Partnership Conference. This is because it is unlikely that Donors including Overseas Governments would give Africa money to support Bureaucracies attached to Conventions. On the other hand, they would be willing and in fact anxious to contribute to Programmes, Activities and Actions for the protection of the coastal and marine environment including the conservation of the Biological Diversity for human kind. It is imperative then that we prepare Programmes around well known themes such as Pollution, Erosion, Mangrove Restoration, Information Technology for Decision Making, Disaster Mitigations, etc. that will be presented to potential Donors ahead of the Conference. Finally, we believe that the Conference should be convened not later than the first quarter of 2001 to avoid losing the momentum engendered at the Cape Town Conference.

Before yielding the floor, Mr. Chairman, I would like to call on my colleague, the Honourable Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Transport, to inform you of the status of Nigeria's efforts in regard to preparedness in cases of Marine Spills and the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan. Albeit, the Federal Ministry of Environment as mandated by Section 20 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the National Policy on Environment, is putting in place soonest Infra-Red Satellite Cameras to monitor the 6000 kilometres oil pipelines crisscrossing the country on land and seas. Patrol ships are to be mounted with satellite cameras to monitor the criminal discharge of ballast water and bilge waste from maritime cargo ships against polluting our waters. Precisely, on the 10th of March, the oil industries and the Ministry of Environment agreed on Terms of Reference and inaugurated committees that will check pollution of our seas as we engage daily in oil drilling, loading of crude and discharge of finished petroleum products for use in the country.

I will be giving the pertinent memo to the Bureau for reproduction and circulation to the Honourable Ministers.

Thank you for your attention and God bless.

Annex XIISTATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF STATE, FEDERAL MINISTRY OF
TRANSPORT, ALHAJI BELLO USMAN

Mr. Chairman,
 Colleague Ministers
 The Secretary General of the IMO, Represented by Mr. Jean-Claude Sainlos
 The Executive Director of UNEP, Represented by Mr. Halifa Omar Drammeh
 Your Excellencies
 Distinguished Delegates
 Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I join my honourable delegates, the Honourable Ministers Responsible for marine transport and the environment to congratulate our host, the Government and good people of Ghana, the IMO, UNEP and all distinguished delegates for a successful conclusion of the joint IMO/UNEP Expert Meeting in this beautiful La Palm Royal Beach Hotel – Accra.

It is absolutely clear Mr. Chairman, that this conference has achieved its objectives by sensitizing our member states on the looming dangers facing our subregion in the event of a major oil pollution from tankers, oil exploitation and other hazardous substances transported by sea.

The Government of Nigeria under the Leadership of His Excellency President Olusegun Obasanjo has repeatedly demonstrated its desire to adhere to the IMO's twin objectives of Safer Shipping, and Cleaner Oceans. The Joint participation of the Honourable Minister of State, Environment and myself, the Honourable Minister of State, Transport, of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, is consistent with IMO/UNEP's belief that pollution prevention, control and management, will require the effective collaboration of all those responsible for marine transportation and the environment. Last year, 1999, member states of the West and Central African subregion signed the ABUJA MOU – Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control) in Abuja-Nigeria.

With this signature, member states made a pledge to take concrete steps to ratify relevant IMO instruments and to ensure through subregional cooperation the eventual elimination of substandard shipping and thus prevent marine pollution and environmental degradation. We have, equally taken steps to denounce the 1971 Fund Convention in readiness to accede to the 1992 IOPC Fund Convention to enable us receive adequate compensation in the event of any oil spills.

We have designated the Federal Ministry of Transport as the IMO focal point in Nigeria.

The meeting of Experts further underscored the need for us to update our Emergency Oil Spill Contingency Plans and the importance of upgrading the Abidjan Convention and its Emergency Protocol in light of coming into force of the OPRC Convention. Nigeria supports these initiatives and will mobilise and deploy these safety instruments.

As distinguished delegates are aware, Nigeria is one of the major oil exporting countries in the world. We, sometimes also, import oil in crude or refined forms to blend or/and augment domestic consumptions. Given the higher propensity for marine pollution as a consequence of our oil exploitation and shipping operations, I wish to, at this stage, graciously request member states to consider giving Nigeria the post of the Secretary General of the Abidjan Convention. This singular act will not only guarantee commensurate attention being accorded to potential pollution incidents from oil sources, but will provide effective coordination and control of hazardous and toxic, ship-generated wastes dumped at our waters. May I also take this

opportunity to thank all those who have continued to support us, most specifically, the IMO, UNDP, UNEP and the French government and further appeal to all the donor countries, agencies and organizations to provide our member states the necessary financial and technical cooperation assistance for a sustainable programme of pollution prevention, control and emergency response programmes.

I wish to finally appeal to all member states, agencies and organizations, whose operations and activities are potential sources of environmental hazards to our pristine marine and coastal waters to heed the clarion call of this joint IMO/UNEP meeting to implement all the decisions adopted at these meetings.

Thank you and God bless.

Annex XIII

STATEMENT BY THE UNIDO REPRESENTATIVE,
MR. CHIDI IBE, UNIDO CONSULTANT.

Mr. Chairman,
Your Excellencies Ministers of State,
Colleagues of UN Organizations,
Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Director General of the United Nations International Development Organizations, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the organisers of this meeting and particularly the Government of Ghana and UNEP to have invited us to assist this very importance conference.

UNIDO, through its regular programmes and more recently as executing agency of the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem Project has always supported the Abidjan Convention, and I would like to assure this conference of Parties that we will continue to provide all our support to the various programmes and projects of the Convention.

Once again, on behalf of UNIDO, thank you very much to have associated UNIDO to this meeting.

Thank you.

Annex XIV

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF IMO,
MR. JEAN-CLAUDE SAINLOS.

In his brief presentation, the IMO representative, Mr. Jean-Claude Sainlos, congratulated delegates for their cooperation and hard work in bringing the IMO/UNEP Joint meeting to a success. He thanked the ministers for lending their support to the issues discussed during the meeting, the decisions that had been arrived at, and the challenges ahead of them. He hoped that they would extend their support to cover the real letter and spirit of the Abidjan Convention, namely, to endeavour to implement the decisions that have been arrived at. He hammered home the need for both national and international cooperation to combat the problem of marine degradation and other environmental issues confronting the region.

The IMO representative reminded them that pollution and its related effects on the marine environment is no respecter of countries for one oil spill incident in the territorial waters of one country has the potential to affect several others in the region. Consequently, the move to tackle the problem must be done in cooperation with other nations. It was his hope that the ministers would carry the serious import of the discussions and decisions back to their governments and impress it upon them to back their ratification of and accession to the Convention with the type of actions that would move it forward.

Annex XV

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