

No. 9577

GUINEA, MALI, MAURITANIA AND SENEGAL

**Statute of the Organization of the Senegal Riparian States—
OERS. Signed at Labé on 24 March 1968**

Authentic text: French.

Registered by Senegal on 19 May 1969.

GUINÉE, MALI, MAURITANIE ET SÉNÉGAL

**Statut de l'Organisation des États Riverains du Sénégal —
O.E.R.S. Signé à Labé le 24 mars 1968**

Texte authentique: français.

Enregistré par le Sénégal le 19 mai 1969.

[TRANSLATION — TRADUCTION]

STATUTE¹ OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SENEGAL
RIPARIAN STATES—OERS

The Heads of State and Government of the countries bordering on the Senegal River,

Considering the fraternal ties and the common culture and civilization which unite the peoples of the Senegal riparian States, and their common aspirations for peace, progress and democracy,

Desiring to express their common determination to maintain and develop among their countries a strong system of co-operation and friendly relations based on complete equality and respect for their sovereignty and their respective fundamental options,

In conformity with the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and faithful to the Charter of the Organization of African Unity²;

Determined to promote and to intensify mutual co-operation and trade and to pursue their joint efforts towards economic, cultural and social development with a view to attaining harmonized regional development and strengthening the independence of their countries,

Resolved to establish and maintain among their States favourable conditions for the achievement of those goals and to overcome all obstacles to that end,

Conscious of the need to co-ordinate and harmonize for that purpose their development policies in the economic, social and cultural fields and to guide those policies as far as possible towards joint project,

Convinced of the need to establish initially sub-regional and subsequently regional economic units, as an objective approach to, and a realistic foundation for, African unity,

Considering the resolution of the Conference of Heads of the Senegal Riparian States held on 12 and 13 November 1965 at Nouakchott concerning the setting up of a regional sub-group, the said Heads of State and Government

¹ Came into force on 1 March 1969, date of notification to the signatory States of the deposit of the last instrument of ratification with the Government of Senegal, in accordance with articles 33 and 34.

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. 479, p. 39.

Have agreed to establish an inter-governmental organization entitled “Organization of the Senegal Riparian States”, the Statute of which consists of the following provisions:

CHAPTER I

PURPOSES OF THE OERS

Article 1

The Organization of the Senegal Riparian States, consisting of:

The Republic of Guinea,
The Republic of Mali,
The Islamic Republic of Mauritania,
The Republic of Senegal,

has as its purpose:

1. to promote mutual understanding and solidarity among the member States so as to create a permanently favourable climate for co-operation and for the maintenance of peaceful and friendly relations among the States;

2. to promote the development, economic independence and social progress of the member States by far-reaching co-operation, including the harmonization of their development plans and the co-ordination of their efforts to achieve concerted projects in the following fields:

- agriculture and animal husbandry,
- education, training and information,
- public health,
- industrial development,
- transport and telecommunications,
- trade,
- judicial co-operation and harmonization of civil and commercial legislation;

3. to promote and intensify trade and the movement of persons and goods among the member States;

4. to promote, in accordance with the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, the establishment of the West African Regional Group of States, with a view to implementing African unity.

Article 2

To attain the above-mentioned purposes, the Governments of the States members of the OERS solemnly undertake to seek joint and appropriate solutions to the problems raised by the present systems of trade, education, movement of goods and establishment of persons in the member States.

Article 3

The Governments of the member States undertake, in the absence of a common monetary zone or a free convertibility zone for their currency, to facilitate inter-State payments in order to develop trade among the member States.

Article 4

The Governments of the member States of OERS undertake to harmonize and bring more closely together their educational systems, with a view to standardizing the academic disciplines, the curricula, and the levels of recruitment and to establishing an equivalence between the diplomas awarded by the establishments of the member States of the regional sub-group.

Article 5

The Governments of the member States of the regional sub-group undertake to conclude a multinational convention on establishment.

CHAPTER II

ORGANS OF THE OERS

Article 6

The institutions of the OERS shall be:

- the Conference of Heads of State and Government;
- the Council of Ministers;
- the Inter-Parliamentary Commission.

The organs of the OERS under the jurisdiction of the Council of Ministers shall be:

- the Executive Secretariat of the OERS;
- the General Secretariat for the Development of the Senegal River Basin;
- the General Secretariat for Planning and Development;
- the General Secretariat for Educational, Cultural and Social Affairs;

and any other organs whose establishment may be deemed necessary to attain the purposes of the OERS.

Section I

THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

Article 7

The Conference of Heads of State and Government shall be the supreme authority of the Organization of the Senegal Riparian States.

Article 8

The Conference shall define the co-operation and development policy of the OERS. It shall take decisions concerning the general economic policy of the OERS and any other decision within its purview.

It shall consider and approve the recommendations of the Council of Ministers in accordance with the provisions of its rules of procedure.

Article 9

The Conference shall meet in regular session once a year, and in extraordinary session as required. It shall be convened by the current President of the OERS.

Article 10

Each member State shall have one vote.

Article 11

The Conference shall take its decisions by the unanimous vote of its members.

Article 12

The decisions adopted by the Conference shall be binding on the member States, which shall undertake to implement them.

Article 13

The Conference shall establish and adopt its rules of procedure; it shall approve those of the other institutions.

Section 2

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Article 14

The Council of Ministers of the OERS shall be composed of members of the Governments of the member States, or plenipotentiaries designated by the Governments of the Member States, having the rank and prerogatives of Ministers, three members being appointed for each State.

The Council shall meet twice a year in regular session; one of the sessions must precede the regular session of the Conference of Heads of State and Government. At the request of any member State, the Council shall meet in extraordinary session provided that all the other members of the OERS agree. It shall be convened by its current Chairman.

The agenda of an extraordinary session shall normally include only the matters for which it has been convened.

Article 15

The Council shall be essentially an institution for policy-making, execution and supervision.

Within the context of the general policy defined by the Conference of Heads of State and Government, the Council shall be responsible for promoting all action aimed at attaining the goals defined in articles 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the present Statute.

It shall be assisted in the performance of its work by the technical and economic organs mentioned in Article 6.

Article 16

The Council shall prepare and propose the general policy measures concerning development and co-operation among the member States of the OERS.

Article 17

The Council of Ministers shall be responsible to the Conference of Heads of State and Government.

It shall be entrusted with the preparation of the Conference of Heads of State and Government. It shall take cognizance of any matter referred to it by the Conference and shall implement the policy of economic, financial, educational, cultural and social co-operation, in accordance with the general policy defined by the Conference of Heads of State and Government and with the spirit of the fundamental goals defined in chapter I, articles 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the present Statute.

Article 18

The Council shall take its decision by a unanimous vote of the member States.

Section 3

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION

Article 19

The Inter-Parliamentary Commission of the OERS shall consist of five members of parliament for each member State. It shall supervise the activities of the OERS and shall inform the National Assemblies of the member States of them. It shall have consultative status with the Council of Ministers of the OERS.

It shall meet twice a year and shall be convened by its current Chairman.

Article 20

The OERS shall have an Executive Secretariat with headquarters at Dakar (Republic of Senegal).

Article 21

The organs of the OERS shall be placed under the authority of an Executive Secretary.

Article 22

The Executive Secretary shall, under the authority of the current Chairman of the Council of Ministers, direct the administrative operation of the

OERS. He shall supervise the activities of the General Secretaries and co-ordinate their work. He shall be the controller of the general budget of the Organization.

Article 23

The General Secretariat for the Development of the Senegal River Basin shall be directed by a General Secretary entrusted with the promotion and co-ordination of studies and development operations in respect of the Senegal River Basin, in accordance with the International Convention of 26 July 1963 concerning general development and the International Convention of 6 February 1964 concerning the status of the Senegal River.

Amendments to the above-mentioned international conventions shall replace the Council of Ministers of the Inter-Governmental Committee for the Development of the Senegal River Basin by the Council of Ministers of the OERS.

Article 24

The General Secretariat for Planning and Development shall be directed by a General Secretary responsible for studies designed to harmonize and co-ordinate the national development plans of the States, the preparation of a joint programme of economic integration and its implementation.

Article 25

The General Secretariat for Educational, Social and Cultural Affairs shall be directed by a General Secretary responsible for studies designed to harmonize and co-ordinate educational, cultural and social affairs, the preparation of the relevant programmes of co-operation and their implementation.

Article 26

The Executive Secretary and the General Secretaries shall be appointed for a period of three years by the Council of Ministers. Their appointments shall be terminated under the same conditions.

Article 27

The General Secretaries shall be under the authority of the Executive Secretary who is responsible to the Council of Ministers. They shall be responsible for the implementation of the programmes assigned to the Executive Secretary by the Council of Ministers. Each Secretary-General shall be the sub-controller of the budget section covering his own activities.

CHAPTER III

BUDGET

Article 28

The budgets of the institutions and organs of the OERS shall be prepared by the Executive Secretary and by the General Secretaries of the OERS. They shall be adopted by the Council of Ministers.

Article 29

They shall be financed by contributions from the member States, as decided by the Conference of Heads of State and Government upon the proposal of the Council of Ministers.

The member States shall undertake to pay their contributions at the dates stipulated.

CHAPTER IV

STAFF

Article 30

The staff of the organs of the OERS shall be recruited without any distinction of sex, religion or nationality, from among Africans as a priority, and preferably from nationals of the Senegal riparian States.

Article 31

A special regulation laid down by the Council of Ministers shall define in detail the rights and duties of the staff of organs of the OERS.

CHAPTER V

MISCELLANEOUS

Article 32

The present statute shall be ratified or adopted by the signatory States in accordance with their respective constitutional processes.

Article 33

The instruments of ratification or approval shall be deposited with the Government of the Republic of Senegal, which shall notify all signatories of each such deposit.

ENTRY INTO FORCE

Article 34

The present Statute shall enter into force after ratification or approval by all the signatory States.

INTERPRETATION

Article 35

Any dispute which may arise among the member States concerning the interpretation or the application of the present Statute shall be settled by negotiation, and, failing agreement, shall be submitted to the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration of the Organization of African Unity.

AMENDMENTS AND REVISION

Article 36

The present Statute may be amended or revised by the Conference of Heads of State and Government if any member State makes a written request to the current President of the OERS to that effect.

Article 37

The amendments or revision shall only take effect after ratification or approval by all the member States.

CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Article 38

Any State which desires to renounce its membership shall so inform the Conference of Heads of State and Government in writing, through the current President, who shall immediately notify the other member States.

The present Statute shall cease to apply with respect to that State at the end of one year from the date of notification, without prejudice to the obligations resulting from previous commitments.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF We, the Heads of State and Government of the riparian countries bordering on the river Senegal, have signed the present Agreement.

DONE at Labé on this twenty-fourth day of March 1968.

For the Republic of Guinea:

Amhed SÉKOU TOURÉ

For the Republic of Mali:

Modibo KEITA

For the Islamic Republic
of Mauritania:

Moktar OULD DADDAH

For the Republic
of Senegal:

Leopold Sedar SENGHOR