

PRESS RELEASE- #2025-01 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WACSO F RESTORES CONFIDENCE AND DEMONSTRATES MATURITY THROUGH INDEPENDENT AUDIT AND INVESTIGATION REPORTS PRESENTED AT ITS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ABUJA JANUARY 08TH 2025: The West African Civil Society Forum (WACSO F), Board of Directors chaired by barrister BUBA KHAN, has taken decisive steps to restore confidence and demonstrate its commitment to transparency and good governance. With the support of the Open Society Foundations, WACSO F commissioned an independent audit and investigation to examine the crisis that began in April 2022. During a restitution meeting on 27 December 2024 in DAKAR, SENEGAL and online, with more than 30 participants from more than 10 countries, the audit and investigation reports have been presented to members, partners, and stakeholders. The findings and recommendations will guide future actions.

The financial audit revealed that the financial situation of WACSO F is regular and fair, with no financial faults found in the management of operations and projects (with partners GPPAC, PLAN INTERNATIONAL and FORD FOUNDATION.) under the leadership of the General Secretary Mr. Komlan Messie. The investigation noted that, before the artificial crisis of April 2022, WACSO F was doing well with significant progress under the leadership of Mr. Komlan Messie, with several projects, worth over \$1.2 million with partners such as PLAN INTERNATIONAL, SAVE THE CHILDREN, GPPAC, FORD FOUNDATION.

The investigation revealed that the crisis was artificially created by 3 individuals from the former executive committee, composed of Mrs. Khady Fall Tall (Senegal), Mrs. Margaret Udoh (Nigeria), Mr. Dionisio Pereira (Cabo Verde), elected in 2016 for two years, who refused to leave office after the expiration of their term. These individuals, driven by greed and disrespect for the texts, used, with the help of individuals like Mrs. Ebele Agbata, Mr. Peter Imbur, Mr. Ko pep Dabugat, Mr. David Sanwo Olatunji and others, unacceptable xenophobic tactics, including brutality, intimidation and defamation, in an attempt to oust the General Secretary, Mr. Komlan Messie, in addition to human rights violations against Mr. Komlan Messie and the accountant Olumide Olomofe Abayomi. The investigation revealed the real motivations of one of the instigators of the crisis, **Mr. DIONISIO PEREIRA who wrote on May 15, 2024, "... I resumed my participation, in a very active manner, after being approached by a financial partner of WACSO F. For two years, together with some members of the Executive Committee and the Secretariat, we have been fighting against Komlan and recruiting Mr. KOPEP, ... Our team, ..., has not been able to accomplish the mission entrusted to it during our election. We are spending a lot of resources to do nothing useful for our people."**

The General Assembly approved the audit and investigation reports, and elected a new Board of Directors.

WACSO F is firmly committed to implementing regulatory, structural, institutional, organizational and operational reforms to avoid similar crises in the future. According to the Chairman of the Board of Directors (BoD) of WACSO F, Barrister BUBA KHAN, "This crisis is now behind us and we will work tirelessly to restore confidence in WACSO F and to promote the values of civil society". The coordinators and the Board renew their confidence in the Regional Executive Director, Mr. Komlan Messie and renew their commitment to transparency, accountability and good governance. WACSO F thanks OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS and, the members for their support. WACSO F renewed its call for the support of partners in the implementation of the recommended reforms in a process of continuous improvement.

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ABOUT THE WEST AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM (WACSO F)

With more than 1000 Member Organizations, the WEST AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM (WACSO F) is the umbrella network of the Civil Society in West Africa, covering 18 thematic areas, with representation in 15 countries of ECOWAS. WACSO F is the channel for institutionalized dialogue between civil society organizations and ECOWAS. WACSO F builds capacity, advocates, mobilizes civil society, engages in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies for a prosperous, stable and peaceful Africa. WACSO F is an excellent channel, a one-stop-shop for systematic engagement between institutions and civil society organizations, for impactful results. www.Wacsof-Foscao.Org