**COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE 3RD WEST AFRICAN YOUTH CAMP 2017 HELD IN COTE D’IVORIE**

**THEME: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC AND PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES IN THE ECOWAS REGION**

**November 20th – 24th - 2017**

**Preamble**

The young people of West Africa are proud to gather here in **Cote D’Ivorie**  to participate in the 3rd West African Youth Camp, organized by the West Africa Youth Conference in collaboration with the Plateforme d’Autonomisation des Organizations de Jeunesse de Cote d’Ivorie supports from the Ministry of Youth with sponsorship from United Nation Development Programme (UNDP).

The camp is moored by the pillars of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the critical need for young people to participate fully in Public policies which include but not limited to: Pan Africanism, a prosperous Africa based on inclusive economic growth and sustainable development, good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law, ending hunger and poverty through productive agriculture, good health and wellbeing, quality education, gender equality, a peaceful and secured Africa, clean water and sanitation, an Africa where development is people-driven, unleashing the potential of its women and youth, tackling climate change.

We are convincedthat these pillars of the two development policy papers are unifying thematic focus which will be addressed in this joint communiqué. Unarguably**,** West Africa’s greatest asset is its exuberant youthful population which makes up more than 55% of the region’s citizenry.

If the young people of West Africa are empowered through education, skill trainings, innovation, employment, entrepreneurship, science and technology, agribusiness and access to finance, the region and continent can defeat almost all of the social vices that have time without numbers contributed to the backwardness of West Africa.

We recognize the resilience and support of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals, African Union’s and ECOWAS in contributing to the unleashing of the potentials of youth.

Being cognizant that, prioritizing, and placing of premier on youth empowerment by West African Governments and partners must run in parallel with the commitment of the young people to execute with sincerity initiatives that have the possibilities of unleashing their talents and skills.

Being given direction and guidance to create awareness on regional treaties like the African Youth Charter, National Youth Policies in West African countries, the African charter on democracy, Elections and Good Governance, the Act of the AU, ECOWAS protocols using the media cannot be over emphasized.

Adhering to the calls made by global leaders in motivating young people worldwide to think outside of the box and make tremendous changes in our status quo, we are moved by the willingness of the productive calibers of young people here at the 3rd Edition of the West African Youth Camp to champion a pro-poor cause in the interest of West African Youths.

**WE THEREFORE SEND OUT THIS WAKE UP CALLS TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF WEST AFRICA:**

1. That Political Power is not given but taking;
2. Despite the lack of will from our political leaders to empower us, young people should above all odds endeavor to make themselves productive agents that will contribute to humanity;
3. That young people should make themselves available in public policies in the Region and not just followers;
4. To realize that young people of West Africa must buttress AU and ECOWAS’s efforts in promoting continental unity;
5. To in our individual capacities, take as a priority to fight against corruption; a menace to West Africa’s development. We must pressurize government through robust civil society activism in order to strengthen anti-corruption institutions; and
6. To make best use of the various media platforms in order to have effective and efficient information dissemination among youth in the region.

**WEST AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS**

1. Support affirmative action’s that seek to increase young people participation and representation in public policies and governance process;
2. Particularly, support and develop programs to build and establish an enabling environment for entrepreneurship skills, youth mentoring and counseling, increased access to quality education (formal and vocational) and employment, particularly for young girls and youth with disabilities;
3. Invest and monitor efforts to reduce significantly the high rate of infant and maternal mortality in by developing infrastructures which supports expectant mothers and unborn babies in the process of child bearing;
4. Ensure the ratification and proper implementation of the African Youth Charter;
5. Involve young people in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation process of youth related projects, programs and policies; and
6. Uphold the tenets of democracy through popular political participation, smooth transition, respect for the rule of law, and protecting the intrinsic rights of the human person.

**ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS)**

1. Young people re-affirm the commitment to the establishment of West Africa Youth Institute on Leadership and Conflict Management;
2. Young people insist on the ECOWAS establishment of the ECOWAS Youth Commission or establish an ECOWAS Youth Envoy as a rally point for all Young people in the ECOWAS Region;
3. Encourage member states to create youth desk in all Government Ministries and agencies as a key step to ensure the active participation of their youth in decision making processes for development in West Africa;
4. Develop strategic plans to combat the emerging pandemic of Youth Migration and death of the young people in Libya;
5. That the **WEST AFRICA YOUTH FUND** be made open to fund Youth activities in the West Africa Region;
6. Ensure that the ECOWAS Youth Development Centered partner and develop young people in the Region with quality events across the Region;
7. Promote regional trade with free movement of labor and capital in the region.

**THE MEDIA**

1. To join the Advocacy Campaign for Governments intervention on Youth Migration across the coast of Libya;
2. Disseminate information on the African Youth Charter and National Youth Policies;
3. Engage in rigorous promotional activities for youth involvement in governance and create awareness about opportunities for young people;
4. Disseminate information on structures, policies and programs that contribute towards the achievement of the SDGs and the Africa Agenda 2063;
5. Ensure the voices of young people are heard; and
6. Create a platform of training West African Youths in the Area of the media and continentally connecting them through a single most platform.

**ALL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS IN WEST AFRICA SHOULD:**

1. Focus on financing positive Youth projects and programs which contribute to the development of the West African Youth. Particularly, the establishment of sustainable platforms including state and non-state organizations that facilitates and promotes Youth Development;
2. Support programmes that encourage young people’s participations in Public Policies specially Political Governance;
3. Support the operationalization of all youth related policies in West Africa;
4. Promote sustainable partnerships, networking and integration of youth in national development efforts; and
5. Support campaign against Sexual and gender base violence as well as gender inequality.

**AGREEMENT:**

* We agreed that the next West Africa Youth Camp be held in Niger in 2018;
* We also agree that Secretary General of WAYC **Abdoul Moumouni Abass** Coordinate alongside **Abdoulaye Malam Abdoul Wahab** and assisted by **Nadiratou Sani Ibrahim**.

**CONCLUSION**

We want to collectively thank the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) for the leadership role in providing a favorable environment, financial and moral supports. We also value the courage and support of our host, Plateforme d’Autonomisation des Organizations de Jeunesse de Cote d’Ivorie for the successful facilitation of the 3rd Edition of the West African Youth Camp. Furthermore, we will ever be grateful to the Ministry of Youth & Sports, ECOWAS, Secretariat National AU Reforcement des capacites.

The conference is hereby committed to further engage our leaders in West African countries and other local and international organizations to see reason to help us implement our stated recommendations and make appropriate provisions for our short term, medium term, and long term needs for the development of the Sub-region and all African nations at large.

We are credibly proud to propose!!!!

Done this 25th Day of November, A.D. 2017