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OPENING CEREMONY



**SPEECH OF H.E. Mr. ALPHONSE DOUATI
MINISTER OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY
AND FISHERIES RESOURCES
CURRENT CHAIRMAN OF ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT
REPUBLIC OF IVORY COAST**

*His Excellency, the Minister of the Plan and Development,
Ladies and Gentlemen Ministers and Heads of Delegation,
Ladies and Gentlemen Excellencies Ambassadors and Heads of Diplomatic Missions,
Mr. Permanent Secretary of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT,
Ladies and Gentlemen Representatives of International Organizations, Mr. Mayor of COCODY,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It gives me the greatest pleasure to speak to such an august assembly of distinguished men and women on the occasion of this pleasant opening ceremony of the sixth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African Nations Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT).

In my capacity as Chairman of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT you will permit me therefore, in the name of the President of the Republic His Excellency Mr. Laurent GBAGBO, the Prime Minister His Excellency Mr. Charles Konan Banny, and in my own name, to express my deepest gratitude and sincerest thanks to all the Delegations which agreed to come to Abidjan to take part in this meeting.

Even though my country, Ivory Coast, actually occupies the chairmanship of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT, the sixth meeting was relocated to Rabat in Morocco.

Allow me, Ladies and Gentlemen, to reiterate today our thanks to King Mohamed VI of Morocco and all the Moroccan people for all the consideration they have shown to ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT.

I would also like to give an emphatic thank-you to the delegation from Japan and to all our partners in development for the unstinting support they provide to ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT. I am thinking particularly of the FAO, ONUDI, INFOPECHE, the JICA of Japan and the Moroccan Cooperation authority among others for their constant support of the scientific and communications activities of our conference.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our centers of interest dealt with the difficult problems facing the sustainable management of fisheries, the training of workers at all levels, motivation of fisheries research, monitoring and supervision of fisheries, success of the policy of reducing dangerous, illicit and unconventional practices etc...

Ivory Coast is aware of these imperatives and urgent needs and has always actively participated in all the activities of our conference.

I wish you all an agreeable stay in our country, and in particular a successful outcome to your discussions; and once more thank you for your distinguished presence and for coming in such a large number to attend this gathering.

Thank you.



**ADDRESS OF MR. BOHOUN BOUABRE
MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTER OF THE PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF IVORY COAST**

Ladies and Gentlemen Ministers and Heads of Delegation,

Ladies and Gentlemen Excellencies Ambassadors and Heads of Diplomatic Missions,

Mr. Permanent Secretary of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT,

Ladies and Gentlemen Representatives of International Organizations,

Mr. Mayor of COCODY,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the name of the President, His Excellency Mr. Laurent GBAGBO to whom I owe the honour of officiating at this ceremony, in the name of the Prime Minister of the Government of which circumstances have made me the spokesman,

In the name of the Ivorian people, I wish to send you my greetings as a friend and brother and bid you welcome to Abidjan, the commercial capital of Ivory Coast.

Honourable Ministers and Delegates,

This country which welcomes you has recently been at war and has lived through the dark hours of war. That war is over now, but the country is still in crisis. You saw a demonstration of this a few days ago. This disruptive situation however cannot prevent men and women of goodwill from continuing to work. In the three days you have been here with us you have proved to be men and women of goodwill in the service of the noble cause of developing fishing, which is a vital sector of the economy, and even of society as a whole.

Before coming back to this later on, allow me to interpret your presence here in Abidjan, apart from the official good reason, as a gesture and display of solidarity towards Ivory Coast and its people during this period of crisis. I also seize this occasion to express the gratitude of the President of the Republic, the Government and the people of Ivory Coast to your various countries and their leaders who did not lose the opportunity of supporting the Ivorian authorities and giving their backing to the peace process in Ivory Coast.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before returning to the subject of your meeting, I would like to single out especially the delegations from Morocco and Japan.

The King of Morocco His Majesty Mohamed VI has regularly shown proof of his firm commitment to South/South cooperation. The assumption of full responsibility for General Secretariat of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT by Morocco is a perfect illustration among many of this commitment.

Our dear friends from the Sherifian Kingdom of Morocco, we beg you to convey our admiration to His Majesty King Mohamed VI.

There are several members in the Japanese delegation, coming from the land of the rising sun so far away. By being so numerous you honour ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT of course, but in particular you demonstrate the interest you are giving to the development of fisheries resources and to cooperation with the African continent. Our congratulations to you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your Conference is presented as an important instrument of sustainable management of fisheries resources along the Atlantic coast. Ivory Coast with its 550 km of Atlantic coastline cannot be indifferent to such an objective. This country is generally known for its one-crop agriculture which has given it its second name : Ivory Coast, land of cocoa.

However, the President of the Republic and the Government are aware of the pressing necessity to diversify income and wish to satisfy the food requirements of the population ;they have therefore given the expansion of fisheries resources a major role in the strategic development of the country. An intelligent and rational exploitation of fisheries resources is vital for the economy and the ecosystem in general. But you are the specialists and it is not for a layman like me to tell you how important this subject is.

Ministers, the experts who have been working these past few days will no doubt have given deep thought to the directions you should take. These thoughts, I am certain, will inspire the recommendations of your conference in defining and implementing appropriate policies adapted to the context of each country. It remains to hope that each country will act determinedly to apply these policies effectively.

I can assure you that henceforth our country is committed to fulfil its role in enforcing your recommendations.

There is no real need to say that the accelerating expansion of industrial methods of exploiting the resources of the oceans is an obvious threat to the interests of small countries for which ownership of a trawler is a luxury. That is why we must rejoice in the intention of your organization to participate in protecting exclusive economic zones through combating unregulated and illicit fishing practices. By doing this, ATAFCO/COMHAFAT becomes the tool needed for implementing the code of conduct for responsible fishing as defined by the FAO and supported by the international scientific community.

The Ivorian government will provide unwavering support to the results of your work.

It is with this note of commitment that I declare the 6th meeting of the Executive Committee of ATAFCO/COMHAFAT open.

Thank you.



WORK DOCUMENTS

AGENDA

- 1 Opening ceremony
- 2 Adoption of the agenda
- 3 Examination of the report of the meeting of experts
- 4 Statements by Delegations
- 5 Place and date of the 7th Session
- 6 Miscellaneous questions
- 7 Thematic lectures
- 8 Adoption of the report of the meeting
- 9 Closing ceremony



ANNOTATED AGENDA

Point 1: Opening ceremony

The session of the sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Conference will be solemnly declared open on Friday 21 July 2006 at 9.30 am. by His Excellency the Prime Minister.

◆ Point 2: Reading and adoption of the agenda

The meeting is requested to consider and adopt the provisional agenda (ref. CONF.7/B 6/1).

◆ Point 3: Examination of the report of the meeting of experts

The meeting of Experts took place in Abidjan, Ivory Coast from 19-20 July 2006. At the end of its session the meeting adopted the report ref. CONF.7/B 6/4, wherein are reported the results of all debates among the participants as well as recommendations relating to the various topics discussed.

The meeting is requested to consider and adopt the report of the meeting of Experts and to make where necessary any observations and recommendations it may consider useful.

◆ Point 4: Statements by Heads of Delegation

Heads of Delegation who so wish are invited to make statements.

◆ Point 5: Place and date of the 7th Session

The meeting is requested to determine the place and date for the 7th Session of the Conference.

◆ Point 6: Miscellaneous questions

Members of the Bureau of the Ministerial Conference and observers are invited to submit any other questions for consideration and evaluation by the meeting.

◆ Point 7: Thematic lectures

Presentation on regional management of fisheries resources by satellites.

By an representative of CLS - ARGOS society.

Presentation on durable use of fisheries resources by an Japanese Expert.

◆ Point 8: Adoption of the report of the meeting

The meeting will adopt a report at the end of the Session.

◆ Point 9: Close of the meeting

The current Chairman of the Conference will make the closing address of the sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Conference.

WORK PROGRAM

Friday 21/07/06

9:30 – 10:00	Opening ceremony Address of welcome delivered by H.E Dr. DOUATI ALPHONSE, current Chairman of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO Opening address by H.E. Mr. BOHOUN BOUABRE, Minister of State, Minister of the Plan and Development of the Republic of Ivory Coast.
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 – 10:45	Adoption of the agenda
10:45 – 11:45	Examination of the report of the meeting of Experts
11:45 – 12:15	Statements from Head of Delegations
12:30 – 14:15	Lunch
14:15 – 14:30	Place and date of the 7 th Session
14:30 – 14:45	Miscellaneous questions
14:45 – 15:15	Thematic lectures
15:00 – 16:30	Writing report of the meeting
16:30 – 17:00	Adoption of the report of the Ministerial Meeting
17:00	Closing ceremony



FINAL REPORT OF THE EXPERT MEETING

- 1 - The sixth meeting of Experts of the Executive Committee of the Conference was held in Abidjan from 19 - 20 July 2006, at the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Ivory Coast.
- 2 - The following member countries took part : Angola, Benin, Cameroun, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Morocco and Mauritania.
- 3 - Nigeria, Mali, Japan, CRSP, COREP, ICCAT, the FAO, INFOPECHE were present at the meeting as observers.
- 4 - The networks of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT, RAFISMER and REFMA took part in the deliberations.
- 5 - A list of participants is attached.
- 6 - The solemn opening session of the meeting was chaired by the Principal Private Secretary of the Minister of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Resources of the Ivory Coast.
- 7 - In the name of His Excellency the Minister, the Principal Private Secretary thanked the participants for coming to Ivory Coast. He recalled the responsibility and duty of every member country in the management and use of its fisheries resources. They should pay particular interest to the activities of local and industrial fleets as well as on pollution from different sources which could compromise sustainable exploitation of these resources. He also applauded and congratulated the creation of the new Sub-Regional Committee for Fishing in Center West Gulf of Guinea which has filled the last gap in coverage of the region. Finally, when wishing the Experts an agreeable stay while in Ivory Coast, the Principal Private Secretary reiterated his wish to see their deliberations end successfully.
- 8 - The following agenda was adopted after amendment:
 - Opening of the meeting
 - Adoption of the agenda
 - Presentation of the activities of the Conference
 - Follow up of recommendations of the 6th Session
 - Mode of enforcement of Article 18 of the Regional Convention for Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean
 - Opening up ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT to landlocked countries
 - Place and date for the 7th Session
 - Miscellaneous questions
 - Thematic presentations
 - Adoption of the report
 - Close of the meeting
- 9 - The Permanent Secretary, after thanking the outgoing and incoming chairmen of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT as well as Japan, Morocco and France for their material and financial support to our organization, gave a presentation of the work performed since the last Session of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT in July 2005 in Rabat:
 - Recording the decisions of the 6th session electronically and on paper;
 - Organizing the discussion meeting held at the headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat on 11 February 2006 between the Chairman's office and the Permanent Secretariat of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT;
 - Organizing the selective meeting of Expert members of the Executive Committee in Lomé from 30 - 31 March 2006;

Organizing a symposium on the sustainable management of fisheries resources on the west African coast held in Agadir from 16 - 18 May 2006;

Organizing the 7th meeting of the Executive Committee of REFMA in Nouadhibou, Mauritania, from 26 to 28 September 2005;

Organizing the 3rd meeting of the Executive Committee of RAFISMER in Luanda, Angola, from 17 - 18 April 2006;

Organizing the 6th meeting of the Executive Committee of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT held from 19 - 21 July 2006 in Abidjan, Ivory Coast;

Writing and publishing in collaboration with the Executive Committee of RAFISMER a manual and a poster of pelagic fish off the west coast of Africa ;

Distributing reports of all activities to all focal points within the Ministries of member states of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT;

Distributing information via ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT's website.

10 - The Permanent Secretariat gave a report on cooperation and collaboration with France, Japan and several international, regional and sub-regional organizations such as the FAO, ICCAT, INFOPECHE, COPACE, CSRP, and COREP.

It also mentioned new relationships being forged with Spain and Canada.

FOLLOW UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 6th SESSION

11 - As part of the follow up to the recommendations of the 6th Session of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT, a selective meeting of Experts from member countries of the Executive Committee was held in Lomé from 30 - 31 March 2006.

12 - The final report of this meeting as well as a timetable for carrying out the activities of the two-year period 2006 - 2007 were presented (see related documents attached).

MODE OF ENFORCEMENT OF ARTICLE 18 OF THE REGIONAL

CONVENTION ON FISHERIES COOPERATION AMONG AFRICAN STATES BORDERING THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

13 - In order to create the Regional Fisheries Development Fund (FRDP) mentioned in Article 18 of the convention, the meeting recommends acquiring the services of a consultant firstly to review the legal aspects, and secondly to suggest methods for financing ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT.

14 - The meeting stressed that it would be necessary to call on financial aid from the member states of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT according to objective criteria yet to be defined in order to allow for the Secretariat to accomplish its work.

15 - The Permanent Secretariat in collaboration with the Chairman's office was told by the meeting to draw up the terms of reference for this appointment.

OPENING UP ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT TO LANDLOCKED

AFRICAN COUNTRIES

16 - The principle of opening up ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT to landlocked African countries was accepted by member countries.

17 - The meeting recommended that a consultant should be engaged to study the practicalities of this initiative.



PLACE AND DATE OF THE 7th SESSION

- 18- Ivory Coast reaffirmed its offer to host the 7th Session of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT.
- 19- It was agreed that this question should be placed before the Ministers for appreciation at their meeting on 2nd July 2006.

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

- 20- The meeting recommended drawing up a memorandum of cooperation between ICCAT and ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT to enable the two organizations to collaborate closely on a regular level.
- 21- The meeting was told of the efforts undertaken by ICCAT towards improving the tuna statistics of eight member countries of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT: Angola, Cape Verde, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Guinea and Sao Tome e Principe.
- 22- Furthermore, the meeting was pleased to announce the creation of the Sub-Regional Committee for Fisheries in the Centre West Gulf of Guinea.
- 23- The meeting recommended that collaboration conventions be set up with CSRP and the Sub-Regional Committee for Fisheries in the Centre West Gulf of Guinea.
- 24- The meeting was advised of the progress achieved in compiling a simplified manual with an interactive CD and a poster of pelagic species to be found in the ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT zone.
- 25- The meeting congratulated Senegal, Morocco and Mauritania on their efforts in the work of REFMA.
- 26- Japan repeated its adherence to the principle of the sustainable use of living marine resources, at the same time congratulating the grouping of the ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT countries on their initiative towards solving common problems in their sector.
- 27- Japan, while guaranteeing ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT of its continued support, exhorted the member countries to set up a system of annual contributions so the Secretariat of the Conference can carry on its work.
- 28- As for the control and supervision of fisheries, the meeting was informed of Japan's proposal to carry out studies for bringing the system for monitoring fishing vessels into general use throughout the region.
One of the countries in the region will be chosen to undertake this study.
- 29- Japan asked the countries of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT to synergize and collaborate with it at the coming United Nations conference, where a proposal for a moratorium on deep-sea trawling is to be debated.
- 30- The meeting asked Japan to examine the possibility of African scientists being associated with scientific studies concerning the stocks of cetaceans as well as observation campaigns conducted at sea.

THEMATIC PRESENTATIONS

- 31- The meeting followed attentively the presentation of a CD-ROM on pelagic species found off the west African coast.
- 32- The meeting followed the presentation of the system for monitoring fishing vessels via satellite (VMS ARGOS system).

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

- 33- The meeting adopted the report of its work.

CLOSE OF THE MEETING

- 34- The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:50 PM.



FINAL REPORT



- 1 - The sixth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean was held in Abidjan on 21 July 2006, at the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Ivory Coast. The meeting of Ministers was preceded by that of the Experts held from 19 - 20 July 2006.
- 2 - Present at the meeting were representatives of the following member countries : Angola, Benin, Cameroun, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Morocco and Mauritania.
- 3 - Mali, Japan, CRSP, COREP, ICCAT, the FAO and INFOPECHÉ attended the meeting as observers.
- 4 - The networks of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT, RAFISMER and REFMA took part in the deliberations.
- 5 - A list of the participants is attached.
- 6 - The solemn opening Session was placed under the chairmanship of His Excellency Mr. Paul Antoine BOHOUN Bouabré, Minister of State, Minister of the Plan and Development of the Republic of Ivory Coast, and organizer of the ceremony.
- 7 - Dr. Alphonse DOUATI, Minister of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Resources of the Republic of Ivory Coast and current Chairman of the Executive Committee of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT, delivered the speech of welcome.
- 8 - After thanking all the delegations for their show of solidarity towards the people of Ivory Coast and the partners in development for their lasting support, he stressed the problems facing the organization, i.e:
 - sustainable management of fisheries;
 - training of workers at all levels;
 - motivating fisheries research;
 - monitoring and supervision of fishing;
 - a successful outcome of the policy of reducing illicit and unconventional fishing practices.
- 9 - Furthermore he noted that the present meeting offered an opportunity to strengthen solidarity among member countries of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT. In this respect, close attention should be paid to opening up ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT to landlocked and geographically disadvantaged countries.
- 10 - The Minister of State in his turn thanked the participants in the name of the Ivorian Government for having placed their trust in his country now hosting these proceedings.
- 11 - He took the opportunity given by this solemn occasion to express the gratitude of the Republic of Ivory Coast to Japan and the Kingdom of Morocco for the commitment these partners have displayed in the development of the fisheries sector in ATLAFCO/ COMHAFAT's zone.
- 12 - Before declaring the meeting open, the Minister of State noted that the Conference remains an important instrument in the sustainable management of fisheries resources and for this reason the Ivory Coast can guarantee its strong commitment to be involved in supporting the recommendations of this meeting.
- 13 - The following agenda was adopted:
 - Opening of the meeting
 - Adoption of the agenda
 - Examination of the report of the Experts meeting
 - Statements by the Delegations
 - Place and date of the 7th Session



- Miscellaneous questions
- Thematic presentations
- Adoption of the report of the meeting
- Closing ceremony

EXAMINATION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXPERTS MEETING

- 14- The meeting of Experts took place in Abidjan from 19 - 20 July 2006. At the end of its work, the meeting adopted a report containing the results of its deliberations together with its recommendations concerning the various questions discussed.
- 15- The meeting took note of the activities covered and was pleased with the quality of the work done by the Permanent Secretariat of the Conference.
- 16- The Conference examined this report closely, and adopted it.

STATEMENTS BY THE HEADS OF DELEGATIONS

- 17- The meeting heard statements from the heads of Delegations from the following member states and observers: Angola, Benin, Ghana, Morocco, Mali.
- 18- The heads of Delegation reaffirmed their attachment to the objectives of ATLAFCO/ COMHAFAT which exists as an important framework for discussion of problems of development in fisheries and aquaculture among member countries.
- 19- They laid stress on the evaluation of working methods and means of financing the branches of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT so as to make them more efficient and more successful.
- 20- They also reaffirmed the active solidarity present both within ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT countries as well as between ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT and landlocked countries who share the same ideals.
- 21- Finally, they suggested setting up an annual meeting of Ministers of ATLAFCO/ COMHAFAT with a view to taking concrete measures necessary to safeguard fisheries resources in the area covered by this institution.

PLACE AND DATE OF THE 7th SESSION

- 22- The meeting reserved the month of July 2007 as the date for holding the seventh Session of the Conference.
- 23- The Republic of Ivory Coast reaffirmed its invitation to host the seventh Session of the Conference in Yamoussoukro or Abidjan.
- 24- After examining the offer of the Republic of Ivory Coast to host the 7th Conference in Abidjan or in Yamoussoukro, it was accepted by the meeting unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

- 25- The meeting recommended drawing up a memorandum of cooperation between ICCAT and ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT, so that both organizations may collaborate closely on a regular basis.
- 26- The meeting was informed of the efforts undertaken by ICCAT towards improving the statistics of tuna fishing in eight member countries of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT : Angola, Cape Verde, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Guinea and São Tomé e Príncipe).
- 27- The meeting was also pleased at the creation of the Sub-Regional Committee for Fisheries in the Centre West Gulf of Guinea.



28- It recommended that other collaboration agreements be established with the CSRP and the Sub-Regional Committee for Fisheries in the Centre West Gulf of Guinea.

29- The meeting was informed of the state of progress in the compilation of a simplified manual with interactive CD and the creation of a poster of pelagic species in the ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT zone.

30- The meeting congratulated Senegal, Morocco and Mauritania for the efforts they have made in the framework of the Maritime Training Network (REFMA).

THEMATIC PRESENTATIONS

31- Japan reiterated its adherence to the principle of the sustainable use of live marine resources, while hailing the initiative of grouping countries under ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT in order to solve problems common to the region.

32- While reassuring ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT of its backing, this partner exhorted member countries to set up a system of annual contributions in order to guarantee the running of the Permanent Secretariat of the Conference.

33- As part of the monitoring and supervision of fisheries the meeting was informed of Japan's proposal to conduct studies for bringing into general use a system of monitoring fishing vessels in the area.

One country in the area will be selected for undertaking this study.

34- Japan drew the attention of the countries of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT to the absence of scientific proof and the resulting socio-economic consequences if the next conference of the United Nations adopts the proposition for a moratorium on deep-sea trawling.

35- The meeting followed the presentation of the system for monitoring fishing vessels by satellite (VMS ARGOS system), and then noted with satisfaction that several ATLAFCO/ COMHAFAT countries were participating in this initiative.

ADOPTION OF THE MEETING REPORT

36- The meeting adopted the report of its work.

CLOSING CEREMONY

37- The meeting was closed by:

distribution of certificates of participation ;

distribution of souvenir gifts to foreign delegations;

closing address given by the H.E Dr. Alphonse DOUATI, current Chairman of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT.



DECLARATIONS OF HEAD DELEGATIONS



MEMBR STATES DECLARATIONS

DECLARATION OF H.E MINISTER OF FISHERIES OF REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA

Son Excellence Monsieur DOUATI Alphonse, Ministre de la Production Animale des Ressources Halieutiques de Côte d'Ivoire et Président en exercice de la Conférence Ministérielle sur la Coopération Halieutique entre les Etats Africains Riverains de l'Océan Atlantique (COMHAFAT,

Distingués Ministres,

Messieurs les Représentants des Organisations Régionales et Internationales,

Distingués Délégués,

Mesdames et Messieurs.

Permettez moi Monsieur le Président, en premier lieu d'affirmer que c'est avec une grande satisfaction que je prend la parole dans cette assemblée, au nom du Gouvernement de l'Angola et de la Délégation qui m'accompagne exprimés nos sincères remerciements à son Excellence Monsieur le Président Laurent GBAGBO, au Gouvernement et au peuple frères de la République de Côte d'Ivoire, pour la réception chaleureuse et l'hospitalité donnée aussi bien pour les excellentes conditions de travail crée pour la réalisation avec succès de cette session dans cette belle ville.

Je félicite d'autre part les Experts pour l'excellent travail réalisé qui nous a permis d'avoir connaissance des activités accomplies dans de la recommandation pour la 6^{ème} Session, des modalités de la mise en ?uvre de l'article 18 de la convention régionale sur la Coopération Halieutique entre les Etats Africains de l'Océan Atlantique et l'ouverture de la COMHAFAT aux pays sous littoral.

Monsieur le Président,

Messieurs les Ministres,

Distingués Délégués,

Je réaffirme que l'Angola continue de considérer la COMHAFAT comme étant une Organisation appropriée où nous pouvons canaliser et discuter les problèmes qui affectent le développement des activités de la pêche et de l'aquaculture de notre région, c'est pourquoi nous pensons que malgré les difficultés rencontrées provoquées par différentes raisons, les pays membres doivent manifester une forte volonté politique pour renforcer les capacités humaines surtout financière de notre Conférence.

Dans ce cadre, j'aimerais informer que le Gouvernement de la République d'Angola a contribué volontairement au budget de la COMHAFAT afin d'atténuer certains difficultés qu'elle rencontre dans l'accomplissement de ses activités administratives.

Dans le même contexte, j'aimerais également rappeler qu'en thème de solidarité avec l'organisation, l'Angola a abrité les travaux de la 3^{ème} réunion du Bureau du réseau Africain de l'Institut de Recherche Halieutique et des Sciences de la Mer (RAFISMER), à Luanda, Angola du 17 au 18 avril 2006.

Par ailleurs, dans l'esprit de régulariser la situation de notre organisation, permettez moi de rappeler qu'en mars de l'année en cours la République d'Angola a déposé ses instruments juridiques d'adhésion à la convention régionale sur la Coopération Halieutique entre les Etats Africains Riverains de l'Océan Atlantique auprès de la FAO.

Relativement au secteur de la pêche de la République d'Angola, dans le cadre de son développement, le programme du Gouvernement a défini certaines politiques et encore des mesures de politique, notamment:

- Formation et la pêche artisanale soit maritime soit continentale tout en réalisant des investissements peu coûteux, et la création d'un nombre significatif de poste de travail,
- Le développement de l'aquaculture, activités pour lesquelles le pays a d'excellentes potentialités, tout en relevant le défis de la recherche scientifique dans ce domaine, la construction d'infrastructures appropriées telle comme les stations pilotes et des écoles de formation,
- La provenance des meilleures conclusions d'appui à la pêche, l'amélioration du réseau de distribution de poisson, réfrigération, congélation, séchage,
- La revitalisation de l'industrie de transformation du poisson de façon à réduire la dépendance extérieure en poisson congelé et transformer,
- Le renforcement de la capacité des entreprises existantes et la création des bases de l'organisation de la restructuration du secteur,
La préservation de la qualité du poisson et la garantie de la défense du consommateur,
- Le renforcement du système de formation des cadres tout en complétant le cycle de formation technique professionnelle.

Avec l'effort propre du Gouvernement d'Angola et l'assistance technique et financière de ses partenaires de coopération bilatérale, régionale et internationale, le secteur des pêches de l'Angola a mis en œuvre plusieurs actions du Programme du Gouvernement en vue de surpasser graduellement les problèmes confrontés dans les différents domaines.

Dans ce contrôle il est a réaffirmé que dans le cadre des opportunités offertes par la COMHAFAT, des actions de la gestion formatives et de mise à niveau dans des Instructions d'enseignement du pays siège de l'organisation soit le Royaume du Maroc.

Face aux actions de formation des organisations par la COMHAFAT et ses partenaires de Coopération, j'aime ceux-ci, mais exprimer mes remerciements et souhaiter que continuent d'identifier des programmes et des actions concrètes qui contribueront à la résolution des problèmes confrontés par les pays membres en vue d'atteindre les objectives définies.

Je vous remercie pour votre spéciale attention.



MEMBR STATES DECLARATIONS

STATEMENT BY HONORABLE

MR. DANIEL CHRISTIAN DUGAN DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FISHERIES - GHANA

Mr. Chairman

Ministers for Fisheries of Member States

Your Excellencies and Representatives of Diplomatic Missions Representatives of UN and Donor Agencies,

Fisheries Experts

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

All other Protocol Observed.

Before I proceed with my statement, I wish to express my profound gratitude and appreciation to the entire Board of Executives of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Co-operation Among countries Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO). I also wish to convey the fraternal greeting of our President, H. E. Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor, the Government and people of Ghana. Special greetings from my Minister, Hon. Mrs. Gladys Asmah, who should have been here but for an equally important task she has to perform. Special greetings also from all the stakeholders in the fisheries industry in Ghana.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you more sincerely for giving me the opportunity to make a statement at this august conference and in doing so, I will state briefly some of the important things that are happening in the industry in Ghana.

When H. E. President J. A. Kufuor took over as President of the Republic of Ghana in January 2001, his vision for the growth of the fisheries industry was laid bare when he appointed a Minister of State in charge of Fisheries under the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA).

During his visits to fish producing nations like Morocco, H.E. the President might have seen the great potential fish has in becoming one of the major foreign exchange earners and poverty reduction sector of the economy.

To enhance this potential, President Kufuor in January, 2005 set aside the fisheries department from MOFA and elevated it to a Ministerial level with cabinet status.

Mr. Chairman, this is one of the many wise decisions H.E. President Kufuor has been taking since his assumption as President of the Republic. The great potential fisheries has for the development of my country Ghana cannot all be elaborated here.

With over 500 000 people directly involved in fish production and with their dependants forming at least 10% of our population, no government worth its name can ignore this production sector.

Plagued with over-exploitation and depletion of fish in the fresh water and marine resources, coupled with illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing methods IUU, my Ministry since 2005 is faced with the challenge of forging a successful fisheries industry.

With 10% of the country covered with water and yet aquaculture contributing only 1% of total fish production, my ministry undertook visits to Israel and China to study at first hand extensive fish farming. Familiarisation tour was made to Uganda to understudy small scale rural community fish farming practices.

Over 200 youth have so far been trained in aquaculture practices. The youth were picked from all the ten regions of the country. My Ministry is considering granting a loan of at least \$2,500 each to these trainees to begin small scale fish farms in their localities.

To address the high poverty level in the fishing communities, the Ministry introduced « Fish Work and Pay Tools ». It is a programme where fishing gears especially outboard motors are given out on credit basis at very soft and affordable terms.

The Ministry has began a programme of training fisher folks in alternative livelihoods, like batik production and kente weaving. This is drawing some of them from depending directly on the sea or lake for livelihood. Apart from increasing income earnings in these communities, this programme is indirectly reducing the incidence of over fishing.

Mr. Chairman, the entire fishing industry is under the private sector. The major problem they are facing now is dealing with the high cost of fuel. Not that my government is not addressing this issue. Last year over \$10 million was used to subsidise fuel for fishers. With world price of petroleum products sky rocketing by the day, subsidy on marine gas oil and premix fuel will have little effect as the fishers must meet government part way in cost sharing.

Mr. Chairman, I am aware of the harmful effect oil price hikes are having on fishing communities around the globe. Cost of fish product have almost doubled over the year in major production areas. My concern is our local fishers in struggling economies like ours. It is sad to see fishing boats tied at the harbour because it is too expensive to chase fish in the sea.

This is a problem all nations are facing and I am afraid we have to find ways of living with this situation.

Mr. Chairman, the problems of depleting fishery stock, poaching, illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishery practices, degradation of coastal environment and loss of coastal habitats among others are still with us.

In an attempt to monitor activities of fishers in our waters, my government in November, last year inaugurated the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). All vessels licensed to fish in our waters must have transponders installed on them. The problem is how to combat the poachers who do not have these equipment installed on them. In her statement to this august body, last year July in Rabat, Morocco, my Minister called for member countries to collaborate on issues of IUU and to wipe out the bad fishing practices in the region.

It will be very expensive policing our waters considering the limited resources most member countries have. I will again make a personal suggestion. I will request that all Ministers in charge of fisheries among the member states form a ministerial committee, and meet at least once a year, come out with common agenda and see that they are implemented in their countries. I am afraid all recommendations of fisheries expects will remain in the shelves without the political push to implement them. Whatever is happening in the waters of any state should be of concern to all states irrespective of distance.

We can then propagate common laws to protect our waters from poachers and other bad fishing practices. I am not suggesting a ministerial committee with a standing secretariat, but a regular interaction among our politicians who head the fishery ministries to push our common agenda at the highest level.

My Minister again mentioned the need for research vessels. I very much agree with her on the need for such vessels since vital information from such research could help formulate fishery management plans for sustainable exploitation of our fishery resources. I believe if all fishery ministers of member states had collectively consider the issue of research vessels and pushed the need to collectively acquire some, at the highest political level, we could be in the process of purchasing such vessels.

Mr. Chairman, fishery products can be high foreign exchange earner for member states like oil, gold, diamond and other minerals. Unlike the minerals, fishery is a renewable resource. Policies are needed to protect this resource form depleting. If the West and other major fishing zones in the world could implement strict laws to protect their resources, I feel it is high time we collectively do the same. We



cannot have fishers running away from the laws of their countries to take undue advantage of our waters and scoop our fish away without paying us, go then back to their countries, process our fish and sell them back to us.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion I will like to thank all the experts for the fruitful deliberations they had over the past two days.

Mr. Chairman, colleague ministers, the future of our people is in our hands. We must take decisions that will ensure the mutual benefit of our countries.

Mr. Chairman, colleague ministers, fellow delegates, distinguish ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your attention and my the Good God bless us all.

MEMBR STATES DECLARATIONS

DECLARATION OF THE MOROCCAN DELEGATION GIVEN BY MR MOHAMMED TARMIDI THE SECRETARY GENERAL DEPARTEMENT OF MARITIME FISHERIES MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPEMENT AND MARITIME FISHERIES KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

Monsieur le Président,

Messieurs les Ministres,

Mesdames, Messieurs,

Permettez-moi tout d'abord, Monsieur le Président, de vous présenter les salutations LES PLUS chaleureuses de Monsieur Mohand LAENSER, Ministre de l'Agriculture, du Développement Rural et des Pêches Maritimes du Royaume du Maroc qui tenait à participer personnellement à cette 6^{ème} réunion du Bureau de la COMAHFAT à laquelle il accorde un intérêt tout particulier mais qui ne peut malheureusement pas y assister en raison de contraintes de calendrier.

Permettez-moi aussi, Monsieur le Président, de saisir cette heureuse opportunité pour remercier vivement le Gouvernement de la République de la Côte d'Ivoire, ce pays frère pour lequel nous avons tant de considération et de respect, pour l'accueil chaleureux et fraternel qui nous a été réservé depuis notre arrivée dans cette belle ville d'Abidjan et pour toutes les commodités mises à la disposition des participants à cette réunion dont nous assurés du plein succès.

Monsieur le Président

Messieurs les Ministres

Mesdames et Messieur

Depuis sa création à Rabat en 1989, notre Conférence qui a ouvert la voie à un nouveau type de concertation et de partenariat entre les Etats Côtiers de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, a franchi d'importantes étapes, illustrées par une présence et des activités multiformes sur les plans africain et international.

Notre réflexion et notre action dans ce sens, ont réservé une attention particulière à la contribution des pêches à la sécurité alimentaire et à l'amélioration des conditions de vie de nos communautés de pêcheurs. Les acquis de la rationalisation et de la pérennisation de la pêche qui demeurent notre principal préoccupation, doivent en effet, être soutenus par une valorisation et une utilisation judicieuse des captures, afin d'augmenter et de diversifier les apports nutritionnels de la mer, tout en garantissant leur qualité et leur salubrité.

Dans cette perspective, notre Conférence a tenté de donner plein effet à la Convention Régionale de Dakar et au Protocole de Conakry, car ces instruments juridiques constituant à notre avis un précieux acquis et une assise institutionnelle spécifique pour l'exécution des actions de coopération qui sont entreprises sous les auspices de notre Conférence.

Par ailleurs, il serait hautement souhaitable que nous puissions procéder à une évaluation de nos méthodes de travail et des mécanismes de fonctionnement des organes de notre Conférence, en vue d'une plus grande efficacité dans la réalisation des objectifs que nous nous sommes fixés.

Il conviendrait à cet effet, d'évaluer la portée de nos moyens matériels et financiers, leurs limites et les



mesures à prendre pour les adapter à nos ambitions et faire de notre Organisation un outil véritablement opérationnel.

Il conviendrait également de mener ensemble, une réflexion sur l'efficacité de nos moyens de diffusion de l'information entre les Etats Membres de la Conférence. A l'heure des nouvelles technologies, la mise en place d'un réseau de communication à travers les autoroutes de l'information peut contribuer à une meilleure circulation des données et par conséquent, servir d'outil stratégique à la décision.

Afin de mettre à la disposition de nos gouvernements des outils efficaces d'aide à la décision, notre Organisation devrait s'atteler à la mise en place d'indicateurs socio-économiques et techniques sur la base de systèmes d'information fiables et de données statistiques comparables.

Nous nous réjouissons bien évidemment des progrès réalisés à ce niveau par la création et la mise en place des réseaux REFMA et RAFISMER que nous devrions consolider et encourager pour leur permettre de devenir des outils efficaces et pérennes, à la hauteur des missions qui leur ont été assignées.

Monsieur le Président

Messieurs les Ministres

Mesdames et Messieurs

Notre Conférence en tant qu'organisation régionale des pêches, doit se doter de tous les moyens pour s'intégrer de manière active dans la mouvance internationale actuelle, en faveur d'un nouveau mode de gouvernance des espaces marins qui implique à ce stade d'évolution des pêcheries mondiales, plus de sacrifice que de dividendes à partager.

La tâche importante qui nous incombe précisément aujourd'hui est de convenir de lignes directrices et d'analyser l'impact des recommandations adoptées et mises en oeuvre pour permettre à notre Conférence d'intégrer progressivement ce nouveau concept de la bonne gouvernance qui plaide en faveur de la rationalisation de la pêche et d'un meilleur usage des captures réalisées en mer, dans l'intérêt bien compris de nos collectivités.

Le moment s'avère propice pour notre Bureau, d'examiner l'opportunité de permettre à Conférence de s'ouvrir sur son environnement géographique afin d'intégrer de nouvelles compétences, à travers l'accueil de nouveaux membres au niveau de notre Continent tout en les associant à notre défi de développement.

Je suis convaincu que les travaux fructueux menés par nos experts durant ces derniers jours et les recommandations pertinentes auxquelles ils ont abouti nous permettront de mieux appréhender et analyser les différentes questions inscrites à notre ordre du jour, lesquelles reflètent l'essentiel de nos préoccupations.

Monsieur le Président,

Messieurs les Ministres,

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Je voudrais vous réitérer la volonté de mon pays et sa disponibilité pour poursuivre les actions déjà initiées ensemble, et faire de notre région un espace de paix et de prospérité où rayonnent ses valeurs culturelles et civilisationnelles.

Je demeure convaincu que chacun de nous est profondément mu par le désir de participer à la réalisation des nobles objectifs que nous nous sommes assignés, qui auront des retombées bénéfiques sur l'ensemble de notre Région, en ce XXI^{ème} siècle qui sera marqué par un bouleversement dans les méthodes de gestion des ressources, ce qui se traduirait par un renforcement de la dimension halieutique de la mer en tant que source de vie et de prospérité.

Grâce à la mobilisation de tous, et à l'appui de nos partenaires privilégiés y compris les organisations du



système des Nations Unies, auxquels je rends un vibrant hommage, je suis persuadé que nous parviendrons à relever les défis qui s'imposent à notre Organisation et à concrétiser nos objectifs auxquelles aspirent nos populations.

Je vous remercie de votre aimable attention et souhaite plein succès à notre réunion.

Merci pour votre attention.



OBSERVERS DECLARATIONS

DECLARATION OF MR YAMAGIWA DAÏSHIRO DEPUTY OF THE JAPANESE PARLIAMENT, DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE DEMOCRATIC LIBERAL PARTY , COUNCELLER CLOSE TO THE JAPANESE COMMISSIONNAIR OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALE COMMISSION VETERINARY DOCTOR

C'est à la fois un grand honneur et un grand plaisir pour moi de vous parler ici au nom du peuple japonais dont le nombre est de 127 millions.

Comme vous le savez bien, le 20^{ème} siècle a été celui des sacs et des pillages commis par les pays puissants, mais nous devons faire de ce 21^{ème} siècle celui de symbiose et de coexistence pacifique. Nous souhaitons partager cette position avec vous. Pour ce faire, un des défis essentiels auxquels nous devons faire face doit être certainement la sécurité alimentaire: il faut nourrir la population mondiale qui ne cesse d'augmenter. Il est donc absolument nécessaire de savoir gérer et utiliser les ressources naturelles d'une manière scientifique et durable. Nous apprécions beaucoup les efforts déployés en ce sens par les pays membres de la COMHAFAT.

Permettez-moi de vous citer un exemple typique de la menace qui vient de ces mouvements écologistes extrémistes d'aujourd'hui: le problème de la chasse à la baleine. Comme j'ai participé à plusieurs reprises à des réunions annuelles de la CBI (IWC), je puis vous affirmer en un mot que ceux qui s'opposent à la chasse baleinière ne sont pas capables de nous convaincre d'une manière scientifique: ils s'y opposent pour des raisons politico-émotionnelles, dépourvues de toutes justifications scientifiques. Nous estimons qu'à la réunion annuelle de cette année tenue à Saint-Kitts, un petit pays insulaire des Caraïbes, nos efforts de longue haleine ont enfin porté les fruits sous forme de «la Déclaration de Saint-Kitts» qui préconise le principe de l'utilisation durable des ressources en cétacés. Toutefois, il reste encore beaucoup d'étapes à franchir pour reprendre les activités de la chasse baleinière de caractère commercial ; nous voudrions obtenir votre meilleure compréhension et votre collaboration pour faire valoir cette cause commune qu'est le principe de l'utilisation durable des ressources marines vivantes y compris les cétacés.

Je voudrais attirer votre attention au problème du moratoire de la pêche au chalut de grand fond dans les eaux internationales. Cette question a été soulevée par l'initiative d'un certain nombre de pays et d'ONGs écologistes qui, sous prétexte de sauvegarder l'écosystème vulnérable que représentent des montagnes sous-marines etc., demandent à l'assemblée des Nations Unies d'instituer un moratoire du chalutage de grande envergure dans les eaux internationales. Mais, bien que leurs arguments manquent de fondements scientifiques, ils déploient des activités contre une méthode de pêche spécifique ; nous considérons qu'ils ne demandent pas la protection de l'écosystème océanique, mais plutôt ils font des campagnes politiques et non-scientifiques pour favoriser une dénégation pure et simple d'une pratique de pêche singulière. Il est à souligner qu'une fois un tel moratoire est adopté, ce genre de campagne de dénigrement risque de s'étendre aux autres formes de pêche telles que la pêche au chalut à l'intérieur de la ZEE de chaque pays. Bref, nous avons besoin de ne pas perdre de vue toute évolution des débats sur la pêche au sein des Nations Unies.

Notre pays ne demande pas votre aide pour résoudre les problèmes de la chasse baleinière et pour empêcher l'adoption du moratoire du chalutage; nous vous demandons de considérer la problématique comme étant la vôtre et de conjuguer vos efforts avec les nôtres pour faire valoir notre position qui se



traduit par le principe de l'utilisation durable des ressources halieutiques pour le bien de l'humanité.

En d'autres termes, le 21ème siècle doit être construit sous le signe de la coopération entre tous les peuples du monde pour réaliser la prospérité mutuelle basée sur ce principe de l'utilisation durable de toutes les ressources naturelles qui nous sont données.

OBSERVERS DECLARATIONS

DECLARATION OF MALI GIVEN BY MR COULIBALY HERY NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF FISHERIES

Monsieur le Président de la COMHAFAT

Messieurs les Ministres

Honorables invités

Permettez tout d'abord pour des raisons de calendrier gouvernemental de présenter les excuses de Monsieur OUMAR Ibrahima Touré, Ministre de l'Élevage et de la Pêche du Mali dont le voyage a été à la dernière minute annulé.

Permettez moi également de remercier les Autorités de la République de Côte d'Ivoire et particulièrement Monsieur le Ministre de la Production Animale et des Ressources Halieutiques pour l'accueil et toutes les facilités dont nous avons bénéficié depuis notre arrivée à Abidjan.

Je remercie également le Secrétariat Permanent de la COMHAFAT pour sa disponibilité.

Le Mali a apprécié à sa juste valeur l'attention particulière dont il fait l'objet de la part de la COMHAFAT.

Nous partageons avant tout les objectifs de la COMHAFAT et saluons singulièrement la solidarité exprimée avec les pays sans littoral. Solidarité matérialisée par votre division d'ouvrir l'organisation aux pays africains sous littoral.

La motivation de cette décision a été donnée largement par vous-même Monsieur le Président.

Le Mali souhaite une matérialisation rapide de cette décision.

Monsieur le Président,

Messieurs les Ministres,

Nous exprimons notre reconnaissance aux pays membres de la COMHAFAT pour leur collaboration, leur disponibilité et l'ouverture d'esprit dont ils nous gratifient.

Nous sommes convaincus, c'est ensemble que nous ferons face au sous développement et à la pauvreté une exploitation raisonnée de nos ressources.

Nous souhaitons que les décisions du Bureau soit confirmées par la 7^{ème} Session de la COMHAFAT à Abidjan.



CLOSING CEREMONY



CLOSING CEREMONY

SPECIAL MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY MR. LAURENT GBAGBO PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF IVORY COAST

The Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT):

- After holding its sixth meeting of the Executive Committee in Abidjan from 19 - 21 July 2006 at the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Ivory Coast;
- Greatly touched by the marks of brotherly friendship and hospitality which the Ivorian Government has shown to members of the 6th meeting of the Executive Committee of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT taking part in this meeting ;
- In consideration of the impeccable logistical and material organization offered by Ivory Coast, the host country of this meeting;
- Seeing the availability and the interest shown during the meeting by the highest levels of the Ivorian government, in particular by His Excellency Mr. Alphonse DOUATI, Minister of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Resources;
- Noting with satisfaction the excellent working conditions placed at the disposal of the delegations which ensured the complete success of the sixth meeting of the Executive Committee of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT in Abidjan ;
- We, the Ministers of the member states of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT, express our sincerest thanks and deepest gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Laurent GBAGBO, President of the Republic, and to the Ivorian government and people, for the displays of attention and generous hospitality we have received during our stay on the soil of Ivory Coast.

We congratulate Ivory Coast for hosting this meeting, a country whose longstanding traditions of welcome and hospitality have in great measure lived up to our expectations.

Abidjan, July 21, 2006
The Executive Committee of
ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT



CLOSING CEREMONY

CLOSING ADDRESS

**GIVEN BY H.E. MR. ALPHONSE DOUATI
MINISTER OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND FISHERIES RESOURCES
CURRENT CHAIRMAN OF ATAFCO/COMHAFAT**

*His Excellency, the Minister of State, Minister of the Plan and Development,
Ministers and Heads of Delegations*

*Ladies and Gentlemen Excellencies the Ambassadors and Heads of Diplomatic Missions,
The Honourable Member of the Japanese House of Representatives,*

Mr. Permanent Secretary of ATAFCO/COMHAFAT,

Ladies and Gentlemen Representatives of International Organizations,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The lights are going out over the 6th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean.

Permit me, in the name of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Laurent GBAGBO, the Ivorian Government and myself, to express my deepest gratitude and my sincerest thanks to all those who have contributed in any way to the success of this meeting; some as backers, I am thinking of the Sherifian Kingdom of Morocco, or others as organizers or scientists.

I would like to ask you to join me in applauding the permanent secretary and all the Experts for the quality of work they have accomplished which has facilitated and simplified adoption by the Ministers of the conclusions of the meetings.

We wish to applaud once more all our national and international partners including INFOPECHE, the FAO, ONUDI and Japan for their truly invaluable support.

Finally, I would like to thank my peers the Ministers for their positive presence, their useful contribution to the meeting and for having approved the offer of Ivory Coast to host the seventh Session of ATAFCO/COMHAFAT next July.

I hereby in the name of the Government of Ivory Coast willingly accept this honour and the challenges it will present.

The present meeting has enabled us to examine our acceptance of the responsibilities and social and economic issues we have to consider in our different national and community policies.

Now that this has been done, I would like to wish you a safe return to your countries and to your families.

It is also time to give especial thanks once more to the Moroccan Government which contributed to the organization of this meeting by assuming responsibility for the whole Permanent Secretariat. The Sherifian Kingdom of Morocco has always offered its unflinching support to the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean. For this reason, and for many others, I would like you to applaud by acclamation this solid commitment of the Kingdom of Morocco which is an inspiration to us all.

To all my other colleagues whose support against all adversity has never slackened, Ivory Coast, through



ALLOCUTION GIVEN BY MR A.DAHMANI

PERMANENT SECRETARY OF THE ATLAFCO

Mr. Chairman,

Mr. Principal Private Secretary of His Excellency the Minister,

Gentlemen Representatives of Countries friendly to ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT,

Gentlemen Representatives of International, Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to express my happiness and my sincerest thanks to all of you for answering our invitation to take part in the 6th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT).

The Permanent Secretary is greatly honoured and wishes to announce his department is completely satisfied to work in total synergy with the Chairman of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT. On this occasion, the honour has fallen to me to render a powerful tribute to His Excellency Dr. Alphonse DOUATI, the Ivory Coast Minister of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Resources, and to the outgoing Chairman, His Excellency Mr. Emile DOUMBA, Minister of Forestry, Water and Fisheries Economics of the Republic of Gabon responsible for the Environment and Nature Conservation, for the interest, the devotion, and the farsightedness they have consistently shown towards ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT.

The wise counsel and pertinent directives offered by His Excellency Dr. DOUATI since the beginning of his term of office as Chairman of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT have increased the motivation of the Permanent Secretariat and the Executive office of the Conference towards the completion and implementation of some of the tasks recommended for ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT at the 6th Session of the Conference held in Rabat, Morocco in July 2005.

Mr. Chairman,

Honourable Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since it was first set up the Permanent Secretariat has always acted in concert with the Chairman's office of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT to implement the recommendations arising from its sessions. From among the projects for cooperation created to encompass the scope of ATLAFCO/ COMHAFAT's ambitions it should be noted that some have been accomplished thanks to the dynamism, discussions and efforts displayed by all branches of the Conference, whereas some unfortunately could not be carried out due to a lack of financial as well as technical support. However, ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT can never, through its Permanent Secretariat, thank Japan, Morocco and France enough for their financial backing towards accomplishing its objectives of sustainable development of fisheries along the west coast of Africa.

By virtue of the prerogatives granted to it, the Permanent Secretariat, together with the current Chairman and the spokesman country, is pleased to present a list of its principal achievements since the 6th Session held in July 2005.

TECHNICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1) Recording the decisions of the 6th Session on paper and in electronic form (CD).
- 2) Organizing a meeting for discussions between the Chairman's office and the Permanent Secretariat of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT held at the headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat on February 11, 2006. At this meeting which was the occasion of his first visit Dr. Alphonse DOUATI, the Permanent Secretariat and the Chairman's office were able to identify the achievements and establish a timetable for work to

be carried out during the official year 2006 - 2007.

The abovementioned timetable will be the subject of discussions during the period of the meeting.

- 3) Organizing the selective meeting of the Expert members of the Executive Committee in Lomé from March 30 - 31, 2006. The main result of this meeting was to finalize the above timetable.
- 4) Organizing a symposium on the sustainable development of fisheries resources along the coast of west Africa, held in Agadir from May 16 – 18, 2006. The results of a panel of Experts representing the member states of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT and the observer countries Japan and Mali provided suggestions and recommendations for research, training and the sustainable use of marine resources.
- 5) Organizing the 7th meeting of REFMA in Nouadhibou, Mauritania, from December 26 – 28, 2005, the main objective being to establish its three-year action plan.
- 6) Organizing the 3rd meeting of RAFISMER in Luanda from April 17 – 18, 2006 with the objective of working out a strategy on which to base the Executive Committee's action plan.
- 7) Organizing the 6th meeting of the Executive Committee of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT held from July 19 – 21, 2006. At this meeting several points of order are to be debated, some of which are of capital importance to the future of our organization and deserve to be analysed in great detail by the eminent experts here present.
- 8) Writing and publishing a manual and poster on pelagic fish along the coast of west Africa in concert with the Executive Committee of RAFISMER.

DISTRIBUTING INFORMATION

- 1) Distribution of reports of all the Conference's activities has been effected at focal points throughout the ministries of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT's member states.
- 2) Information has also been distributed via the website of ATLAFCO/ COMHAFAT. The Permanent Secretariat takes this opportunity to make a further appeal to all the Experts from member states of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT to supply more information about fisheries so that wider distribution may be achieved.

DEGREE OF COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION WITH COUNTRIES AND WITH INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL AND SUB- REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT maintains relations of cooperation and collaboration with several countries, especially Japan and France. New relations are in progress of being initiated with Spain and Canada.

ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT has also noted the satisfactory relations of cooperation existing with international, regional and sub-regional organizations like the FAO, INFOPECHE, COPACE, ICCAT, CSRP and COREP (Regional Fisheries Commission for the Gulf of Guinea – Libreville Gabon). These relations, which today are only of exchanges of information and documentation, deserve to be developed so that combined and complementary activities having objectives of mutual interest can be undertaken. It is with this aim in view that two memorandums of intent will be concluded with COREP and ICCAT.

Mr. Chairman,

Honourable Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The fact that our respective countries have created the African Ministerial Fisheries Conference is because they are convinced that through it our fisheries industries will achieve notable progress due to friendly policies carried out within a framework of effective regional cooperation.



That is why we are all called upon to seize this opportunity by combining our efforts and to have a more hopeful vision of the sustainable development of marine resources along the Atlantic coast of Africa.

I am quite convinced that cooperation based on sound principles of solidarity between the member states of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT will enable the fisheries sector, considered to be a vital resource to our region, to move forward.

It is obvious that our appeal will not be heard, and that the objectives we have given ourselves will not really be achieved, unless we receive the unstinted support of international organizations and our partners in friendly countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Honourables Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are delighted today that this 6th meeting of the Executive Committee is being held in Abidjan, this wonderful city in the Republic of Ivory Coast, a sister country to which we owe consideration and respect.

I seize this opportunity to express in the name of the Permanent Secretary my deepest thanks to the Government of the Ivory Coast, in the presence of Dr. Alphonse DOUATI, Minister of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Resources and current Chairman of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT, for the hospitality, the warm reception and the very agreeable conditions offered to the participants.

I feel too it is my agreeable duty to offer my thanks and my congratulations to the organizing committee through which I send my warmest greetings to Dr. DJOBO, Director of Fisheries and current Chairman of the Experts for the close attention he has paid to ensuring the smooth running of the 6th meeting of the Executive Committee of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT.

It is clear, seeing the genius and skill of the panel of participating Experts, that the deliberations of the meeting will end in satisfactory results to be submitted to the gracious appreciation of your Ministers.

Long live Africa

Long live ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT

I wish you all well.

DECLARATION OF MR NARUKO TAKAHIDE

**DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
ON FISHERIES, FISHERIES AGENCY,
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTS AND FISHERIES OF JAPAN**

Permettez-moi de vous présenter mes respects pour les efforts sérieux et sincères que les pays membres de la COMHAFAT déploient depuis des années pour résoudre les problèmes du secteur des pêches afin d'assurer les offres de produits halieutiques aux peuples de vos pays.

Notre pays soutient le principe de l'utilisation durable des ressources marines vivantes et nous remercions à tous les pays adhérents de cette Convention COMHAFAT pour l'appui qu'ils apportent à notre position et à nos arguments au sein de multiples conférences internationales liées à la pêche.

Nous constatons qu'un des sujets principaux qui vous préoccupent actuellement est le problème financier de cette organisation, notamment celui de contribution annuelle de chaque pays membre. Nous estimons qu'il faudrait faire avancer les discussions pour maintenir en état la Convention elle-même et qu'au moins une décision doit être prise pour faciliter le financement des fonctionnements du Secrétariat Permanent. Comme notre pays continue, depuis des années, de coopérer avec presque tous les pays membres de la COMHAFAT, en particulier dans le domaine des pêches, nous souhaitons vivement que cette question financière du Secrétariat Permanent soit résolue rapidement afin d'assurer un développement sain et sûr de notre coopération.

En collaboration avec ICCAT (CICTA), nous nous efforçons d'extirper les bateaux de pêche illégaux (IUU). Or, les systèmes de contrôle et de surveillance de pêche ne sont pas les mêmes d'un pays à un autre et, compte tenu des différences de type d'équipement à bord de chaque bateau autorisé, nos activités de contrôle de pêche se trouvent souvent en difficultés, voire entravées. Pour faire face à ces difficultés, nous avons établi un programme d'étude qui a pour but la vérification de l'applicabilité universelle d'un système de contrôle et de surveillance. Comme nous avons l'intention de choisir un pays de la région ouest - africaine pour exécuter ce programme d'étude, nous vous prions de nous apporter votre compréhension et collaboration.

Nous voyons s'intensifier les activités de certaines ONG extrémistes qui s'opposent à certaines méthodes de pêche appliquées à quelques ressources spécifiques. Notamment, nous voudrions attirer votre attention aux débats des Nations Unies qui, à l'automne de cette année, prendront une décision pour l'adoption d'un moratoire visant l'interdiction pour un certain temps de la pratique de la pêche au chalut dans les eaux internationales. Nous souhaitons pouvoir vous consulter et nous concerter en procédant aux échanges de vues préalables afin d'éviter toutes surprises et tous déboires pour les pays pêcheurs comme les nôtres.

■ FINAL REPORT OF THE EXPERTS RESTRICTED MEETING ■

(Togo - Lome, 30 - 31 mai 2006)

A limited meeting of the experts of the Bureau of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African Countries Bordering the Atlantic Ocean took place in LOME from 30-31 March 2006, at the kind invitation of the Government of Togo.

The meeting was attended by the following member countries of the Bureau: Angola, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Morocco and Mauritania.

Togo and Japan attended the meeting as observers.

A list of participants is attached.

The solemn opening session of the meeting was chaired by the Principal Private Secretary (Directeur de Cabinet) of the Minister of State, Minister of Agriculture, Husbandry and Fisheries of Togo.

In his welcoming address, the Principal Private Secretary, representing the Minister of State, expressed his pleasure at the choice of Togo for this meeting, and wished it every success in its work.

The Permanent Secretary of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO also thanked the Government of Togo for accepting to host the meeting.

He observed that the meeting came at the moment when the fisheries sector of member countries of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO is faced with major problems. He stated that the challenge to be overcome is to guarantee food supplies and reduce poverty in the region. He stressed that member countries must show solidarity in meeting every challenge.

He recalled that at the 6th session of the conference in Rabat in July 2005 recommendations were made that this meeting should examine in order that they can be implemented.

In the name of the current Chairman of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO, Dr DJOBO ANVRA Jeanson, Technical Advisor to the Minister of Livestock Production and Fisheries Resources of the Ivory Coast, in his turn thanked the Government of Togo for accepting to host this preparatory meeting in advance of the ministerial meeting. He asked for the thanks of the current Chairman of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO to be conveyed to the Minister of State, Minister of Agriculture, Husbandry and Fisheries of Togo.

After wishing every success to its work he declared the meeting open.

The following agenda of the work to be done was adopted:

- Opening the meeting
- Adopting the agenda
- Report on the recommendations of the 6th Session
- Scheduling of the Bureau's activities
- Organizing the 6th meeting of the Bureau.
- Conditions for applying Article 18 of the Regional Convention on Fisheries Cooperation among African Countries Bordering the Atlantic Ocean
- Date and place for the 6th session the Bureau of COMHAFAT/ ATLAFCO
- Miscellaneous questions
- Reading and adoption of the report
- Closure of the meeting

Report on the recommendations of the 6th Session of COMHAFAT/ ATLAFCO

The Chairman of Experts informed the participants that Dr. Alphonse DOUATI, current Chairman of the Conference, paid a visit to the Permanent Secretariat from 11-14 February 2006.

In the course of this visit, the main recommendations of the 6th session of the Conference held in July 2005 in Rabat were reviewed.

These recommendations dealt with the 8 following themes:

Expansion of maritime training

Development of fisheries research

Improving the value and promotion of trade in fishery products ;

Code of conduct for responsible fishing ;

Establishing a coherent policy regarding the control of fisheries ;

Situation regarding ratification/membership/acceptance of the Convention ;

Dialogue between member states and international authorities;

Relations of cooperation and collaboration with countries and international, regional and sub-regional organizations.

While reviewing these recommendations, the Permanent Secretary of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO informed the participants that the training programme under the tripartite cooperation agreement between Japan, Morocco and other African countries would cease on 31 March 2006. The meeting agreed to submit a request to the principal partners, Japan and Morocco, for this programme to continue.

The Secretariat informed participants that since a year ago France has stopped offering financial support for the research activities of RAFISMER (African Network of Fishery & Marine Science Institutes), and in consequence Morocco alone now provides financial support to this sector.

The meeting welcomed the signature of Angola as a member.

The Permanent Secretariat of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO told the member countries which had not already done so to sign their membership agreement. The appropriate forms for this have already been sent to them.

The Chairman informed the meeting of the technical assistance given by the FAO to create the Gulf of Guinea Centre Fisheries Commission

The meeting was informed by the Permanent Secretariat that a memorandum of agreement had been drawn up between COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO and CECAF regarding the distribution of information concerning the activities of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO.

The Secretariat reassured participants that it had sent the Final Report of the 6th session, in French and in English, to all countries members of the Conference as well as to the observer countries and to the regional and international organizations attending the meeting

A recapitulation of the action programme of the Bureau for the period 2006-2007 is attached, and will be submitted for adoption at the meeting of the Bureau.

Organization of the 6th Session of the Bureau

The Permanent Secretary of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO recalled the procedure for organizing meetings of the Bureau and stressed in particular the material and financial requirements to be secured, at the same time underlining the necessity of calling on our regular partners such as Japan.

The Japanese party present at this meeting as an observer reaffirmed his country's interest in the



development of the fisheries sector in Africa and confirmed its financial support of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO.

In accordance with the recommendation of the 6th session dealing with Article 18 of the COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO Regional Convention, the Chairman, during his visit to the head office of the Permanent Secretariat of COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO, asked for a programme of COMHAFAT/ ATLAFCO's activity to be prepared as well as a statement of the expenses involved in operating the Secretariat and financing its programme of activities.

The Chairman will summon all necessary skilled advice to support the Permanent Secretariat in its work.

The documents when prepared will be submitted to the meeting of the Ministerial Bureau for adoption, after being examined by the Experts.

The Japanese party recalled its condition for continuing financial support of the Conference, i.e. the establishment of a system of annual contributions from each of the member states.

PLACE AND DATE FOR THE 6th MEETING OF THE BUREAU

The meeting accepted with gratitude the invitation of the Ivory Coast to host the 6th meeting of the Bureau. However, if the conditions required cannot be met, another country of the Bureau will host this meeting which is planned for July 2006.

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

The meeting was informed that a symposium on the sustainable use of living marine resources is to be held in AGADIR as part of a workshop organized by COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO in May 2006.

The meeting offered no objection to the holding of this symposium.

The Chairman announced the meeting closed at 7.20 pm.



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