Your Excellency Eduardo dos Santos, President of the Republic of Angola and the current Chairman of the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellencies, Representative of Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellencies, Government dignitaries of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea,

Honourable Ministers

Executive Secretaries,

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and Heads of Diplomatic Missions, Consulates and international organisations,
Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour and a source of satisfaction for the people and the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to receive African personalities in this city of Sipopo, for the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the GGC to address and decide on important issues affecting peace and the harmonious development of the Member States of the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

First of all, let me express our warmest welcome to all the Heads of State and Government, Their Representatives, and Delegates to this Summit, and to wish them a good and happy stay to perform their work satisfactorily, while enjoying the best of Equatorial Guinea hospitality.

Excellencies
The Council of Ministers presented to us important issues on the cooperation amongst our States, the security and harmony of the Sub-Region, the integral development of our peoples and the rational exploitation of resources that divine providence has given us; matters that this Summit is called upon to discuss and proffer solutions that satisfy the interests of all.

Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

As it is known to all that the Gulf of Guinea Commission was created to coordinate the efforts of the Countries of the sub Region with the order
with the objectives of carrying out a rational exploitation of its resources, exchanging commercial activities, empowering training institutions of Member States for the defence and protection of these resources, developing joint and coordinated actions for these purposes and, in general, for the defence and security of our States, in case of threat.

At the present time, the difficult international situation, which result from direct and indirect effects of the economic crisis of the countries, the chain of terrorism, the use of mercenaries to destabilise countries, piracy, drug trafficking, cross-border crimes and other phenomena that affect the stability of the Gulf Region, are causes of great concern to our Governments and require that we take necessary measures to avoid these same dangers in the sub-region.

No country of the Gulf should consider itself free from these threats, which can spread without limits at any moment to all the States. Therefore, we should not remain indifferent beneath this alarming situation but should take into consideration our little dynamism in sub-regional policies, which requires revitalization in order to energise our organisation to be a vanguard against these phenomena.

Indeed, although the reports that have been submitted to us emphasize the work that our young regional institution has carried out since its inception, we are also aware of the different structural, operational and logistical problems, which have prevented it from achieving the results desired by our respective states.
On the other hand, we recognize the complex International mechanisms and difficult conditions in which the Gulf of Guinea Commission is carrying out its work, but this should not justify the little consideration shown by our States to fulfil their commitments and financial obligations to the Commission.

Without any doubt, our inadequate financial commitment continues to affect adversely the personality, the effectiveness, and the visibility of our organization.

With regard to the security of States, we would like to emphasize that the terrorist attacks in several Member States, the maritime piracy, drug trafficking and organized transnational crimes have increased in recent years.

These actions rendered vulnerable the basis of solidarity of our countries, restrict individuals and collective liberty and freedom, and hamper the exercise of democracy in our States.

There is therefore the need for a collective, concerted and coordinated action by all Member States of the Gulf of Guinea, under a hostile, worrying and complex scenario. For this reason, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea believes that the Commission of Gulf of Guinea must create a maritime surveillance and security body operating in each of its Member States to counter such acts that weaken security and stability in the area as well as to integrate more coastal States of the Gulf as Members of this organisation.

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

Equatorial Guinea feels happy by the way that the International community is seriously addressing the growing acts of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea in recent years. The recent Summits held successively in Benin and Cameroun this year, are a true testimony of the collective efforts deployed in this field by the international community, especially the United Nations, the African Union, ECCAS and ECOWAS. Therefore the Gulf Guinea Commission should strengthen its relations with these institutions to make common front to these challenges.

Those summits enabled us to share experiences on methods of eliminating piracy in the Gulf of Guinea region, proposing global, tangible, practical and durable solutions that will lead to the development and operation of a regional strategy to combat piracy and to maintain peace and security in the Gulf of Guinea, with the recent establishment of a regional Centre for coordination of operations in this area.

In this connection, let us call to mind the active collaboration for the effective implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2018 (2011) and 2039(2012) respectively, and the decisions taken in recent Summits of Heads of State and Government of the communities of Central and West Africa held in Yaoundé (Cameroon) on Peace and Security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Working together with a genuine spirit of compromise, solidarity, regional cooperation and regional integration can, without doubt, jointly
overcome the challenges encountered to date on our way towards achieving the objectives for which the Commission was created.

The Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is totally convinced that a strong and effective Commission of Gulf of Guinea, is the only way that our region has to overcome the type of problems that it is dealing with now, in order to ensure the well being of its peoples, and guarantee peace and security in the maritime and land spaces of the Gulf of Guinea.

On the other hand, the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has always been a valuable partner, willing and eager to work with all countries and their allies operating in the area, to fight against this criminality and ensure the safety of physical individuals and legal entities in West and Central Africa, as well as that of their operations in the open waters of the Gulf of Guinea.

Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

To conclude, the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea firmly believes that the recommendations and decisions emanating from the discussions and reflections of this Summit will fully respond to the wishes and aspirations of development and well-being of the Member States of the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

For the effective and dynamic work in the future of the Commission, an urgent review of the structure, its regulatory texts and the functional
Organogram of the Executive Secretariat is needed, in order to improve on them and to ensure that the Commission carries out its assigned duties in the face of the new challenges of the time.

In the interest of our peoples, I wish this Summit of the countries of Gulf of Guinea Commission a great success.

I therefore declare open the work of the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of Gulf of Guinea Commission.

Thank you very much.