

**STATEMENT ON THE MINISTERIAL MEETING ON THE
REPORT OF THE JOINT UNITED NATIONS- ECOWAS FACT
FINDING TEAM ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES
SURROUNDING THE DEATHS AND DISAPPEARANCES OF
GHANAIAN NATIONALS IN 2005**

On August 14, 2008, the joint UN-ECOWAS Fact-Finding Team was established at the request of the Governments of The Gambia and Ghana to facilitate efforts by both Governments to bring about the peaceful resolution of the above-mentioned matters consistent with the principles of justice, and respect for human rights and human dignity.

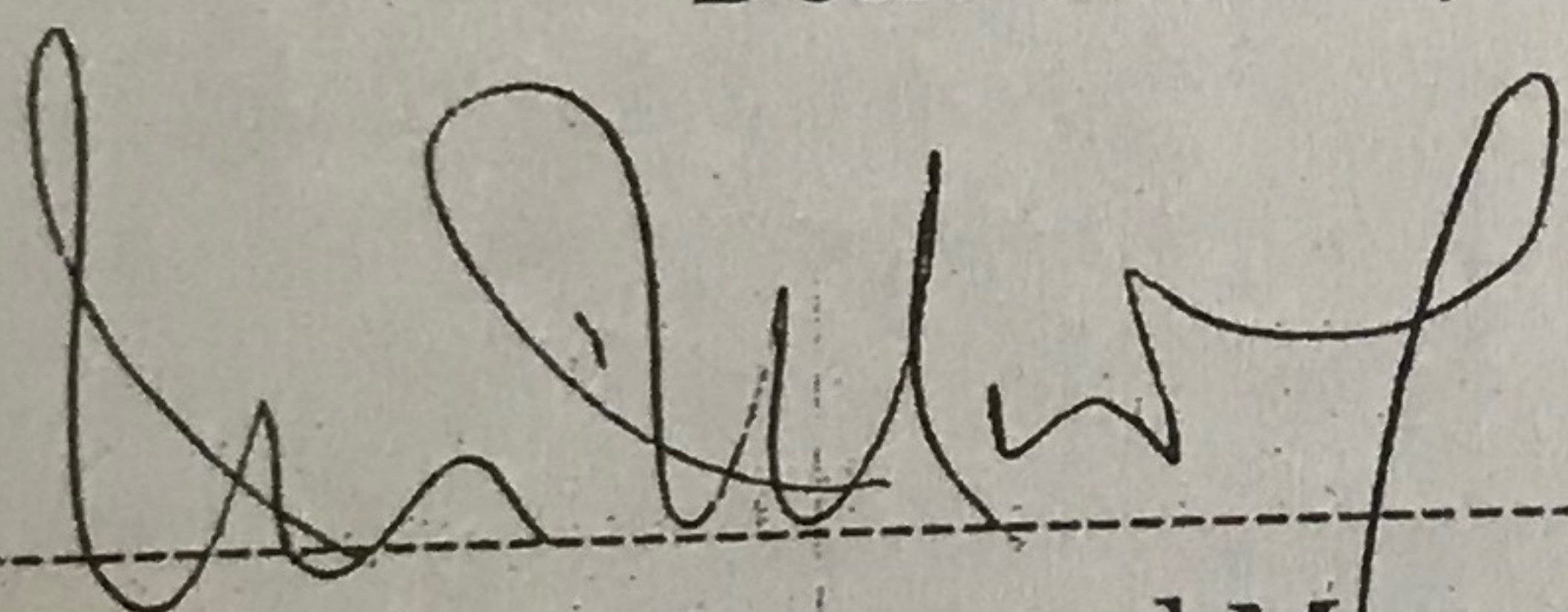
On May 11, 2009, delegations from the two countries, represented by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior and Justice of The Gambia and Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Interior of Ghana met at the Headquarters of the ECOWAS Commission, Abuja, under the facilitation of the UN and ECOWAS. Following a review and discussions on the findings of the Fact-Finding Team, the Governments of Ghana and the Gambia re-affirmed their commitment to strengthen their traditionally cordial bilateral relations and agreed to the following:

- Both Governments extended their condolences to the families of those confirmed dead. They agreed that the two Governments would cooperate in the exhumation and repatriation of the bodies to their families in Ghana so that they would be given befitting traditional burials.
- Consistent with the findings of the Fact-Finding Team, the two parties acknowledged that the Government of The Gambia is not directly or indirectly complicit in the deaths and disappearances of the Ghanaian nationals concerned. Nonetheless, the Gambian Government agreed to make contributions to the families of the six Ghanaians found dead in its territory, in conformity with African traditional values shared by both countries.

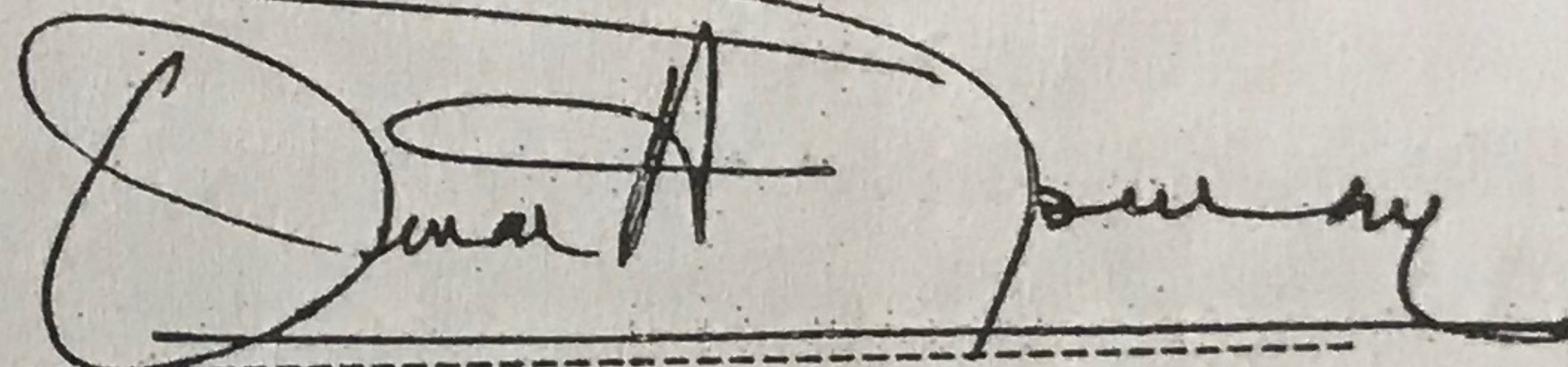
- Both sides pledged to pursue, through all available means, the arrests and prosecution of all those involved in the deaths and disappearances of the Ghanaians concerned, and other ECOWAS nationals, especially those identified as culprits in the report. Both countries agreed also to follow up on any future leads in the case of those suspected missing.
- In recognition of the discovery that these Ghanaians and other ECOWAS nationals were victims of a human trafficking scam, and because of the regional dimension of the problem, both Governments called on ECOWAS Member States to intensify efforts to identify and punish known traffickers with the support of the international community.

The two Governments commend the facilitation of the UN and ECOWAS and the work of the Fact-Finding Team. They express optimism that the findings of the report and the implementation of the decisions of their meeting will help to restore and strengthen the traditionally cordial bilateral relations between the two countries.

Done at Sirte, this 2nd day of July, 2009

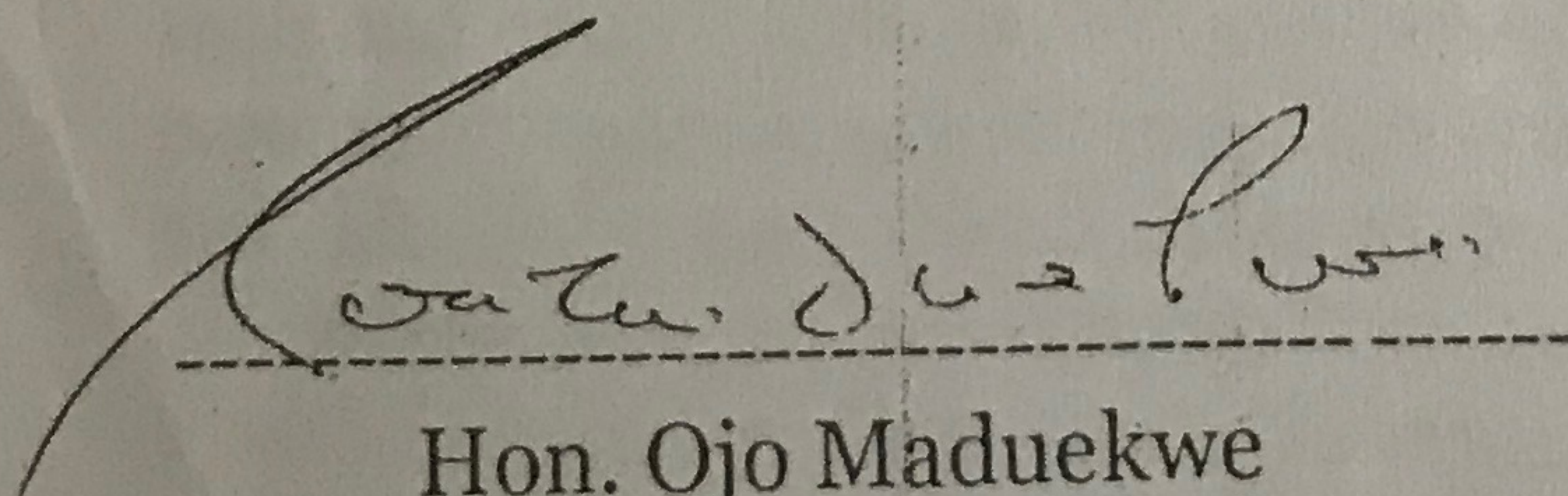


Hon. Alhaji Muhammad Mumuni
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Republic of Ghana

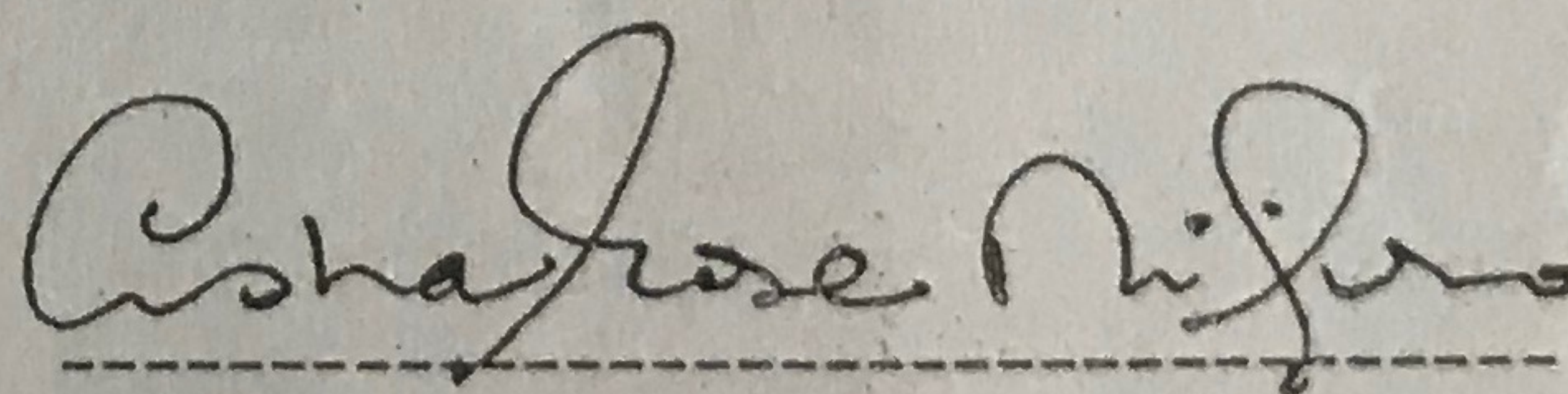


Hon. (Dr) Omar Alieu Touray
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Republic of The Gambia

Witnessed by:



Hon. Ojo Maduekwe
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Nigeria
Chairman,
ECOWAS Council of Ministers



Hon. Asha-Rose Migiro
Deputy Secretary General,
United Nations