



**MESSAGE OF H.E. DR. OMAR ALIEU TOURAY, PRESIDENT OF THE ECOWAS
COMMISSION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ECOWAS,**

28 MAY 2025.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the 28th of May 1975, visionaries from fifteen West African nations came together with one purpose: to forge a path of cooperation, integration, and shared progress for our people. That singular act of courage and commitment gave birth to the Economic Community of West African States—ECOWAS.

From that moment to this very day, our journey has been defined by resilience, unity, and purpose. Today, we have gathered here to celebrate five decades of regional solidarity, of standing side-by-side through times of hope and hardship, and of building the most integrated Regional Economic Community on the African continent. Today, ECOWAS represents more than an Institution—it is a symbol of the enduring aspirations of over 400 million citizens.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In these five decades, our Community has made remarkable strides:

We have facilitated free movement across borders, allowing our people to travel, trade, and connect without barriers. We have advanced intra-regional trade, implemented a Common External Tariff, and developed critical regional infrastructure, linking our capitals and markets. We have laid the groundwork for a single currency, built a regional electricity market, and extended digital connectivity across borders.

We have stood together in the face of epidemics, insecurity, and natural disasters, offering humanitarian support and strengthening healthcare and food systems. We have invested in our most valuable resource—our people—by promoting gender equality, youth empowerment, and human capital development. We have upheld democracy, dispatched election observation missions, and deployed our Standby Force in defence of peace and regional stability.

These achievements, while significant, are not merely chapters in our history. They are the building blocks of a future that we must continue to shape—together. The challenges we face today—terrorism, climate change, unconstitutional changes of government, poverty, and economic disparities—are formidable. But so too is our collective will. As I have often said, **ECOWAS is better and stronger together as a Community. Our strength lies in our unity, in our shared identity, and in the spirit of solidarity that defines our Union.**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This 50th Anniversary is not only a moment for celebration, but it is also a moment for **introspection, recalibration, and recommitment.** Let us recommit to an ECOWAS of the People—where peace, prosperity, and justice are not just ideals, but lived realities. Let us recommit to deepening integration, to building inclusive economies, and to advancing the African Continental Free Trade Area through regional leadership. Let us recommit to fostering democracy and good governance, and to defending the rights and dignity of every West African citizen.

As we look to the next fifty years, let us dream boldly and act courageously. The future of ECOWAS must be brighter, greener, more inclusive, and more secure. It must be anchored in innovation, in sustainability, and in the unwavering belief that we are indeed stronger together.

To our founding fathers, we say thank you.

To our Member States, institutions, partners, and citizens, we say: the journey continues.

Together, we will build the ECOWAS of tomorrow—an ECOWAS of Peace and Prosperity for All.

Happy 50th Anniversary to us all.

Long live ECOWAS!

Long live West African solidarity!

Long live the spirit of unity and progress!

Thank you.

Merci.

Obrigado.