

BORDERLESS 2018



**Efficient Corridor
Management For Improved
Trade And Transport**

9th -11th May 2018 @ Azalai Salam Hotel - Bamako, Mali



FINAL REPORT

7th BORDERLESS ALLIANCE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Theme: “Effective corridor management to improve trade and transport in West Africa”

9 to 11 May 2017, Azalai Salam Hotel, Bamako



The 7th Annual Conference of Borderless Alliance - BORDERLESS 2018 took place from 9th to 11th May 2018, in the conference hall of the Azalai Salam Hotel in Bamako (Mali), on the theme: "Efficient Corridor Management to Improve Trade and Transport in West Africa ". Organized by the Executive Secretariat of Borderless Alliance in collaboration with the Malian Council of Shippers (CMC), the Technical Unit for Business Climate Reforms (CTRCA) and the Malian Council of Road Carriers (CMTR), this meeting brought together 150 private and public sector stakeholders from 15 countries, including: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Niger, Nigeria, Togo, Kenya, Cameroon, Guinea Conakry, South Africa, Great Britain and the United States of America. Technical and Financial Partners, namely USAID, GIZ-ECOWAS, the African Development Bank (AfDB), regional and sub-regional organizations such as ECOWAS and UEMOA also took part in the conference. Besides, several ministries (transport, trade, health, customs, police and gendarmerie) and companies from various sectors of activity were represented.

This report presents the work of the 7th Annual Conference and focuses on the following areas:

- Opening ceremony;
- Meeting proceedings and conclusions;
- General Assembly;
- Major recommendations;
- Closing ceremony.

I. Opening ceremony

The opening ceremony was chaired by Mrs. Seynabou DIOP TRAORE, Minister of Infrastructure and Equipment of Mali, and Acting Minister for Transport and Country Opening up. It was marked by six (06) speeches including the welcome address by the Mayor of Commune III of Bamako, a speech by the President of Borderless Alliance, messages of support from the Ambassador of the United States of America to Mali and the First Secretary of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany to Mali, an address by the UEMOA Commission and then the opening speech.

In his welcome address, Mr. Cheick Fanta Madi TRAORE, Mayor of Commune III of the city of Bamako, commended the holding of the conference. He expressed gratitude for his commune being chosen to host the event and underlined the importance of such an event for West Africa.

After the Mayor, Mr. Ousmane Babalaye DAOU, Chairman of the Executive Committee of Borderless Alliance, expressed gratitude to HE Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar KEITA, President of the Republic of Mali and the Government, for permitting the holding of the conference in Bamako. He then praised the achievements of Borderless Alliance in six years only, with the support of development partners who share the vision of the Alliance. While noting the relevance of the Borderless 2018 theme in the light of current debates in the region, the Chairman called on participants to contribute positively to the discussions and formulate concrete recommendations aiming to increase intra-community trade. He ended his speech by thanking the partners and sponsors who assisted with the organization of the conference.

His Excellency the Ambassador of the United States to Mali, Paul FOLMSBEE, for his part, emphasized the enormous economic potentialities of West Africa with, in particular, a growing per capita GDP and a middle class of over 70 million persons. He also recalled the urgent necessity to remove barriers to the free movement of goods in order to create favorable conditions for private investment and job creation. Considering Mali's strategic position, he also stressed the need to make corridors linking it to Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Burkina very competitive. The Representative of the United States Government also emphasized the need for collaboration between organizations such as Borderless Alliance, ECOWAS, Governments and the private sector to effectively tackle trade barriers in the region. Finally, Ambassador FOLMSBEE said how proud the United States are to be supporting Borderless Alliance since its creation and renewed their commitment with ECOWAS, UEMOA and the governments of the region for the creation of a regional common market.

The representative of the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Mali, Mr. André BUDICK, speaking fourth, praised the efforts of the Malian Government, through the CTRCA, for the improvement of business practice, through the establishment of a platform which provides information on import / export administrative procedures, capacity building for actors and proposals for simplification of customs procedures. He also acclaimed the good cooperation between his country and the partners in the region, including Borderless Alliance, through GIZ.

The Representative of the UEMOA Commission in Mali, Mr. Mamadou Moustapha BARO, welcomed the 7th Borderless Alliance Annual Conference in Bamako and, on behalf of the Chairman of the UEMOA Commission, he paid a fitting tribute to the President of the Republic of Mali for his relentless commitment to the process of regional integration. He then recalled his institution's initiatives in terms of corridor management, including the creation and management of eleven (11) corridors by Decision No. 39/2009 / CM / UEMOA of 17 December 2009 and the establishment of corridor management committees responsible for identifying barriers to traffic flow and providing solutions. He also announced the implementation of a Transport and Trade Facilitation Support Project to eliminate non-tariff barriers and improve the competitiveness of economies in the sub-region.

In opening the conference, the Minister of Infrastructure and Equipment of the Republic of Mali, Mrs. TRAORE Seynabou DIOP, on behalf of the President of the Republic, HE Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar KEITA thanked the officials of Borderless Alliance for choosing Bamako to host this conference. She emphasized that the theme of the 7th Borderless Alliance Annual Conference falls in line with the President's Social Emergencies Program, which includes the elimination of physical and non-physical barriers on road corridors. She also acknowledged the endeavors and priceless contribution of Borderless Alliance in supporting the efforts of governments to promote the free movement of persons and goods in West Africa. She therefore hoped that this conference would help pave the way for a harmonious development of means of transport and strengthen its institutional framework. Lastly, she expressed gratitude to development partners for their constant contribution to regional integration efforts in the sub region, and invited the public and private media to support Borderless Alliance in promoting its activities.

II. Meeting proceedings and conclusion

Before the actual start of the technical work, Borderless Alliance Executive Secretary Justin BAYILI reviewed the recommendations of the 2017 Borderless conference held in Ouagadougou. He also presented the main activities carried out by the Alliance during the year 2017. These activities focused on (i) Advocacy for the elimination of trade barriers; (ii) capacity building for cross-border trade actors and improved commercial information; (iii) road governance and transport; (iv) Membership; (v) Partnership with TFP and Regional Economic Communities (ECOWAS and UEMOA).

At the end of this presentation, discussions took place in plenary with four (4) panels:

- **Panel 1, which focused on "Development and Management of Corridors in the ECOWAS Area: Current situation and prospects"**, was an opportunity to present the strategy and the provisions underway to promote the development of corridors in the sub-region. Indeed, since 2017, the ECOWAS Commission with support from USAID prepared a strategy for the development and management of corridors which is still to be presented to the highest authorities of the region for assessment and validation. It should also be noted that in 2009, the UEMOA Commission too undertook initiatives for the establishment and management of corridors. During this panel, practical cases on the establishment and management of corridors were provided by the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Organization (ALCO) and the ProDAF (Family Farming Development Program), through three (3) presentations:
 - ECOWAS Corridors Management and Development Strategy by Dr. Amadou KONE, Consultant in Transport and International Trade;

- Presentation of the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor and its performance indicators by Mr. Edy K. ANTHONY, ALCO Transport Specialist;
 - Contribution of ProDAF to Regional Integration and Corridor Management to Improve Cross-Border Trade in Niger-Nigeria Agro-pastoral Products by Zazouli Dan Tata Mahamadou Siradja, ProDAF National Technical Assistant.
- **Panel 2 focused on "Best Practices in Corridor Management and the Role of the Private Sector"**. Successful experiences in East Africa were shared among participants, with particular emphasis on the role of the private sector in the design and implementation of economic infrastructure projects, to turn corridors into real centers of economic development and well-being for the populations along road corridors. Two (2) presentations were discussed with this panel:
- Operation and Achievements of the Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority, by Mr. Cezzi K. KANIONGA, Director of Private Sector Investment Promotion / NCTTA, Kenya;
 - Development of logistical infrastructure to facilitate the delivery of agro-silvo-pastoral products, by Mr. Abdou Yahouza, Deputy Senior Technical Advisor of the L4G Project, Mali.
- **Panel 3 discussed challenges related to "Facilitation of goods in transit: best practices"**. During this panel, cross-border trade stakeholders discussed transit challenges and shared some of the best practices provided for in the region's protocols / conventions and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Customs Organization (WCO) Agreements.

This panel had two (2) presentations, as listed below:

- The experience of the implementation of the Single ISRT Convention between Mali, Burkina Faso and Ghana, presented by Mr. Salihou GUIRO, Transport / Logistics Specialist and Expert in Trade Facilitation;
 - The experience of ECOWAS ISRT national guarantors, by Mr. YODA Emmanuel, President of the Association of ISRT National Guarantors and Deputy Director General of the CCI-BF in charge of Infrastructures and Sustainable Development.
- **Panel 4 "Review of the implementation of the Protocols Governing Regional Trade"**, made it possible to take stock of the community protocols and regulations adopted by the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions, with the view to implementing economic integration. Special emphasis has been placed on interconnections of

customs administrations' IT systems, community protocols related to Inter-State Road Transit (ISRT) and the axle load and gauge controls on means of transport.

This panel was steered by:

- Mr. Salifou TIEMTORE, Director of Customs at the ECOWAS Commission;
- Mrs. Rose TIEMOKO/KABRAN, Head of Division for External Trade at the UEMOA Commission; who discussed the regional vision of the institution.
- Mr. Ziad Hamoui, Executive Director of Tarzan Enterprise Ltd and President of the Borderless Alliance Ghana National Committee.

The discussions resulted in the voicing of several concerns including:

- Absence of Border Information Centers on all major corridors in the region;
- Lack of financial resources for the smooth functioning of the National Transport Facilitation and Transit Committees;
- Little knowledge of trade and transport texts and procedures among stakeholders;
- Lack of coordination between Customs, National Guarantors and the ECOWAS Commission in the implementation of the ISRT;
- Absence of coordination between the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions in the specific area of the creation and management of corridors;
- No concurrent implementation of Regulation 14 on axle load controls;
- Absence of a sanctions mechanism that could lead the various Member States to implement Community Protocols;
- Problem of uniformity of heavy goods vehicles in the community area;
- Lack of interconnection of customs IT systems in West Africa;
- Absence of an interface between tracking systems (satellite tracking or geolocation of goods);
- Isolated computerization of ports, border terminals and inland terminals ;
- Non implementation of ISRT Convention in all ECOWAS countries ;
- Absence of a solidarity fund to secure national guarantors;

- Manual guarantee system and non-integration of guarantee activities with a regional scope;
- Absence of an action plan involving the private sector in the design and implementation of economic and logistical infrastructure on the corridors;
- Lack of collective actions by the private sector to increase influence on community decisions;
- Absence of coordinated actions undertaken by technical and financial partners in the region;
- Obsolescence of some community protocols due to technological progress;

In view of these concerns, the below recommendations have been made.

III. Recommendations from deliberations

A- To Member States

- 1- The implementation of the single interstate road transit guarantee on the various corridors of the sub region;
- 2- The creation of a solidarity fund to secure national guarantees;
- 3- The provision of financial resources for the operation of the National Committees for Facilitation of Transport and Transit;
- 4- The harmonization of the interface of tracking systems, in case there is no unique regional tracking system;
- 5- The speeding up of the implementation of the interconnection of Customs IT Systems in West Africa ;
- 6- The acceleration of the approval process for cargo carriers as part of the full implementation of ISRT in the region;
- 7- The automation of the guarantee system and integration of guarantee activities with a regional scope;

- 8- The setting up of a small committee in each country to accelerate the implementation of ISRT;
- 9- The involvement of the private sector in the preparation and implementation of economic and logistical infrastructure on corridors.

B- *To the private sector*

- 10- The involvement of the private sector in the construction of logistical infrastructure on the corridors (car park, weighbridge ...);
- 11- A better organization of the private sector for greater influence on community decisions.

C- *To Regional Economic Communities*

- 12- An improved coordination between the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions, with a view to harmonizing their strategy for the development and management of corridors;
- 13- The interconnection of ports, border and inland terminals;
- 14- The organization of a meeting between Customs, National Guarantors and ECOWAS on the practical modalities of the implementation of ISRT;
- 15- The harmonization of initiatives and ongoing dialogue between various actors to resolve newly identified and existing difficulties;
- 16- The implementation through corridor approach resulting in the gradual implementation of the whole of ISRT;
- 17- The harmonization of corridor performance indicators in the sub-region

D- *To technical and financial partners*

- 18- The support to countries and Borderless Alliance in the various actions related to trade facilitation and transport in West Africa;
- 19- Periodic consultation between technical partners for a synergy of actions in the region.

E- To Borderless Alliance

- 20- Creation of Border Information Centers on all the main corridors and revitalization of existing ones;
- 21- Better coordination between Borderless Alliance's operational bodies (Executive Committee, National Committees and Executive Secretariat);
- 22- Capacity building for trade and transport stakeholders;
- 23- Facilitating dialogue between border communities, to turn borders into real integration tools;
- 24- Facilitating the implementation of the ISRT Convention, especially dialogue between National Guarantors;
- 25- Enabling arbitration of conflicting interests among shippers, carriers and countries on the implementation of Regulation 14;
- 26- Providing economic operators with relevant information on trade and transport procedures before they embark on business trips.

At end of the deliberations, the Executive Secretariat of Borderless Alliance was charged to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations.

IV- General Assembly

As usual, Borderless Alliance members took the opportunity of this Annual Conference to hold the Association's Annual General Meeting. In addition to the review and adoption of the activity report and the financial statements for the year 2017, the Assembly elected the members of the Executive Committee to manage its direction for the 2018-2020 period:

- Chairman: Mr. Jonas LAGO, Advisor in charge of Public Relations and Facilitation / Scanning Systems SA, Côte d'Ivoire
- 1st Vice-Chairman (in charge of resource mobilization) : Mr. Souley Mama YACOUBOU, CEO of TRAVCO Sarl, Benin
- 2nd Vice-Chairman (in charge of Membership): Olatayo Omidji, Chief/Strategic Planning of Nigeria Import and Export (NEXIM) Bank.

The General Assembly also approved Ghana's offer to host the 8th Annual Conference in Accra in 2019.

Detailed minutes will report on this General Assembly Meeting held on May 11, 2018.

V- Closing ceremony

The Closing ceremony of the conference chaired by Mr. Alkaidi Amar TOURE, Secretary General of the Ministry of Transport and Country opening up, was marked by:

- Presentation of the conclusions of the Conference;
- Votes of thanks from participants to the President of the Republic of Mali, the Government, the Minister of Transport, the media and sponsors, the CMC and the CTRCA and finally the Executive Committee of Borderless Alliance;
- Presentation and installation of the members of the new Executive Committee, followed by the word of thanks from the incoming Chairman, Mr. Jonas LAGO;
- Passing of the torch between the CMC and the President of Borderless Alliance Ghana National Committee, Mr. Ziad HAMOUI for the organization of the 2019 Borderless Conference ;
- In his appreciation speech and at the end of his term, President Ousmane Babalaye DAOU expressed his gratitude for the opportunity he was given to serve Borderless Alliance for two years. He reiterated his gratitude to the President of the Republic of Mali and his Government for the remarkable arrangements made to facilitate the sojourn of participants in the Conference. While congratulating the new Chairman of Borderless Alliance, he assured him of his willingness to support him in this difficult task.
- At the official closing ceremony, Mr. Alkaidi Amad TOURE, General Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, speaking on behalf of his Minister, congratulated the participants for their thoroughness in the deliberations. Their commitment resulted in fruitful debates and top quality recommendations whose implementation will support the efforts of governments and Regional Economic Communities (ECOWAS and UEMOA) for an increased regional integration for the benefit of the peoples of our respective countries. He declared the 7th Borderless Conference 2018 closed, while imploring the Almighty to provide Borderless Alliance the opportunity to hold many more annual conferences.

Done at Bamako, this 11th day of May 2018

The participants