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**Ministerial Lobby Group**

**DRAFT ANNOTATED AGENDA**

**Special Meeting of the Ministerial Lobby Group (GMAP)**  
**23-24 November 2000, Bamako, Mali**

Declassified

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**ANNOTATED DRAFT AGENDA<sup>1</sup>**

**Special Meeting with the Ministerial Lobby Group (GMAP) and Development Agencies, Members of the Club du Sahel on the Occasion of the Bamako 2000 Meetings of the CILSS**

**Thursday 23 November pm to Friday 24 November 2000  
Bamako, Mali**

**23 November p.m.: Opening Session**

- Objectives and Expected Outcomes of the Special Meeting
- Thematic Discussion on Regional Integration

**24 November a.m.: Continued Thematic Discussions**

Regional Integration (as needed)

Sahel 21

Aid Reform

- Discussion of areas of consensus and agreement and on the general thrust of a Communiqué to be presented to the CILSS Heads of State Conference on 25 November 2000.

**24 November p.m.: High Level Informal Meeting: Restricted Session**

This session will provide an opportunity for the Heads of State, GMAP and donor Heads of Delegation to have a frank exchange of views on the region's critical political and socio-economic challenges.

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1. This is a draft by the Secretariat of the Club du Sahel. It is subject to change based on comments from the GMAP.

## ANNOTATIONS

### 1. General Information

The discussions will be led by the Ministerial Lobby Group, referred to by its French acronym — GMAP. The main objective of the meeting will be to reach agreement among members of the Ministerial Lobby Group and Development Co-operation Agencies that are members of the Club du Sahel on concrete actions and initiatives to be taken to advance strategic agendas in three areas:

- Regional Integration;
- Sahel 21;
- Aid Reform.

The Ministerial Lobby Group, launched at the Club du Sahel's Conference in Switzerland in September 1999, has since met several times to define its role and set out an agenda leading up to this Special Meeting. The group is informal and membership is based on co-optation by other members. It is open to ministers from West African States, interested in promoting African leadership.

To improve the sustainability of its actions, the Group has proposed a new partnership with development co-operation agencies to promote emerging-economy status by 2025 for countries of the region. It also advocates African leadership and responsibility for managing the development process and associated implementation of development co-operation activities. The GMAP is promoting regional integration and co-operation for the direct benefit of the people of the region. The Ministers are seeking deepened dialogue with development co-operation agencies through greater involvement of senior staff of these agencies in the definition of a common strategic and political vision on key issues.

### 2. Objectives and Outcomes of the Meeting

#### 2.1. Objectives

There are at least two main objectives of the meeting:

Obtain a clear response from development co-operation agencies on the level of involvement they are prepared to sustain in working with the GMAP to define a common strategic and political vision on key issues and, in particular, those set out under the regional integration agenda item.

Obtain initial feedback, through discussion with some of the Heads of State of the region, on the extent to which there is political backing for ceding certain areas of national sovereignty in the short-term with the hope of obtaining returns to regional growth and development in the medium-term.

## **2.2. Outcomes**

1. Recognition that there is value-added in having an informal group of decision-makers proposing and lobbying for a regional approach to development, including progress in sensitive areas such as IGO reform and investing in priority regional projects, even when this means fewer resources for national projects.
2. Agreement from the donor community to support this process including considering the establishment of substantial regional funds, reallocating resources when necessary to respond to new priorities and providing funding for essential strategic studies.
3. Agreement to promote the full integration of the regional dimension of sustainable food security into the PRSP processes of the countries of the region, including investing to make these processes more participatory.
4. Support for the two areas of aid reform: i) strengthening the knowledge base and networking on aid practices in the region through experimentation with various reforms in aid practices; and ii) enhancing the capacity of the region to participate in international debates on development co-operation.

## **3. Regional Integration**

### **3.1. Proposal**

The GMAP would like to propose a regional development approach that would broaden the issues beyond what may be desirable in terms of regional integration to what can accelerate economic growth and development in the region as a whole. Since both the GMAP and the Club du Sahel forums are informal the objective would be to make progress with analyses and proposed strategies and then to widely disseminate these ideas to other institutions and forums for decision-making.

The proposal has four broad components:

- Rationalising sub-regional inter-governmental organisations;
- Developing regional guidelines for spatial planning and land management and use;
- Proposing regional management of selected infrastructure and services and regional regulation of certain privatised sectors;
- Promoting a regional approach to development through local communities and grassroots actors and better management of cross-border areas.

### **3.2. Issues for Discussion and Agreement**

#### ***i. Rationalising sub-regional IGOs***

The need to rationalise sub-regional IGOs has been on the table for many years with little apparent progress. The GMAP is proposing a process for developing an approach and then lobbying with heads of state and other regional decision-makers to mobilise the necessary political momentum to move forward. In more general terms the GMAP proposes a process for reforming IGOs based on the following: (1) Documenting overlapping mandates and functions; (2) Assessing the effectiveness and credibility of IGOs in fulfilling their mandates and functions (3) Examining the financial costs of each IGO including both regional and external funding sources.

The GMAP is using the Bamako Meetings as a test case for its capacity to move towards more efficiency in regional IGOs. In the context of the CILSS, it is proposing to refocus this sub-regional organisation on its original mandate in the areas of food security, natural resources management including fighting desertification and to use the CILSS Secretariat's valuable expertise across the West African region.

- ▶ Some questions have been raised about the political will both within the region and among the donor community to support such a process. For example, it is not clear whether donors would be prepared to adjust their financing to IGOs to take account of the reform process. It also is not yet clear whether the countries of the sub-region are willing to demonstrate their support to essential IGOs by clearing their arrears to these institutions. Is it reasonable to assume that operating expenditures of IGOs should be covered by member states with donor financing being allocated to cover regional investments or strategic studies?

*ii. Developing regional guidelines for spatial planning and land management and use*

The record of regional co-operation in terms of facilitating cost-efficient land management and use is quite modest. IGOs have not been active in supporting their member states to develop cost-effective amenities which could help improve the competitiveness of the region as a whole. Donor funding for such studies has been available largely at the national level. Nevertheless, it is widely recognised that major breakthroughs in dealing with certain development challenges would have to be made on a regional basis. In terms of infrastructure for transport, energy and telecommunications regional economies of scale are vital to achieving relative comparative advantages in international markets. The burden of significant investment costs also needs to be spread over a number of countries of the region in order to be manageable.

Appropriate land management and use can also facilitate the freer flow of goods and services in the region. When migration is open then poorer segments of the population tend to migrate to areas where amenities are better developed. The GMAP is proposing a process focussed on the following: (1) Defining economic solidarity zones in the region; (2) Developing the major river basins in the region; (3) Correcting regional disparities in infrastructure and the quality of human capital and (4) Managing the region's natural resources (i.e. diamonds, oil, migration) for regional prosperity.

- ▶ Some issues for discussion include the willingness of national governments to agree to regional investments that may not necessarily bring immediate national gains and to undertake regional prospective studies to provide the underpinning for the GMAP approach. The GMAP intends to co-operate with a project financed by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Land Use Planning and Management in West and Central Africa. It also will present the work and findings of the Municipal Development Program based in Cotonou to ECOWAS officials and heads of state so that they can contribute to this process. These proposals may appear to be out of phase with some donor approaches based exclusively on the private sector and market forces. The GMAP is asking for donor support nonetheless.

*iii. Proposing regional management of selected infrastructure and services and regional regulation of certain privatised sectors*

The GMAP is proposing the creation of a regional management body for railway infrastructure. The justification involves the large amounts of investment that would be required to develop a viable regional railway system including the need to change the rails and electrify the network. The case is also made for a regional and collective management of certain institutions of higher education and specialised technical

training in order to ensure that they help foster the creation of networks that contribute to West Africa's capacity to participate in international scientific debates.

Based on the critical role of certain airports and ports in the regional integration process — the fact that they have to a large extent been privatised and cannot be viable based on national markets alone — the GMAP makes the case for placing them under the supervision of a regional authority mandated to promote complementarities that will serve the objective of achieving financial viability.

- ▶ Questions have been raised about the risk of falling back into the problems associated with too much public intervention in the management of infrastructure and services. Nevertheless, it is clear that privatised monopolies do not tend to be more responsive to public interest than public monopolies and that financial viability may require regional market strategies. The need for some type of effective regulatory framework for privatised infrastructure is also widely accepted. The issue remains of how to implement this.

*iv. Promoting a regional approach to development through local communities and grassroots actors and better management of cross-border areas*

Based on current figures the regional economy is concentrated in three countries: Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Together they account for 64 per cent of the population and 67 per cent of the economy. Promoting a regional approach through local communities and grassroots actors is seen as a way of moving towards a more balanced type of regional development with special focus on the poorer areas of West Africa. The GMAP proposes to concentrate on three urbanised zones and their surrounding rural areas:

- The Sahelian basin from the Cap-Vert peninsula to Lake Chad. This area is concentrated in cities such as Dakar, Bamako, Ouagadougou, Niamey and the Hausa cities of northern Nigeria;
- The Gulf of Benin organised around the cities of Abidjan, Accra, Lome, Cotonou and the Yoruba and Ibo cities of Nigeria;
- The intermediate zone between the above two basins and between the Sahelian savannah and Guinean forest areas. This area has been a crossroads for regional trade and migration.

Taking into account the characteristics of local communities at the regional level will facilitate the development of local actors around their agendas which tend to focus on practical issues related to linking-up local markets and promoting trade opportunities among regions.

In terms of the management of cross-border areas, the GMAP is proposing to build on the realities of these "cross-border countries" or "national peripheries" with dynamic markets some of which have become autonomous free-zones and areas of substantial migration. The objective is to promote cross-border projects that help structure these areas and take into account the views of local actors including those in the informal sector.

The GMAP is proposing to join the current collaborative work of the Club du Sahel Secretariat and the Municipal Development Program in association with the West Africa Enterprise Network and newly-federated farmers' organisations to provide an essential link with national-level decision-makers and on-going decentralisation processes led from the centre.

- ▶ Issues for discussion include the willingness of national governments to promote the development of cross-border regions which may be perceived as weakening

nation states and the willingness of the donor community to invest substantial funds in developing cross-border regional development. Can a regional approach of this kind help to bring the informal sector into the fiscal net so that it contributes to the costs of building infrastructure that should improve its competitiveness?

- ▶ As a means of implementing the proposals set out above the GMAP is making the case for the establishment of substantial regional funds to carry out some of the heaviest investments in the area of infrastructure and regional centres of learning.

#### 4. Sahel 21

##### 4.1. *Proposal: A Strategic Framework for Sustainable Food Security in the Context of Poverty Reduction*

Despite improved climatic conditions over the last fifteen years with significant increases in foodcrop production, food insecurity remains the daily concern of a large share of the population in the Sahel, about 40 per cent. Food insecurity especially affects vulnerable groups: women, children and rural households in dry land areas, households headed by women in urban and rural areas ... Food insecurity is both a result of poverty and a major constraint to development. Increasing urbanisation in the Sahel and the lack of diversified sources of income in rural areas means that today the question of food security is just as much one of access (due to lack of purchasing power, dysfunctioning markets and lack of infrastructure) as one of supply of agricultural products.

The strategic framework is based on the premise that it is possible to ensure food security for all Sahelians, despite population growth and urbanisation, by relying primarily on the sub-region's resources and developing economic and physical complementarities with the other countries in Central and West Africa.

The general document that was prepared and has been discussed at various occasions sets out the diagnosis of food insecurity in the sub-region as well as the strategic directions that have been agreed. There is no need to repeat them here. However, the proposals made in the strategic framework imply quite a radical change in methods at several levels that need to be discussed in an objective manner with the countries and the international community based on joint commitments.

- **At the level of strategy formulation from local to national and sub-regional through a real culture of consultation and negotiation.** Food security has suffered for too long from a doubly deficient approach: at the institutional level, that approach has focussed essentially on the national level and on governments. In terms of sectoral content, the approach has focussed on technical and agricultural aspects. A four-pronged evolution is now required: more decentralisation, more regional co-operation, more involvement of socio-economic actors and more coherence among broad macro-economic and sector policies.
- **At the sub-regional level.** The diagnosis set out in the general document shows that effective co-operation among IGOs is a pre-requisite to responding to the expectations of Sahelians with respect to food security. Several important aspects developed in the strategic framework are the responsibility of other IGOs and should not be dealt with by the CILSS (conflict prevention, harmonisation of macro-economic frameworks ...). But this would require strong political leadership to ensure that the mandates and roles of each of the main IGOs concerned is fulfilled on a consistent and transparent basis with respect to the challenges of food security. This is an important responsibility for Heads of State and governments.

- **At the level of the strategic positioning and programmes of the CILSS.** Co-ordinating such a strategic framework cannot just be an additional programme for the CILSS. On the contrary, this should provide an opportunity to develop the organisation's competencies and co-operation among countries in core areas (food security and natural resources management) by reorganising and restructuring technical programmes (research, information, policy dialogue, technical support...) so that they respond to the main questions raised in the strategic framework.
- **At the level of dialogue between the sub-region and the international community.** The diagnosis emphasises the importance of respecting the choices made by Sahelians and of focussing dialogue around these choices. Economic liberalisation which remains the dogma, nevertheless requires nuances in two respects: the modalities for integrating into and "cleaning up" the global economy and for development co-operation programmes. This type of dialogue will take time with the sole objective of agreeing on viable programmes. Even if the objectives in the strategic framework will require substantial financial commitments, a good deal can be achieved through better local resource mobilisation. The real question is whether the international community is prepared to enter negotiations at the infra-national, national or sub-regional levels to facilitate the reaching of serious compromises among the actors so that new forms of multi-actor and multi-sector governance have a real opportunity to emerge. All of this requires time, resources and trust.

#### 4.2. *Issues for Discussion and Agreement*

- Do governments and the international community share the objective defined in the strategic framework for food security in the context of poverty reduction and do they agree to put food security at the centre of the agenda? Are governments prepared to integrate this priority into their budgetary choices? Are donor agencies willing to support this priority and to develop financing instruments that really strengthen Sahelian leadership in defining priorities, allocating resources and co-ordinating activities?
- Do governments and the international community agree on the ten principles<sup>2</sup> defined and developed in the strategic framework. These principles would substantially transform the nature of public action, of co-ordinating mechanisms among actors, of relations with donors and of how responsibility is taken... and are they ready to accept the consequences, in particular:
  - When supporting consultation and negotiation processes?
  - When financing programmes: national and sub-regional multi-donor round tables, common funds, joint procedures for accounting for resources? Are governments ready to promote multi-actor steering groups for food security strategies, to negotiate outcome indicators and to ensure transparency in resource use?
- Do governments and donor agencies agree that the co-ordinating body of the strategic framework for food security should be co-chaired by CILSS and ECOWAS, and include the various IGOs and networks of socio-professional actors as well as donors? Do they agree that this should provide the main framework for sub-regional discussions on food security?
- Are governments and donor agencies prepared to support the CILSS with the restructuring necessary for it to co-ordinate the sub-regional strategic framework? Are donor agencies amenable to co-ordination and a common approach to these reforms?

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2. See *Sahel 21: Cadre stratégique de sécurité alimentaire durable dans une perspective de lutte contre la pauvreté au Sahel*, document provisoire soumis au 2ème Forum des sociétés sahéniennes, 13-14 novembre 2000, p. 61.



- Do governments and donor agencies agree on the importance of integrating food security questions into international trade negotiations, and, in particular, to prepare WTO negotiations and negotiations with the EU on Regional Economic Partnership Agreements in this context?

## **5. Aid Reform**

### **5.1. Proposal**

The GMAP would like to focus on a limited number of concrete steps that could help the region initiate a process for improving the impact of development co-operation and local ownership and management of development resources. The objective of the proposal is to progressively build-up involvement of aid managers and stakeholders in the region so that the initiatives for improving the quality and relevance of aid can progressively come from them. In order to promote such change the demand for greater aid impact would need to come from the stakeholders.

The GMAP would like to focus on two broad types of concrete actions which are not necessarily mutually exclusive:

- The first type involves strengthening the knowledge base for regional discussions and networking on aid practices through better documentation of actual practices and the organisation of thematic debates around questions such as aid effectiveness and the quality of local aid management including compliance with international standards of accountability.
- The second type of action involves enhancing the capacity of the region to participate actively in international debates on development co-operation. The objective here is to alter the current situation where development co-operation discussions appear to be primarily a donor concern.

### **5.2. Issues for Discussion and Agreement**

#### ***i. Strengthening the knowledge base and networking on aid practices in the region***

Four countries of the sub-region have expressed specific interest in strengthening the knowledge base and networking on aid practices. They are: Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali and Senegal. The GMAP would like to propose the establishment of an aid managers' network as a means of building the regional knowledge base on aid practices and using the exchange of experiences as a mechanism for improving aid practices and procedures. The first step would be to document and organise debates on the following illustrative list of themes:

- Mapping aid flows and measuring intermediation costs and aid impact;
- Establishing an inventory of good field practices of donor co-ordination in selected sectors and programmes;
- Documenting innovative approaches to conditionality and the empirical relationship between conditionality and impact, if any;
- Developing and monitoring the application of acceptable standards for financial management and procurement;
- Improving local aid management capacities in conjunction with ACBF.

Through the Club du Sahel Secretariat's auspices there have already been some experimentation and monitoring of innovative aid practices. These include: follow-up to the Mali Aid Review conducted by the DAC and UNDP, a process of improving coherence of national sustainable development strategies in Burkina Faso under a task force of the DAC Working Party on Development Co-operation and Environment, work on the mapping of aid flows in Mali in conjunction with the Development Co-operation Directorate of the OECD.

- ▶ The results of such experimentation are mixed and show that the process of changing attitudes and practices on the ground is a difficult and probably a lengthy one. Participants may wish to discuss the lessons learned from these mixed results. In the case of the Mali Aid Reform process, the issue of harmonisation of donors' procedures regarding public procurement contracts should be studied from the standpoint of the beneficiary country's assertion of ownership over aid programmes, in accordance with the stated goals of the donors themselves. A presentation of this issue will be given drawing attention to the challenges ahead. A note on the status of the Mali Aid Reform will be distributed.
  
- ▶ The GMAP proposes to lend political and lobbying support so that the results of experimentation have more visibility and lead to the countries of the region accepting greater responsibility for managing development co-operation. The GMAP is also asking development co-operation agencies to express their interest in participating and supporting this type of action. Even those agencies not directly involved should agree to provide the information necessary to undertake the actions listed above.

*ii. Enhancing the capacity of the region to participate in international debates on development co-operation*

Currently the low level of African participation in international debates is a constraint to reaching consensus on ways to move forward and achieving real progress. The process of changing the status quo has a number of dimensions with the same objective of widening access to relevant information (concept papers, aid evaluations, reports etc.) and drawing those most directly concerned by results into discussions on possible solutions.

The GMAP is proposing a number of actions: (1) to develop a south-south exchange of information on aid practices, procedures, modalities; (2) to conduct debates open to the general public on development co-operation targeting, in particular, interested civil society and private sector networks and (3) to develop accessible information systems for a wide range of partners and stakeholders interested in development co-operation.

The above actions are mainly dependent on the GMAP and other actors in the region. Donors can help by providing technical and financial resources as required and agreeing to take into account the analyses and views expressed in the course of these south-south consultations.

At present the donors control access to most of the international forums that discuss aid modalities and effectiveness such as the Special Partnership for Africa and the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD.

The GMAP is asking donors, based on their membership in these forums outside the Club du Sahel, to push in favour of opening up certain discussions to the south and agreeing that local donor field representatives be allowed the time and encouraged to participate in some of the regional debates on

development co-operation. They could also participate selectively in meetings of the regional aid managers' network.

- ▶ The question is the value added of opening-up international forums and the need to find an appropriate balance between opportunities for donors to meet among themselves, developing countries to meet among themselves and bringing the two groups together. Are donors willing to use their clout in the DAC and SPA to find such opportunities? Are countries in the region willing to invest the time to conduct informed discussions with donors on key issues?

**List of documents for this meeting, also available on OLIS in English and French**

- SAH/GMAP(2000)19* Aid Reform: Improving Development Aid Approaches and Practices  
*SAH/GMAP(2000)20* Regional Integration

**List of documents for this meeting in English and French and not available on OLIS**

- Sahel 21* Sustainable Food Security Strategy Paper with a View to Reducing Poverty in the Sahel — Background Document, GMAP 2-4 October 2000
- Sahel 21* Cadre stratégique de sécurité alimentaire durable dans une perspective de lutte contre la pauvreté au Sahel. Principales orientations : implications sur la réforme institutionnelle, la coopération régionale et la réforme de l'aide (French Only)
- Sahel 21* Cadre stratégique de sécurité alimentaire durable dans une perspective de lutte contre la pauvreté au Sahel — document provisoire soumis au 2ème Forum des sociétés sahéliennes, 13-14 novembre 2000 (French Only)