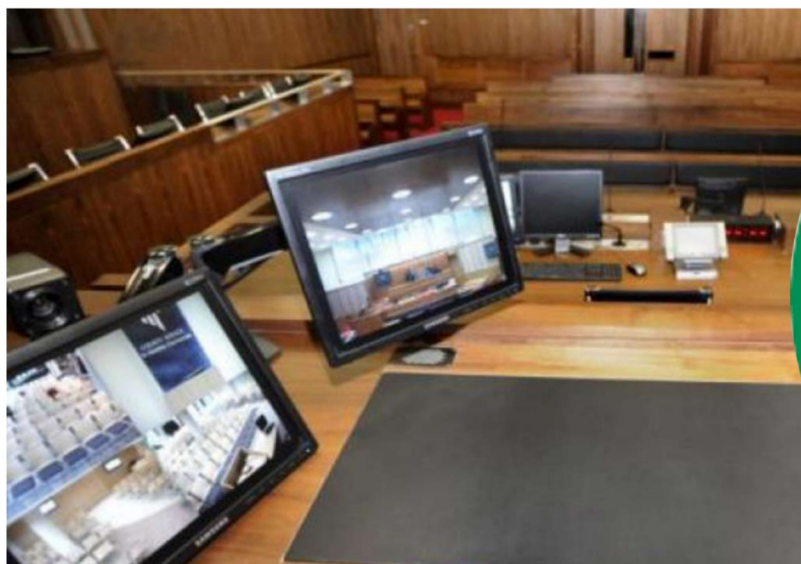


Virtual technology useful for court sessions

– ECOWAS Court president



Justice Edward Asante, President of the Community Court of Justice, has described virtual technology as a useful instrument in court sessions as it "allows for the participation of more people who ordinarily would have been denied the opportunity". Asante's submission is contained in a statement issued by the court in Abuja. According to him, virtual technology helps the court to save costs of hosting conferences and external court sessions. Asante was speaking at a meeting with officials of the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment in Banjul, The Gambia.

A delegation of the ECOWAS Court, led by its president, had visited to begin arrangements for the court's 2023 international conference, to be hosted in The Gambia. The delegation was received by the Deputy Permanent Secretary in the ministry, Mr Abdoulie Jammeh. Asante said the five-day visit would enable the team to begin arrangements for the provision of critical IT and other support infrastructure for a successful hybrid conference.' He said such arrangements would ensure virtual participation and the live transmission of not only the opening ceremony but also the sessions. "Even though a legacy of the COVID-19 epidemic when the Court had to integrate IT to enable it to undertake virtual court sessions, we have since successfully deployed this technology for previous international conferences in Lome and Praia as well as the external court

government's determination to provide the necessary support that would ensure a successful conference. The delegation later visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where they were received by Mr Omar Baldeh. Baldeh reassured the delegation of the government's commitment to contribute to the success of the conference. About 200 people, mainly jurists, members of the academia, and students would participate in the 2023 international conference of the court to be hosted by The Gambia. Also, six chief justices of member states, six attorney-generals, heads of ECOWAS Institutions, and heads of national units of ECOWAS member states, would be participating. The conference is expected to hold between May 22 and May 25, and will have as its theme "Ecowas Zero Tolerance for Unconstitutional Change of Government".



Hon. Justice Edward-Amoako-Asante
President, ECOWAS Court of Justice

The 2023 conference provides an opportunity for the court to address the issue of concern in the ECOWAS community legal landscape. This is particularly in two years of unconstitutional changes of government in Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso. It would also focus on the need for participatory democracy and constitutional order in all member states. In addition, participants would examine the linkages with the rule of law, and the duty of member states to respect, protect and fulfill human rights in their territories.