



Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa
Groupe Intergouvernemental d'Action contre le Blanchiment d'Argent en Afrique de l'Ouest
Grupo Inter Governamental de Acção contra o Branqueamento de Dinheiro em África Ocidental

Ambassadors of GIABA Member States and Officials of Senegal Fully Informed during a Briefing Session

The Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), organised a briefing session in its premises for the ambassadors of ECOWAS Member States, development partners and Senegalese authorities on 30 July 2010, in Dakar, Senegal. The session was a response to the directives of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS at its 38th Summit held in Cape Verde on 3 July 2010 requiring all ECOWAS institutions to provide a platform for keeping stakeholders especially ECOWAS Ambassadors within their geographical location informed of their institutions' activities within the strategic framework of ECOWAS vision.

In his welcome address, the Director General of GIABA, Dr. Abdullahi Shehu, expressed his profound gratitude to the Government of Senegal and members of the Ministerial Committee for GIABA, namely the Ministers of Economy, Interior and Justice for their support and their continued commitment in assisting the Secretariat in combating money laundering and terrorist financing in West Africa. The Director General noted that *"The reputation of GIABA and its admission as an associate member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) last June is due to the determination of the Member States» and thus the briefing session is a demonstration of "the accountability mandate of GIABA."*

On behalf of the development partners, the U.S. ambassador to Senegal, Ms. Marcia Bernicat applauded the commitment of ECOWAS Member States in the fight against money laundering. *"States involved in the fight against this crime are likely to succeed and those who do not fight against money laundering will enter, sooner or later, in conflict with the criminals; because they would take advantage of their weakness or indifference regardless of the country size"* she said. Ms Bernicat pledged her country's support to GIABA to ensure total conquer of the criminals.

Joining his voice to previous speakers, the representative of the State Minister, Ministry of Justice, Mr. Demba Kandji commended GIABA for the briefing session and summed up actions taken by Senegal to combat money laundering and terrorist financing in Senegal.

For the Minister of State, Minister for Foreign Affairs, whose speech was read by his representative, His Excellency Ambassador Ibou Ndiaye, noted that no one country can effectively fight against transnational organised crime that threatens not only the social and political stability, but also the development efforts. Accordingly, the minister emphasised that *"the fight against these scourges requires states to pool their efforts, consult regularly and undertake constant coordination to check the activities of the criminals who exploit every opportunities especially our borders ..."*.

While acknowledging the role and ambition of GIABA in the fight against these scourges, the State Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs welcomed the briefing session as it is *"an opportunity to discuss the real issues which focus on money laundering and terrorist financing."* He also called for enhanced *"people's involvement in the implementation of measures to curb the threats related to transnational crime"*.

On behalf of the Director General of GIABA, her behalf and the staff, the Deputy Director General of GIABA, Dr. Elisabeth Ndeye Diaw thanked the visitors. *"Your continued support is a motivation to fight against money laundering and terrorist financing and a clear intention to form a rejectionist front against these scourges,"* she said.

The Secretariat used the occasion to present its score card to the audience covering its activities especially between 2006 and first half of 2010. In particular, multifaceted achievements, challenges and constraints in implementing robust AML/CFT regimes in West Africa were highlighted. The Secretariat reiterated its commitment to continue to provide the technical assistance to its member States and solicited stronger political commitment from member States in taking ownership of the AML/CFT process. The session was concluded with a tour of the GIABA Secretariat facilities.

Groupe Intergouvernemental d'Action contre le Blanchiment d'Argent en Afrique de l'Ouest
Complexe SICAP, Point -E, Immeuble A 1^{er} étage, Av. Cheikh-Anta-DIOP x Canal IV
BP. 32400, Dakar-Ponty, Sénégal Tél.: (+221) 33 859 18 18 / 33 824 17 52 Fax: (+221) 33 824 17 45
secretariat@giaba.org www.giaba.org