



28th August, 2026

His Excellency, Bassirou Diomaye Faye,
President of the Republic of Senegal
Presidential Villa,
Dakar

Through:

The Republic of Senegal Embassy in Nigeria

AFRICAN BAR ASSOCIATION CONGRATULATES PRESIDENT BASSIROU DIOMAYE FAYE ON ASSUMING ECOWAS LEADERSHIP, CALLS FOR URGENT RECONCILIATION AND RENEWED REGIONAL UNITY

The African Bar Association (AFBA) warmly congratulates **His Excellency, Bassirou Diomaye Faye, President of the Republic of Senegal**, on his assumption of the Chairmanship of the **ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government**.

President Faye assumes this important regional responsibility at a defining moment in the history of West Africa. ECOWAS faces serious challenges to regional cohesion, democratic governance, economic integration, peace and security, particularly following the strained relations between ECOWAS and the Alliance of Sahel States (AES).

The African Bar Association therefore urges President Faye to use his tenure to provide **courageous, impartial and statesmanlike leadership aimed at healing divisions and rebuilding trust among the nations and peoples of West Africa**.

1. RECONCILIATION BETWEEN ECOWAS AND THE AES STATES

The African Bar Association considers the restoration of dialogue between ECOWAS and the AES countries—**Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger**—an urgent priority.

We call upon President Faye to pursue this responsibility without prejudice or a predetermined position, but with **fairness, mutual respect, diplomacy and an unwavering commitment to the collective interests of West African peoples**.

The objective should not be to determine winners and losers, but to find a **just, honourable and sustainable solution** that enables our region to overcome its present divisions.

The African Bar Association believes that the differences between ECOWAS and the AES states must not be allowed to permanently undermine the vision of regional integration conceived by the founding fathers of ECOWAS in 1975.

West Africa must not become a region divided against itself.

We therefore encourage President Faye to champion an inclusive process of reconciliation that can ultimately restore cooperation, solidarity and a renewed sense of common purpose across the sub-region.

2. RULE OF LAW, DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

The African Bar Association further urges the new ECOWAS leadership to make the **rule of law, constitutionalism, human rights and good governance** central pillars of regional policy.

ECOWAS must be an organisation where the rights of citizens are protected, constitutional institutions are respected, governments are accountable and justice is accessible to all.

We call for consistent and principled application of regional standards, without double standards or selective enforcement.

The legitimacy and credibility of ECOWAS will ultimately depend not merely on the strength of its institutions, but on the extent to which its actions command the confidence of the citizens of West Africa.

3. FREE MOVEMENT, TRADE AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

The African Bar Association calls for renewed commitment to the fundamental principles of **free movement of persons, goods and services** within the ECOWAS region.

Unlawful, arbitrary or unjustified restrictions that frustrate legitimate movement and trade must be addressed.

Our region cannot achieve meaningful economic transformation while artificial barriers continue to impede businesses, traders, professionals, investors and ordinary citizens who depend upon regional commerce for their livelihoods.

ECOWAS must make regional integration a **living reality for its citizens**, rather than merely an aspiration contained in treaties and protocols.

4. REGIONAL SOLIDARITY AND DEVELOPMENT

We further urge President Faye and the ECOWAS leadership to strengthen mechanisms for assisting member states facing economic, institutional, security and developmental challenges.

The strength of a regional community is demonstrated by its willingness to support members in times of difficulty.

ECOWAS should therefore promote practical cooperation in **education, healthcare, infrastructure, agriculture, technology, energy, security, justice and economic development**, particularly in areas where individual member states face significant capacity constraints.

Such solidarity will help create the conditions for **sustainable and enduring development across West Africa**.

African Bar Association has just been granted a special consultative status by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of United Nations.

We are therefore ready to partner with Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the discharge of our onerous functions, relative the above appointment, hoping and calling on ECOWAS to accept our hands of friendship and cordial relation.

A MOMENT FOR COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP

The African Bar Association recognizes that President; Bassirou Diomaye Faye assumes the ECOWAS chairmanship at a particularly challenging time. It is, however, precisely at moments of crisis that leadership matters most.

We therefore call upon His Excellency to rise above narrow national and political considerations and provide **bold, balanced and visionary leadership capable of bringing West Africans together**.

The future of ECOWAS cannot be secured through confrontation, isolation or the deepening of divisions. It can only be secured through **dialogue, justice, mutual respect, economic cooperation and fidelity to the rule of law**.

The African Bar Association stands ready to support every genuine effort directed towards reconciliation, peace, justice, democratic governance and the advancement of regional integration.

We urge all ECOWAS and AES member states to seize this opportunity for a **new chapter of dialogue and reconciliation**.

The founding vision of ECOWAS was one of a West Africa united by shared interests, shared prosperity and shared destiny.

That vision must not be abandoned. It must be renewed.

We therefore congratulate **His Excellency President Bassirou Diomaye Faye** and wish him a successful tenure as Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government.



High Chief Ibrahim Eddy Mark
President