

**ECOWAS: THE CASE FOR POLITICAL INTEGRATION  
AS A PRELUDE TO  
ECONOMIC INTEGRATION IN WEST AFRICA**

by

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A thesis in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
**MASTER OF ARTS**

In

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

**Faculty of International Development Studies**

**Saint Mary's University**

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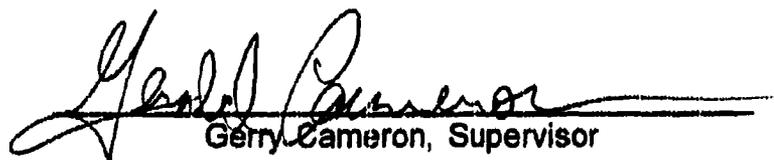
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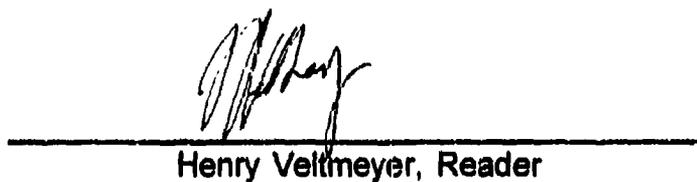


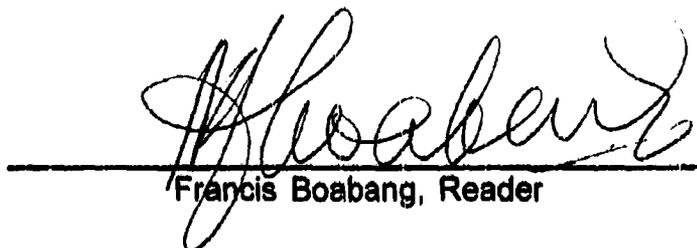
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Gerry Cameron, Supervisor

  
Henry Veltmeyer, Reader

  
Francis Boabang, Reader

Date: September 26, 1994

## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	i
Acknowledgement .....	ii
<b>Chapter One</b>	
1.0 Introduction .....	1
<b>Chapter Two</b>	
2.0 The Rationale and Ideological Framework for Analysis.....	14
2.1 The Rationale for This Thesis .....	14
2.2 Ideological Framework for Analysis .....	19
2.3 African International Relations .....	27
2.4 Summary .....	34
<b>Chapter Three</b>	
3.0 The Theory of Economic Integration .....	37
3.1 The Traditional Theory of Economic Integration.....	37
3.2 Effects of Economic Integration .....	43
3.3 Summary .....	47
<b>Chapter Four</b>	
4.0 The Evolution of Intra-Trade and ECOWAS.....	48
4.1 Introduction .....	48
4.2 Evolution of Intra-Trade in West Africa .....	49
4.3 The Emergence of ECOWAS .....	52

4.4	The Old ECOWAS Fundamental Objectives .....	55
4.5	The Aims of the Revised Treaty .....	59
4.6	The Objectives of the Treaty .....	60
4.7	The Structure of ECOWAS .....	64
4.8	Characteristics of ECOWAS Member-Countries' Economies .....	66
	a) Low Labour Productivity .....	68
	b) The Dominance of Agriculture in West Africa .....	73
	c) Capital Shortage and External Debt .....	78
	d) Limited Technical Progress .....	81
	e) High Population Growth Rate .....	83
	f) Foreign Trade-Oriented Economies .....	86
	g) Structural Adjustment Programs .....	92
4.9	Monetary Integration .....	95
4.10	Summary .....	96

## **Chapter Five**

5.0	Military and Authoritarian Regimes, Ethnicity, Political Instability and the Need for Political Integration among ECOWAS States.....	98
5.1	Introduction .....	98
5.2	Military Coups and Internal Political Instability in ECOWAS States .....	103
5.3	Inter-State Political Quagmires .....	135

<b>5.4 The Need for Political Cooperation Among ECOWAS</b>	
Member-Countries.....	142
<b>5.5 Evolution of Two Economic Integration Schemes: The European Community and the Latin American Free Trade Association.....</b>	<b>144</b>
a) The European Community .....	144
b) Latin American Free Trade Association .....	148
<b>5.6 Lessons for ECOWAS .....</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>5.7 Summary .....</b>	<b>155</b>

## **Chapter Six**

<b>6.0 Conclusion .....</b>	<b>158</b>
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## **Figures**

<b>1. Maps of West Africa and Africa .....</b>	<b>2</b>
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<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>169</b>
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## **Tables**

<b>No.</b>		<b>Page</b>
1.	ECOWAS Basic Economic Indicators as of 1990 .....	3
2.	Co-operative Organizations in West Africa .....	15
3.	ECOWAS Member-Countries' Gross Domestic Product at Constant Market Prices .....	67
4.	Labour Force in Agriculture, 1975-1992 (percentage) .....	71
5.	Major Agricultural Exports of Member-Countries.....	74
6.	Agricultural Food Production among Member- Countries, 1983-1991 .....	75
7.	Total External Debts of ECOWAS Member- Countries, 1970-1991 .....	81
8.	ECOWAS Mid-Year Population Estimates (in millions) 1983-1991 .....	85
9.	Foreign Investors and their Area(s) of Operation in West Africa from Colonial period to Independence .....	88
10.	ECOWAS Member-Countries Intra-Trade Against Trade with Industrialized Countries .....	91
11.	Member-Countries Successful/Attempted Coup d'etats from Post-Independence to July 1994 .....	106

i

**ECOWAS: THE CASE FOR POLITICAL INTEGRATION AS A PRELUDE  
TO ECONOMIC INTEGRATION IN WEST AFRICA**

Donatus E. Enang  
September 26, 1994

**Abstract**

The formation of the Economic Community of West African States in 1975 is nothing short of the realization of a long dream of the West African countries. In particular, the agreement by the Anglophone and Francophone countries to establish ECOWAS is a welcome development in itself in spite of their different colonial backgrounds. The aims, objectives, and protocols embodied in the ECOWAS Treaty are unique in the realization of their underdeveloped economies. These aims and objectives are only a fractional part of the economic integration process. Translating the aims and objectives into pragmatic terms, however, has been fraught with difficulties due to member-countries' ill-conceived macro-economic policies, the entrenchment of the subregion into the global economy, the proliferation of repressive military and authoritarian regimes most of which preclude democratic practices, inadequate use of productive resources, the debt crisis forcing ECOWAS states to restructure their economies through the IMF-imposed structural adjustment programs. Most states cannot even fulfil their avowed commitment to ECOWAS, thus impeding development initiatives envisaged. It is for these reasons, among others, that this thesis strongly advocates for political cooperation which will eventually lead to effective economic integration. After all, the establishment of the European Community and the Latin American Integration Association were both preceded by political cooperation which eventually evolved into economic integration respectively.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

To undertake a project such as this study without guidance is like paddling a canoe amid the ocean with bare hands. In fact, my thanks go to both Henry Veltmeyer and Francis Boabang both of who constantly provided me with advice when I needed some. Gerry Cameron, my supervisor, was by far my greatest asset! If I had the means I would make him a star for tolerating my frequent calls to seek advice, directions and resources for this project. I deeply appreciate his patience and support and his readiness to attend to my queries even when he was seriously involved in serious academic activities. Perhaps without Gerry who provided me the 'push,' I needed this thesis may not have been completed on time.

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Finally, my greatest thanks go to my wife, Josephine who frequently woke me at night to remind me about this project. Her understanding of the struggle between me and this work is well appreciated. Again, I thank Josephine immensely for her contribution from the inception of this work to completion, especially for the compilation of some of the data used in this thesis.

**ECOWAS: THE CASE FOR POLITICAL INTEGRATION AS A PRELUDE  
TO ECONOMIC INTEGRATION IN WEST AFRICA**

**CHAPTER ONE**

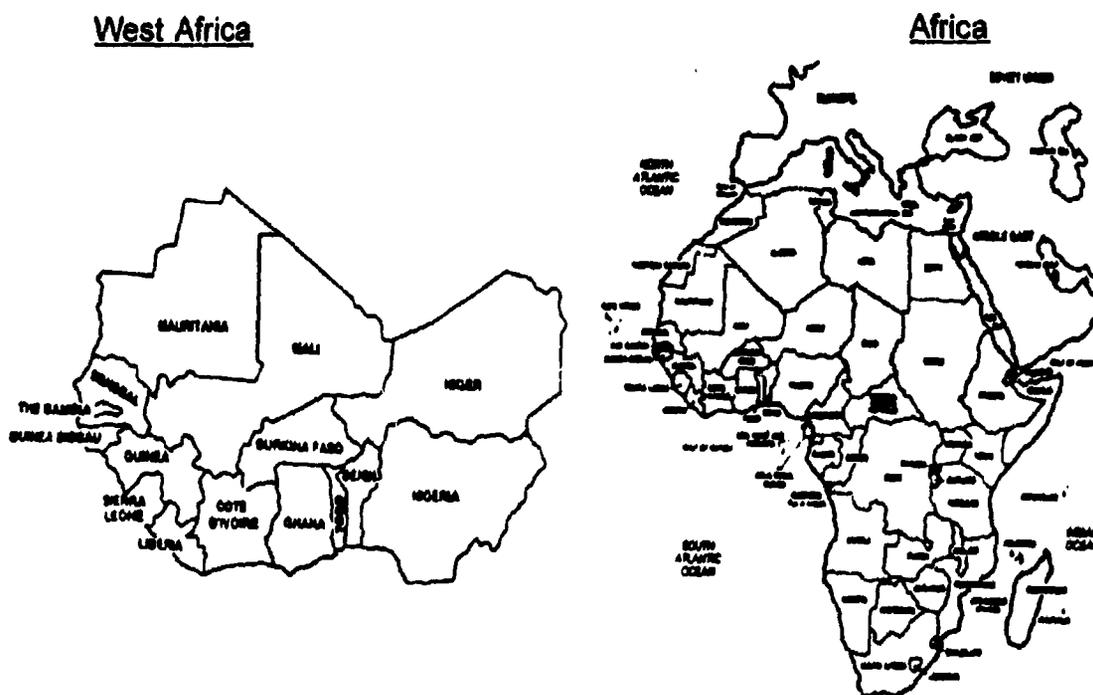
**1. INTRODUCTION**

In many West African countries, the weakness of the economy characterized by limited markets and low productivity, is widely known. Most countries cannot finance large-scale development programs which would result in large-scale economies. The majority of these countries fall within the Sahelian region and cannot afford the cost of financing gigantic dams or irrigation schemes without major outside help from the developed nations. Becoming independent in the 1960s did not necessarily mean severing ties with their respective European colonial powers. This is because, while these ties with the colonial powers, especially upon post-independence, provided some advantages for the newly independent nations, these advantages have diminished, and to some degree, turned disadvantageous as independence itself can be rightly claimed to have sowed the seed of subordination of former colonies to the imperial powers, which proved costly as the negative effects become more glaring particularly in the current economic climate of the 1990s.

Political independence across West Africa was welcomed with pomp and pageantry. Gaining political independence did not, however, mean severing economic ties with colonial masters and other Eastern and Western countries. In fact economic ties remained potent until a series of global recession set in, as

of the early 1970s. It was in light of this phenomenon that ways and means were sought to improve the economic conditions of countries of the subregion. One strategy was the formation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) - a subregional economic unit forming a geographical area of 6.25 million square kilometres, stretching from Mauritania to Niger and covering all coastal countries as far as Nigeria (see Figure 1 below). This subregion is widely known to be relatively backward in terms of economic development compared to other developing countries outside the continent of Africa.

**Figure 1, Maps of West Africa and Africa**



But while some of these countries have made modest progress since independence, others have lagged far behind. An indication of these countries'

backwardness is revealed from the fact that none of them fall within the high income bracket indicated in the World Bank's statistics. The subregion's basic economic indicator shown below is illustrative of this economic twist:

**Table 1: ECOWAS Basic Economic Indicators as of 1990**

COUNTRY	Population (millions) mid-1990	Land Area 0000's sq.km.	GNP per capita 1990 U.S.\$	Average Annual % Inflation Rate in 1990-1990 U.S.\$	Life Expectancy at Birth: 1990 Years	Adult Illiteracy rate %
Benin	4.7	113	360	1.9	50	77
Burkina Faso	7.5	274	330	4.5	48	82
Cape Verde	0.3	4	890	9.8	66	..
Gambia	0.8	11	260	13.8	44	73
Ghana	14.9	239	390	42.5	55	40
Guinea	5.7	246	440	..	43	76
Guinea Bissau	.9	36	180	54.4	39	64
Ivory Coast	11.9	322	750	2.3	55	46
Liberia	2.6	111	..	..	54	61
Mali	8.5	1240	270	3.0	48	68
Mauritania	2.0	1026	500	9.0	47	66
Niger	7.7	1267	310	2.9	45	72
Nigeria	115.5*	924	290*	17.7	52	49
Senegal	7.4	197	710	6.7	47	62
Sierra Leone	4.1	72	240	56.1	42	79
Togo	3.6	57	410	4.8	54	64

Source: The World Bank (1992) *World Development Report 1992, Development and the Environment*, Oxford University Press, London, pp. 216 & 285. \*It should be noted here that Nigeria's 1991 official (and generally accepted) population census was put at 85.6 million people. There is no doubt this will have effect on its per capita income.

As can be observed from Table 1, the gross national product (GNP) of these countries range from the lowest level of U.S.\$180 per capita for Guinea

Bissau to the highest level of U.S.\$890 per capita by mid-1990 for Cape Verde. Two other economies that have recorded progress, according to the above data, are both Ivory Coast and Senegal whose per capita income is U.S.\$750 and U.S.\$710 respectively. Even some of the countries that were economically viable and promising in productive capacity and reached a point that placed them in the middle income bracket, have in recent years, fallen to low-income economies. An example is Nigeria whose GNP per capita has drastically fallen from what it was in 1985 - U.S.\$970 - to a meagre level of U.S.\$290. This could be attributed to increasing population. On the other hand, the average annual inflation growth rate in percentage terms for the period 1980-1990 is more appalling for three countries - Ghana (42.5 percent), Guinea Bissau (54.4 percent) and Sierra Leone, with the highest level of 56.1 percent. The country with the lowest inflation rate Benin (1.9 percent). A word of caution is necessary here. The above figures are for the period between 1980-1990. If current estimates are made for each country, we are bound to see a completely different picture, perhaps the reverse of what we have here. By 1992 only three West African countries' economies - Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, and Senegal - fell in the middle income bracket. This backwardness is traceable to a number of factors, including macro-economic problems that bedeviled most countries of the subregion in the last two decades, and the absorption of the Third World economies into the global economy.

Large revenues received by governments from trade have in recent years

tended to disrupt, rather than promote, real economic development. Income (for example in Nigeria) has been wastefully spent on white elephant projects that yield no revenues necessary for development. And, as we can learn from Nigeria's experience, per capita income of most countries has dropped steeply from where it was high some years earlier. There are also distortions in the pricing system, coupled with declining prices of agricultural products, which have acted as a disincentive to large-scale investments in agriculture which, in the 1960s' contributed more than 70% of each countries' foreign exchange. This, to a large extent, has obstructed the development of agriculture and industrial growth. Effective development of these resources undoubtedly could have, contributed to the subregion's economic growth, assuring countries financial security, thus placing a limit to external borrowing and consequently, avoiding or lessening the present economic strangulation faced by most ECOWAS member-countries.

Yet, with the exception of the Sahelian countries, most ECOWAS member-countries are well endowed with a wide range of resources such as minerals (including oil), arable land for the cultivation of agricultural products for both domestic consumption and exports, and enormous human resources.

The formation of ECOWAS which was anticipated to bring about progress has made little impact on the economies of member-states because no serious commitment had been made to fulfil the ideals embodied in the ECOWAS' Treaty establishing the organization. As of 1993, a revised and expanded new Treaty

was put in place, the organization recognizing that the old Treaty did not meet the aspirations of member-states, or that member-states did not make the protocols embodied in the old treaty work.

Up to the mid-1970s', the economies of most of the West African countries worsened. By the mid-1980s' the economic performance of most countries remained low, and by 1991, the real gross domestic product, on average grew by only 1.9 per annum versus an average population growth rate of 2.8 percent; and this downward process led to a decline in per capita income for most member-countries by 1992. This weak growth, apart from those mentioned above, and as will be seen later, can be attributed to the declining agricultural production throughout West Africa, particularly in the Sahelian countries: Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal where frequent drought affected farmers' agricultural output.<sup>1</sup>

After independence, most of these countries depended largely on agricultural exports from which they derived considerable amount of foreign exchange, manufactured goods and services, and this spurred foreign investors to invest in agribusiness. By the 1980s, agricultural production drastically declined due in part to government policies and a foreign debt burden. Foreign investments dropped drastically. And in the absence of industrial development, agriculture was supposed to be an important source of economic growth, leading

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<sup>1</sup>It should be noticed here that nine of the countries identified as drought-stricken areas, are members of ECOWAS. See IBRD/The World Bank (1989) Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth. The World Bank, Washington, D.C. p. 220

to a diversification of industry particularly in those countries where arable land is relatively abundant. In fact, the disorientation of priorities by governments in development policies, including ineffective agricultural policies, must have had an enormous impact on these countries. For example, the indigenization of foreign firms in 1983 hitherto involved in agribusiness in Nigeria brought about negative results in terms of food production. Nigeria's food import bills rose dramatically. Over all, industrial development which agriculture could have played a major role had long-since become stalled in most ECOWAS member-states (See Chapter Four).

In terms of intra-trade which predominated the subregion from nationhood prior to colonization by European countries in the nineteenth century, this has dwindled to a low ebb before and after independence. Rather than increasing intra-trade, exports of cash crops have continued to be directed to their colonial masters in return for manufactured goods. This is because domestic industries are either inefficient or lack the necessary capital for large-scale investment in industries to both local demand or subregional intra-trade.

For some countries of the subregion, the only way out were both foreign loans and aid (whose genesis can be traced to the mid-1960s'). By mid-1970s' the spate of demands for loans and aid quadrupled due to that period's oil-shock. In fact, both loans and aid were anticipated to play a revamping role in ECOWAS countries' already deteriorating economies. But receiving foreign loans inevitably meant becoming debtor nations. However, foreign loans - no

matter from which source they came - only offered temporary relief to some of the countries that received them, especially since some of the loans, particularly those from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank meant automatic introduction of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) - a program that seeks recipient governments to cut drastically or remove totally subsidies to state enterprises, social programs, the private sectors (including farmers), and the privatization of state-owned enterprises. Foreign aid, on the other hand was tied in that the recipient country had to trade with the donor nation. Up until now, solutions to Africa's economic problems which started in the early 1970s continue to evade African leaders.

It was against this background that the Organization of African Unity (OAU), encouraged by the United Nations Organization and the European Community, encouraged African countries to embark on (1) the formation of economic cooperation by African countries. This cooperation was to be in the form of economic integration at the subregional level with the ultimate objective of establishing an all-encompassing continental common market by the year 2000. The time frame of the year 2000 has since been postponed till the year 2035<sup>2</sup> and (2) the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programs, both as strategies for remedying the deterioration of Africa's economies and to bring

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<sup>2</sup>A. Traore (1993) "Regional Integration" European Community, Africa-Caribbean-Pacific states. The Courier, No. 142, November-December, 1993. p. 48.

about enhanced economic development,<sup>3</sup> bearing in mind the cooperative process that had already been instituted.<sup>4</sup>

Although the idea about the formation of an economic unit in West Africa dates back in the early 1960's, it was the general economic climate of the subregion in the early 1970s' as well as the encouragement of international organizations, previously mentioned above, that propelled the countries to form ECOWAS in 1975. Since then, the development process in some of these countries has either stagnated or drastically slowed down, due to a number of factors, including ineffective domestic economic policies, internal political problems, absence of democratic government practices in some of these countries due to military dictatorship or single party government, endemic corruption,<sup>5</sup> capital flight to the developed countries' private banks by either the present or past government functionaries, cross-border smuggling, and partly because of exogenous factors.

Another factor that led to the formation of ECOWAS was the recognition

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<sup>3</sup>It should be noticed here that the spate of demands for loans from the World Bank and the International Monetary Funds by Sub-Saharan African countries increased tremendously in the mid-1970s following the 'oil shock' influenced by the Organization for Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). See Terisa E. Turner (1990) The Politics of World Resource Development in the 1990s. International Oil Working Group. Massachusetts.

<sup>4</sup>A. Traore Op cit., p. 48.

<sup>5</sup>See an article by George Moody-Stuart, former President of the Group of Seven for European Private Sector Cooperation with the ACP (Africa-Caribbean, and Pacific states). Although he did not go too far. Moody-Stuart's research reveals several facets of corruption by top government functionaries in countries of the Third World, citing many African countries (including some ECOWAS nations) as the most afflicted in the article, "Grand Corruption in Third World Development." The Courier, No 140. July-August 1993, pp. 89-91.

that the subregion's economies were not large enough to achieve economies of scale or specialization. It was also recognized that official intra-trade was infinitesimally low, whereas unofficial intra-trade in the form of smuggling across borders escalated to enormous proportions. The latter was more worrisome to some member-countries to the extent that law enforcement agencies were permanently placed on borders. An example is Nigeria which was forced to close its borders with Cameroon - its eastern neighbour - for over three years due to smuggling, currency trafficking, and other illicit dealings between nationals of the two countries.<sup>6</sup> This was also the case with Nigeria's western neighbour, Benin. There is also persistent internal crisis in most countries as well as intra-subregional political problems which will be explored later.

A few years before the formation of ECOWAS, the Francophone countries had led the way by establishing an economic integration, named the West African Economic Community (CEAO), and significant progress had been recorded, as will be shown later. Seeing this as a successful endeavour, Nigeria spearheaded the search for an economic integration that would embrace all the West African subregion through extensive consultations with both Francophone and Anglophone countries.<sup>7</sup> The outcome of Nigeria's efforts, supported by Togo, was the formation of ECOWAS which, as stated earlier, came into

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<sup>6</sup>West Africa, various issues from 1973 to 1993.

<sup>7</sup>See Sam Olofin (1978), "ECOWAS And the Lome Convention: An Experiment in Complementary or Conflicting Customs Union Arrangements?" in Journal of Common Market Studies, No. 16, 1977-78, pp. 54-55

existence in 1975 with membership embracing all the fifteen countries, namely, Benin, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.<sup>8</sup> In 1976, Cape Verde, located in an island on the west coast of the subregion later joined, thus becoming the sixteenth member-nation. Over eighteen years after its formation and subsequent ratification of the Treaty, the organization appears to remain in the gestation stage as progress has been limited for various reasons which will be discussed in this thesis later. Suffice it at this point to state that it is for the above-mentioned reasons that one would emphasize that if ECOWAS must become a viable integrative unit, then it is of paramount importance that political integration must, of necessity, precede economic integration.

In the introductory chapter, I have highlighted some of the problems facing the West African subregion. These, according to the opinion of the author, have played major roles in the chequered history of ECOWAS. A more detailed history of how ECOWAS evolved can be found in Chapter Four.

Chapter Two will provide the rationale and ideological framework for analysis. In doing this, the perception of ECOWAS as an integrative organization will be assessed. An attempt will also be made to look at other organizations within the subregion to discover whether ECOWAS' successes or failures are dependent on these organizations. This chapter will also provide an

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

ideological framework with respect to the subordinate nature of member-countries to their former colonial powers and the relationship existing between them. Chapter Three will deal with the theoretical aspects of economic integration and will analyze, as well as interpret available data, to explain the theoretical aspects of economic integration. Chapter Four will focus on literature review with reference to the evolution of intra-trade and the subsequent evolution of ECOWAS as a subregional unit and its past glory and development efforts. This will provide the background for its emergence as an integrative unit, and a review of the implications of the relationship among member-countries. An attempt will also be made to deal with the mechanisms to fulfil the objectives of ECOWAS, its goals, achievements and failures. Chapter Five deals with the central theme of this thesis which impinges on the prevailing instability in most West African countries forming ECOWAS. This instability embraces social, political, economic, and institutional deficiencies and the underlying causes, the most significant being the political realities which predominate in the subregion where most governments are dictatorial, some headed by self-installed military officers while others declare themselves heads of state for life. Evidence of this can be found in the absence of democratic rule in most countries of the region, especially with regard to Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Burkina Faso, and in particular Liberia, where there has been a long-standing civil war. Thus in a subregion where conflicting ideology exists among some of the countries, one would agree there is little room for these countries to commit themselves pragmatically to the

fulfilment of frequent resolutions passed in various ECOWAS member-states gatherings. Yet, they often talk of cooperation, self-reliance, and a desire to forge a politically unified front to face the challenge of economic development. This, in short, is in contradiction to their frequent rhetoric.

Chapter Five also deals with the experiences of integrative organizations such as the European Community (EC), and the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA), and some other regional integrative schemes, some of which graduated from political cooperation to subregional or regional integrative organizations to support the validity of the central argument of this thesis.

Several data are provided in support of arguments that are embodied in this thesis. It should be noted, however, that data provided here are by no means conclusive since most countries of the subregion tend to manipulate, and in most cases, exclude some important data that are vital in planning and implementation of development schemes. The reader should bear in mind that the author is writing from a lay-man's perspective rather than as an economist. This thesis is, therefore, devoid of technicality which forms an appendage of economic analysis.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE RATIONALE AND IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS**

#### **2.1 Rationale for this Thesis**

In the last three decades numerous studies have been made of the economies of the West African subregion. Yet, the realities of the subregion have not been fully explored by analysts, particularly economists, political economists and political scientists, with regards to economic integration. At best, mention of ECOWAS' integrative efforts has always been limited to the economic realm, and these analyses occasionally relate to an accumulating debt crisis, corrupt and dictatorial regimes, poverty among the majority in the rural sector of these countries, without making attempt to ask why things remain the way they are. The result of this analysis is to overshadow the political realities of the various regimes, be they democratic, military, or dictatorial in character. Hence people outside the subregion or Africa in general who would be interested in knowing political trends in the subregion tend to be less informed about the real issues with which the subregion is faced.

One fact that remains clear, however, is the general recognition that ECOWAS had emerged as an integrative organization. But let it be stated that ECOWAS is not the first cooperative organization established in the subregion. A cursory look at the following cooperative organizations and membership within the subregion will reveal that others existed prior to the formation of ECOWAS - the only exception being the Club of Sahel which was established in 1976.

**Table 2: Cooperative Organizations in West Africa**

Name of Organization	Year of Formation	Membership
Banque Centrale des Etats l'Africaine del'Ouest (Central Bank of West Africa)	1955	Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo
Banque Ouest-Africaine de Developpement (West African Development Bank)	1973	Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo.
Communaute Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (West Africa Economic Community)	1973	Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Guinea, and Togo.
Comite Permanent Inter-etats de lutte contre la secheresse dans le Sahel (Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel)	1973	Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal.
Club of Sahel	1976	Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania Niger, and Senegal.
Economic Community of West African States	1975	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.
Entente Council	1959	Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast Niger, and Togo.
Liptako-Gourma Integrated Development Authority	1972	Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger
Mano River Union	1977	Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone.
Niger Basin Authority	1984	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Nigeria.

Source: New African Yearbook 1991-92 (1992), IC Publication, London. pp. 10-14.

The above ten cooperative organizations are only some of the existing ones in West Africa. While there are also cooperative intergovernmental organizations between countries of the subregion, a combined number of cooperative organizations throughout Africa alone is said to be over 200.<sup>9</sup> The general goal of each of these organizations is strictly economic and the development of their respective countries which made up each of these

<sup>9</sup> See A. Traore, "Regional Integration", The Courier, No.142. Brussels, p.48.

organizations. A cursory glance will reveal that most of the countries belong to two or more economic cooperative organizations. While some of these organizations may not be actively involved in real development efforts, others have the potential for economic viability at least in the long term. The Council of Entente, for example, has the objective of becoming an agent of integration, but according to Renninger, the mechanisms appropriate to fulfil such a task has never been developed.<sup>10</sup>

Long before the formation of ECOWAS, these countries held, and continue to hold, a peripheral position in the global economy. To a large extent, this status imposes important limitations in terms of socio-economic growth of these countries. For example, all member-countries of ECOWAS are exporters of primary products, including minerals, through which they earn foreign exchange. This means they must continue to rely on the world market along with its concomitant fluctuations, particularly in mineral products. In the last 20 years, for instance, a series of world recessions have occurred, the most deeply felt and most prolonged being that of 1980-82 which affected both the developed and developing nations, causing total real output in the industrialized countries to stagnate, brought about a fall in the production of manufactures in many of them to the levels of 1976-77 and productive capacity was consequently

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<sup>10</sup>John P. Renninger (1982) "The Future of Economic Cooperation Schemes in Africa, with Special Reference to ECOWAS," in Timothy M. Shaw (ed.), Alternative Futures for Africa. Westview Press, Boulder. p. 159.

underutilized.<sup>11</sup> In fact, unemployment in these countries, particularly severe among the young, reached the highest levels since the Second World War, the volume of world trade stagnated in 1981 and actually declined by two percent in 1982.<sup>12</sup> As can be expected, any economic downturn at the world market inevitably affects the subregion just as it does to other Third World countries because of the absorption of the Third World into the global economy. And because of shortage of capital, attempts by member-countries to fix up their deteriorating economy in most cases, means seeking external loans either from the IMF or the World Bank or from private consortiums. It has been mentioned in the introduction that, receiving IMF or World Bank loans inevitably means the introduction of economic policies imposed on the recipient countries along with its negative effects. The negative effects of most of these programs and other socio-economic problems relating to the subregion have been subjected to critical analysis. One thing that is constantly overlooked is political variability which itself is a consequence of colonial legacy. To some degree, the political realities are intertwined with ethnicity, culture and religion, as will be revealed later. This thesis recognizes that ECOWAS is an economic integration and not political integration. On the other hand, while some may claim that analysis of

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<sup>11</sup>See for example, Luis Serven and Andres Solimano (1993), "Debt Crisis, Adjustment Policies and Capital Formation in Developing Countries: Where Do We Stand?" World Development, Vol. 21, No. 1. p. 127.

<sup>12</sup>G. K. Helleiner, et al, eds. (1983) Towards a New Bretton Woods: Challenges for the World Financial and Trading System: Report by a Commonwealth Study Group. Commonwealth Secretariat, London, p. 2.

political situations in ECOWAS member-countries is irrelevant, this thesis recognizes the importance of political conditions since these cannot be divorced from economics. It is for this reason that this thesis considers it imperative to look beyond economics by exploring the political realities of ECOWAS member-countries. It is hoped by so doing, an understanding of the present economic plight of the subregion will be gained. After all, Pierre Maillet once informed us that historically, apart from economic reasons, the construction of the European Community (EC) was motivated by a series of political and cultural considerations. For Maillet, political reasons were motivated by the need (1) to give European continent the strength it needed to make its voice heard in the global dialogue along with other great powers; (2) to hold a political position at the international level sought by the European people; and (3) to play an effective part in the gradual construction of the world. Culturally, from Maillet's view, most Europeans were of the opinion that the European heritage has intrinsic worth, and that without systematically taking a stand against other countries or continents, a specific European character should be preserved when confronted by the threat of domination by other cultures, be it from the East or from the West.<sup>13</sup> While this argument may not hold in toto in the case of West African subregion, this may be rightly so considering its underdeveloped position -

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<sup>13</sup>P. Maillet (1977) The Construction of a European Community: Achievements and Prospects for the Future, Praeger, New York, 1977. p.x. See also Sidney Pollard (1985) The Integration of the European Economy Since 1815, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, pp. 12-17. R.F. Mikesell "The Movement Toward Regional Trading Groups in Latin America" in Albert O. Hirschman (1961) ed. Latin American Issues, The Twentieth Century Fund, New York, 1961, pp. 125-151.

internal political instability, corruption among top government functionaries in most of these countries, and ethnic problems, all pose a stumbling block to progress. It has already been mentioned that economic analyses have tended to overshadow political analysis with regard to ECOWAS. It is the neglect by analysts to probe the political situations in these countries that compelled the author to focus his attention on political integration as a prelude to economic integration.

## **2.2 Ideological Framework for Analysis**

The experience of ECOWAS has never been satisfactory as one will expect, considering the rhetoric of member-countries concerning the organization. The community does not seem to have learned any lessons from the experience of the East African Community (EAC) which collapsed in 1975. For several reasons, the EAC once represented the hopes and optimistic expectations of many Africans for a viable inter-state economic cooperation. According to Nnoli, the common colonial experiences of the member-states, the long history of association in a common market, the high level of trade among them, and the degree of geographical mobility of their populations across their boundaries were positive assets to the consolidation of their inherited economic cooperation which was originally put in place in 1917, by the British which colonized the EAC's member-countries: Kenya, Tanzania (then known as

Tanganyika), and Uganda between 1885 and 1890.<sup>14</sup> In 1967, the EAC was established following a series of cooperative agreements in the operation of four long-established institutions, namely the East African Railways Corporation, the East African Harbours Corporation; the East African Posts and Telecommunication Corporation, and the East African Airways Corporation. All these institutions had been put in place by the British between 1920 and 1950 with headquarters in Kenya. The Treaty for the East African Community sought to restructure these institutions.<sup>15</sup> For a few years, the Community worked well but Kenya's dominating role in the Community proved to be a signal for the collapse of the organization. Both Tanzania and Uganda had been experiencing increasingly trade deficits in intra-trade of the Community with the latter's position deteriorating faster over time. Attempts to correct this failed. Moreover, deliberate industrial location of large-scale industries in Kenya, and less location of industries in the other two countries tended to create strains among the three countries. These strains had been brought about by lack of adequate redistribution machinery for the benefits of integration. Due to ideological differences between these three countries, the integration scheme collapsed.<sup>16</sup>

In West Africa, the earlier hopes of economic integration degenerated in

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<sup>14</sup>See O. Nnoli (1985), "External Constraints of Pan-African Economic Integration," in Economic Cooperation and Integration in Africa, Codesria Books, Dakar, pp. 126. D.A.K. Mbogoro, (1985), "Regional Grouping and Economic Development: Some Lessons from the East African Integration Scheme," in Economic Cooperation and Integration in Africa, Codesria Books, Dakar, pp. 229-253.

<sup>15</sup>Mbogoro, "Some Lessons from the East African Integration Scheme," p. 238.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid. p.247-48.

a plea for even the most minimal economic cooperation. Despite the collapse of the EAC, ECOWAS was established in West Africa. Before and after it was put in place, the search for a viable economic integration of the various states and regions of Africa has continued. And serious debates on an all African economic integration has been on in the last few years.<sup>17</sup> But if one may ask, what are the prospects for ECOWAS success? Has it learned or can it learn lessons from the EAC's experience? Have ECOWAS member-nations developed effective strategy and put such in place with regard to political cooperation which this author consider imperative. If they did, what of the constant frictions between some of the member-states?

While in a strict sense, a pre-requisite for success in any integrative endeavour is the elimination of at least the major constraints on inter-state transactions in West Africa, there is also a need for peaceful co-existence between states. This means political cooperation must be placed as the forerunner. Given the present low level of these transactions, unless ECOWAS member-states are able to enter into new political relations, trade, effective monetary exchanges and the transfer of capital, labour and technology among themselves, the momentum for economic integration is most likely to be stultified. Many obstacles have hampered the development of new relations as we have witnessed in the past since ECOWAS treaty was established. Some

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<sup>17</sup>See several issues of West Africa. 1993, See also Tony Hawkins (1990), "Black Africa: From Aid Dependence to Self-Sustaining Growth," in Global Studies, Africa, Fourth Edition, The Dushkin Publishing Group, Gullford. pp. 170-2, and several articles in The Courier between 1991 and 1994.

of them emanate from within the internal environment of the West Africa subregion while others are external in character. It is imperative to deal with these internal and external environments.

At the internal level, the expectations of ECOWAS leaders of economic cooperation are occasionally politicized. As a result, it is difficult for them to agree on even the relatively non-controversial shared objectives. The limited nature of the resources, relative to its growing population, hampers bargaining for reciprocal benefits especially where payoffs have to be deferred.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, ideological cleavages have been quite divisive especially between the Anglophone and Francophone countries of the community. Added to this is the fact that the social and political instability of most member-states impedes efforts aimed at integration. This is perhaps, the reason Haas rightly concluded that poorly integrated countries are usually poor partners of economic cooperation since they cannot be relied upon to make the vital decisions which they fear might further undermine their control at home.<sup>19</sup> Looked from exogenous perspective, it is important to recognize that one of the major factors constraining economic integration is associated with the penetration of African societies by external forces through the phenomenon of imperialism. The task of imperialism is to look for surplus value wherever it can be extracted. It must expand, export

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<sup>18</sup>See Ernst B. Haas (1973) "The Study of Regional Integration: Reflections on the Joy and Anguish of Pretheorizing" in Richard Falk and Saul H. Mendlowitz, eds. Regional Politics and World Order. Fraeman and Co., San Francisco. p. 111.

<sup>19</sup>ibid. p. 117.

capital, procure raw materials, establish markets for manufactured goods, and exploit cheap labour. This statement is the conclusion of Lenin who put it as follows:

Imperialism is a product of highly developed industrial capitalism (which) consists in the striving of every industrial capitalist nation to subjugate and annex ever larger agrarian territories, irrespective of the nations that inhabit them.<sup>20</sup>

Pursuant to these objectives, the developed capitalist countries of Europe subjugated and dominated the nations of Africa for decades. African economies were transformed and geared toward the export of raw materials and the import of manufactured goods. Along with the dominance of foreign ownership of private enterprises, norms and procedures in the social, political and economic infrastructure which supported these activities, this transformation created national economies which became oriented to foreign trade.<sup>21</sup> Thus the West African and other Sub-Saharan African economies became outward oriented even before the local capitalist market and forces had become fully developed. According to Amin, the outcome of this colonial pattern of economic activities, was the integration of African countries' economies into their respective colonial masters' economies in particular, and the global community of capitalist states in general, but as dependent and peripheral units. Directly linked with this process was the import-export sector, with its supporting commercial,

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<sup>20</sup>V. Lenin, "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism" in K. Marx, F. Engels, and V. Lenin (1974) On Historical Materialism: A Collection, International Publishers, New York, p. 503.

<sup>21</sup>O. Nnoli, Op cit. p. 128. See S. Amin (1975) Accumulation on a World Scale, Vol. 2. Monthly Review, New York; S. Amin (1976), Unequal Development, Monthly Review, New York, pp. 198-293; and Clive Thomas (1974), "Dependence and Transformation," Monthly Review, pp. 25-41.

construction and administrative activities which was less directly integrated. But even the subsistence sector, by acting as a reservoir of labour for, and through its supply of raw materials to these other sectors was indirectly connected to the developed and the external world of capitalism.<sup>22</sup>

This integration of African nations into the world economy was established within the context of externally dominated international division of labour which placed African countries in an inferior status, and constrained their ability to reorganize their economies in ways they deem fit, including the establishment of lateral relations with other African States, other Third World states, and the now defunct socialist states. Changes in the African economies were forced on them to conform to changes in the terms of this externally imposed international division of labour.<sup>23</sup> Following the end of Second World War changes within the advanced capitalist countries forced them to shift emphasis to the manufacture of capital goods, light import substitution industries began to be established in the African states, ensuring a market there for capital goods from the metropolitan states. With slight modifications, this pattern of economic relations has persisted in the post-colonial independence period. According to Nnoli, the emergence of those dependent and external directed African economies occurred at the time of intense inter-imperialist rivalries. This was preceded by the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 which balkanized Africa into

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<sup>22</sup>S.Amin. Accumulation on a World Scale, Vol. Monthly Review, New York, 1. pp. 170-222.

<sup>23</sup>O. Nnoli, "External Constraints of Economic Integration." p. 129.

territorial compartments of domination by the rival imperialist powers which represented the most notorious expression of that rivalry. Thus the direction of trade of an African country was not determined by the nature of its trade balance. Instead, it was decisively influenced by the interest of the respective colonial powers. So long as trade was favourable to the metropolitan powers, the direction of trade was maintained in spite of the consequent adverse balance of trade for the African country.<sup>24</sup>

Similarly, colonial enterprises predominated in the subregion prior to decolonization, and most were involved in direct investment activities in the colonies, the colonial currency monopolized monetary transactions, the colonies' external reserves were invested at the centre, and foreign aid flowed overwhelmingly from there. Even the colonial language prevailed in each of the colonies as the basis for education, commerce and political discourse. As if he was writing on behalf of other imperial powers, Lenin lamented:

For the complete victory of commodity production, the bourgeoisie must capture the home market, and there must be politically united territories whose population speak a single language, with all obstacle to the development of that language and its consolidation in the literature eliminated.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the post World War II multilateralization of imperialism, inter-imperialist rivalry has persisted. In our present day, this is reflected in the

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<sup>24</sup>ibid. p. 130. See Table 3 in O. Nnoli (1978) Self-Reliance and Foreign Policy in Tanzania, NOK, New York. p. 23.

<sup>25</sup>V. Lenin (1974) "The Right of Nations to Self Determination," in Collected Works, Progress, Vol. 20. p. 396.

competition between the European Community (EC) and the United States, between the EC and Japan, and currently the present two major economic powers - the United States and Japan are getting closer to a trade war. The former, currently faced with trade deficit with Japan, is putting pressure on the latter to accept more of its exports of manufactures while Japan is reluctant to agree to terms dictated by Washington.<sup>26</sup>

Within the EC itself, there was a bitter rivalry among the former colonial powers. This was evident during the negotiations for the Lome Convention between the EC and Caribbean, African and Pacific states, and between the EC and some mediterranean states, notably Tunisia, Turkey, Greece and Portugal.<sup>27</sup> Another reflection of inter-imperialist rivalry is further reflected in the attempts by the former colonial powers to maintain in positions of power and governmental authority African leaders who are not just favourably disposed to imperialist capital in general but the capital of particular capitalist powers. An example of this, is the Franco-Belgian animosity over Zaire.<sup>28</sup>

Thus the continuing dependence of African states on the imperialist powers' rivalry in Africa have adverse consequences for African economic

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<sup>26</sup>See Globe and Mail, February 3, 1993, p. A.1

<sup>27</sup>See Ernest Mandal (1970), Europe Versus America, Monthly Review, New York, p. 237; O. Ojwok (1977), "The New International Economic Order and Transfer of Technology," a paper presented at the biennial conference of the African Association of Political Science, Rabat, Morocco, September 1977, p. 14.

<sup>28</sup>See for example, George M. Houser (1989) No One Can Stop the Rain: Glimpses of Africa's Liberation Struggles, Pilgrim Press, New York, p. 39.

integration. With respect to ECOWAS member-countries, the former colonial rulers are hegemonic powers. They use their payoff capacity to undermine the will of the member-states to integrate.<sup>29</sup> Individual powers may, thus be reluctant to encourage the subregion's economic integration which will cause them to lose special privileges and preferences which they had exacted during their heyday of colonial rule and subsequent post-independence economic ties. Or they may arrange such attractive preferences for the exports of member-states to their former colonial masters so that member-states would be reluctant to play effective role in the subregion's economic grouping. In the last ten years, however, the imperialist grip on individual member-states has been relaxed due to global economic problems, debt crisis, structural adjustment, and so forth, but this does not mean that ties with the capitalist states have been severed.

### **2.3 African International Relations**

According to Shaw, the differences and complexity in African international relations have led to two important phenomenon: the first is the search for alternative development strategies, and second, an alternative modes of analysis

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<sup>29</sup>France, for example, has continued to maintain closer ties with its former colonies. A biennial Franco-African summit is held in Africa, and the last one was hosted by Libreville, Gabon. See West Africa, 5-11 October, 1992. Besides this, France is a frequent participant at most CEAO meetings, the Francophone equivalent of ECOWAS. It also makes yearly contribution to CEAO's Funds to supplement member-countries' annual dues. There is no doubt this is one strategy of influencing the continuity of member-countries economic relations, thus an indirect way of maintaining domination over the helpless and powerless member-nations of ECOWAS. This is also the case with other Francophone economic cooperative organizations. See West Africa, 26 October-1 November, 1992. p. 1838.

among scholars.<sup>30</sup> Within the populace, there is resistance to new policies and perspectives as well as persistent advocacy of these policies from radicals as well as reactionaries. Thus the old orthodoxy and new alternatives have co-existed in Africa up to the present time. The old strategies and approaches, non-alignment, integration and modernization, not only failed over the past 25 years or so, but are increasingly inappropriate for the already transformed world in economic terms. It was the economic plight that confronted Africa, partly due to the failure of the orthodox theory of modernization, and partly due to the global economic crisis of the 1970s, that led to the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) in 1981 and consequently the 1986 Addis Ababa Declaration, prepared for the Special United Nations General Assembly mid-1986 which recognized the following factors as being the main source of their problems:

- 1) Africa's reluctant recognition that contemporary rates of development were either unsatisfactory or negative;
- 2) A belated appreciation that global recovery would not necessarily help Africa and that many external agencies had only a temporary interest in continental development;
- 3) The recognition that international recommendations were not always appropriate, so Africa had to design its own strategy;
- 4) The agreement that continental balkanization had to be overcome to provide the basis for sustained recovery;
- 5) The insistence that indigenous interests, exchange and policies should be primary so that both South-South and South-North negotiations

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<sup>30</sup>Timothy M. Shaw. "Introduction: Marginalisation, Differentiation and Redefinition," in Ralph I. Onwuka and Timothy M. Shaw (eds.) Africa in World Politics: Into the 1990s. The MacMillan Press Ltd, London, 1989. p. xiv.

could proceed from a position of cohesion rather than division; and

- 6) The consensus that Africa needs self-confidence as well as self-reliance and self-sustainment to advance towards redevelopment, redirection and a continental country by the end of the century.<sup>31</sup>

As Shaw had pointed out, it is the failure of national economies, regional integration, South-South relations and North-South redistribution, combined with inflation, recession, desertification, regional conflicts and debt rescheduling that forced Africa to re-evaluate its development directions rapidly and critically. The process which led to the formulation of the Lagos Plan of Action has already been alluded to. I have also pointed out that the long-term aim of this process is the formation of an all Africa common market or economic integration by the year 2000. Some of the goals embodied in the LPA, according to Adedeji, the former Secretary General of ECA,

called for the strengthening of existing regional economic communities and for establishing new ones so as to cover the continent as a whole; for the strengthening of sectoral integration at the continental level; and for promoting coordination and harmonization among existing and future economic groups. And during the decade of the 1990s, the declaration also call for sectoral integration.<sup>32</sup>

Adedeji then added that:

Excessive openness and external dependence of African economies are inimical to the achievement not only of national but also of collective

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<sup>31</sup>See Timothy M. Shaw. "The Revival of Regionalism: Cure for Crisis or Prescription for Conflict?," in Onwuka and Shaw. Africa in World Politics. See Richard Sandbrook (1985), The Politics of Africa's Economic Stagnation. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

<sup>32</sup>Adebayo Adedeji, "Inter-African Economic Cooperation in Light of the Final Act of Lagos," in Adebayo and Timothy M. Shaw, eds.(1985), Economic Crisis in Africa: African Perspectives on Development Problems and Potentials. Lynne Rienner, Boulder. p. 66.

self-reliance so that progressive inter-African economic penetration is a *sine qua non* for the achievement of national and collective self-reliance.<sup>33</sup>

The achievement of national and collective self-reliance, however, involve using the developed institutions such as ECOWAS, WAEC, Preferential Trade Area (PTA), and others, including their subsidiary organizations, as the main instruments for achieving the collective self-reliance.<sup>34</sup>

Adedeji's argument has been rightly questioned by Shaw who contended that the developments of these institutions has occurred in a continent characterized not only by cyclical droughts but also by declines and inequalities in a world system preoccupied by a new international division of labour rather than a new international economic order. According to Shaw, to increase the pace of development, let alone cooperation, changes must take place in the character of production, relations and institutions within and between African political economies. And such changes, he argued, are a function of history as well as of ideology and diplomacy. All these determine whether the continent can proceed from old to new forms of regionalism, from extroversion to self-reliance, and from orthodox to radical analysis.<sup>35</sup>

Africa is, however, faced by a number of limitations. It is not only the largest regional sub-system given its territorial size and number of states; it is

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<sup>33</sup> *ibid.* p. 74.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.* p. 74.

<sup>35</sup> Adedeji and Shaw. Economic Crisis in Africa. p. 102

also the least industrialized of all the regions of the Third World countries, and one characterized by deep-rooted inequality. Its colonial legacy, evidenced in its dualistic economies, authoritarian regimes and high levels of ethnic consciousness, low level of infrastructural development, all combine to place African States in a disadvantageous position. In fact, Renninger once argued that if current projections materialize with regard to both Africa's continued inability to meet basic human needs (BHN) and narrow the gap of growing inequalities, its future prospects are rather gloomy.<sup>36</sup> In spite of all these, however, Africa's inheritance and mixed performance, it has emerged as an important contributor in the present arena of world politics with its ambiguous and contradictory position which characterize its political economy in the past and present.<sup>37</sup>

The re-emergence of the orthodox ideology in Africa, as Shaw contended, is one aspect of a broader trend towards divergent political economies caused by the highly uneven impact of incorporation into the world system. And the emergence of a few leading powers on the continent according to Shaw, is forcing a reassessment in both perception and policy. The similarity of policy orientation can be located partly in the integrative efforts of various countries of Africa, and partly in individual countries' economic policies. This perhaps

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<sup>36</sup> John P. Renninger (1982), "The Future of Economic Cooperation Schemes in Africa, with Special Reference to ECOWAS," in Timothy M. Shaw (ed.) Alternative Futures, p. 166.

<sup>37</sup> Shaw. op.cit. p. 109.

explains why the orthodox school clings to the assumption that the West African subregion consists of essentially equal and similar actors, while the radical perspective attempts to relate the concept of integration as that of 'sub-imperialism' to changes in the subregion's position in the world economic order.<sup>38</sup> From this, it is easy to note a division between the orthodox and radical modes of analysis in terms of theory and practical policies with particular emphasis on Africa's role in the world system and the analysis of regionalism.

The orthodox analysis, for example, views regional integration, particularly in Africa as part of a diplomatic strategy to strike a balance between the continent and the rest of the world. Their approach has been to look at regional integration, not as a development strategy, but as a diplomatic strategy to enhance Africa's position in the global system through a collective form of decolonization. The orthodox paradigm, consequently focuses on the form of regional constitutions and institutions, on mediation and liberation, rather than on structural transformation. This is perhaps what prompted, James Mayall to state the following:

From the start, the existence of the OAU (the Organization of African Unity) has been far more important to African states-men and politicians than any functional role it may perform in promoting economic cooperation or even the alignment of foreign policies. By merely being there, the OAU does indeed perform one vital role in African diplomacy - it bestows legitimacy on its members and on the movements and causes which they choose to recognize.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* p. 103.

<sup>39</sup> James Mayall. "The OAU and the African Crisis," *Optima*. Vol. 27, No. 2, 1977, p. 86.

John Ravenhill, arguing from the orthodox perspective, stressed that any integrative process in Africa is a reaction to colonialism and "does not go beyond the re-Africanization of the continent as an objective." For him, the orthodoxy still has faith in its theories of convergence and 'trickle-down' development and "extroverted strategies of growth."<sup>40</sup>

From the foregoing, it is worthy of note that the orthodox perspective recognized the persistent inequalities in Africa, perceiving these as a phenomenon that can be eliminated. Zartman for instance, perceives the well-to-do nations as merely centres of momentary conflicts, identifying three major features of the leading African States: (1) those whose initiatives on regional level are often temporary, (2) delicate positions of dominance within a subregion, and (3) inadequate resources which would have provided a basis of influence and power.<sup>41</sup>

In contrast to the orthodox view of regional powers through integrative process, the radical mode perceives regional powers as being less transitional, not restricted to strategic issues alone and more structurally defined. Their approach has been to relegate the orthodox assumptions and remedies and replaced them with a more introverted and self-reliant development strategies, based on the international division of labour as it affects Africa. For the radicals,

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<sup>40</sup> John Ravenhill (ed.) (1988), Africa in Economic Crisis. MacMillan Press, London. pp. 1-17.

<sup>41</sup> I. William Zartman. "Africa as a Subordinate State System in International Relations." International Organization, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1967. p. 574. See also I. William Zartman, and Yassin El-Ayouty, (eds.) (1983) The OAU after Twenty Years. Praeger, New York. p. 22-37.

the internationalization of production does not mean internationalization of control. Rather, the centre is able to secure favourable terms by offering some limited degree of semi-industrialization to co-operative regimes or countries with particularly valuable natural or organizational resources. Immanuel Wallerstein stated this more forcefully when he observed that some African countries, either by invitation or by accident, will come to enjoy upward mobility in the international hierarchy, while the majority will continue to stagnate and remain underdeveloped in the periphery.<sup>42</sup> But the orthodoxy insists that integration takes time and that, given Africa's colonial inheritance, its post-independence performance "is quite promising."<sup>43</sup> The rationale for this conclusion is yet to be revealed given the current Africa's conditions: poverty, inadequate resources, especially technology, capital, and the constantly rising debt burdens. The phrase, "quite promising," therefore needs some qualification or some explanation as to how this will occur in the long term given the dependency nature of African countries.

One thing is obvious. The trauma of decolonization remains active given Africa's present realities, and some people in these countries would probably had wished they had not been extricated from colonialism. It is for various reasons outlined above, including economic, social, among others, that gave the

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<sup>42</sup>Immanuel Wallerstein. "Dependence in an Interdependent World: the Limited Possibilities of Transformation with the Capitalist World Economy." African Studies Review. Vol. 17. No. 1, April 1974, pp. 1-26.

<sup>43</sup>Shaw, op.cit. p. 105.

impetus for the formation of integrative units in Africa with the probable hope that economic integration would create an expanded market, greater scope of opportunities in intra-regional trade enabling countries to increase exports of goods and services, increased employment of labour, factor movement, industrial expansion, leading to over-all development in each of the countries involved in the integrative process. Development thus becomes an important goal of any integrative process.

#### **2.4 Summary**

That the West African subregion was able to come together to form a collective unit toward self-reliance is an achievement in itself. The current economic crises the subregion is facing is a normal process which must be overcome, at least, in the long run, for no country in history has evolved to a viable economic status without one form of economic problem or another. The major problem which most countries have not recognized, perhaps, is that gaining political independence without economic independence is the most problematic thing. While economic independence is not totally desirable, countries must maintain relationships with their colonial masters and other developed countries. This is so because, as economically backward subregion, these countries cannot, at this point, depend on their own so long as development process is important. They lack every kind of technology which can easily be acquired from the developed nations, but this cannot be done

unless cordial relationship exists between them. At least direct control by their former imperial powers has been lessened. This explains why ECOWAS member-countries have established an economic relationship with several developed nations. Through this relationship, exports have been directed, and will continue to be directed to, different developed nations. The imports which exports will eventually attract in the long term will no doubt solidify the groundwork for industrial growth which will lead to diversification of industries and industrialization - the greatest aspiration of ECOWAS nations.

## CHAPTER THREE

### The Theory of Economic Integration

#### 3.1 The Traditional Theory of Economic Integration

From the onset, it should be noted that the theory of 'customs union' is the traditional title for the theory of 'economic integration.'<sup>44</sup> These two titles will, therefore, be used interchangeably. Before proceeding, it is important to define the concept of economic integration. By doing this, it is necessary to distinguish four types of economic integration. According to Belassa, the first is a *free trade area* involving the abolition of internal tariffs and quantitative restrictions among member-countries, while maintaining restrictions against non-member countries. The second aspect is a *customs union*, which involve the complete abolition of internal tariffs and the complete suppression of discrimination against the movement of goods within member-countries. It also involves the adoption of a common external tariffs against non-member countries. The third is the *common market* considered to be the advanced form of economic integration and goes beyond the removal of tariffs and discriminatory practices against other non-member nations. The common market also involves all factors common to other forms of economic integration. In addition, there are common rules to

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<sup>44</sup>It should be noted that the first major study on Customs Union was done by Jacob Viner in 1950. Since then, this theory propounded by him has become the starting point in the analysis of economic integration. See Jacob Viner (1950) The Customs Union Issue, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, New York. See also J.E. Meade (1955), The Theory of Customs Union, North Holland, Amsterdam, Bela Balassa (1965), Economic Development and Integration, Grafica Panamericana, Mexico. Richard Lipsey (1960) "The Theory of Customs Unions: A General Survey," Economic Journal, No. 70. Barry Bracewell-Milnes (1976) Economic Integration in East and West, Croom Helm Ltd, London. p. 58.

ensure competition and free factor movements. The fourth is *economic union*, considered to be the most advanced stage of economic integration. At this stage, the harmonization of both social and economic policies among member-countries is vital.<sup>45</sup> A common market can be carried to such a stage. Economic integration, as can be seen, embraces all these four dimensions of economic cooperation by participating countries.

The original argument for economic integration by neo-classical theorists is rooted in the theory of international trade and comparative advantage.<sup>46</sup> Thus the orthodox arguments advanced by neo-classical economists for international trade were a number of natural resource endowment and the advantages offered by specialization. But countries are not equally blessed, especially in the production of goods. Even where there are no disparity in natural resource endowments, it would still be profitable to specialize in particular activities because of the economies of scale made possible by the division of labour. Each person and each country should therefore specialize in the activities in which he, or the country has the greatest comparative advantage. This was the original thesis of Adam Smith and Ricardo. In recent decades, emphasis have been laid on increasing returns to scale - an idea which was

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<sup>45</sup>See Bela Balassa, (1961) The Theory of Economic Integration, Richard D. Irwin, Illinois, pp. 1-2.

<sup>46</sup>See Imre Vadja (1971), "Integration, Economic Union, and the Nation State," in I. Vadja and M. Simai, (eds.), Foreign Trade in a Planned Economy, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; W.G.C. Haack, (1983) "The Selectivity of Economic Integration Theories: A Comparison of Some Traditional and Marxist Approaches," Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol. 21, No. 4.

foreign to Ricardo who was preoccupied with agriculture.<sup>47</sup> But in agriculture, the relationship was at the opposite pole because as output increases, marginal returns, due to less fertile land, must be brought into production at increasing costs or intra-marginal land must be worked more intensively. Either process causes costs to increase. Increasing returns to scale is, therefore, one important argument for the removal of trade barriers if domestic economy is inadequate to utilize the scope for reducing costs by increasing production; and an increasing number of industries have been used to support the argument for economic integration.<sup>48</sup> The main emphasis behind this process was on exports oriented economies based on orthodox theory of international trade. This had little impact on the economies of the West African subregion. Anxious to bring about development which was equated with industrialization, most West African countries (as did other Third World countries) whose earlier emphasis was directed toward international trade, decided it was time to replace that process by 'import substitution industrialization' - a process which encouraged local production of goods which were hitherto imported through diversification of industries with eventual increase of exports of not only agricultural products but also the export of manufactured goods at least in the long term.<sup>49</sup> This too

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<sup>47</sup>L. B. M. Mennes, Planning Economic Integration, p. 16.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid. p. 13; See also Richard E. Caves, Ronald W. Jones, and Jeffrey A. Frankel (1990), World Trade and Payments, Scott, Foresman and Co., New York. p. 323.

<sup>49</sup>See W.C. Baum and S.M. Tolbert (1985), Investing in Development: Lessons of World Bank Experience, Oxford University Press, London. p. 35.

failed due to the proliferation of inefficient industries; it also aggravated inequalities in income distribution by raising the prices of locally manufactured goods relative to agricultural goods and by favouring profits over wages.<sup>50</sup>

Speaking strictly in integrative terms, the market system with regards to consumption, is based on the principle that the same goods have different values for different consumers at different times. As Bracewell-Milnes analysis shows, the advantages of integration may be over-estimated or underestimated if the economics of consumption is not taken into consideration. They are overestimated if the calculations of the benefits from specialization ignore a weakness of demand in one or more of the countries concerned; and, they are underestimated if the calculations ignore effective demand that was not economically effective prior to integration. Some of the reasons for an economic integration may, in principle, therefore include any of the aims of domestic economic policy such as improvement in resource allocation, employment of resources, rate of growth and income distribution.<sup>51</sup> Some of other reasons for economic integration will be dealt with shortly. In the interim, it is necessary to note that the traditional theory of economic integration revolves around tariffs, quotas and other quantitative restrictions or prohibitions, to the exclusion of other forms of non-tariff barriers to trade. In recent years analysts within the field have brought forth other arguments to justify the necessity for economic integration as

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<sup>50</sup>R.G. Lipsey, et al (1985) Economics, Harper and Row, Publishers, New York p. 396-97

<sup>51</sup>Bracewell-milnes, Op.cit. p. 13.

will be seen later.

Theoretically the key concepts of economic integration stand out: trade creation, and trade diversion. Originally made popular through the work of Jacob Viner,<sup>52</sup> the major characteristics of economic integration is a complete removal of tariff barriers between member countries whose aim is to move towards free trade within a regional bloc. It is also characterized by the imposition of a common external tariffs on imports from the rest of the world. The higher the tariffs, the more their impact is felt by countries outside the regional economic bloc. One thing is obvious however. Whether economic integration is beneficial or not depends, among other things, on the above-mentioned concepts of trade creation and trade diversion. These two concepts are central to economic integration, according to the analysis of Jeffery Harrop.<sup>53</sup> The question which arises, therefore, is what is meant by the concepts of trade creation and trade diversion? A look at Viner's analysis is in order in understanding these concepts. According to Viner, trade creation occurs when a country in the customs union area finds it cheaper to import from a member country. Rather

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<sup>52</sup>Up to 1993, Viner's exposition continues to generate what seems to me as 'hot' debates among scholars on the effects of both trade creation and diversion. See for example, Richard Pomfret (1993), "Measuring the Effects of Economic Integration on Third Countries: A Comment on Plummer," in World Development, Vol. 21, No. 9, pp. 1435-1437. Mordechai E. Kreinin and Michael G. Plummer (1993), "A Reply to Richard Pomfret's Comment," in World Development, Vol. 21, No. 9. Jacob Viner, The Customs Union Issue. See also Bela Balassa who elaborated the theory in his The Theory of Economic Integration, Richard D. Irwin, Inc., Illinois, 1961, Bela Balassa (ed.), European Economic Integration, North-Holland Publishing Co. Amsterdam, 1975, Neil Vousden, The Economics of Trade Protection, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990. See also Richard E. Caves, et al, World Trade and Payments, Scott, Foresman and Co. 1990.

<sup>53</sup>Jeffery Harrop (1989), The Political Economy of Integration, pp. 42-47.

than produce domestically, it derives its supply from a member country which has a lower price since the intra-tariff has been removed. Viner stated further that if, prior to the formation of the customs union, potential member-countries were producing a commodity behind tariff walls where, after the formation of the union, one of the union partners becomes the complete supplier for the union, trade is created. Contrary to trade creation, Viner added, trade diversion occurs if one of the member-countries was producing the commodity before formation of the customs union inefficiently - as a high cost producer - due to its protection behind a tariff wall; on the formation of the union, this country now captures the whole of the union market.<sup>54</sup>

It is worthwhile to ask to what extent the degree of diversion will be. In his analysis, Bracewell-Milnes provided the answer, as did Harrop. Both authors demonstrated that empirically, trade diversion is not widespread as one could be tempted to assume. As they pointed out, economic integration has contributed to rising internal incomes within the integration unit and outside countries have equally benefitted through the supply of complementary products, especially where the common external tariff has been set at a low level. Moreover, where the integration embraces a larger number of countries, the better it will be since it tends to reduce the likelihood of the lowest cost producer being excluded. And where the union partners have contributed to rising internal incomes, outside countries are usually able to supply complementary products with beneficial

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<sup>54</sup>Jacob Viner, The Customs Union Issue, See especially Chapter 4.

effects especially where common external tariff has been set at a low level. Hence, the consensus is for the retention of economic integration or customs union wherever this process has been put in place.<sup>55</sup>

### **3.2 Effects of Economic Integration**

The subject of economic integration have, over the years, attracted attention from academics. Needless, therefore, to say the following survey is by no means exhaustive. Viner's penetrating study of the subject has already been mentioned. His central thesis revolves around trade creation defined as a shift from high-cost to low-cost source of supply within the integration area, and trade diversion, defined as a shift from a low-cost source of supply outside the integration area to a high-cost producer within it. Besides Viner's analysis, however, other parameters have been introduced into the analysis of economic integration through the work of Meade, and Lipsey. The general conclusion which can be drawn from their analysis is that it is impossible to make any theoretical generalizations about the effects of customs union or economic integration, other than that it may be either beneficial or harmful. To some extent, therefore, most authors are in agreement with this particular thread of Viner's analysis. Their argument are essentially an extension of Viner's exposition. Meade, for example, using the same analytical framework, introduced additional parameters, pushing the argument farther than Viner did.

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<sup>55</sup>Barry Bracewell-Milnes, (1976), Economic Integration in East and West, Croom Helm Limited, London, pp. 13-16; Harrop, Op. Cit., p. 42-46; See also Caves, et al, World Trade, pp. 316-322.

Thus while Viner was concerned with the effects of customs union on trade in particular commodities, Meade considered the effect on total world trade in terms of primary, secondary and tertiary effects that emerge from the removal of barriers on intra-trade and the creation of barriers on trade with third countries. These effects according to Meade, must be measured not only in terms of gains and losses to world trade but also in terms of the utilization of resources. Certain situations might arise in which the impact of customs unions might be harmful to the trade in particular commodities, but beneficial to world trade generally and to the use of resources. The higher the initial duties on each other's products which the partners seek to remove, the more likely is the effect to be a rise in economic welfare. The removal of duties may not, however, yield positive result if there are other and more vigorous obstacles to trade such as quantitative restrictions; restrictive commercial and fiscal policies such as discriminatory freight rates, subsidies, guarantees, or differential credit systems. For Meade, a customs union that stops at tariff reductions without harmonization of policies may not produce one result or the other. Each case must be evaluated in light of how far the union is prepared to go in terms of co-ordinating, harmonizing and integrating policies.<sup>56</sup>

Lipsey's theoretical position, on the other hand, dealt with two key issues with emphasis on consumption effects. His first argument is that given a country's volume of international trade, a customs union is more likely to raise

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<sup>56</sup>J.E. Meade (1956), The Theory of Customs Union, pp. 45-47.

welfare the higher the proportion of trade with the outside world. His second conclusion is that a customs union is more likely to raise welfare the lower the total volume of foreign trade relative to domestic purchases prior to the formation of the customs union.<sup>57</sup>

In spite of Viner's classic analysis, he has been challenged by other neo-classical economists. For example, liberal economists such as Balassa, Mikesell, Linder and Hazlewood, all argued that Viner's exposition of neo-classical customs union's theory was inappropriate to less developed countries.<sup>58</sup> While his argument has not been totally rejected, his analysis has been extended and developed further by Cooper and Massell (1980). Both are in agreement with Viner's basic theory of customs union as a basis for evaluating economic integration. They, however, demonstrated that a country, by formulating appropriate policy of non-preferential tariff reductions, can reap the benefits of customs unions through trade creation, without incurring negative losses, through trade diversion. For these authors, tariffs may be legitimately

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<sup>57</sup>R.G. Lipsey (1970), The Theory of Customs Union: A General Equilibrium Analysis, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London. pp. 198-201

<sup>58</sup>See Bela Balassa (1967), Economic Development and Integration p. 19; R.F. Mikesell, "The Theory of Common Markets As Applied to Regional Arrangements Among Developing Countries," in R. Harrod and D. Hague, eds. (1964), International Trade Theory in a Developing World, Macmillan, London, pp. 205-229; A. Hazlewood, ed.(1967), African Integration and Disintegration: Case Studies in Economic and Political Union, Oxford University Press, London; S.B. Linder, "Customs Union and Economic Development," in M.S. Wionczcek, ed.(1966), Latin American Economic Integration, Praeger, London; C.A. Cooper and B.F. Massell (1965) "Toward a General Theory of Customs Union for Developing Countries," Journal of Political Economy, No.73, pp.461-76.

non-economic for reasons of prestige or of national defence.<sup>59</sup> Very recently, Vousden (1990) also deflected Viner's argument on trade diversion. He pointed out that while the formation of a customs union may result in an overall welfare gains if the cost reduction effect outweighs the trade diversion, the possibility of country A bribing country B to join such a union in the hope that transfers would be possible cannot be ruled out. When these transfers are absent, country B is worse off as a result of lowering its tariff on imports from country A. Even then, the two countries may agree to form a union if country B also has a decreasing cost industry which can expand its sales to country A when tariffs are removed. This would be the case for example, if there is intra-industry trade in differentiated products, and this is a possibility in any situation in which both union partners have potential export industries exhibiting economies of scale. So, whether a particular country decides to join the union would depend on whether the increase in its rents from exporting to its partner was sufficient to offset the loss of tariff revenue on its diverted imports.<sup>60</sup> In like manner, Pearson and Ingram's 1980 study arrived at the same conclusion with reference to Ghana and Ivory Coast. Using a variant of the Corden model which allows for a significant domestic distortions in each country's goods and factor markets, they estimated that both countries would reap significant welfare gains from such a union, thus

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<sup>59</sup>C.A. Cooper and B.F. Massell (1980), "A New Look at Customs Union Theory," Economic Journal, Vol. 77, December, pp. 742-747.

<sup>60</sup>Neil Vousden (1990), The Economics of Trade Protection, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 245-246.

enabling a welfare gain for Ghana of about 33 percent of its Gross National Product (GNP) and a welfare gain of 22 per cent of Ivory Coast's GNP.<sup>61</sup>

### **3.3 Summary**

It is important to note that Viner's indepth study on customs union laid the ground work for academic debate on the subject and the debate has continued to the 1990s. While his analysis may not be accepted in toto by other intellectuals, his exposition has inspired others to scrutinize his work. The result of his work has, at least, generated interest, criticisms and further analyses on economic integration. The fact is that ideas generate criticisms which, in turn lead to interest. From this exposition, it is expedient to turn the evolution of trade and subsequent emergence of ECOWAS and the practical implication of the theory of economic integration.

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<sup>61</sup>S.R. Pearson and W.D. Ingram (1980), "Economics of Scale, Domestic Divergences and Potential Gains from Economic Integration in Ghana and Ivory Coast," in Journal of Political Economy, No. 88, pp. 994-1008.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Historical Evolution of Intra-Trade and ECOWAS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Trade among West African countries had been in existence for several centuries.<sup>62</sup> To understand the realities surrounding the evolution of ECOWAS, it is important, therefore, to understand the past if the present must be appreciated in as much as intra-trade was fundamental in the establishment of the community. In that way, a coherent interpretation can be made about the current situation. Moreover, ECOWAS is about economic integration which, in itself, presupposes trade among member-states.

It is imperative to emphasize that historically West African peoples have never been united as members of a single political unit. Yet some of the pre-colonial kingdoms that expanded across the subregion have great symbolic importance for those seeking to enhance interstate co-operation through trade. For example, from the Mali empire of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, the Songhai empire of the sixteenth century, and the nineteenth-century Fulani caliphate of Sokoto in Nigeria all based in the savanna, are widely remembered as examples of past supranational glory.<sup>63</sup> The kingdoms of the southern

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<sup>62</sup>Jefferies Ramsay (1991), "West Africa: Seeking Unity in Diversity, the Link of History and Trade." Global Studies: Africa, The Dushkin Publishing Group, Guilford. pp. 17-18. See especially Chapter 4 in J. D. Omer-Cooper et al (1988), The Growth of African Civilisation, Longman, London, pp. 109-118.

<sup>63</sup>ibid, p. 18.

forests, such as the Asante Confederation, the Dahomey kingdom, and the Yoruba city-states, were smaller than the greater savanna empires to their north. All these city-states and kingdoms, although generally different in origin and character, were nevertheless, also sources of greater regional identity.<sup>64</sup>

#### **4.2 Evolution of Intra-Trade in West Africa**

Over the centuries, there has been inter-border<sup>65</sup> trade which, in our present time can be regarded as interstate trade among the West African subregion. For example, Sagay and Wilson's analysis<sup>66</sup> has shown how farmer-traders in Katsina (northern Nigeria) used to take donkey loads of tobacco as far as 250 miles north into what is now Niger, and used the proceeds to buy stocks down to southern Nigeria, and then buy kola nuts to take back to the north again. In pursuance of trade, cattle herdsman and traders established routes which took no account of modern frontiers - which never existed before the arrival of Europeans in West Africa. The trans-Saharan caravan trade to West Africa was of great importance. Although this was antiquated methods of trade, it stimulated the introduction of the use of the camel which became the

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid. p.18

<sup>65</sup>The type of trade being referred to here is one that was carried out between nations and tribes having geographical proximity as there was no such thing known as 'country' or boundary before the arrival and subsequent partitioning of the various nations and territories of West Africa peoples. As a result of this there was free and frequent movement of peoples to and from the then nations. See J.D. Omer-Cooper, et al. (1968) The Growth of African Civilization: The Making of Modern Africa, Vol. 1, Longman. pp. 117-118.

<sup>66</sup>J.Sagay and D.A. Wilson (1978) West Africa: A History of Caravan Trade, Evans Brothers Ltd, See especially Chapter 3, pp. 131-37.

'vehicle' for transportation, even in the first century A.D.<sup>67</sup> Within a period of several centuries a network of routes had been established. But whatever their vicissitudes, however, the route terminals in West Africa served as distribution points for all the areas to the south. Although trade flourished and reached its peak between the 15th and 16th centuries, it had dwindled to a low ebb after the 16th century.<sup>68</sup>

The precolonial states of West Africa gave rise to great urban centres, which were interlinked through extensive trade networks. According to West Africa, this development was the result of the area's agricultural productivity, which supported a relatively high population density from the early times.<sup>69</sup>

From the above, it is easy for one to note that trade among West African countries is not a new phenomenon. In his penetrating analysis, Igwebe pointed out that the process had existed prior to the advent of colonialism which occasioned the compartmentalization in 1887 of West African subregion in particular and the rest of African territories in general after the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 by the now highly developed imperial powers.<sup>70</sup> He further indicated that this trade flourished, but was unrecorded. Therefore, it was unofficial in the

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<sup>67</sup>See in particular, "Roots of the West African Community," West Africa, 30, June, 1975, p. 738.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid. p. 738.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid. p. 738.

<sup>70</sup>E.B. Igwebe (1993), "Tide of Regionalism," in West Africa, 19-25 July, pp. 1244-45. See also William R. Kellor (1984), The Twentieth Century World: An International History, Oxford University Press, London. p. 33.

real sense. People on both sides of each territory's border have continued to trade in spite of the official demarcations for the common reason of ethnic loyalty, thereby ignoring the use of procedures of international political boundaries.<sup>71</sup> Even in our present situation, conventional economic analysis or estimates put intra-African trade as at 1991 at 3.6 percent.<sup>72</sup> Within the subregion itself, Igwebe alluded to the fact that most states would not survive economically without this form of trade. For example, Niger and Benin both of which share borders with Nigeria, are totally dependent on the latter for their economic survival, and this is a consequence of the artificially created boundaries by the colonial powers among hitherto good neighbours, causing the fragmentation of Africa and imposing colonial languages, cultures and economies.<sup>73</sup> While it is not the intention of the author to make a detailed analysis on the evolution of trade in West Africa, the main intention here is strictly to show that intra-trade within the subregion had been in existence several centuries prior to the creation of ECOWAS. The fact that several routes were established and secret routes continue to be established in our present

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<sup>71</sup>West Africa, "Roots of the West Africa Community," 30 June, 1975, p. 738. See also for example Basil Davidson's analysis of trade prior to European colonization of Africa in his Africa In Modern History: The Search for a New Society. Penguin Books Ltd. London, 1978. pp. 57-81.

<sup>72</sup>For statistical analysis, see African Development Bank (1993), Africa in the World Economy: Economic Integration and Structural Adjustment in Africa. Abidjan, p. 7.

<sup>73</sup>Igwebe, Op cit, p. 1245

time,<sup>74</sup> can support one's assumption that the present large-scale smuggling can partly be attributed to the long existed intra-border trading, and partly due to economic reasons, and this has become a way of life for most individuals and small businesses. Combined with this, is black-markets which dominated, and continue to dominate, the economies of most of the West African countries both before and after the creation of ECOWAS. In fact, smuggling, accompanied by black-market activities, can be closely equated to the past glory of unrecorded trade, and one major negative effect of smuggling is that it deprives governments of the conventional process of taxation which, if well calculated, could runs into millions of dollars per year.

#### **4.3 The Emergence of ECOWAS**

The movement toward economic integration dates back to the early 1960s with efforts to institutionalize the concept of Pan-Africanism. The proposal to institutionalize this concept was conceived by Africa's well-known nationalist, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, whose goal was the establishment of a Continental Union Government, or at least, a political union of West African States.<sup>75</sup> According to Ojo, this proposal failed primarily because Nigeria opposed it, while

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<sup>74</sup>See Jones Ekanem (1975) "Evolution of Trade, Smuggling and Economic Integration in West Africa," in West Africa, 5 June, 1975.

<sup>75</sup>This concept of continental union was to represent Ghana-Guinea Bissau Union; Ghana-Guinea Bissau-Mali Union; and Ghana-Congo Union, of which each was to form a nucleus of a "continental union." For a detailed advocacy of this union, see Kwame Nkrumah's Africa Must Unite (1960), Mercury Books, London, pp. 150-152.

succeeding in getting a coalition of African States to support its stand.<sup>76</sup> Ojo further revealed Nigeria's position as being that economic integration should precede political union and that economic union must itself begin at the sub-regional level and proceed in stages beginning with functional cooperation and coordination leading to an African common market. Nigeria's stand was based on ideological belief and commitment to engage in policies of regional integration which presupposes some notion among the participants as to their interdependence, a shared conception of how and why they need one another.<sup>77</sup>

In the early 1960s, the notion of economic integration was vague for practical purposes in West Africa. The Francophone states saw themselves as a world apart from the Anglophone states and vice-versa.<sup>78</sup> Within the latter existed a rivalry between Nigeria and Ghana for a continental leadership. Thus Ghana's withdrawal from the West African Currency Board and the West African Airways (now defunct) was based on grounds of having achieved independence. It could, therefore, no longer associate with any of these and other common institutions, in addition to Ghana's struggles for leadership. All these brought

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<sup>76</sup>See Olatunde J.B. Ojo (1974), Nigeria's Foreign Policy, 1960-66: Politics, Economics and the Struggle for African Leadership, University of Connecticut Press, Connecticut, p. 210.

<sup>77</sup>O.J.B. Ojo (1980) "Nigeria and the Formation of ECOWAS" in International Organization, No. 34, Vol. 4, University of Wisconsin Press, p. 571.

<sup>78</sup>One area of noting the distinction between the Francophone and Anglophone separate ideological stance manifests in economic cooperations by the former in several areas. A close look at existing cooperative organizations in West Africa reveals that seven of these organizations are predominantly composed of mainly Francophone countries, whereas Anglophone countries such as the Gambia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria belong to only three, namely, the Mano River Union, Niger Basin Authority, and the Interstate on Committee on Drought. See Table 2 in Chapter Two of this Thesis.

about divergent ideologies and views on the form and scope of African unity.<sup>79</sup> Another reason for Nigeria's stand might have been its desire to become the industrial heartland of Africa - a wish it hoped to realize within a West African subregional integration scheme that would be implemented at a pace that would not outstrip Nigeria's ability to develop the productive capacity needed to make it the centre of industrial growth. As Ojo pointed out, Nigeria's First National Development Plan 1962-68, was designed as a strategy to enhance that capacity to make Nigeria "the industrial heartland of an African common market."<sup>80</sup>

However, the need for economic integration within the subregion intensified following the United Nations General Assembly's evaluation of progress made over the second development decade in which it encouraged the Third World to "take further and vigorous steps to expand cooperation among themselves at regional, sub-regional, and inter-regional levels."<sup>81</sup> The reasons for this encouragement include, among others, the creation of opportunities for investment, a better allocation and utilization of resources, internal and external economies of scale, increased efficiency resulting from specialization, the development of new industries, greater diversification of domestic and export sectors, a reduction of external economic dependence, a strong bargaining

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid, p. 573. See also O. Aluko (1976) Ghana and Nigeria, 1957-70: A Study in Inter-African Discord, Rex Collins, London, See especially pages 72-121 in which Aluko made an in depth analysis of the Ghana-Nigeria rivalry and the struggle for leadership.

<sup>80</sup>O.J.B. Ojo, "Nigeria and the Formation of ECOWAS," p. 573.

<sup>81</sup>Renninger, Op Cit. p. 154.

position, and the industrial transformation of the economies of countries which undertake to form such a cooperation.<sup>82</sup>

It was against the prevailing economic conditions, coupled with the United Nations (UN) encouragement that West African countries, under the persuasion of Nigeria's then President, General Yakubu Gowon, and Togo's President Gnassingbe Eyadema, came together on 27 May 1975, to officially establish ECOWAS. Efforts toward this goal was initiated between these two presidents in 1971 and before May 1975, contacts had been made with all other West African countries.<sup>83</sup> The general aim of the original Treaty establishing ECOWAS in 1975 was:

To promote co-operation and development in all fields of economic activity, particularly in all fields of industry, transportation, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural sciences, commerce, monetary and financial questions and in social and cultural matters for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the peoples, of increasing and maintaining economic stability, of fostering closer relations among its members, and of contributing to progress and development of the African continent.<sup>84</sup>

#### **4.4 The Old ECOWAS Fundamental Objectives**

For comparative purposes, it is important to put in perspective the objectives of the 1975 Treaty in order to judge and appreciate the work done by

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 162.

<sup>83</sup> See an interview on ECOWAS by Paxton Idowu with General Yakubu Gowon, "Change is Necessary," West Africa, 27 July-2 August, 1992. pp. 1340-43.

<sup>84</sup> Quoted by Renninger from ECOWAS Treaty and Communiqué, Article 2. Federal Government Press, Lagos, Nigeria, 1975. Op.cit. p. 155.

the Committee of Eminent Persons on ECOWAS established in 1990 to revise the Treaty. The general objectives spelt out by the 1975 Treaty include:

- 1) To reduce dependence of member-countries on the external forces that seek to influence the economic policies and direction of African States;
- 2) To help to improve the bargaining position of member-countries, thus contributing to their development potentials through the broader strategy for promoting the New International Economic Order (NIEO); and
- 3) To co-ordinate the development programs in different sectors and sub-sectors as a means of accelerating the rate of economic growth and development.

In addition to the general objectives, specific objectives were also outlined and they include the following:

- 1) the elimination between member-states, of customs duties and other imports and export duties;
- 2) the abolition of quantitative and administrative restrictions on trade among member-states;
- 3) the establishment of a common tariff and a common commercial policy towards third countries;
- 4) the abolition between member-states of obstacles to free movement of persons, services, and capital;
- 5) the harmonization of agricultural policies and the promotion of common projects in the member-states, notably in the fields of marketing, research, and agro-industrial enterprises;
- 6) the implementation of schemes for the joint development of transportation, communication, energy, and other infrastructural facilities, as well as the evolution of a common policy in these fields;
- 7) the harmonization of economic and industrial policies of member-states;

- 8) the establishment of a fund for co-operation, compensation and development;
- 9) the harmonization of the economic and industrial policies of the member-states and the elimination of disparities in the level of their development; and
- 10) other activities calculated to further the aims of the community as the member-states may from time to time undertake in common.

The Treaty entrenched three provisions which were to be achieved in phases: Phase 1 - the Right of Entry and Abolition of Visa - 1980-85; Phase 2 - the Right of Residence to be achieved by 1985-90; and Phase 3 - the Right of Establishment which was to be achieved between 1990 and 1995. Transition from one phase to another in the above schedule was not automatic.

The institutions established by the Community to achieve its objectives include (1) the Authority of Heads of State and Government, which is the highest authority; (2) the Council of Ministers; (3) the Executive Secretariat, headed by an Executive Secretary; (4) a Tribunal, and other specialized Committees and Commissions, including the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation, and Development. Of all these institutions, the three most important are the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Executive Secretariat, and the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation, and Development. The Treaty had a total of 65 Articles.<sup>85</sup>

In 1990 the General Assembly of Heads of States and Governments

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<sup>85</sup>See West Africa, 5 June, 1975. See also Ibrahim Gambari (1991), Political Comparative Dimensions of Regional Integration: The Case of ECOWAS, Humanities Press International, New Jersey, p. 193.

unanimously decided it was imperative to revise the 1975 Treaty due to inadequacies inherent in the protocols and in the light of previous years' experience. According to the outgoing Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Abass Bundu, who gave more specific reasons for the Treaty's revision, this decision was taken due, in part, to economic and political crises within the subregion in the last decade and in part because of lack of progress necessitated by structural adjustment programs embarked upon by all countries of the subregion which significantly slowed down the pace of each country's economic initiatives and which, in turn, affected each country's ability to contribute to the realization of ECOWAS immediate objectives.<sup>86</sup> Combined with these were three major factors: (1) the post Cold War adjustments in international relations and the consolidation of regional economic bloc within the industrialized countries which climaxed in the united concern of Europe and the United States for the economic liberalization process leading to a shift of economic aid to former Communist Soviet Union. Thus while the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) was making its facilities available to the presently democratizing Eastern Europe, American capital also showed increasing support as evidenced by the April 1993 promise of \$43 billion American assistance to the Russian Federation. And contrary to repeated assurances by the West, West Africa could not help but absorb the shocks of the diversion of Western attention

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<sup>86</sup>Abbas Bundu (1993), "ECOWAS Comes of Age: An Overview of Developments in 1992-93," West Africa, 19-25 July, 1993, pp. 1250-57.

and capital away from the pressing development needs of the subregion;<sup>87</sup> (2) the second factor is the increasing debt burden which stood at \$78.3 billion in 1991 (refer to Table 7 of this Thesis) - representing 45 percent of Africa's debt burden; and (3) is a combination of several factors, including poor economic performance of member-countries, the failure of member-countries to live up to their commitments to the organization, and the Liberian civil war coupled with the non-intervention clause embodied in the original Treaty.<sup>88</sup>

At the beginning of this section, reference was made to the establishment, in 1990, of a Committee to revise ECOWAS Treaty. Named the 'Committee of Eminent Persons on ECOWAS Treaty' and headed by the former Nigerian President, General Yakubu Gowon - who incidentally initiated the establishment of ECOWAS in 1975, took over a year to complete. The Committee commenced work in May 1991 and completed in July 1992.<sup>89</sup> The Treaty which was adopted in Cotonou in July 1993, is highlighted below.

#### **4.5 The Aims of the Revised Treaty**<sup>90</sup>

In the 1975 Treaty, there were a total of 65 Articles, but the revised Treaty was expanded to accommodate 93 Articles. The general aims of the new

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<sup>87</sup>ibid. p. 1250.

<sup>86</sup>ibid. p. 1250.

<sup>89</sup>See "Highlights of the Treaty," in West Africa, 19-25 July 1993, p. 1248-12. See also text of General Yakubu Gowon's introductory remark to a news briefing in Dakar, Senegal on the report of his Committee of Eminent Persons on the ECOWAS Treaty Review, in West Africa, 10-16 August, 1992, p. 1340-41.

<sup>90</sup>See "Highlights of the (ECOWAS) Treaty," in West Africa, 19-25 July, 1993, p. 1248.

Treaty, simply stated, are:

To promote cooperation and integration, leading to the establishment of an economic union in West Africa in order to raise the living standards of its peoples, and to maintain and enhance economic stability, foster relations among member-states and contribute to the progress and development of the African Continent.

#### **4.6 The Objectives of the Treaty**

In order to achieve the aims set out, and, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the revised Treaty, the Community committed itself to ensuring:

- 1) the harmonization and coordination of national policies and the promotion of integration programs, projects and activities, particularly in food, agriculture and natural resources, industry, transport and communication, energy, trade, money and finance, human resources, education, information, culture, science, technology, services, health, tourism and legal matters;
- 2) the harmonization and coordination of policies for the protection of the environment;
- 3) the establishment of a joint production enterprises;
- 4) the establishment of a common market through:(i) the liberalization of trade by the abolition, among member-states, of custom duties levied on imports and exports, and the abolition, among member-states, of non-tariff barriers in order to establish a free trade area at the Community level, (ii) the adoption of a common external tariff and a common trade policy vis-a-vis third countries; (iii) the removal, between member-states, of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital, and to the right of residence and establishment;
- 5) the establishment of an economic union through the adoption of common policies in the economic, financial, social and cultural sectors, and the creation of a monetary union;
- 6) the promotion of joint ventures by private sector enterprises and other economic operators, in particular through the adoption of a regional agreement on cross-border investments;

- 7) the adoption of measures for the integration of private sectors, particularly the creation of an enabling environment to promote small and medium scale enterprises;
- 8) the harmonization of national investment codes leading to the adoption of a single Community investment code;
- 9) the harmonization of standards and measures;
- 10) the promotion of balanced development of the region, paying attention to the special problems of each member-state particularly those of landlocked and small island member-states;
- 11) the encouragement and strengthening of relations and the promotion of the flow of information particularly among rural populations, women and youth organizations and socio-professional organizations such as associations of the media, business men and women, workers, and trade unions;
- 12) the adoption of Community population policy which takes into account the need for a balance between demographic factors and socio-economic development;
- 13) the establishment of a fund for cooperation, compensation and development; and
- 14) any other activity that member-states may decide to undertake jointly with a view to attaining Community objectives.<sup>91</sup>

Viewed from a comparative perspective, the revised Treaty is all-encompassing, covering broader range of objectives than the previous one. The new Treaty certainly supersedes the old Treaty of 1975 which had 55 Articles against the new one which embodied 93 Articles. To mention briefly for example, matters such as tourism, the environment, joint production enterprises, promotion of joint ventures by private sector enterprises, harmonization of

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid. p.1248.

investment codes - leading to a single Community unified investment code, promotion of small and medium scale private enterprises, establishment and promotion of relations among rural population, women, youth organizations, professional organizations, the media, workers and trade unions, and the adoption of Community population policy, are all items that were absent in the old Treaty. What is easily observable is the fact that while the first thirteen objectives are clearly stated, the fourteenth objective is ambiguous and can be subjected to maneuverability. However, the ability to implement these broad objectives will be determined by member-countries' commitment to the Treaty's aim and objectives. For, if member-countries were handicapped in implementing the previously limited objectives, what can one expect in the revised Treaty? Certainly, doing this will, no doubt, call for serious commitment on the part of member-countries. The task is enormous as it is challenging, and one hopes member-countries will be prepared to face the challenge in practical terms.

In pursuance to the implementation of these objectives, member-countries solemnly affirmed and declared their adherence to the following principles:

- a) equality and inter-dependence of member-states;
- b) solidarity and collective self-reliance;
- c) inter-state cooperation, harmonization of policies and integration of programs;
- d) non-aggression between member-states;
- e) maintenance of regional peace, stability and security through the promotion and strengthening of good neighbourliness;

- f) peaceful settlement of disputes among member-states, active cooperation between neighbouring countries and the promotion of peaceful environment as a prerequisite for economic development;
- g) recognition, promotion and protection of human and people's rights in accordance with the provisions of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights;
- h) accountability, economic and social justice and popular participation in development;
- i) recognition and observance of the rules and principles of the Community;
- j) promotion and consolidation of a democratic system of governance in each member-state as envisaged by the Declaration of Political Principles adopted in Abuja on 6 July 1991;
- k) equitable and just distribution of the cost and benefits of economic cooperation and integration.<sup>92</sup>

According to the revised Treaty, member-countries must undertake to create favourable conditions for the attainment of the objectives of the Community, and particularly to take all necessary measures to harmonize their strategies and policies, and to refrain from any action that may hinder the attainment of the said objectives. Moreover, each member-state shall, in accordance with its constitutional procedures, take all necessary measures to ensure the enactment and dissemination of legislative and statutory texts as may be necessary for the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty. Each member-state must undertake to honour its obligations under the Treaty and to

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<sup>92</sup> ibid.

abide by the decisions and regulations of the Community.<sup>93</sup> Of particular interest is sanctions which will be applied against countries who default in their annual payments to the Community's Fund. These sanctions include (a) the suspension of new Community loans or assistance, (b) the suspension of disbursement for an ongoing Community projects or assistance, and (3) the suspension from the Community.<sup>94</sup>

#### **4.7 The Structure of ECOWAS**

It has already been pointed out that in the original Treaty, several organs and institutions were established, the most important organs being the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Council of Ministers, the Executive Secretariat, and the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development. All these organs were retained while institutions established in the original Treaty were expanded to include:

- a) the Authority of Heads of State and Government;
- b) the Council of Ministers;
- c) the Community Parliament;
- d) the Economic and Social Council;
- e) the Community Court of Justice;
- f) the Executive Secretariat;
- g) the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development;
- h) Specialized Technical Commissions; and
- i) any other institutions that may be established by the Authority.

A cursory look above will reveal there is now a Community Parliament,

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<sup>93</sup>ibid.

<sup>94</sup>See "Highlights," West Africa, p. 1248. See also Gowon's "Talking Points" in West Africa, 10-16 August, 1992, p. 1341

an Economic and Social Council and a Court of Justice. The latter thus replaces what was known as the "Tribunal." The institution conferred with the highest authority still remains 'the Authority of Heads of State and/or Government.' Its functions includes the general direction and control of the Community affairs and takes all measures to ensure its progressive development and the realization of its objectives. It ensures that institutions of the Community perform their tasks and act within the limits of the powers conferred on them by the Treaty and Protocols. As the supreme body, the Authority of Heads of State and Government which is simply referred to as "the Authority," has the following responsibilities:<sup>95</sup>

- a) determines the general policy and major guidelines of the Community, gives directives, harmonize and coordinate the economic, scientific, technical, cultural and social policies of member-states;
- b) oversees the functioning of the Community institutions and follow-up implementation of Community objectives;
- c) prepares and adopt its Rules and Procedures;
- d) appoints the Executive Secretary in accordance with the provisions of Article 17 of the revised Treaty;
- e) appoints, on the recommendation of the Council, External Auditors;
- f) delegates to the Council of Ministers, where necessary, the authority to take such decisions as are stipulated in Article 9 of the Treaty;
- g) refers where it deems necessary any matter to the Community Court of Justice when it confirms that a member-state or institution

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<sup>95</sup>ibid.

of the Community has failed to honour any of its obligations or an institution of the Community has acted beyond the limits of its authority or has abused the powers conferred on it by the provisions of the Treaty, by a decision of the Authority or a regulation of the Council;

- h) requests the Community Court of Justice, as and when necessary, to give advisory opinion on any legal questions; and
- i) exercises any other powers conferred on it under the Treaty.

There are now several specialized commissions established for the realization of the Community's objectives, and some of them include those dealing with Customs and Taxation; Environment and Natural Resources; Monetary, Finance and Payments; Industry, Energy, Science and Technology; Agriculture and Natural Resources, Transport, Telecommunications, and Tourism; Human Resources, Information, Social and Cultural Affairs.<sup>96</sup>

Comment on the above will be reserved at this point. For the moment, it is imperative to look at the major characteristics of ECOWAS member-countries economies which, it is hoped, will shed light to the above issues. By so doing one will appreciate the current socio-economic problems and efforts to overcome them.

#### **4.8 Characteristics of ECOWAS Member-Countries Economies**

In understanding the economic positions of ECOWAS member-states, it is necessary to present another economic indicator - each member-countries'

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<sup>96</sup>ibid. p. 1248. See also General Yakubu Gowon, "Talking Points," West Africa, 10-16 August 1992, pp. 1340-3.

GDP in Table 3 - which was intentionally omitted in Table 1 (Chapter One). The intention here is to show the degree of change between 1970 and 1992. What

**Table 3: ECOWAS Member-Countries' Gross Domestic Product at Constant Market Prices (In Millions of U.S. Dollars)**

COUNTRY	1970	1975	1980	1990	1992
Benin	646	686	837	1110	1187
Burkina Faso	807	947	1156	1697	1832
Cape Verde	103	91	98	184	193
Gambia	85	125	141	222	241
Ghana	4349	4258	4544	5671	6187
Guinea	1628	1864	2200	2992	3180
GuineaBissau	109	133	119	202	217
Ivory Coast	3568	5211	6399	6712	6526
Liberia	1141	1041	1147	977	983
Mali	661	761	983	1469	1609
Mauritania	610	609	703	816	875
Niger	1410	1240	1714	1561	1645
Nigeria	54013	74052	84010	105046	114116
Senegal	1878	2110	2229	3027	3131
Sierra Leone	1020	1114	1166	1463	1426
Togo	508	614	781	862	827
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>71926</b>	<b>94095</b>	<b>108227</b>	<b>134001</b>	<b>144175</b>

Source: African Development Bank. *African Development Report 1993: Africa In The World Economy: Economic Integration and Structural Adjustment in Africa*. Abidjan, 1993. p. A-4.

is easily observable is that GDP for all countries has been on the upward trend for the period 1970 through to 1992. The period intentionally omitted - 1985 - was not significantly different in terms of growth rate for, when these figures are

compared with GDP per capita, we have a completely different picture. For example, Nigeria persistently recorded the highest GDP for each year shown above, followed by Ghana. The country with the least GDP on Table 3 being Cape Verde. When calculated by each country's population, the whole picture is reversed. For example, in Table 1, on page 3, we noted Cape Verde recording the highest per capita income of US\$890, whereas Nigeria could only contend with US\$290, while Ghana was mid-way with per capita income of US\$390 all in 1990. Table 3 having been presented, it is necessary to look at economic characteristics of ECOWAS member-nations.

Characteristically, West Africa has not developed economically as do countries of the industrialized West for the following factors: (a) low labour productivity, (b) the dominance of agriculture, (c) capital shortage and external debt, (d) limited technical progress, (e) high population growth rate, (f) foreign trade oriented economies, and (g) structural adjustment programs. An attempt will be made to elaborate on these factors.

**a) Low Labour Productivity**

One of the factors inhibiting development in West Africa has been the subregion's extreme low productivity of the labour force for the simple reason that most are either unskilled or semi-skilled.<sup>97</sup> To use Nigeria as an example, the output per person is low compared with economically advanced countries

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<sup>97</sup>O.Lawal (1992), Economics of West Africa, Heinemann, Ibadan, Nigeria, p. 223. See also Brian W. Walker (1988), Authentic Development in Africa, Headlines Series, New York.

such as Canada, the United States, Germany, and Britain. The situation is not different in other West African countries. This low productivity is not restricted to waged employment but permeates the whole economy, namely farming, weaving, petty-trading, and those in tertiary activities. The major explanation for this low labour productivity, especially among farmers and craftsmen is the inadequate factors of production notably capital and enterprise which must be combined with other factors for optimum utilization and production. For example, an average West African farmer can neither buy modern agricultural equipment necessary for total output nor employ well paid manager who can oversee the use of modern techniques of farm management. And even if he is enterprising he may not have access to cultivable land because the prevailing system of land ownership in the rural areas precludes people from outside the village communities to use the communally-owned cultivable land.<sup>98</sup> Another explanation is that unskilled and semi-skilled workers are not exposed to complex industrial atmosphere and the complicated tools of new factories in West Africa most of which need some level of training. The result is ineffectiveness at work.

There are also environmental factors such as unhygienic surroundings resulting to poor health and consequently low productivity. Linked with this are climatic conditions: excessive heat and humidity with resultant effects on people and crops. The former - excessive heat - is the most damaging when it is

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<sup>98</sup>Bede N. Okigbo (1987), "Towards a New Green Revolution: from Chemicals to New Biological Techniques in the Improvement of Tropical Agriculture in Towards a Second Green Revolution: From Chemical to New Biological Technologies in Agriculture in the Tropics, Oxford University Press, Oxford. pp. 458-59.

combined with dry winds blowing dust from the Sahara desert down the West coast of Africa, and in most cases, causing drought among the Sahelian countries - a situation which Harrison once described as "eco-catastrophe."<sup>99</sup>

Throughout West Africa, the proportion of those engaged in food production is greater than those in other sectors as we can see in Table 4 which follows shortly. The figures presented in Table 4 give a glaring picture of labour force participation in agriculture from 1975 to 1992. One could assume that prior to 1975, the percentage might have been much higher for all countries considering the fact that agriculture was, and is still, the backbone of some of the subregion's economies in that they generated between 80-96 percentage of each country's foreign exchange prior to 1970.<sup>100</sup> As table 4 shows, by 1992 most countries had recorded a reduction in the participation of labour force in agriculture, especially Mauritania - one of the Sahelian drought-stricken countries. Its labour force in agriculture declined significantly from 85 percent

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<sup>99</sup>See Paul Harrison (1981), Inside the Third World, Richard Clay Ltd, Bungay, Suffolk, See Chapter 4, pp. 63-76.

<sup>100</sup>See Okigbo, Op Cit. p. 458.

**Table 4: Labour Force in Agriculture, 1975-1992 (Percentage)**

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>1975</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1992</b>
Benin	81	70	65	59	58
Burkina Faso	88	87	86	85	85
Cape Verde	64	52	67	61	60
Gambia	87	84	83	82	81
Ghana	58	56	54	53	52
Guinea	85	81	78	76	75
Guinea Bissau	84	82	81	80	80
Ivory Coast	76	65	60	54	52
Liberia	78	74	73	71	71
Mali	89	86	84	82	81
Mauritania	85	69	61	54	50
Niger	94	91	89	88	87
Nigeria	71	68	67	65	64
Senegal	83	81	79	78	78
Sierra Leone	76	70	67	64	63
Togo	77	73	71	69	69
<b>Total Average</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>69</b>

Source: African Development Bank (1993) *Africa in the World Economy: Economic Integration and Structural Adjustment in Africa*. African Development Bank, Abidjan, p. A-44.

in 1975 to 50 percent in 1992, making it the lowest of all ECOWAS countries. Benin, Ivory Coast, and Sierra Leone, showed modest declines, while others witnessed a reduction in their labour force in this sector by figures ranging from 4 percent to 13 percent, with the subregion's average labour force dropping to

69 percent. Here, caution is necessary. However, the involvement of 69 percent, in average, of the labour force in agriculture must not be over-emphasized. Factors leading to labour force decline in agriculture are easily traceable.

In recent years, there has been exodus of the rural population, a rural-urban migration of the active labour force to seek employment in secondary activities which are sometimes viewed as less energy exhausting and more rewarding.<sup>101</sup> As a matter of fact, rural-urban migration is accompanied by both intra-subregional migration and emigration into Europe and North America, not only by semi-educated people, but a large number of highly educated West Africans causing serious brain drain.<sup>102</sup> Although rural-urban migration had commenced even before the arrival of SAP, there is no doubt in one's mind that SAP acted to amplify the situation especially when viewed from the fact that all ECOWAS member-countries have been, and continue to be, recipients of the World Bank and IMF loans. Within cities, the impact of SAPs have led to serious unemployment in both the public and private sectors.<sup>103</sup> These, among other reasons, thus explain why labour productivity has declined in terms of its contribution to ECOWAS member-countries' economic development.

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<sup>101</sup> See Augustine Oyowe (1992), "Africa's Population, Development and Immigration into Europe," in The Courier, No. 134, July-August 1992, pp. 72-73.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, p. 73.

<sup>103</sup> Julius O. Ihonvbere, "Economic Crisis, Structural Adjustment and Social Crisis in Nigeria," World Development, Vol. 21, No.1, p. 142.

### **b) The Dominance of Agriculture in West Africa**

The economies of West African countries are predominantly agrarian.<sup>104</sup> Agriculture plays a dual role in the subregion. The first is production for exports, and the second is subsistence production. While the two types are important, emphasis in the past had been for the former because of the benefit of cash return. Hence the derivative name of 'cash crops' for export and the latter, is simply referred to as 'subsistence agriculture' which meets immediate food needs of families.<sup>105</sup>

The fact that agriculture dominate the economies of ECOWAS countries, production trends have been largely disappointing. This decline in agricultural production has resulted in an increase in the importation of food and other agricultural products. Nigeria in particular which used to be a major exporter of agricultural products such as cocoa groundnuts and palm produce has, over the years, become a net importer of these crops. The situation is much more serious in the landlocked, the arid, and semi-arid countries.<sup>106</sup> Tables 5 and 6 are presented below to show (1) the nature of cash crops on which most ECOWAS member-countries depend, and (2) the declining rate of agricultural production.

What can we observe from the following two tables? Table 5 points to

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<sup>104</sup>See Chapter 12 which deals exclusively on agriculture, in O.Lawal (1992), Economics of West Africa, Heinemann Educational Books, Ibadan. pp. 148-163.

<sup>105</sup>ibid. pp. 148-9.

<sup>106</sup>See A. Owosekun (1985), "Some Thorny Issues in the Economic Community of West African States," Economic Cooperation and Integration in Africa, Codesria Books, Dakar. pp. 90-110.

**Table 5: Major Agricultural Exports of Member-countries**

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>Major Agricultural Exports</b>	<b>Principal Export</b>
Benin	Cotton, Cocoa, and Palm Oil.	Cotton
Burkina Faso	Cotton, Groundnuts, Sesame seed.	Cotton
Cape Verde	Bananas.	Bananas
Gambia	Groundnuts(shelled), Groundnut oil, Oil seed cake and meal.	Groundnuts (shelled)
Ghana	Cocoa, Coffee, and Bananas.	Cocoa
Guinea	Coffee, Cocoa, and Oilseed cake	Coffee
Guinea Bissau	Groundnuts (shelled), Palm kernels Cotton	Groundnuts (shelled)
Ivory Coast	Cocoa, Coffee, and Cotton	Cocoa
Liberia	Rubber, Coffee, and Cocoa	Rubber
Mali	Cotton, Groundnut Oil, Oilseed.	Cotton
Mauritania	Fish, Millet, Sorghum, Maize, Rice	Rice
Niger	Cotton, Oilseed cake and meal	Cotton
Nigeria	Cocoa, Palm kernel, Rubber, Yam tubers, vegetable oil.	Cocoa
Senegal	Groundnut oil, Oilseed cake and meal, Cotton	Groundnut oil
Sierra Leone	Cocoa, Coffee, and Tobacco	Cocoa
Togo	Cotton, Cocoa, and Coffee	Cotton

Source: Compiled from the World Bank (1989), Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth, The World Bank, Washington D.C. pp. 246-248, and New African Year Book 1991-92 (1992), IC Publication, London.

**Table 6: Agricultural Food Production among ECOWAS Member-Countries, 1983-1991 (In Thousands of Metric Tons)**

COUNTRY	1983	1985	1987	1989	1991	1983-1987	1987-1991
						%	%
Benin	2167	2776	2547	3330	3520	4.1	8.4
Burkina Faso	2377	2933	3053	3070	3463	6.5	3.2
Cape Verde	52	62	96	76	69	16.6	-8.0
Gambia	227	239	258	220	183	3.2	-8.3
Ghana	5221	9033	8605	8970	9562	13.3	2.7
Guinea	3017	3097	3159	3186	3610	1.2	3.4
Guinea Bissau	343	389	456	408	474	7.3	1.0
Ivory Coast	8835	9446	9798	9318	9794	1.6	-0.0
Liberia	1049	1095	1236	1259	939	4.2	-6.6
Mali	2810	3108	3197	3339	3858	3.3	4.8
Mauritania	413	512	568	658	498	8.3	-3.4
Niger	3101	3022	2875	3175	3791	-1.9	7.2
Nigeria	50327	59734	58209	58718	63061	3.7	2.0
Senegal	2335	3132	3421	2871	2632	10.0	-6.3
Sierra Leone	1364	1204	1268	1311	1081	-1.8	-3.9
Togo	1293	1532	1431	1716	1656	2.6	3.7
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>84931</b>	<b>101314</b>	<b>100177</b>	<b>101625</b>	<b>108186</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>-0.1</b>

Source: African Development Bank (1993), *Selected Statistics on Regional Member Countries*, African Development Bank, Abidjan, p. 19.

one important conclusion: the fact that almost all countries produce the same goods. The only exception being Cape Verde whose principal export produce is bananas, although it has the potential of becoming a major fish exporter. Unfortunately this area has not been given the necessary priority it

deserves.<sup>107</sup> From the above two tables, will the theory of economic integration hold considering the production of similar products by all countries? Perhaps the answer to this question lies on the level of production. That is, if some of the countries are producing less and less of given products and some others producing more than they need, then the answer to this question would have been in the affirmative. Besides, other sectors of the economies will have significant roles to play, particularly in the areas of industries, manufacturing, and service sectors.

Table 6 is self explanatory. The period between 1983 and 1987 was favourable for almost all ECOWAS countries in food production. The only exception being Guinea which recorded the lowest percentage, while Niger and Sierra Leone both had negative growth for that period. Even then, while Sierra Leone's food production in 1987-91 further worsened, Niger recorded the second highest level of food production with 7.2 percent after Benin with a record high of 8.4 percent for the 1987-91 period. Several other countries, some of which recorded high growth for 1983-87, witnessed a steep fall. Both Cape Verde and Gambia had negative growth of -8.0 percent and -8.3 percent respectively, the over all average growth rate of ECOWAS member countries being -0.1 percent.

Some of the major constraints to agricultural production in the subregion, among others, include capital shortage, declining level of foreign investment in

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<sup>107</sup> New African Yearbook 1991-92, p. 69.

this sector in some of the countries,<sup>108</sup> inadequate water supply especially in the case of countries of the Sahelian belt, and as already mentioned - migration to the cities, continued use of traditional methods of farming,<sup>109</sup> and endemic diseases such as river blindness in the fertile river valleys of the Niger and Burkina Faso. There is also the absence of technology which can be easily adapted to suit the particular needs of the tropical nature of the subregion.

Closely linked with agriculture is the transfer of technology from developed nations to the subregion. An important part of this is research and development (R & D). It has been established by Jenkins that multinational corporations (MNCs) tend to concentrate the bulk of their R & D in their country of origin. Using the United States as an example, Jenkins concludes that only 10 percent of all their R & D that are carried out overseas, particularly in advanced capitalist countries "with very little being undertaken by subsidiaries in the Third World."<sup>110</sup> Vernon attributes the reasons for this tendency to (1) comparative advantage in the MNC's home country, (2) lack of trained manpower in the Third World countries, (3) to allow economies of scale in R & D, and (4) to eliminate the problems of co-ordinating decentralized units considered to be uneconomical with regards to R & D as opposed to dispersed units. Other arguments advanced

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<sup>108</sup> See for example Luis Servén and Andrés Solimano (1993), "Debt Crisis, Adjustment Policies and Capital Formation in Developing Countries: Where Do we Stand?" in World Development, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 127-140.

<sup>109</sup> Okigbo, Op cit, p. 460.

<sup>110</sup> Rhys Jenkins (1967), Transnational Corporations and Uneven Development, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London. p. 87.

against decentralization of R & D is that it requires constant contact with production and markets so that processes and products can be modified and developed. This implies that the centralized activities should be located in the country where major production and markets are found which, according to Vernon, is usually the home country.<sup>111</sup>

While these arguments are convincing and plausible, they cannot be seen as adequate explanations for not decentralizing R & D not only in Africa but also in other regions of Third World countries. The solution to these problems requires major efforts by the Community as well as international assistance on a vast scale. In fact, extending R & D to the Third World will, in general, help in adapting 'transferred' agricultural technology to suit the particular needs of these tropical countries. It must be clearly stated that unless the problem of low level of production is removed the aspiration of ECOWAS will be difficult to fulfil. Removing these problems will involve effective government policies backed by strong will and determination to translate such policies into concrete terms.

### **c) Capital Shortage and External Debt**

In no subregion of Sub-Saharan Africa is so starved by capital shortage than in West Africa. Throughout West Africa, there is enormous shortage of capital which is essential for overall development. This shortage of capital is not limited to infrastructures machines, and overheard capital such as roads,

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<sup>111</sup>R. Vernon (1977), Storm Over the Multinationals: The Real Issues, MacMillan, London, 1977. pp. 43-5. See also F. Stewart (1977), Technology and Underdevelopment, Oxford University Press, London.

railways, ports and electricity, but extends to high yielding crop species, fertilizers. The resultant shortage of domestic capital which can be invested in productive enterprises prevents the accumulation of more capital and also hinders the production of more goods for domestic consumption.<sup>112</sup> For example, according to World Bank's 1990 statistics on gross domestic product, apart from Guinea and Nigeria whose savings were in excess of 20 percent of national income respectively, all other countries' savings ranged between 2 and 11 percent while Ivory Coast's savings was 14 percent,<sup>113</sup> whereas savings could sometime exceed 30 percent of national income in many developed nations.<sup>114</sup> On the one hand, it was this lack of capital that forced all ECOWAS member-states to take advantage of the World Bank/IMF loans especially from the early 1970s and in most of African countries. On the other hand, the oil shock of the early 1970s prompted a wave of demands for the World Bank/IMF facilities by needy countries affected by that oil shock. What this meant for ECOWAS was to begin to accumulate debt as they continued to

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<sup>112</sup>A careful scrutiny of economic indicators, percentage of economic growth, level of illiteracy rates, greater dependence on some international institutions such as Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), international reserves, levels of production, and so forth of African countries in the African Development Report 1993, World Development Report 1992, and New African Yearbook 1991-92 - all point to the same direction: that West Africa subregion is a little behind other subregions. Official development assistance to Mozambique, Tanzania, and Somalia, from ODA - as a percentage of GNP for 1990 was 65.7%, 48.2%, and 45.9% respectively. Whereas ECOWAS countries' receipts of assistance from the same source was marginal, ranging from 0.7 to 14% of their GNP, and only one country, Mauritania had the luxury of receiving 20% of ODA assistance. This is understandable since about 95 of these countries fall in the low income category. See World Development Report 1992, p. 256.

<sup>113</sup>The World Bank (1992), World Development Report, p. 234.

<sup>114</sup>ibid. pp. 234-5.

borrow more and more funds from these two United Nations financial institutions, and reschedule repayments of previous loans. From this phenomenon emerged mandatory structural adjustment programs (SAPs) for countries seeking loans from the IMF or the World Bank<sup>115</sup> which, as of 1991 had accumulated to much higher levels than was the case a decade ago. Table 7 presented in the following page summarizes each country's debt standing for the period 1970 through to 1991 in the following page. It presents an unfavourable situation for all countries of the subregion. While some countries contracted larger foreign loans, others were cautious in borrowing foreign loans probably to avoid unfavourable future repayment problems. But the situation progressively changed with each country increasing its debt burden by millions of dollars. To the extent that by 1991 while the least indebted country was Cape Verde with a debt burden of only US\$158 million, Nigeria's debt had accumulated to an alarming high of US\$34.5 billion. This increasing debt scenario is also evident in all countries of the subregion. The negative effects of these loans have been mentioned. A further elaboration on these debts will be made in the section dealing with SAP.

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<sup>115</sup>See L.D. Smith (1989), "Structural Adjustment, Price Report and Agricultural Performance in Sub-Saharan Africa," in Journal of Agricultural Economics, Vol. 40, No. 1, January 1989. pp. 21-31. See also K. McAfee (1990), "Why the Third World Goes Hungry: Selling Cheap and Buying Dear," in Third World, The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc. Guilford, Connecticut, pp. 12-17.

**Table 7: Total External Debt of ECOWAS Member-Countries, 1970-1991  
(In Millions of U.S. Dollars)**

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1975</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1991</b>
Benin	40	89	817	1185	1300
Burkina Faso	21	63	511	717	956
Cape Verde	..	1	100	137	158
Gambia	5	13	245	341	351
Ghana	543	723	2226	3296	4209
Guinea	315	767	1455	2256	2626
Guinea Bissau	..	7	308	500	653
Ivory Coast	278	1021	9745	15683	18847
Liberia	162	178	1244	1694	1989
Mali	246	355	1468	2145	2531
Mauritania	27	189	1502	2044	2298
Niger	32	111	1208	1587	1653
Nigeria	567	1143	19550	31977	34597
Senegal	131	342	2563	3286	3522
Sierra Leone	59	155	723	1093	1291
Togo	40	119	940	1186	1356
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2466</b>	<b>5276</b>	<b>44605</b>	<b>69039</b>	<b>78338</b>

Source: African Development (1993), *Africa In the World Economy: Economic Integration and Structural Adjustment in Africa*. Abidjan, p. A-22.

#### **d) Limited Technical Progress**

It is important to emphasize that due to limited technical progress in West Africa, technological and scientific progress are not as widely applied as they are in countries such as the United States, Japan, Britain, Canada, Germany, and

other developed countries. Nor are modern equipment widely available; in fact, minimal availability of modern technology leads a great number of people and businesses to use obsolete implements for weaving, spinning, farming, tailoring in many ECOWAS member-countries.<sup>116</sup> Available machines are also obsolete and cannot be used effectively as would be modern equipment. Even many industries tend to rely to a large extent on machines which are considered obsolete in economically advanced countries. The use of the few sophisticated machines available is hampered, in some cases, by lack of adequately trained personnel most of whom have not been exposed to such technology.<sup>117</sup>

In agriculture, while traditional hoes and cutlasses are used,<sup>118</sup> in developed countries such as Canada, Britain, Sweden, and the United States, sophisticated machines and techniques such as combined harvesters, ploughs, low flying helicopters, insecticides, fertilizers are used for farming. This development occurred as result of industrialization which paved the way for mechanization processes.<sup>119</sup> In the West Africa subregion, this has not been the case especially in the rural sector where the bulk of food are produced through manual labour which is both energy-sapping and back-breaking

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<sup>116</sup>See Brian W. Walker, Authentic Development, p. 38. Rhys Jenkins (1987), Transnational Corporations and Uneven Development, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, p. 90.

<sup>117</sup>ibid., p. 41.

<sup>118</sup>Okigbo, Op cit., p. 469.

<sup>119</sup>The World Bank (1987), Mechanization of Agriculture in the Third World: World Bank Study, World Bank, Washington D.C., p. 11.

exercise.<sup>120</sup> Besides, many machines in use in West Africa were those designed for the temperate countries, and the use of these machines in the tropical countries lead to frequent breakdown and easy wearing under tropical climate. Moreover, these machines are labour-saving devices which do not match with the labour-intensive methods in which West Africans were accustomed.

**e) High Population Growth Rate**

Throughout West Africa, the population has long been on the upward trend in the last several decades. The population increased from about 33.7 million in 1913 to 199.9 million in 1991.<sup>121</sup> This is an increase of about 600 percent. The reasons for these increase can be attributed to increased medical facilities and improved sanitary conditions which have reduced death rate, and raised the average span of life.<sup>122</sup> Added to these is the conservative attitude of many West Africans to have large families and the traditional African belief that procreation of males work towards carrying the family head's name into the

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<sup>120</sup>ibid.

<sup>121</sup>Samuel Ibeiman (1993), "Agriculture and Increasing Population in West Africa," in The African Concord, London, May, 1993. p. 39.

<sup>122</sup>It should be noted here that although life expectancy as of 1990 still remains much lower than those of industrialized world, this is an improvement in the case of West Africa subregion, especially when compared to four decades ago. See Table 1 on Basic Economic Indicators on Chapter One of this Thesis.

next generation.<sup>123</sup> The effect of this cultural phenomenon can be devastating in the face of decreasing food production. At any rate, to put the current population growth rates in perspective, Table 8 is presented below to show the rate of growth for each country for the period 1983-1991:

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<sup>123</sup> Ibelman, Op cit, p. 39.

**Table 8: ECOWAS: Mid-Year Population Estimates (in Millions): 1983-1991**<sup>124</sup>

COUNTRY	1983	1985	1987	1989	1991	Average annual Density Growth Rate	
						1983- 1987	1987- 1991
						%	%
Benin	3.8	4.0	4.2	4.5	4.8	2.9	3.1
Burkina Faso	7.5	7.9	8.3	8.8	9.2	2.6	2.7
Cape Verde	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	2.4	2.5
Gambia	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	3.0	2.9
Ghana	11.9	12.8	13.7	14.6	15.5	3.6	3.1
Guinea	4.7	5.0	5.3	5.6	5.9	2.6	3.0
Guinea Bissau	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.7	2.1
Ivory Coast	9.2	9.9	10.7	11.5	12.4	3.9	3.8
Liberia	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.5	2.7	3.2	3.3
Mali	7.5	7.9	8.4	8.9	9.5	3.0	3.1
Mauritania	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.7	2.8
Niger	6.2	6.6	7.0	7.5	8.0	3.3	3.2
Nigeria	86.3	92.0	98.3	105.1	112.1	3.3	3.3
Senegal	6.0	6.4	6.7	7.1	7.5	2.8	2.8
Sierra Leone	3.5	3.7	3.8	4.0	4.3	2.4	2.6
Togo	2.9	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.0	3.2
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>165.1</b>	<b>165.1</b>	<b>175.8</b>	<b>187.6</b>	<b>199.9</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.8</b>

Source: Compiled from African Development Bank's Selected Statistics on Regional Member Countries, Development Research and Policy Development, Abidjan, p. 21.

What can be noted from Table 8 is that the rate of population growth is

<sup>124</sup>Mid-Year population are figures from United Nations Population Division, the World Bank, or national sources (obtained by the African Development Bank). Long-term refugees in a given country are considered to be part of that country.

faster than the rate at which the economies grow to the extent that efforts by ECOWAS countries to increase economic growth are completely eclipsed by the consumption pressure from rising population. Even surpluses in some sectors that could have been channelled into investment are consumed. The needs of the increasing population are constantly in excess of the production. Besides, there is high percentage of dependency in West Africa on the external environment. For instance, it has been shown that the average population of youths aged between 0 and 14 years is 46.3 percent for the whole of West Africa. While Sierra Leone has the lowest youth population rate with a percentage of 43.4, Togo has the highest number of youths with 48.1 percent of the total population of the country. There is a sharp contrast in this scenario when compared to Germany where the youths only form 16.2 percent of the country's total population.<sup>125</sup> Under the West African condition, what this implies is that investment will be diverted to the provision of schools and colleges, children medical facilities and other social amenities needed by the youths rather than on investments that will promote economic growth. In fact, this is an area that deserves effective policy, not only by individual countries, but also ECOWAS.

#### **f) Foreign Trade Oriented Economies**

Like all other developing nations of the world, foreign trade plays a

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<sup>125</sup>World Development Report 1992, pp. 268-9, See also O.Lawal, Op. Cit., p. 123.

significant role in the economies of West Africa. More than 90 percent of export earnings come from agricultural sector in the colonial era.<sup>126</sup> Cash crop production in which former colonial masters played key roles, as evidenced in the following table, were oriented towards the supply of raw materials to the industries in the developed countries, each country channelling its produce to its former colonial masters and other developed countries with which trade relations had been established.<sup>127</sup> Realizing that leaving production of cash crops to local farmers alone will not yield the desired results, foreign companies from metropolitan countries had to establish and solidify their presence in the subregion. Thus while Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and the Gambia sent majority of their produce to Britain, the Francophone countries such sent their produce to France. In return for these, they imported manufactured goods, fertilizers, and agricultural machines. Table 9 shown in the following page provides evidence in support of this assertion.

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<sup>126</sup>See A.Y. Yansane (1977), "The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)," in The Review of Black Political Economy, Black Economic Research Centre, New York. p. 219.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid. p. 220.

**Table 9: Foreign Investors and their Area(s) of Operation in West Africa from Colonial Period to Independence**

Company	Place/Year of Commencement	Sector
United Africa Company	Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, The Gambia/1861	Various
Royal Niger Company	Nigeria, Ghana/1861	Banking
Fanti Consolidated Ltd	Ghana/1910	Mining
Anglo-American Corp.	Liberia/1917	Various
Societe Generale	Ghana, Nigeria, all French West Africa/1932	Various
Societe Internationale	All French W.Africa, Nigeria/1932	Various
Anglo Mining Corp.	Nigeria/1920	Mining Exploration
Niger Delta Company	Nigeria/1861	Various
Union Carbide	Ghana, Nigeria/1920	Mining
Lever Brothers	Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia/1929	Plantations
Firestone Copper Co.	Liberia/1920	Mining
Mobil Oil (formerly Vacuum Oil)	Ghana, Nigeria/1960	Oil Exploration
Shell-BP Oil	Various Countries/1908	Oil Exploration

Source: Compiled from M.Wilkins, 'Multinational Companies and the Diffusion of Technology to Africa: A Historical Perspective' in D.B. Thomas (1976), Importing Technology into Africa, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1976, p.26.

Table 9 gives a glaring picture of activities of foreign companies which were used by the imperial powers to extract the resources of countries of the subregion to metropolitan countries. In fact, no research is needed to be carried out to discover the proliferation of foreign investment in the subregion and the rest of sub-saharan Africa. While their continued presence and subsequent

proliferation is in response for foreign joint ventures, their importance to countries of the subregion is unquestionable especially when technology and technical know-how which they possess are assets. Yet those sectors of economies in which they are engaged have only made modest contribution to the overall economies of the subregion, but when compared to agriculture, the sectors shown in Table 10 points to the fact that their contributions to economies of these states are, by far, greater than agriculture.

As a matter of fact, the plight of West Africa was, and is still, that owing to the low elasticity of demand of many of their products, commodity prices suffer from fluctuations in the world market. Hence, the expected return often do not meet with their estimated revenue for planning development projects thereby retarding development efforts. Because export-oriented products are accorded high priority, staple food production tend to receive less priority. Consequently severe regional famines set in, creating opportunities for Western media to portray hundreds of thousands of people as "sinking toward death."<sup>128</sup> This is why McAfee was forced to conclude that Western media report emergency goods shipments, foreign aid grants, private and governmental loans from the developed countries, leading Westerners to assume that by these measures, the rich countries are sustaining the battered economies of the Third World. According to McAfee, the opposite is closer to the truth. In the movement of wealth around the world, McAfee contended, far more flows out of

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<sup>128</sup>K. McAfee, "Why the Third World Goes Hungry." p. 12.

impoverished countries of Africa...into the richer economies of Europe, North America, and Japan.<sup>129</sup> One instance of this dilemma is an estimate by the Overseas Development Council, which revealed that every year from 1986, U.S.\$43 billion in net financial resources are transferred from the South to the North, although this estimate is conservative as others have put the South's net loss much higher.<sup>130</sup> McAfee, for example, revealed a 1988 UNICEF's study which showed that developing countries had to channel \$178 billion to developed countries to meet their debt bills repayments which as at that year had climaxed to \$1.2 trillion.<sup>131</sup> Of course, this was not the first time such revelation was made. Indeed, expressing his personal view in an article, Lal did not hide his feelings when he revealed that "billions of dollars were being drained from "crisis debtors" to developed nations."<sup>132</sup>

Speaking of trade, however, Table 10 presents the picture of intra-trade of ECOWAS member-countries against trade with the industrialized countries. A careful look reveals that member-states' intra-trade continues to remains low despite their avowed commitment to increase it. Instead, trade with industrialized countries continues to increase than ever as evidenced in Table 10 which

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<sup>129</sup>K. McAfee, Op cit, p. 12.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid. p. 12.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid.

<sup>132</sup>Deepak Lal, "Poor Countries and the Global Economy: Crisis and Adjustment" in C. Fred Bergsten, ed. (1985), Global Economic Imbalances, Institute for International Economics, Special Reports No. 4. December. pp. 65-76.

follows:

**Table 10: ECOWAS Intra-trade Against Trade with Industrialized Countries, 1979-1987 (In percentage terms)**

Year	ECOWAS Intra-Trade		ECOWAS-Industrialized Countries	
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
1979	3.3	4.0	76.5	70.2
1980	2.7	3.8	70.0	65.8
1981	5.0	4.1	63.2	63.7
1982	5.6	5.1	67.6	61.6
1983	5.7	6.1	65.4	64.2
1984	4.8	7.3	64.0	62.7
1985	4.1	5.8	64.0	63.1
1986	5.1	6.1	66.5	67.9
1987	5.4	5.3	66.5	65.0
Averages	4.6	5.3	67.1	64.9

Source: Compiled from country Reports in New African Yearbook 1991-92, World Development Report 1992, World Bank, Washington D.C., pp. 218-223. African Development Bank's Selected Statistics on Regional Member Countries, Development Research and Policy Development, Abidjan, p. 21.

A close look on Table 10 for the years 1979-87 is indicative of this ebbing intra-trade in the subregion, while external trade with the industrialized world remains high. On average, it can clearly be seen that intra-trade accounted for only 4.6 percent of exports against 5.3 percent of imports within the subregion for the nine-year period, 1979-87. A comparison of external trade, on the other hand, weighs more heavily in favour of the developed countries, and this is indicative that a far high proportion of ECOWAS member-countries trade in both exports and imports is with the industrialized world and less intra-subregional

trade. In the process, imported inflation is stimulated with high cost of imports.

The average ECOWAS exports for the period indicated above is 67.1 percent, against average imports of 64.9 percent. There is no doubt the former could be attributable to cash crops and mineral exports, while the latter could be attributed to merchandise imports, including machinery and equipment. From a theoretical stand point, it is evidently clear that there is no basis for economic integration. It is therefore an illusion to perceive ECOWAS as such.

#### **g) Structural Adjustment Programs**

In the introductory Chapter, it was clearly stated that both subregional integration and SAPs were the two major policies adopted at the Lagos Plan of Action by African countries - West African countries inclusive - to rectify their deteriorating economies. SAP, as a second strategy for West African survival, is a response to the sharp deterioration of economic performance in the 1980s. According to *African Development Bank (ADB)*, the depth and severity of African crisis, caused by a combination of external and internal factors, forced African leaders to seek new development initiatives, the most significant being the reform and adjustment of their economies.<sup>133</sup> Anchored on a liberal economic philosophy, most of the SAPs adopted by ECOWAS member-countries were aimed at eliminating economic distortions; adapting the economies to market forces; improving the efficiency of resource allocation and utilization; and

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<sup>133</sup>African Development Bank (1993), African Development Report 1993: Africa in the World Economy, Economic Integration and Structural Adjustment in Africa. Abidjan, p. 152.

restoring the economies to the path of rapid and self-sustaining growth and development.<sup>134</sup> Thus while economic integration could be seen as a means of fostering economic growth and development by making ECOWAS states inward-looking, at least on a collective basis, SAPs adopted by the subregion, like other countries of the Third World, have mainly been outward-oriented.

SAP policies have two components. While the first is usually directed to stabilization of the economy through measures to reduce or remove external and internal imbalances - referred to as "managed reduction in expenditure" to bring about an orderly adjustment of domestic demand to the reduced level of external resources available to a country, the second component is directed to measures to achieve structural changes that will contribute to economic recovery and long-term growth.<sup>135</sup> This requires changes in relative prices; and institutional reforms designed to make the economy more efficient, more flexible and better able to use resources in a way that generate long term growth. These changes are expected to improve resource allocation and increase the resilience of the economies to future shocks.

While there have been few cases of fairly successful adjustment programs, the general picture has been very uneven. A review of the experience so far points to a few important conclusions from the analysis of the

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<sup>134</sup>ibid

<sup>135</sup>See World Bank (1983), See especially Chapter 4, World Bank, Washington D.C.; Ismail Serageldin (1988), Beyond Crisis Management: The World Bank's Comprehensive Program for Promoting Sustained Growth with Equity in Africa, World Bank, Washington D.C.

*African Development Report.*

The first is that in spite of the aim of structural adjustment policies to achieve adjustment with growth, experience to date suggests that only a handful of countries have been able to record appreciable growth rates, even after a decade of adjustment process.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, adjustment policies in many countries have depressed incomes of a wide rate of income groups. Secondly, adjustment programs seem to have accorded greater priority to short term objectives of maintaining sound balance of payments improvement, and less priority to long-term growth. Thirdly, adjustment policies have fallen short of expectations in stimulating growth, because several countries implementing SAPs have been subjected to heavy burden of external debt, forcing them to implement austerity measures that leave little room for growth. Fourthly, many countries have faced the problem of limited institutional capacity to manage reforms. Apart from the problem of managing macroeconomic objectives, many ECOWAS countries have been confronted with major issues of sectoral reforms in areas such as education and other social sectors, in transport, infrastructure, environment, and urban development, not to talk of the development of rural areas which would have halted emigration into urban towns. Fifthly, SAPs have continued to rely predominantly on concessional lending by international financial institutions, while the expected increase in foreign investment to support

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<sup>136</sup>See Paul Mosley and John Weeks (1993), "Has Recovery Begun? 'Africa's Adjustment in the 1980s' Revisited," in World Development, Vol. 21, No. 10, pp. 1583. See also African Development Report, p. 152.

adjustment growth has remained unrealized.<sup>137</sup>

Nevertheless, the inter-relationship between structural adjustment programs and economic integration cannot be subjected to any serious debate. Both have an inseparable goal of promoting economic growth and development. Moreover, the two involve actions on the same macroeconomic and sectoral variables. Even without any conscious attempt to link SAP and economic integration programs, policy in one particular area necessarily has implications for actions in the other area. Therefore, in examining the inter-relationship between the two, the crucial issue is how to ensure that SAP policies and integration objectives are mutually reinforcing rather than conflicting.<sup>138</sup>

#### **4.9 Monetary Integration**

Monetary integration is another vital facet of an economic union. In most cases the existing colonial currencies were used in post-independence West African subregion and they have continue to use them as the official currencies issued by each country's central bank. Even though ECOWAS committed itself to introducing monetary integration, this has not worked well. Rather, what ECOWAS did was the establishment of a West African Clearing House (WACH), and this has not been effective as it should. According to Cobham and Robson,

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<sup>137</sup>African Development Report, p. 153

<sup>138</sup>African Development Bank, African Development Report, p. 156. For a comprehensive analysis, see Thomas Callaghy (1990), "Lost Between State and Market: The Politics of Economic Adjustment in Ghana, Zambia, and Nigeria," in Joan M. Nelson, ed. Economic Crisis and Policy Choice: The Politics of Economic Adjustment in the Third World, Princeton University Press, Princeton.

WACH is bedeviled with serious constraints.<sup>139</sup>

One of the prerequisites for external loans, particularly from the IMF and other international lending agencies, is the devaluation of national currency. Devaluation of currencies lead to unfavourable situations in most cases in the short-term. The adverse effects of such situations occasioned by a devaluation have been deeply felt by several debt-ridden countries. Consequently both Ghana and Nigeria were forced to adopt the IMF favoured two-tier system of foreign exchange market, in which anyone may buy foreign currency legally and anonymously from exchange bureaus. The bureaus set the rate as they please, according to market forces. So far this has led to improved economic performance in the case of Ghana where the bureaus are not controlled by the government, whereas the Nigerian case is bedeviled by serious constraints as the Nigerian central bank directs the commercial banks in the operation of the bureaus.<sup>140</sup>

#### **4.10 Summary**

In concluding this Chapter, it is important for one to note that trade in West Africa has evolved over the past centuries. While at the beginning of nation-states, trade in the subregion flourished with the absence of frontiers, the penetration of Europeans into the West coast of Africa tended to halt this process by creating artificial boundaries, indirectly forcing indigenous West

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<sup>139</sup>See David Cobham and Peter Robson (1994), "Monetary Integration in Africa: A Deliberately European Perspective," in World Development, Vol. 22, No. 3, pp. 285-299.

<sup>140</sup>See New African, p 136 and 258.

Africans to produce cash crops for their homeland in Europe. At independence, most West Africans thought they would be free from subordination to their imperial masters. The fact that trading process led to the entrenchment of West Africa into the global market is an example of this absorption which has remained up to the present time. To the extent that fluctuations in the World market prices for commodities must, of necessity, affect West African governments in relation to their exports and imports, thus weakening their capacity to generate income from exports revenues when prices are low. The effects of this is low economic growth and low level of development process. The formation of ECOWAS and subsequent introduction of structural adjustment were both a response to remedying the already battered economies. Both strategies have yet to yield any positive result, and no one expects them to do so at least, in the immediate future. While there are potential for economic improvement using these two strategies, this improvement will likely come about in the long-term. They both call for serious commitments on the part of governments of the subregion - not just rhetoric - to translate these two strategies into concrete terms for the benefit of their peoples.

With reference to economic integration, one will question the validity of this economic enterprise since, conventionally, economic integration posits greater trade among member-countries. The minimal intra-trade among ECOWAS member-countries against greater trade with the industrial world renders the subregion's endeavour invalid from a theoretical viewpoint.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **Military and Authoritarian Regimes, Ethnicity, Political Instability, and the Need for Political Integration**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This Chapter will concentrate on the pervasive instability arising from coup d'etats by the military, the prevalence of authoritarian regimes, and hegemonic relations resulting from ethnicity in most ECOWAS member-states. An attempt will also be made to demonstrate that since the advent of military regimes in most ECOWAS states, factionalism within both the military and political elite, have played a destabilizing role in these countries - particularly where there is a functioning democracy. Besides, hegemonic relations among the ruling elites have tended to punctuate the realization of development goals in most ECOWAS states. To the extent that democracy which provides guiding principles on both the actions of governments and the governed have, in recent years, been relegated to the background of state policies if not totally neglected. Even where democracy is being practised, the governments tend to be headed by autocrats. In others they are simply self-installed authoritarian military men. This is not to say that in functioning democracies, authoritarianism is non-existent. In fact, no where in the world has the military intervened frequently in democratic processes as in West African countries, as will be seen shortly. Even the 'rudimentary' democracies presently being practised by a handful of ECOWAS member-states

have one thing in common: they are either autocratic or authoritarian or both.<sup>141</sup> Consequently, the rules of governing - even where they are legally documented in the form of *Constitutions* - the military usually set aside or suspend such constitutions indefinitely once they succeed in gaining power for the mere reason of having possession of military arsenal with which they forcefully control and repress their subjects. This is, perhaps, what motivated Weiner to conclude that those that have achieved effective control over their subjects did so largely by committing resources to the acquisition of military arsenal and the development of the police as an institution of silencing opposition thereby ensuring their continuous control of state apparatus.<sup>142</sup> A broad range of decrees are frequently instituted as mechanisms for safeguarding the interest of the military regimes. They also establish other institutions similar to America's Central Intelligent Agency to perpetuate repression over those who oppose their policies.<sup>143</sup> The major target of such institutions are usually the media which are sometimes critical over government actions and individuals who

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<sup>141</sup>See for example, Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg (1982) Personal Rule in Black Africa: Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, Tyrant, University of California Press, Berkeley; See also Ladipo Adamolekun and J. Osuntokun (1992), Government and Politics in West Africa. Heinemann, Ibadan, p. 130.

<sup>142</sup>Myron Weiner, "Political Change: Asia, Africa, and the Middle East," in Myron Weiner and Samuel P. Huntington, eds. (1987), Understanding Political Development, Little, Brown and Company, Boston and Toronto, p. 35.

<sup>143</sup>Most notorious was the Nigerian Security Organization (NSO) whose activities was similar to America's CIA or the former Soviet Union's K.G.B., although NSO operated internally. This organization has since been replaced by yet another potent and highly feared State Security Services (simply widely referred to by its acronym "SSS.") See African Guardian, Lagos, Nigeria, May, 1993, p. 9.

openly criticize governments.<sup>144</sup> Thus, where such control is exerted on the majority of the people, can development succeed if the larger population is not allowed to freely express their opinion or are excluded in policy formulations? The question can only attract a 'NO' answer. For, no modern state has the mandate to do whatever it wishes without its subjects' approval through democratic process, especially at the present time when dictatorship and authoritarianism are being replaced by democracy. This, of course, does not mean that some democratic states in the subregion are or can be exonerated from dictatorship or authoritarianism.

Ethnicity is another area of concern. In fact, ethnic diversity becomes more vivid when the number of distinct ethnic groups within the West African subregion is considered. In some instances, the number of groups within a state runs into hundreds. An example is Nigeria whose ethnic groups is over 250 distinct groups. When subgroups are taken into consideration, the number of Nigeria's ethnic groups reaches alarming high of 400, each speaking a distinctly different language or dialect.<sup>145</sup> The same is true of other West African states,

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<sup>144</sup>Having lived in both Nigeria and Ghana respectively and have indeed experienced actions of these governments against the media, I can rightly claim this to be a fact of life. In fact, many invaluable lives have been lost and many thrown into prisons simply because editors, newspapers and periodical reporters or contributors were critical of governments' actions, especially when these media are privately owned. Several instances have occurred when particular magazines, newspapers and journals were banned for publishing the truth or that they were not pro-governments. See for example, Newswatch, Lagos, September, 1986, p. 37.

<sup>145</sup>See the Nigerian case in Africa Watch, Vol. 5, No. 11, June 1993; Ghana: Africa Watch, Vol. IV, No. 1, January 31, 1992. Liberia: Africa Watch, Vol. 5, No. 6, June 1993. See also Ladipo Adamolekun and Jide Osuntokun (1992), Government and Politics in West Africa. Heinemann, Ibadan. See Chapter 6, "Nigeria: Ethnic Diversity and Politics, pp. 120-123. See also Walker Connor, "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?" in World Politics, No. 3, April, 1972, pp.319-355.

although the number of ethnic groups is by far lower than that of Nigeria.<sup>146</sup> From this focal point, it is clear that the problem of ethnic diversity is far too ubiquitous to be ignored by any analysis of nations of West Africa. It was this ethnic diversity that perhaps led Weiner to point out that the post-colonial states were arbitrarily created by the imperial powers without regard to differences in ethnic groups and boundaries and other factors that acted to differentiate them from one another.<sup>147</sup> Consequently, hegemonic rather than accommodative ethnic politics characterize the newly independent states of West Africa. To the extent that "in country after country, a single ethnic group has taken control over the state and used its powers to exercise control over others."<sup>148</sup> In fact, this hegemonic relations has become problematic in most countries of West Africa due to the fact that among multi-ethnic states, the process continues to be one of "nation-destroying" rather than "nation-building," as Walker Connor put it.<sup>149</sup> In fact, ethnic hegemony has been exercised in a variety of ways, from the repression of ethnic and religious minorities to the more benign use of state power to give preferences in education and employment to the dominant group

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<sup>146</sup> Ademolekun and Osuntokun, Op Cit, p. 322.

<sup>147</sup> See Myron Weiner, "Political Change: Asia, Africa, and the Middle East," in Myron Weiner and Samuel P. Huntington (1987), Understanding Political Development, Little, Brown and Company, Toronto. pp. 33-64.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid, p. 35.

<sup>149</sup> Walker Connor, Op Cit, pp. 321-321.

or groups.<sup>150</sup> As will be seen later in this Chapter, hegemony, ethnicity as well as the failure of the military and/or authoritarian regimes to relinquish power in order to give way to democratic process almost throughout West Africa, have led to several counter military coup d'etats. The questions which readily come to mind are (1) Why are military rule so pervasive in the West African subregion? (2) Why are the military leaders so tenacious to power once they illegally succeed in overthrowing their respective governments? And (3) why do they not keep to their promise of relinquishing power to elected civilian administrations? To answer these questions, it is important to look at military coup d'etats in Africa and the role of the military regimes which tend to perpetuate hegemony as well as ethnic tensions and the consequent political instabilities throughout the subregion from post-independence. By so doing, we shall gain some insight into the behavioural attitude of the various governments in West Africa.

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<sup>150</sup>This hegemonic relations has been practised since countries of the West African subregion gained independence in the early 1960s. To the extent that minority groups were forced to put pressure on ruling elites to create their own separate provinces or states. To avoid generalization, Nigeria is the most significant example where domination of the minorities by the dominant groups has resulted to demands for, and the creation of, states. Thus Nigeria which, at independence, had only three regions composed of three dominant groups: the Hausas, Ibos, and the Yorubas, now has 30 states structure, each with its own Governor, (legislative assemblies during civilian administration such as those that were put in place in the Second Republic), and local governments. While this process has the advantage of lessening hegemony, it is unlikely to remove the problem in a country where there are over 250 distinct ethnic groups, including the three major ones mentioned above. For the number of ethnic groups See New Africa Yearbook 1991-92, p. 243. For an analysis of this hegemonic and autocratic relations, see Clifford Geertz, "The Judging of Nations: Some Comments on the Assessment of Regimes in the New States," European Journal of Sociology, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1977, pp. 245-61. See also Walker, Op cit., p. 333.

## **5.2 Military Coups and Internal Political Instability In ECOWAS States**

The intention here is not to make a detailed analysis of military coup d'etats, but to show how military coups have emerged as a mechanism for changing governments from post-independence Africa to the present time thereby precluding democratic process in much of the subregion. It is imperative for the reader to understand what is meant by a *military coup* or *coup d'etat*. These two phrases refer to the same thing with regards to a coup. By a military coup, it is meant an irregular seizure of the state's central executive by the regular armed forces or by the internal security forces through the use (or threat of the use) of force.<sup>151</sup> This definition includes plots, attempted coups, and successful seizures of political and administrative powers, thus exclude civilian irregular transfers as cabinet reshuffling and palace coups.

But what are the factors leading to coup d'etats? Two of the most important factors have already been mentioned: hegemonic relations arising from deep-rooted ethnicity, military and political factionalism among the elites. Others include political crisis rooted in the tension between an increasingly disenchanted citizens over the role of the state and weak political institutions. There is also lack of opportunities for citizens' participation in the political process.<sup>152</sup> Other important elements that cannot be ignored include political centrality of the

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<sup>151</sup>Augustine. J. Kposowa and J. Craig Jenkins (1993), "The Structural Sources of Military Coups in Postcolonial Africa, 1957-1984," American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 99, No. 1, July 1993, p. 127.

<sup>152</sup>Myron Weiner, Op cit, p. 44.

military as rooted in its resources and organizational cohesion, plurality, competition and the prevalence of ethnic antagonism. In addition to these factors is a world system of dependency with regard to political turmoil created by export specialization and foreign capital penetration.<sup>153</sup>

To sketch a brief history of military regimes in post-colonial Africa with some emphasis on West Africa will be in order, especially since military coup has, in fact, become the institutionalized method for changing governments until very recently when most military states have, indeed, pledged to relinquish power to democratically elected civilian administrations.<sup>154</sup> Some of these states include Mali, Mauritania, Benin, Togo, Nigeria, Ghana, and so forth. I will return to this later.

Since the Third World countries gained independence, military interventions have become pervasive. According to Kposowa and Jenkins, for example, between independence period and 1985, 45 African countries experienced 60 successful military seizures of power, 71 coup attempts, and 126 reported plots. By the mid-1980s, 25 of African states were directly controlled by

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<sup>153</sup>Kposowa and Jenkins, Op Cit, pp. 129-132. What I mean by capital penetration is not only direct foreign investments encouraged by individual countries and the World Bank/IMF which stressed the importance of market-oriented economies - an essential conditions for structural adjustment, but also separate loans made available to these countries by individual developed countries and international financial institutions. See for example, Uma Lele and Kofi Adu-Nyako "Integrated Strategy Approach for Poverty Alleviation: A Paramount Priority for Africa," in African Development Review, Vol.3, No.1, June 1991, p. 15.

<sup>154</sup>There is no doubt these pledges were partly an outcome of the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and partly due to pressure from developed countries which insist that democratization must be a condition for foreign assistance. Subsequently since 1986 most military regimes in the subregion have pledged to hand over power to democratically elected governments.

the military and over 90 percent had experienced at least one coup d'etat.<sup>155</sup> It is important to note the period covered, that is, 1960-1985. Since then several more plots, attempted, and successful coups have occurred. Nigeria, a country where hegemony by the Hausa-Fulani and their frequent tendency to plot and most often succeed in seizing power from a ruling regime, is the best example. There is therefore the belief that the statistics presented in Table 11 with regard to incidence of coups would have been much higher if plots were included. On the other hand, when the incidence of coups is compared in global terms, Africa ranks the highest. Bertsch, Clark, and Wood, for example, found in their study that a coup or attempted coup occurred once every 4 months in Latin America (between 1945 and 1972), once every 7 months in Asia (1947-1972), once every 3 months in the Middle East (1949-72), and once every 55 days in Africa (1960-1972).<sup>156</sup> In fact, in West Africa, the incidence of coups is more pronounced than in other subregions of Africa. Table 11 merely summarizes successful and attempted coup d'etats in ECOWAS states for the period 1963 through to 1993, excluding plots which occur more frequently.

The information presented in Table 11 is self-evident. In country after country coup d'etats have become the order of the day as reflected in the above table. It reveals each ECOWAS member-state's colonial master, year of indepen-

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<sup>155</sup>Kposowa and Jenkins, Op Cit, p. 126. See also Ali Mazrui and Michael Tidy (1984), Nationalism and New States in Africa, London, Heinemann.

<sup>156</sup>G.K. Bertsch, P. Robert Clark, and L.M. Wood (1978), Comparing Political Systems: Power and Policy in Three Worlds. Wiley, New York. p. 431.

dence, years of successful and attempted coup d'etats, and the total number of these events. Out of 63, there were 41 successful, and 22 attempted coups.

**Table 11: Member-countries' Successful/Attempted Coup D'etats from Post Independence to 1994**

COUNTRY	Colonial Master	Date of Independence	Years of Successful/ Attempted Coup d'etat	Total
Benin	France	1960	1963, 1965, 1967, 1969, 1972, 1977* 1980	7
Burkina Faso	France	1960	1980, 1974*, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1987	6
Cape Verde	Portugal	1975	1980	1
Gambia	Britain	1965	1981*, July 1994+	2
Ghana	Britain	1957	1966, 1972, 1978, 1979 1982	5
Guinea	France	1958	1980, 1984, 1984	3
Guinea Bissau	Portugal	1974	1980, 1984	2
Ivory Coast	France	1960	1963*, 1973*, 1980*	3
Liberia	Referendum (U.S)	1847	1980, 1983*, 1984* 1985*	4
Mali	France	1960	1980, 1980*, 1991	3
Mauritania	France	1960	1978, 1979, 1984	3
Niger	France	1960	1965*, 1974, 1976, 1983*, 1992	5
Nigeria	Britain	1960	1966, 1966, 1975, 1976, 1983 1983*, 1985, 1986*, 1990*, 1991*, 1993*, April 1994	12
Senegal	France	1960	Various political crises	0
Sierra Leone	Britain	1961	1967*, 1967*, 1983	3
Togo	France	1960	1963, 1965, 1967, 1986*	4
--	--	-	Total Number of coups	64

Source: Compiled from New African Yearbook 1991-92 (1992), several pages. With reference to Mali, see Colleen Lowe Morna (1992), "Africans Chart a Course for Political Change," in Third World 1992/93, The Dushkin Publishing Group Inc., Guilford, Conn. p. 60-1. West Africa, London various issues from 1992-July 1994. \*Asterisked years connotes attempted and unsuccessful coup d'etats. +In the Case of the Gambia, see The Mail-Star, Halifax, 26 July, 1994, p. A.8.

Benin (then Dahomey) and Togo both witnessed their first coup d'etats in 1963 - barely three years after gaining political freedom from France respectively. Subsequent successful military coups occurred in both Ghana and Nigeria in January 1966, and the latest one to occur as this Thesis progresses is that of The Gambia which took place during the third week of July 1994.<sup>157</sup>

From Table 11, it is noticeable that of all ECOWAS countries, Nigeria experienced 12 successful and attempted coup d'etats, followed by Benin and Burkina Faso both of which had 7 and 6 respectively. Ghana and Niger each recorded 5 successful and attempted coups, while Liberia and Togo had four each. Others recorded either one or more of these events. The only country which received the obedience of the military was Senegal which had no history of coup d'etat. This does not, however, exonerate the country of internal political problems. Indeed, political crises have occurred at various times. But the country was able to hold on to power in spite of these crises.<sup>158</sup>

Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, and popularly regarded as the most powerful in Black Africa, has experienced several political, ethnic and even religious conflicts than any ECOWAS states. The country recorded, perhaps, the bloodiest of all military coups at the time, and the outcome of this was a 30-month long war between Nigeria and the then Biafra (Eastern Nigeria) which

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<sup>157</sup>The Mail-Star, Halifax, 26 July, 1994. p. A.8.

<sup>158</sup>See Catherine Boone (1992), Merchant Capital and the Roots of State Power in Senegal, 1930-1985, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. See also New African, pp. 280-9.

attempted to secede from Nigeria in 1967.<sup>159</sup> In fact, in Nigeria coup d'etats has literally become a culture within the military. The above table points to this conclusion, considering the fact that the country is still governed by the military despite the regime's expressed commitment to relinquish power to an elected government in 1992.<sup>160</sup> According to Adamolekun and Osuntokun, the crises that eventually led to bloody civil war from 1967 through to 1970 arose from political disagreement by parties that were ethnically dissimilar but all similar in their commitment to a Western-oriented capitalist economic system.<sup>161</sup> In fact, Nigerian politics between 1960 and 1966 were intricate and complex. Firstly, competition for political office was fierce and ruthless since the control of the state apparatus was the only means of acquiring economic power, particularly with regards to jobs and personal wealth for one's supporters. Secondly, politicians were unwilling to construct any ideology based on a critique of social conditions or to formulate the corresponding set of policy prescriptions; instead they furthered their claims by identifying them with those of their tribes.

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<sup>159</sup>See African Yearbook 1991-92, pp. 131 and 246.

<sup>160</sup>The first announcement by Nigeria's military regime to hand over power to a democratically elected government by 1 October 1990, was made by the country's President, Major General Ibrahim Babangida on 13 January, 1986. The date was further pushed to June 1992, and later to June 1993, culminating in a nation-wide threats by traditional rulers and statesmen about the consequence of the military staying in power beyond June 1993. It was these threats that forced the then head of state, Babangida to bow to the wishes of the people by causing the October 1993 elections to hold. Even then, the election became a non-event as it was cancelled by the ruling government simply because a southerner won by a nation-wide majority which cut across ethnic and religious boundaries. See "Nigeria: Democracy Derailed," in a special issue of Africa Watch, Vol. 5, No. 11, August 27, 1993. See also New African Yearbook 1991-92, pp. 263-64.

<sup>161</sup>Adamolekun and Osuntokun, Op Cit, p. 16-19.

Consequently, the rules of the parliamentary democracy were rapidly jettisoned, and the political system proved unable to contain the conflicts.<sup>162</sup>

A crucial elections in Nigeria's Western region in 1964 led to total breakdown of law and order leading to violence as the elections were blatantly rigged. Protesting groups went on the rampage which culminated in the first coup of January 15, 1966, which brought General Ironsi to power.<sup>163</sup> Ironsi, an Ibo tribe himself was toppled and assassinated along with the Western State military Governor by northern officers in another coup d'etat in May 1967. Up to the time of this work, the country had been ruled by the army except for a brief period of four years - from October 1979 through to December 31, 1985, when Alhaji Shehu Shagari legitimately ruled the country as the President. Since the first coup of January 1966, subsequent successful coups were to see military regimes headed by General Yakubu Gowon<sup>164</sup> who ruled from 1970-75; General M. Muhammad, General O. Obasanjo, 1975-79; General M. Buhari, December 1983-August 1985, General Ibrahim Babangida, August 1985-March 1994; and Major-General Abacha who seized power from an interim government installed by Babangida in April 1994 and continues to rule Nigeria up to the

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<sup>162</sup>ibid. p. 18.

<sup>163</sup>It is important for the reader to note that Ironsi himself did not participate in the January coup. Being the head of the army and the most senior officer, he was considered the only leader capable of leading the country. See New African, p. 247.

<sup>164</sup>Yakubu Gowon then, the Army Chief-of-Staff, a Christian officer from a minority group in the North and a non-participant in the coup of May 1967, was asked to head the government, which he did until the end of the Nigeria-Biafra war. See New African, p. 247. See also Adamelokun and Osuntokun, Government and Politics, p. 278.

present time.<sup>165</sup> In fact, ethnic sentiments have been noted to be the chief motivation for the various coups in Nigeria. These were also the central reasons for the extermination of over 30,000 easterners (majority of these being the Ibos, the Ibibio and Efik tribes) in northern Nigeria - one of the major factors which forced the then Eastern Nigeria to secede and proclaim the region the *Republic of Biafra* by Lt.-Colonel O. Ojukwu - a situation which immediately attracted the Nigerian federal government to institute a "police action," and which eventually culminated in a full-scale civil war.<sup>166</sup> Coupled with ethnicity had been religious riots mainly concentrated in northern towns. A Muslim religious group known as the Maitatsine sect had, in 1980, been involved in riots which claimed not only the death of over 1,000 people, but also the burning of several Christian Churches. In February 1984, another Maitatsine riots also occurred in Yola spreading to other towns. This too claimed over 1,000 lives of people believed to be Christians.<sup>167</sup> These occurrences, motivated by ethnic underpinning, have, in the last eight years, claimed over 5,000 lives, displaced over 80,000 Tiv

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<sup>165</sup>Ibid, pp. 247-263. See also West Africa, 25 April-1 May, 1994. For a comprehensive analysis of the Nigerian situation see B.O. Nwabueze (1993), Military Rule and Social Justice in Nigeria. Spectrum Books Limited, Ibadan.

<sup>166</sup>Chimere Ibedum (1976), War and Unity in Nigeria, Paxton Press, Lagos, Nigeria. pp. 9-27.

<sup>167</sup>While northern Nigeria are widely regarded to be predominantly Islamic region in Nigeria, it should be noted that the reverse is the case. There are millions of northerners who are Christians. Coupled with these are southerners who have worked with their northern Christian counterparts to establish Churches in northern cities and towns. The fact that the number of Muslims and Mosques far outweigh those of Christians, these churches are seen to be a threat to Islam. This is one reason why conflicts continue to exist between the two religious faiths. See Africa Watch Vol.5, No. 9, June 1993, p. 10

and Jukun tribes people in Taraba, Kaduna, Kano, Niger and Benue States.<sup>168</sup>

Most significant, on the part of the Nigerian government, is its dictatorial nature. The promulgation of a decree that barred any court from inquiring into abuses of constitutionally guaranteed civil rights is an example of the military government's hard stance against citizens of the country who voice their opposition on government actions. Another manifestation of the Nigerian government's dictatorial tendency is the arrest and threats of human rights activists, the closure of two publications, arrest and detention of journalists, the seizure of the national bar association and threats to striking academics.<sup>169</sup> Having instituted such a decree, the Nigerian government immediately intensified its action on the detention of opposition groups, culminating in the charging of several leading human rights activists with conspiracy and treason on June 15, 1992.<sup>170</sup>

According to *Africa Watch*,

So fearful was the government of the popular reaction to the charges in Nigeria's cities that the accused were produced in a magistrates court in the village of Gwagwalada, 500 miles from Lagos and 50 miles from the new federal capital, Abuja. These well known detainees are but a small part of a wider campaign of arrest and detention targeting suspects

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid., p. 11-12.

<sup>169</sup> Africa Watch (1993) "Nigeria: Threats to a New Democracy, Human Rights Concerns at Election Time," Vol. 5, No. 9. p. 1.

<sup>170</sup> Among those charged were internationally known people such as Dr. B. Ransome-Kuti of the World Health Organization, Chief Gani Fawehinmi, a famous human rights lawyer. See Africa Watch, "Nigeria: Silencing the Vocal Opposition, Crackdown on Democracy Advocates," Vol. 4, No. 7, June 25, 1992. p. 1; See Bjorn Beckman (1992), "Empowerment or Repression? The World Bank and the Politics of African Adjustment," in Peter Gibbon, Y. Bangura and Arve Otstad, eds. Authoritarianism, Democracy and Adjustment, Nordiska Africa-Institutet, Uddevalla, Sweden. pp. 83-105.

opponents.<sup>171</sup>

*Africa Watch* pointed out further that,

These latest measures taken by the military government of General Ibrahim Babangida are the most graphic illustration to date of the government's manipulation of the transition to civilian rule initiated in 1987...[which] has the avowed aim of handing over power to a democratically elected civilian government in January 1993.<sup>172</sup>

Indeed, periodicals are often replete with news of the Nigerian military regime's repressive stance. According to *Africa Watch*, since the transition program was officially announced in 1987, Nigerians have been sceptical about how democratic a militarily dictated democracy could be. The history of Nigeria's tightly controlled transition program have proven the validity of such concerns, particularly since popular participation, freedom of association and respect for the rule of law were all undermined by Babangida, the former head of state. In 1989, for example, after exhorting Nigerians to form new political parties, the government banned them all and in their place created two of its own parties - the *National Republic Convention (NRC)* and the *Social Democratic Party (SDP)* to contest elections. Babangida's regime followed the same practice with regard to individual candidates. In 1987, it banned all former politicians from participating in elections. The ban was revoked in 1991, but government control of candidates was strengthened by a 1991 decree giving the National Electoral Commission (NEC) the authority to disqualify any candidate deemed by the NEC to be

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<sup>171</sup> *Africa Watch*, "Nigeria: Silencing the Vocal Opposition", pp. 1-3.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* p. 4.

unfit.<sup>173</sup> In spite of this however, the election did take place as scheduled but was fraught with problems. Indeed, Nigerians should have been celebrating the end of military dictatorship. Instead, they were faced with a new and more dangerous phase of military rule as Nigerian ruler, General Babangida and his cronies, in an attempt to disguise the perpetuation of their regime, seek to implement a so-called interim national government. Two months later, General Babangida annulled the presidential election and for the fourth time, postponed the military's exit from politics. His last minute maneuverings did not only betrayed citizens, who in the June 12 elections had overcome ethnic and regional rivalries in an effort to rid themselves of military rule, but, tragically, have brought such rivalries back to the political foreground. The recently reported participation of government forces in ethnically based attacks in the southern delta region demonstrates the military's willingness to foment ethnic conflict for its own gain. The danger of such practices is all too evident from events elsewhere in Africa and the world.<sup>174</sup>

That General Babangida and his cronies had no intention of allowing a significant voice in government was proven by the brutal reaction of military and security forces to the outcry which followed the election's annulment. Over a hundred demonstrators were killed in a pro-democracy demonstration in July

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<sup>173</sup>"Unfit" here refers strictly to those who had held political offices both in the First and Second Republics; See Nwabueze (1993), Military Rule and Social Justice, p. 161. See Africa Watch, "Silencing the Vocal Opposition." pp. 2-3.

<sup>174</sup>See for example a detailed analysis of the Nigerian situation in Africa Watch, "Nigeria: Democracy Derailed," Vol. 5, No. 11, August 27, 1993.

1993, while hundreds of human rights and pro-democracy activists, labour leaders, journalists, students and workers were arrested in July and August of the same year. Many, according to *Africa Watch*, are still detained in abysmal conditions, including pro-democracy leaders who have been under detention for about nine months without access to their families, defense counsel or doctors, despite court order granting their release on bail. Six media houses were proscribed, while a number of journalists were detained and others were declared wanted by security agents. New restrictive press regulations were decreed. This, in fact, led to the formation of an organization called Universal Defenders of Democracy - whose basic role is to challenge the military decrees which they see as one strategy to silence opposition.<sup>175</sup> Reacting to the June 12, 1993 election, Nigerian traditional rulers insisted that the annulled presidential election must not be cast away in the interest of national unity and especially since it represented a new dawn in Nigeria's political history.<sup>176</sup> As of July 1994, the country appears to be heading toward total collapse following strike action initiated early in the month by the Nigerian petroleum oil workers who were later joined by their top officials. This has halted petroleum oil production on which the country depends for about 90 percent of its exports earnings. This action has, as can be expected, caused nation-wide paucity of oil and gas. Industrial production has been stalled for lack of fuel necessary to

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<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10.

<sup>176</sup> *West Africa*, 7-13 March, 1994. p. 402.

generate their plants. As support to the oil workers, the Nigerian Labour Congress recently ordered workers across the country to join the striking oil personnel, which they did. The strike has already spread to civil servants both at federal and states levels. The reasons behind these are two-fold: the first is the demand for the release from jail of M.K.O. Abiola, who won the 1993 presidential election, but who was recently charged and then jailed for treason. The second is the paucity of basic necessities such as gas and petroleum oil needed for local consumption, virtual collapse of transportation services, continued domestic shortages of power and water across the country. As West Africa reported, the country is on the verge of total break down.<sup>177</sup>

For several years, Ivory Coast's autocratic regime headed by President Felix Houphouet Boigny, faced opposition from political parties and several attempted coup d'etats took place, beginning from 1963. As Adamolekun and Osuntokun revealed, in response to the first coup, the government created a strong popular militia group as a countervailing force to the military. This did not, however, prevent the military from trying again in 1973 and 1980. In spite of opposition from political parties and the army, Boigny was able to devise various means to repress the three opposition parties: *the Parti Democratique de Cote D'Ivoire (PDCI)*, *Front Populaire Ivoirienne (FPI)*, and the *Ivorian Workers Party (IWP)* and place the army where they belonged, and indeed, held to power from

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<sup>177</sup>West Africa, July, 1994.

independence until his death in December 1993.<sup>178</sup> Before his death, Boigny's government had frequent confrontation with students who were critical over government policies. Using intimidation, detention of students, imprisonment of members of opposition parties for causing "acts of violence," Boigny was able to silence his opponents.<sup>179</sup> The major question, however, is that could Boigny's exit pave a way for an ideal democracy? What will provide an answer to this question is the experience which will be brought into fore by his successor and political opponents as well as the people themselves.

With regards to Togo, an unsuccessful attempt to topple the government led to repression and imprisonment of several people in September 1986 that Amnesty International had to intervene by sending an official mission to investigate alleged human rights violation by the Togolese government. What Amnesty discovered during its mission were scores of people who had been imprisoned without charges.<sup>180</sup> Before Amnesty International came in, France had despatched 250 troops on 25 September, 1986 to support the former Togolese President Eyadema, against "subversive elements" in the country, and to prevent any attempted coup.<sup>181</sup> Indeed, it was because of the political

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<sup>178</sup>West Africa, 31 January-6 February, 1994.

<sup>179</sup>See West Africa, 16-22 March, 1992, pp. 477.

<sup>180</sup>See especially Adamolekun and Osuntokun, Op Cit, p. 359. See also New African Yearbook, p. 355.

<sup>181</sup>Ibid. p. 355.

climate in Togo and in particular, Eyadema's repressive stance, that forced the formation of *Mouvement Togolaise pour la Democratie (MTD)* in Paris.<sup>182</sup>

In January 1987, Eyadema celebrated his 20 years in power with great pomp and pageantry - an event which was attended by a large number of Francophone Presidents within the subregion and a delegation from France.<sup>183</sup> Here, what is evidently clear is 'grand corruption' which manifested in the use of public money by Eyadema for his own personal use, while a large majority of Togolese people are frequently neglected and denied access to education, health, and other social support usually expected from government. The fact that no citizen could raise an eye-brow against such activities by the country's leader goes to express Eyadema's dictatorial rule. In December 1986, he called for an election and his ruling party, being the only one in the country, Eyadema was re-elected for another seven-year term. In 1990, legislative elections were held on March 4 for the 77 seats in the national assembly. On 25 August 1993, Eyadema was once again re-elected for yet another 7-year term of office.<sup>184</sup>

The case of Benin is not, in fact, different from those of other ECOWAS states. This is indeed revealed by the fact that the country is placed next to Nigeria in terms of the number of coup d'etats that had taken place in the country. Being one of the first two countries to have recorded a coup in 1963,

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<sup>182</sup>New African Yearbook 1992, p. 355.

<sup>183</sup>Adamolekun and Osuntokun, Op Cit, p. 372

<sup>184</sup>ibid.

Benin has a chequered history of coups.<sup>185</sup> In October 1963, the civilian administration was overthrown by Colonel Christophe Soglo, commander of the army, who formed a provisional government uniting the country's three political leaders before and then made temporary exit. In December 1965, he formed the *Comite de Renovation Nationale (CRN)*, but his government was short-lived as in 1967, he was himself overthrown by Lieutenant-Colonel Alphonse Alley who named his executive *Comite Revolutionnaire Militaire (CRM)*. Alley became President and he, in turn, was swept away in a coup led by Major Kouandete. This government was only to last till 1972 when the longest ruling president, Brigadier General Mathieu Kerekou seized power on 26 October 1972, accusing his predecessors of ineffectiveness, ethnicity and anarchy. As *New African* pointed out, on 30 November 1974, Kerekou announced his government's political orientation being socialist based on the philosophical ideal of Marxist-Leninism.<sup>186</sup> Now that this ideology is being replaced by democracy in Eastern Europe and other Third World countries, which hitherto leaned toward communist orientation, will the country continue with Marxist-Leninism? The author of this thesis does not think so.

In Mauritania the dominant political power historically remains with the light-skinned Arabs (*the Maures Blanc*) who are, by far, outnumbered by the

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<sup>185</sup> See *New African*, pp. 28-31; Adamolekun and Osuntokun, *Op Cit.* p. 374. See also *Third World Guide 1991-92*, pp. 226-27.

<sup>186</sup> *New African Yearbook*, p. 29.

Black Mauritians, and this has been so for several generations.<sup>187</sup> In spite of this high population of Blacks which are composed of the Peul, the Sarakoule, the Wollof and the Bambara tribes, hegemonic relationship between the Arabs Mauritians and the Black African tribesmen has been a vexing one since the country became independence. As Davies recalled, because political power is dominated by the Arabs to the exclusion of Black Africans, there is a constant ideological dichotomy between the two groups. As a consequence, there is little or no representation of Blacks in the bureaucracy and institutional apparatuses of the state. It was this lack of representation that compelled Black Africans to form the *Rally for the Rebirth of Negro Africans of Mauritania* (RENAM),<sup>188</sup> - an armed struggle group whose members are drawn from Black Mauritians and organizations who feel they are "being badly treated by political authorities." Created in 1989, and following subsequent government negative attitude towards the Blacks, thousands had to emigrate to Mali and Senegal while the rest emigrated to other West African countries and Europe to form a leftwing group with headquarters in Europe. The military regime headed by President Maaouya Ould Taya employs several exclusionary measures to ensure the Arabs are in control of state's resources - a situation the Blacks do not want. According to Davies, the numerical strength of the Blacks notwithstanding, there has never been power sharing at the apex of state authority, and it was only after a

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<sup>187</sup>George O. Davies, "Mauritania: A Smouldering Cauldron," (1993) in West Africa, 2-8 August, 1993, p.1345.

<sup>188</sup>ibid., p. 1345.

prolonged outcries by Blacks that few Blacks were allowed to hold administrative positions within the civil service. It was this domination by the few Arabs over the years, for example, that compelled Davies to conclude that:

In the corner, there is a cauldron smouldering and if it is allowed to spill over, Mauritania will join those countries that have been experiencing serious fratricidal war in the West African subregion.<sup>189</sup>

In Mali, the military has dominated the political life of the country since the army took control of state apparatus to the chagrin of disillusioned, if not indifferent, population. Dissatisfaction expressed in sporadic violence since the death in detention of Malian first President, Modibo Keita, who remained very popular, and spontaneous demonstrations at Bamako, a majority of the country's population were persistently repressed through detention and imprisonment of citizens, including students. Following popular outcry over the repressive stance of the government, Amnesty International was forced to investigate the problems brought to its attention by Western media and found hundreds of political prisoners in jail. Appeal to the government by Amnesty International yielded result as the head of the military regime had to bow down to this organization and international pressure by releasing political prisoners.<sup>190</sup> Internal crisis in Mali seems to have no end. In fact, one of the casualties of this crisis is Colonel Saloum Bilal, military leader of the *Popular Movement of the Azaouad (MPA)* who was gunned down by an unidentified armed soldiers. Yet, Bilal was noted

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid. p. 1345.

<sup>190</sup> New African Yearbook 1991-92, p. 203-4.

to be one of the architects of the peace process which was embarked upon following the signing of the National Pact on April 11, 1992.<sup>191</sup>

Ghana, the most progressive country at post-independence under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, also witnessed a spate of political crises. Nkrumah's government having been toppled in February 1966 while he was on a peace mission in Hanoi, Lt. General J.A. Ankrah who played no part in the coup d'etat, became the new President.<sup>192</sup> Civilian administration was put in place in 1969 under the Presidency of late Kofi Busia - a former university professor in Britain, following a democratic process. Lacking effective political skill or sound policies, Busia's government dismissed nearly 1000 civil servants. But Busia's government did not last as a group of army officers toppled his government in 1972, and Lt. Col. Ignatius Acheampong became the new head of state. He too was dethroned in a coup in 1978 and General Akuffo who seized power from Busia was, in turn, toppled by the present leader, Flight Lt. Jerry Rawlings in 1979. The first important, but most deplorable, task undertaken by Rawlings' Government whose central executive body was named the *Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)* was to do a "vigorous house-cleaning exercise" - the execution of three former heads of state, namely Acheampong, Akuffo, and Lt. General Ankrah as well as several other high ranking military officers, including General Afrifa for reasons of embezzlement of state's funds.

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<sup>191</sup>West Africa, 14-20 March, 1994, p. 464.

<sup>192</sup>New African Yearbook, 1991-92, p.131.

Altogether eight top army officers were executed - a situation which occasioned immediate international repercussions.<sup>193</sup> Apart from international condemnation of Rawlings' action, Nigeria which supplied Ghana 80 percent of crude oil placed immediate halt of oil supply, thus depriving Ghana of its oil requirements and causing a severe shortage. The house-cleaning nevertheless continued, and up to 100 senior officers and civilians, and businessmen were tried in camera by impromptu "People's Courts."<sup>194</sup> While Rawlings gave way for a brief civilian administration under the presidency of Dr. Hilla Limann, the former returned to power in a coup in the early hours of December 31, 1982 and instituted a central executive called *Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC)* under the aegis of corruption.<sup>195</sup>

Soon after Rawlings seized power for the second time, Ghana's PNDC established a "revolutionary" court system. Consisting of Public Tribunals which operate within the country's judicial system, this parallel system for the administration of justice showed cavalier disregard for normal judicial procedures. Created by decree No. 24, to strengthen the legitimacy of Rawlings and to further the government's political interests, only a handful of verdicts handed down by these courts have run contrary to the government's wishes. As *Africa Watch* pointed out, these public tribunals are the cornerstone of the

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<sup>193</sup> ibid. p. 133.

<sup>194</sup> ibid

<sup>195</sup> Africa Watch, Vol. IV, No. 1, January 31, 1992, p. 2.

government's institutionalized violation of human rights as they operate under a veneer of legality that does not prevent widespread manipulation by the government, but which is often sufficient to make it difficult for Ghanaians to protest against their abuses.<sup>196</sup> In fact, since these tribunals were created, leaders of former political parties and individuals have been tried and sentenced to terms of imprisonment for alleged breaches of the political parties Decree. In fact, three prominent judges and others were abducted and murdered by an unidentified armed group. Rawlings denied any complicity. And to maintain his legitimacy, prominent politicians and businessmen, including a former High Commissioner of Ghana in London, Britain, were given prolonged prison sentences under the aegis of corruption, and embezzlement of public funds.<sup>197</sup> In fact, the autocratic rule of Rawlings resulted in the formation of rebellious factions within Ghana and in neighbouring countries such as Ivory Coast and Togo.<sup>198</sup> There is no doubt that these events are attributable to ethnicity leading to disillusionment by various groups which, in turn, led to frequent unsuccessful coup. For example, northern Ghana made up predominantly of

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<sup>196</sup>See "Ghana: Revolutionary Injustice, Abuse of the Legal System under the PNDC Government," in *Africa Watch*, Vol. IV, No. 1, January 31, 1992. p. 2. It should be noted that this publication by a *Committee of Human Rights Watch*, based in Washington, New York, and London, reports country by country news on human rights issues in African countries.

<sup>197</sup>*Ibid.* p. 136.

<sup>198</sup>*Ibid.* p. 137; One manifestation of disenchantment with Rawlings regime, is the incidence of coup attempts since he came to power. Table eleven revealed five successful coup d'etats, and in-between this are several coup attempts all of which were foiled. Another manifestation of this disenchantment rests on exodus of Ghanaians to other countries within the subregion, Europe or North America.

Hausa tribe are often neglected or are under-represented in the central government. As recently as March 1994, conflict erupted in the northern region leading the death of over 1,000 people - a situation which was blamed on the refusal of the Dagomba, Gonja and Nanumba tribes to allow the Konkombas to have a chieftaincy.<sup>199</sup> In spite of the high number of deaths, Rawlings government seemed unconcerned. Consequently, the opposition party, the *New Patriotic Party (NPP)*<sup>200</sup> challenged Rawlings and his *National Democratic Congress (NDC)* and urged him to "take firm and tangible steps towards reconciling differences with opponents and among warring ethnic factions involved in land disputes in the Northern Region." The NPP spokesman, Kwame Pianim, was responding to Rawlings who stated earlier that "vested interests were bent on causing trouble in the country."<sup>201</sup> Pianim, an executive of the NPP, lamented that his party stood for compromise, while the Ghanaian leader kept talking about the need for others to reconcile "while doing little or nothing himself." According to Pianim, the government had been accusing the opposition parties of "stroking flames of the conflict" rather than coming up with concrete proposals to lessen the tension which had emerged from land disputes." Charging at the government, Pianim asked, "Wasn't he (Rawlings) who said no

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<sup>199</sup>West Africa, 28 March-3 April 1994, p. 552.

<sup>200</sup>Ghana recently returned to civilian administration with Rawlings retaining his position of Presidency being the leader of his party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

<sup>201</sup>West Africa, 21 March 1994, .

one was born with land?"<sup>202</sup>

Liberia, the most politically troubled country during the last year of President William Tolbert's government, the political establishment had witnessed unprecedented events in the history of the country when an increase in the price of rice triggered a chain reaction in January 1979, including demonstrations, country-wide unrest which, by official sources, led to the death of 41 people and 548 others seriously injured, although J. F. Kennedy Medical Centre estimated over 100 killed by police.<sup>203</sup> Upon Tolbert's request, President Sekou Toure of Guinea despatched troops immediately to Liberia in support of Tolbert's True Whig Party which was troubled by the civil strife led by opposition parties - the *Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL)*, (which later changed its name to *Progressive People's Party (PPP)*), and *Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA)* supported by Amos Sawyer, a university professor.<sup>204</sup> The gravity of the situation reached alarming proportion as the country was gripped with fear. Yet, as *New African* recalled, the leader of the government party, Tolbert's True Whig, was always making propaganda at home and abroad to the effect that Liberia was Africa's most stable country, particularly with

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<sup>202</sup>West Africa, 28 March-3 April 1994.

<sup>203</sup>See T. Lardner, "Liberia: An African Tragedy," in Africa Report, November-December 1990, p. 15-16; Gordon Thomasson, "Liberian Disaster: Made in the USA," New York Times, July 14, 1990, p. 21; and Christopher Clapham, "Liberia," in Donald B. Cruise, ed. (1989), Contemporary West African States, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. p. 108. See also for a detailed political and socio-economic history of Liberia, in New African p. 182.

<sup>204</sup>New African Yearbook, Op Cit, pp. 185-86

asserted commitment to 'humanistic capitalism,' which claimed to protect the interest of each individual, including the poor. The True Whig's leadership seemed confident of maintaining a level of consensus politics in the country with the larger population, including political organizations.<sup>205</sup> Here one finds the True Whig's position contradictory for, on the contrary, organized opposition to the ruling party had long been brewing about its dominance of the country's political life. Numerous political organizations began to emerge in addition to community groups in rural areas, workers' self-help groups, and anti-imperialist groups which took up the problems of Liberia's workers and peasants. Students also began to adopt a more assertive and critical posture, and radical groupings began to form in universities to challenge the long-established authority, using increase in the price of rice as a critical basis for argument.<sup>206</sup> It is important for the reader to note that Liberia was founded in 1847 by freed American slaves. According to *Africa Watch*, the new country was controlled by the settlers, known as Americo-Liberians, who effectively held power for 133 years. Believing it was their mission to christianize and civilize Liberia, they ruled the country like a colony, establishing a feudal structure with all social, economic and political power in their hands, and subjecting the indigenous population to a range of abuses.<sup>207</sup> It was against this background that the 1980 military

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<sup>205</sup> New African, p. 183

<sup>206</sup> ibid, pp. 180-85.

<sup>207</sup> Africa Watch Vol. 5, No. 6, (1993), "Liberia: Waging War to Keep the Peace: The ECOMOG Intervention and Human Rights." p. 6.

coup that brought Master Sergeant Samuel Doe to power was welcomed by majority of Liberians who saw it as the overthrow of the ruling elite. Tolbert was shot in his office in cold blood. This incident marked the beginning of ethnic antagonism and subsequent power struggles. Doe installed himself as the new head of state, banned political parties, and then threw members of political parties into jail without trial. To solidify his position as the new head of state and government, and apparently in an attempt to silence the opposing ethnic groups, he proceeded to do house-cleaning by executing 14 members of Tolbert's administration publicly against international community's appeal for clemency, while some countries were quick in condemning the new military government's action.<sup>208</sup> In fact, to demonstrate its chagrin against Doe's deplorable action, Nigeria had to close down its embassy in Monrovia and ordered it staff home. Libya's relations with Liberia deteriorated and had to withdraw its "people's bureau" which it had hoped to make a full-fledged embassy.<sup>209</sup> ECOWAS member-states were unanimous in condemning Sgt. Doe, and took immediate action by preventing him, upon his arrival in Lagos, Nigeria, from entering the venue of ECOWAS' 1980 summit as he was "not recognized as the legitimate head of state" of Liberia.<sup>210</sup>

Sgt. Doe ruled the country with iron-fisted hand similar to Zaire's Mobutu

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<sup>208</sup>Country Profile, "Liberia" in Third World Guide 91/92, Garamond Press, 1991, pp. 390-92. See also New African Yearbook 1991-92, pp. 180-185.

<sup>209</sup>New African, p 184.

<sup>210</sup>ibid.

and Ugandan's Idi Amin. In fact, his dictatorial tendency culminated in the elimination of politicians from the deposed ruling elite and proceeded to replace them with his own ethnic group which formed only 4 percent of the total population of the country, while the larger ethnic groups - the Manos and Gios were left out.<sup>211</sup>

From the foregoing emerged discontent among the population. In a country with a population of 2.7 million, comprising of 16 distinct ethnic groups,<sup>212</sup> it is evidently clear that ethnic tensions played significant part in the country's state of affairs. Opposition from within the military and the populace started to gather momentum that between 1980 and 1989 several coup attempts were staged, all of which failed to topple Sgt. Doe's administration. What followed was increased repression, human rights violations. To test his popularity which he thought he held, he called for an election in 1985 - a year after releasing political opponents and lifting the ban on political opponents.<sup>213</sup> Several parties were formed, including Doe's *National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL)*, Amos Sawyer's *Liberian People Party (LPP)*, *Liberian Unity Party (LUP)* led by Edward Kesselly, the *United People's Party (UPP)* headed by Baccus Matthews, and the *Liberian Action Party (LAP)* of Tuan Wreh.

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<sup>211</sup> John Inegbedion (1992), "The ECOWAS Intervention in Liberia: Toward Regional Conflict Management in post-cold War Africa?" - a paper he presented at the Summer Workshop on International Organizations, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, July 1992, p. 11.

<sup>212</sup> See Third World Guide 91/92, p. 390.

<sup>213</sup> Third World Guide 91/92, p.391.

Elections were held on 15 October 1985, and, as can be expected, Doe's party won by a majority - a majority which was largely attributed to massive rigging by the Doe's party, according to *International Press and New Times*.<sup>214</sup> A wave of criticism on the way in which the elections had been conducted became pervasive that an army commander, Doe's comrade and the second most powerful man in Liberia, Thomas Quiwonkpa, attempted to overthrow the government - a failed attempt which resulted in his death while prominent politicians were once again detained indefinitely. In spite continued criticisms, Doe was sworn into office as President in January 1986 and pledged to reconcile with other parties and repair whatever damages that had been done.<sup>215</sup> It is one thing to speak of reconciling with political opponents. It is another to put into practical terms spoken words. Indeed, no serious attempt was made towards reconciliation, and it was against this background that the three opposition parties - LAP, LUP, and UPP came together to form a "grand coalition." Political struggle continued for a prolonged period, that in 1990, Charles Taylor's *National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL)* - which was behind the initial revolt against General Doe and whose troops' strength consisted mainly of the Gio and Mano tribes of eastern Liberia - stepped in forcefully. These two tribes had been victims of savage acts of torture, and murder at the hands of elements of the Krahn tribe from which General Doe came. Taylor was not deterred by past failures to

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<sup>214</sup>Revealed by *Africa Watch*, Vol. 5, No. 6, pp. 5-6.

<sup>215</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 6.

topple Doe as he turned to full-scale war with the ultimate objective of bringing down the despotic rule of General Doe, replace it within six months by an elected multiparty democracy. Within a short period, Taylor who was heavily armed by Libya,<sup>216</sup> had captured almost 92 percent of major towns and villages of Liberia, almost paralysing General Doe's forces loyal to him. Meanwhile Taylor's former comrade, Yormie Johnson broke away to form his *Independent Patriotic Front (IPF)* with the same goal as Taylor's - to bring down General Doe. With the intention of inspecting his loyal forces, Doe himself met his doom when he met Taylor face to face, as he mistook the latter's forces for his. Doe was summarily machine-gunned, but his forces continued to wage war with both Taylor's and Johnson's forces.<sup>217</sup> Thousands of civilians were killed in the war waged by various factions that were engaged in the war.

it was against this background that in 1990, a group of West African nations under the auspices of the ECOWAS took an unprecedented step of sending a peacekeeping force into Monrovia. This force, known as the *Economic Community Cease-Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG)*, had its goal of bringing peace to the country. Its intervention succeeded in temporarily stopping the bloodshed and ethnic killing. Hence, it is therefore regarded by many as a model of regional conflict resolution.<sup>218</sup> However, ECOMOG has not integrated

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<sup>216</sup> Africa Watch, p. 8.

<sup>217</sup> ibid

<sup>218</sup> Africa Watch, (1993) "Liberia: Waging War to Keep Peace: The ECOMOG Intervention and Human Rights," Vol. 5, No. 6. June. pp. 2-4.

human rights protection and promotion into its activities, and this has proved to be a serious shortcoming. Pursuing peace without recognizing the centrality of human rights has left ECOMOG embroiled in a conflict with few immediate prospects for resolution, for, in the interest of ending the war and defeating a seemingly intractable adversary in Charles Taylor's NPFL, ECOMOG has allied itself with other warring factions, which undermines its credibility and therefore its ability to bring peace. According to *Africa Watch*, ECOMOG's intervention was carried out without clearly stated human rights principles and goals. And although it was not a part of ECOMOG's mandate, concrete human rights improvement resulted after it secured control of Monrovia and its environs in the second half of 1990, including a halt to the ethnic-based killings and brutality, the removal of obstacles to the delivery of relief supplies. Since the NPFL attack on Monrovia in October 1992, ECOMOG has unofficially aligned itself with two of the warring factions, the *Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL)* and the *United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO)*, which are themselves responsible for serious human rights abuses. This has raised questions about ECOMOG's commitment to human rights as well as its ability to act as a neutral arbiter of the conflict. Again, ECOMOG has not sought adequately to control the abusive behaviour of the forces with which it is nominally allied, or to investigate cases of human rights abuses committed by these forces, including killings, beatings, systematic looting and harassment of civilians.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

It is important to note that one success of ECOMOG was the cease-fire which it caused to forestall in November 1990 and its efforts to bring about an *Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU)* governing Monrovia and its environs. It is, however, also important to note that the war tended to divide Liberia. Thus while IGNU backed by ECOMOG only governs Monrovia and its environs, the NPFL controls approximately 90 percent of the country. The problem, however, remains that ECOMOG has not been able to enforce a peaceful solution to the crisis, and due to Taylor's intransigence, ECOMOG has been dragged into the war and is considered by many to constitute a warring faction. Its role has changed from peacekeeping to peace enforcing, and its rules of engagement has been more aggressive in that if they feel threatened, they can also attack targets that might contribute to a threat against them.<sup>220</sup> The most important point to note here is that Liberia, due to political and ethnic divisions the country has been ravaged by war by various factions. When the present war will end is, in fact, a matter of conjecture.

Niger has had its own share of internal political problems. An attempted coup was staged following economic grievances by a greater proportion of the population. Instigated by these economic grievances, the army took over the state radio station as the first step. In an attempt to proceed further, the putsch was overwhelmed by a faction of the army loyal to the country's Prime Minister,

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<sup>220</sup> ibid. p. 3.

Amadou Cheffou.<sup>221</sup>

Very recently, political crisis erupted in Senegal, triggering several deaths and subsequent large-scale trial and imprisonment of political opponents. According to *West Africa*, following violent demonstrations on February 16, 1994 which led to the conviction of two main opposition leaders, Abdoulaye Wade and Landing Savane of the *Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS)* and the *African Party for Democracy and Socialism (PADS)* respectively, 73 people were charged for "breach against the state security."<sup>222</sup>

Indeed, in all countries of the subregion social tensions have been experienced some of which resulted from ethnicity, domination of one ethnic group over other ethnic groups, religious conflicts particularly in states where religious plurality exists. Even the smallest country within ECOWAS, Cape Verde, is not spared from political power struggles.<sup>223</sup>

The same story can be told of other ECOWAS member-states, be they military or civilian regimes. In fact, in most cases, demonstrations against government actions, for example, policies on wage freeze, cuts in number of civil servants, critics of government policies as a whole, have attracted outright imprisonment without trial, torture, killings and immediate banning of associations, political parties considered to be inimical to national

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<sup>221</sup>West Africa, 16-22 March 1992, p. 477.

<sup>222</sup>West Africa, 7-13 March, 1994, p. 405.

<sup>223</sup>ibid. p. 405.

governments.<sup>224</sup> In fact, increasing militarization of these countries has not only impeded development, but has also curtailed the peoples' participation in decision-making in matters that are of great concern to them. In addition, the acquisition of arms from the Western World by countries of the subregion has so far been detrimental rather beneficial for, the great amount of money spent on military arsenal could have been directed to development, especially in programs of strategic importance such as job creation, education, health, agricultural development or 50 percent of such expenditure could have been used to repay foreign loans. The *Report of the South Commission* was not joyful when it lamented that,

Militarization [by countries of the subregion] has perverse implications for development. The diversion of resources to pay for instruments of war and repression retards progress in many countries. Just as deleterious is the growth of a military culture which is contemptuous of democracy, population, human rights, or the principle of government accountability.<sup>225</sup>

The *South Commission* went on to point out the negative effects of militarization being the breeding of corruption, the abuse of power, and the consequent alienation of the people from the political system.<sup>226</sup> Of course,

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<sup>224</sup>Nigeria, Togo, Ghana and Ivory Coast are example of such countries where demands for pay increases, privately owned media criticisms, and demand for equal treatment in employment are not tolerated by the ruling regime. See Adamolekun and Osuntokun, *Op cit*, p. 39-43. Fantu Cheru (1989), *The Silent Revolution in Africa: Debt, Development and Democracy*, Zed Books, London and New Jersey.

<sup>225</sup>The Report of the South Commission (1990), *The Challenge to the South*, Oxford University Press, New York, p. 53.

<sup>226</sup>*Ibid.*

nothing can be more true than the foregoing assertion. One important fact remains true to a large extent: with the exception of the Gambia, all ECOWAS states leaders have, over the years, tended to rule their subjects autocratically simply because they are or have been military regimes or simply because they have the support of the armed forces.<sup>227</sup> Experiences of most countries of the subregion so far point to the divisive and factional nature of these armed forces as opposed to unity among them.

### **5.3 Inter-State Political Quagmires**

Within the subregion problems ranging from border disputes, political divisions, and collaboration with political dissidents in neighbouring countries are constant occurrences. For example Ghana and Togo have been involved in a long standing inter-state problems.<sup>228</sup> Togo became isolated as revolutionary regimes were established in Ghana from 1982 and Burkina Faso from August 1983. Ghana accused Togo of supporting dissidents who invaded Ghana from Togo in June 1983. The Ghanaian government was, in turn, accused by Togo of masterminding a "terrorist commando unit" which was alleged to have crossed over from Ghana and attacked a number of targets in Lome, including the military barracks where President Eyadema lives. Further clashes occurred

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<sup>227</sup> Myron Weiner, Political Change, p. 38. In relation to the growth of autocratic regimes, see Clifford Geertz, "The Judging of Nations: Some Comments on the Assessment of Regimes in the new States," European Journal of Sociology, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1977): pp. 245-61. See also Jackson and Rosberg, (1982) Personal Rule in Black Africa: Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, Tyrant, University of California, Berkeley.

<sup>228</sup> New African Yearbook 1991-92, p. 355.

along Ghana-Togo border and not less than thirteen people were killed. Here again, the Ghanaian government denied of any complicity, and it was cleared of any involvement after a subsequent clash showed that supporters of former Togolese President, S. Olympio, were the dissidents.<sup>229</sup> Over ten years after this particular incident, accusations and counter-accusations and threats and counter threats of aggression between the two countries have continued unabated. The degree of this crisis manifests in the recent mounting tension between the two countries, following the killing of 12 Ghanaians when Togolese soldiers bombarded the border post of Aflao after Togo accused Ghana of backing an apparent attempt to overthrow the Togolese government on January 6, 1994. As if this particular incident was not enough, the Togolese naval officers went further to abduct seven Ghanaian fishermen who were on a fishing trip for no apparent reason.<sup>230</sup> In May 1994, the war of words between the two countries continued with Togo accusing Ghana for being responsible for the presence of bombs in Togo - a report the Ghanaian government spokesman denied, noting that:

If the government of Togo says it has evidence about the transportation of bombs across the border, it is in a better position to know the identity of the couriers, and to whom they were delivered.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>229</sup>New Africa Yearbook 1991-1992 (1992), IC Publications, London. pp. 136-38.

<sup>230</sup>West Africa, "Ghana and Togo at Daggers Drawn," 24-30 January, 1994, p. 129.; See also the issue of 7-13 March, 1994, p. 221.

<sup>231</sup>West Africa, 23-29 May, 1994, p. 918.

The spokesman added that the Ghanaian government will continue to find ways and means of resolving the long standing confrontation between the two countries and that the country will adhere strictly to international law and the principle of good neighbourliness in its relation with Togo.<sup>232</sup>

In neighbouring Ivory Coast, several Ghanaians living in the country were either killed or maimed for flimsy excuses by the authorities who claimed that the Ghanaians ganged up with its citizens to create instability in the country.<sup>233</sup>

A long standing border dispute between Burkina Faso and Mali over a strip of land with its potential wealth, flared again in 1985. Though the matter was referred to the International Court of Justice at the Hague and was under the supervision of neighbouring states which formed Non-Aggression Defence Aid Agreement (NADAA), tension rose in the later half of 1985. On 25 December 1985, the then head of state of Burkina Faso, General Thomas Sankara, sent his troops across the border to occupy some Malian villages. Malian forces responded immediately and drove Sankara's men back but not before over 40 people had been killed in the fight that ensued and in Malian air raids on Burkinabe villages. It was through NADAA's and the International Court of Justice's intervention in 1986 that led to a peaceful settlement.<sup>234</sup>

Inter-state disputes have not been limited to a few countries of the

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<sup>232</sup>Ibid. p. 918.

<sup>233</sup>See West Africa, 24-30 January, 1994, p. 129.

<sup>234</sup>Ibid. p. 204.

subregion. For several years, for example, there was a ferocious border dispute between Mauritania and Senegal and it was only in 1989 that the two countries were able to settle their differences. This settlement was, however, temporary as Mauritania continued to accuse Senegal of supporting "subversive activities" by Black Mauritanian refugees in Senegal while in reality the Blacks "were running away from their home country to avoid extermination."<sup>235</sup>

Inter-states disputes of various kinds have occurred between several countries, including Sierra Leone and Guinea, Mauritania and Mali, between Mali and Burkina Faso, and the latest one is that between Nigeria and Cameroon, although the latter is not an ECOWAS member. In most cases these disputes have resulted to deaths of citizens of countries involved in inter-state disputes. Under these circumstances, can economic cooperation succeed, given the fact that some of these disputes arise from struggle for ownership of portions of land known to have mineral deposits? For example, the dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon arose because of mineral deposit found in the Bakassi peninsula, a Nigerian town. Located in an area close to the border between the two countries, both countries have asserted their authority over the ownership of the peninsula, by deploying hundreds of soldiers to patrol their borders. In fact, several inhabitants of Bakassi have been killed, their houses burnt, and properties looted by Cameroon soldiers before the arrival of Nigerian troops in

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<sup>235</sup>George O. Davies, Op Cit, p. 1345.

Bakassi.<sup>236</sup>

Notwithstanding the ECOWAS protocol which provides citizens of nations of the subregion freedom of movement and the right to reside in ECOWAS' country of individual choice, in January 1983 Nigeria shocked the world by ordering millions of unskilled foreigners working in the country to leave within two weeks, by 31 January 1993, including one million Ghanaians.<sup>237</sup>

In fact, the problem of the sixties which has remained till to the early 1990s in the West African subregion as a whole is not the decline of democratic institutions, the rise of autocratic regimes, but the continued instabilities of regimes which is an outcome of political and ethnic rivalries which themselves have led to limited effectiveness of states. In spite of all these, no significant peasant uprisings have erupted, not to mention peasant revolutions. Massive urban growth and urban crowding notwithstanding, neither the urban poor nor the urban industrial proletariat have turned against their governments. Moreover, class politics have not replaced ethnic politics in West Africa. Many regimes have been unstable in West Africa, but the instabilities can be attributed more often to intra-elite conflicts than to the imbalance between political participation and political institutionalization.<sup>238</sup> Indeed, even modernization embarked upon following independence has not led to the expected massive growth of demands

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<sup>236</sup> Bola Olowo, "Nigeria-Cameroon: No War, No Peace," in West Africa, 7-13 March 1994, p. 397. See also West Africa, 14-20 March 1994, p. 464.

<sup>237</sup> New African Yearbook, p. 261.

<sup>238</sup> Weiner, Op.Cit., p. 57.

for popular participation and the expected demise of autocratic governments. Instead, there have been a number of significant trends in Africa in general and West Africa in particular.<sup>239</sup>

The first is the critical role of human capital which is often overlooked, the importance of states in providing political order, the ability of states in extracting resources and using them effectively for education, health, and basic infrastructure for development, the effectiveness of government policies in inducing market-oriented behaviour.

The second significant trend, according to Weiner, has been the entrenchment of personal autocratic rule in many of the African states, without the underpinnings of strong political parties, effective bureaucracies and popular support. Moreover, states have intruded into the economy not with the goal of inducing market-oriented behaviour, but of transferring resources from one social class to another, and often from those who pay taxes to those who control the states.<sup>240</sup> Corruption - which is a 'lubricant' of African economy has - in the words of Weiner:

supplied more than the grease for making the bureaucracy work, the cream for satisfying the personal tastes of top officials or the spoils of patronage for strengthening a political party...It has also led to a massive transfer of wealth to those who control the state.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> ibid., p. 58.

<sup>240</sup> ibid. pp. 58-59. See also Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, "Why Africa's Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood," in World Politics, Vol. 35, No. 1. (October 1982): pp. 1-24.

<sup>241</sup> Weiner and Huntington, Op Cit, p. 59.

Accordingly, as the ruling elites increasingly extracts wealth from societies, and as it becomes the till from which political elites extract for their own gain, those who seek to improve their personal well-being turn to politics. In this highly politicized atmosphere, perhaps with few alternative nonpolitical means for improving status quo and income, the struggle for power becomes acute, often violent, and both institutional development and market-oriented growth policies are precluded. In this sense it is appropriate to speak not only of the stagnant economies of much of the ECOWAS member states, but also of the stagnant political systems as well.<sup>242</sup> After all, the former ECOWAS Executive Secretary, Abbass Bundu, stated that:

ECOWAS remains essentially an economic grouping that has as its basic focus and objective the integration of the economies of the 16 member countries. That was how it was perceived, conceived, and that is how I believe it is going to go on and prosper. But as I keep saying, you cannot hope for much success in economic integration unless political stability, on which such success is predicated, it also considered as an essential part of the whole integration process.<sup>243</sup>

Therein lies the problems. As economic integration is important, so also is political integration. Political integration itself must be preceded by peaceful co-existence both within each of the countries of ECOWAS as well as between member-states of the organization. If these countries continue to face internal political, economic, and social instabilities, can they perform effectively in a subregional organization? This question can only attract a negative answer

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<sup>242</sup>Weiner, Political Change, p. 59

<sup>243</sup>An interview with the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, A. Bundu. See West Africa, 1-7 July 1991, p. 1086.

since they will be more preoccupied with domestic affairs, especially on how to maintain their position in power.

#### **5.4 The Need for Political cooperation Among ECOWAS Member-States**

For reasons given in the preceding sections, it will be observed that ECOWAS scheme has not met the economic objectives it set for itself nineteen years after its establishment. It has recorded limited economic progress in some areas while in others it has stagnated to some degree for reasons that can rightly be attributed to both internal and inter-states conflicts, which themselves are a direct result of authoritarian nature of these regimes. Nevertheless, internal and inter-state disputes in, and between some member-states remain potent, and the urge for one ethnic group or individuals to hold onto power perpetually has tended to economically choke the masses.<sup>244</sup> The question one would ask is, why economic integration at this time when most countries of the subregion have not been able to maintain domestic and inter-state stability? Why should not ECOWAS countries begin by integrating politically and then use the medium of political integration as a springboard for economic integration? Perhaps the answer to these questions lies in the fact that these nations are 'new' in the sense that 98 percent of these countries became politically independent less than 35 years ago, and perhaps, attempt to understand

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<sup>244</sup>See for example, "Nigeria: Democracy Derailed," in Africa Watch, Vol. 5, No. 11, August 27, 1993, p. 9.

implications of economic integration have not been made. Neither have member-countries learnt lessons from the East African Community which collapsed in 1976<sup>245</sup> or the long-established economic units globally. It appears member-states did not make any serious attempt to research the various implications of an economic integration before springing into it. How then could concrete results emerge from ECOWAS undertakings? This Thesis recognizes the importance of political integration and this is what ECOWAS must seriously look into. The type of political integration being suggested is not, indeed, political unification of the West African subregion for one obvious reason: different colonial heritage. It is a realistic political cooperation which must be institutionalized formally by the current ECOWAS member states. Such institution must have an established goal, objectives, guiding principles on how such a body should operate. Since peaceful co-existence between nations is an important prerequisite for an institutionalized system, a principle of intervention rather than non-intervention in member-states's domestic problems must be incorporated in the case of interstate disputes and even serious internal dispute in countries of member-states. At least, ECOWAS has learnt a lesson from the Liberian war which arose because of ethnic antagonism. This must be preceded by states' and inter-states' political stabilities. When peace is pervasive in member-states, not

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<sup>245</sup>D.A.K. Mbogoro, "Regional Grouping and Economic Development: Some Lessons from the East African Integration Scheme," in W.A. Ndongko, ed. (1985), Economic Cooperation and Integration in Africa, Codesria Books, Dakar, pp. 229-51. See also Rolf J. Langhammer (1992) "The Developing Countries and Regionalism," Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol. XXX, No. 2, June, pp. 211-231.

only will domestic progress emerge, but countries will be in a better position to contribute towards a result-oriented economic integration. It is recognized that this will take time to achieve. For instance, two long-established economic units, the European Community and the Latin American Free Trade Association, both of which are dealt with below, began with political cooperation several centuries before economic integration emerged as a consequence. In fact, experience has shown that political stability and regional security contribute substantially to the success of economic integration. As well, economic growth and sound national policies are prerequisites for a successful integration process.<sup>246</sup>

### **5.5 Evolution of Two Economic Integration Schemes: The European Community and the Latin American Free Trade Association**

The purpose here is to trace the evolution of two distinct economic integrations - one from the so-called First World or the area the South Commission Report referred to as "*the North*," and the second from the Third World, renamed by the South Commission as "*the South*."<sup>247</sup>

#### **a) The European Community**

One of the first economic integrations emerged in Europe, the most important one being the European Community (EC). According to Pollard, this community did not emerge overnight. Rather, it took an historical process which

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<sup>246</sup>The Courier, No. 134, July-August, 1992. p. 78.

<sup>247</sup>The Report of the South Commission (1990) The Challenge to the South, Oxford University Press, New York. p. 1.

evolved over a period of two centuries.<sup>248</sup> Prior to 1815, repeated calls for a unified Europe under a political sense were made under the banner of the common humanity of the Enlightenment. The frequency and the power of such calls increased between the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. As Pollard revealed, the prevailing calls at the time, particularly those of Abbe de Saint-Pierre, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Jeremy Bentham, all advocated for two approaches. The first was the establishment of a European senate or parliament, while the second was the establishment of a European army both of which were considered important in achieving a political unification of the continent. Their main reason for this was essentially the need for the unification of economic policy-making for the benefit of the whole of Europe. These two factors had one thing in common: while economic integration was not the actual intention of this policy initiative, it was to emerge as a consequence of technical and economic progress. By far, the greatest consequence of the whole process was political unification.<sup>249</sup> As we can observe, all these were outcomes of improved technology and economic growth, and the major means through which this process came into place was the British Industrial Revolution which later made both possible the opening up large internal markets of the major European states, the moderation taxation, the development of national education systems, the unification of currency and banking policy, and provision of comprehensive

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<sup>248</sup>Sidney Pollard (1981) The Integration of the European Economy since 1815. George Allen and Unwin Ltd, London, p. 13.

<sup>249</sup>Ibid. p. 14.

rights of citizenship to all citizens within the national borders. Throughout this phase of history, which lasted until in the 1870s and beyond, the development of nation states and of economic cooperation evolved and these processes reinforced each other.<sup>250</sup> The European experience is, therefore an essential part of history of a movement from political cooperation toward economic integration from 1815 through to the present except, of course, during the World War periods and the Great Depression years of the 1930s when economic instability predominated the lives of European citizens.<sup>251</sup> Even the *Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC)* established in April 1948 by sixteen European countries, contained provisions not only for economic, but also for political, and cultural cooperation through standing committees and a central organization. The establishment of OEEC, which was replaced in 1960 by the *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)* in which the United States, Canada and Japan became full members, was preceded by the signing in March 1948 the Treaty of Brussels by Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg. While this treaty was a military alliance ostensibly directed against a revival of the German threat, it also contained provisions for political, economic and cultural matters.<sup>252</sup> In fact, after the Second World War, several treaties most of which were politically

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<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.* p. 15.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>252</sup> See Peter Calvocoressi (1985) *World Politics Since 1945*, Fourth Edition, Longman Inc., New York, pp. 141-42.

motivated were signed in Europe. The ideological underpinnings for these treaties were dictated by several factors, and an example was the military alliance already mentioned above. By far, the greatest influence for these treaties were both political stability and cooperation and eventual European union. The desire for the latter, according to Calvocoressi, was repeatedly stated by the then British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, who called for the establishment of a Council of Europe in 1948. Having persuaded countries of Europe during a 1948 convention at The Hague, this council was set up, consisting of signatories to the Treaty of Brussels, and Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Eire and Italy. Shortly thereafter, Greece, Iceland, Turkey, West Germany, and Austria, all became members. A constitution was established, among others, requiring member-countries to respect the rule of law and fundamental human rights.<sup>253</sup>

In 1950, France proposed a European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), and in April 1951 six states signed a treaty establishing the ECSC which came into existence the following year. By the early 1950s, the Council of Europe had been joined on the European stage by the ECSC. In 1955, the six states resolved to form a European Economic Community (EEC) which is frequently referred to as the Common Market and, in March 1957, the treaty establishing the EEC was signed in Rome. The organization became operational

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<sup>253</sup>Ibid. p. 163.

1 January, 1958.<sup>254</sup> With this Community in place, economic integration within Western Europe became a reality after over two centuries of the development of nation states, two World Wars and subsequent peace, dialogues which led to inter-state political cooperations by virtue of a series of treaties aimed at maintaining peaceful co-existence with one another.

As a matter of fact, the EEC which is now simply called the "European Community (EC)," is a potent and powerful economic organization.<sup>255</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that its importance led to the expansion of member-states of the organization from the original six to eleven, and the establishment in 1986 of the "European Parliament," whose all 518 members are drawn from member-countries which include Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Spain, Greece, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands and Portugal.<sup>256</sup> It is perhaps the experience of this organization that inspired the recent formation of North American Free Trade Association NAFTA, which embraces Canada, the United States, and Mexico.

#### **b) Latin American Free Trade Association**

The Latin American case is another classic one. Just as political factors

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<sup>254</sup> Calvocoressi, World Politics Since 1945. See especially pp. 161-165; See also Barry Bracewell-Milnes (1976), Economic Integration in East and West, Croom Helm Limited, London; Jeffrey Harrop (1989), The Political Economy of Integration in the European Community, Elgar Publishing Limited, London

<sup>255</sup> Michael Davenport (1992), "Africa and the Unimportance of Being Preferred," in Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol. XXX, No. 2, June. p. 234.

<sup>256</sup> See Sidney Pollard (1985), The Integration of the European Community, p. 58. Pierre Mallet (1977), The Construction of a European Community: Achievement and Prospects for the Future, Praeger Publishers, New York.

led to the formation of the European Community, so also did political underpinnings exhibited powerful interplay in the formation of the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA). According to Mikesell's analysis, LAFTA did not emerge overnight. Rather, it was a result of political forces that had existed for over a generation that led to the negotiation of the Montevideo Treaty for a Latin American Free Trade Area. It was also political interplays between several Latin American countries that led to a series of treaties for the establishment of a common market. Mikesell's remark is most revealing when he stated that:

Although there have been efforts to achieve political integration by various groups of Latin American states dating back for over a century, serious efforts to achieve closer political and economic relations between Latin American countries date from the latter part of the 1930s.<sup>257</sup>

It is no wonder, therefore, that the establishment of the *Organization of American States (OAS)* in 1947 by the Rio Treaty and its subsequent Charter signed in May 1948 by all [Latin] American Republics in Bogota was an expression of political unity among member-states of the organization. Even the forerunner of the OAS, the *Pan-American Movement* which began its first phase in 1826 with the Congress of Panama, convoked by Simon Bolivar, and which called for an alliance of reciprocal assistance - an early application of the principle of collective security - was politically motivated. Noted to be Bolivar's highest political achievement, this first phase lasted until 1889.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Raymond F. Mikesell, "The Movement Toward Regional Trading Groups in Latin America," in Albert O. Hirschman (ed.) (1981) Latin American Issues. The Twentieth Century Fund. New York. pp. 125-151.

<sup>258</sup> ibid. pp. 5-7.

The second phase covering the years 1889-1948 was inaugurated by the First International Conference of American States in Washington, D.C. which led to the establishment of a permanent inter-American organization, the *Commercial Bureau of the American Republics*, which was later designated as the *Pan American Union*. The third phase was initiated with the establishment of the OAS in 1948 as noted above, at the Ninth International Conference of American States.<sup>259</sup>

The objectives of the OAS were clearly stated as being, inter alia, to establish peace and justice on the American<sup>260</sup> continent and to promote and strengthen the solidarity and collaboration of its member states. It also made provisions to defend their sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence. To put these principles into practice and to fulfil its regional duties in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Organization pursues the following purposes:

- To help keep the peace and security on the continent;
- To prevent possible causes of any difficulties which may arise and ensure a peaceful settlement among the member states;
- To provide for common action on the part of the member state in the event of aggression;
- To seek the solution of political, juridical, and economic

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<sup>259</sup>Ibid. p. 6.

<sup>260</sup>For the sake of clarity, the United States is always referred to by that name and not "America," a term that might be misinterpreted, according to Carlos Stoetzer, since Latin Americans also consider themselves Americans. See O. Carlos Stoetzer (1965), The Organization of American States. Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, New York. p. vi.

problems that may arise among the member states; and

-To promote, by cooperative action, their economic, social, and cultural development.<sup>281</sup>

By 1985 several specialized sub-organizations have been established to perform specific tasks. Executive and policy-making organs also increased beyond the original numbers.<sup>282</sup>

One thing that is easily observable from the foregoing is evidently clear: there was no explicitly stated policy on free trade or economic integration at the inception of these two integrative units. Although prior to 1938, various plans for creating a Latin American customs union failed,<sup>283</sup> it was only in September of 1957 that OAS expressly stated the need for a Latin American regional market. Perhaps what motivated the OAS to express this need was inspiration generated by the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA's) occasional call for a Latin American customs union. For example, in 1948, ECLA adopted a resolution regarding the study of a Latin American customs union and a payments union. For example, a proposal for a customs union between Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela was passed under the auspices of ECLA,<sup>284</sup> and in 1951, there was another ECLA's resolution launching the

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<sup>281</sup>Stoetzer, The Organization of American States, p. 12.

<sup>282</sup>See organizational chart in Preston E. James and C. J. Minkel (1986) Latin America, Fifth Edition, Praeger, New York. p. 4.

<sup>283</sup>Victor L. Urquidí (1962), Free Trade and Economic Integration in Latin America. University of California Press, Los Angeles, p. 129.

<sup>284</sup>Ibid., 130.

Central American economic integration program. In fact, between 1951 and 1957, seven bilateral free trade treaties were signed between countries of Central America. In February 1960, following extensive studies by ECLA, consultations and conferences, the Montevideo Treaty creating the Latin American Free Trade Association of which Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay, were signatories.<sup>285</sup> The following year the Treaty establishing LAFTA was formally ratified by all member-countries. It was from LAFTA that a sub-economic customs union, the Andean Pact, was established in 1969 by Chile, Peru and this was later joined by Bolivia, Colombia and Ecuador. Members of LAFTA unanimously agreed to replace the Association with the *Latin American Integration Association (LAIA)* in 1981. The subregional organizations for this body included the *Central American Common Market (CACM)*, the *Caribbean Free Trade Association* (which led to the *Caribbean Community (CARICOM)*), the *Andean Group*, and the *East Caribbean Common Market*.<sup>286</sup> Looked from economic integration process LAIA continues to operate with immeasurable success compared with ECOWAS especially from the area of intra-trade.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 130-134.

<sup>286</sup> See Rolf J. Langhammer (1992), "The Developing Countries and Regionalism." pp. 214-215; The South Commission, *The Challenge to the South*, p. 144; Ian Livingstone and A.S. Goodall (1982) *Economics and Development*, Oxford University Press, London and Nairobi, pp. 197-199.

<sup>287</sup> Langhammer, *Op Cit*, p. 215.

## **5.6 Lessons for ECOWAS**

There is no doubt that ECOWAS can learn something from the above two integrative organizations. The reason for putting in perspective the evolution of both the EC and LAFTA (LAIA) is not to show the progress or otherwise recorded by each one of them, but to show the stages they had to go through in making each of the two organizations a reality. In contrast to these two economic units, ECOWAS did not follow the same pattern of political evolution. Indeed, there is substance in the political factor. The political arguments are well-known: subregional or regional bargaining power is stronger than national bargaining power in international negotiations; moreover, subregional or regional cooperation can help build confidence among neighbouring countries and prevent the development of animosities. In addition, there is little doubt that political stability is one of the most important factors for foreign private investors wishing to invest not only in the West African subregion, but also in sub-Saharan Africa in general. As already pointed out above, the integration of Europe, which began in serious terms, the decade after the Second World War, was motivated by both economic and political considerations. On the political level, solidarity was needed to avoid the threat of new conflicts, by incorporating West Germany into a stable framework. On the economic front, Europe had to be reconstructed after the devastation of the war. Today, the European experience is widely referred to as one of the few examples of successful integration schemes. After all, *The Courier* pointed out recently that, if economic integration is considered

solely without political integration, then the case for economic integration may be weak. The reason being that in social, political, and in economic terms, the effects of cooperation and integration extend far beyond static trade gains.<sup>268</sup> Recent studies by the International Trade Centre on sub-regional trade promotion in Africa indicate that the potential for intra-African trade expansion is much larger than it appears at first sight. For example, it was estimated that US\$4-5 billion worth of sub-Saharan African imports from other regions could be obtained from other countries in the continent which exports similar products.<sup>269</sup> Even then, how can this happen with the continuing pervasive internal and inter-state political instabilities? Perhaps a miracle has to happen before effective intra-subregional and intra-African trade will become a reality. This work is not an attempt to hold a pessimistic view of the current ECOWAS scheme. Neither does it advocate for its scrapping. In fact, ECOWAS should continue to exist, moreso since changes have been introduced by virtue of the revision of the Treaty and the expansion of the protocols. Besides, political considerations which, hitherto received little or no attention, should be given priority. This means member-countries must, of necessity, keep their various countries in a stable political order, and at the same time work toward forging cordial inter-state relations between one another. The existence of internal and inter-state stability is essential for effective implementation of the various protocols embodied in the

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<sup>268</sup>The Courier, "Promoting Regional Cooperation and Integration in Sub-Saharan Africa," No. 134, July-August, 1992, pp. 76-83.

<sup>269</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

new Treaty. Without this, the future of ECOWAS as an integrative scheme will be questionable especially with intra-African economic integration being envisaged by the year 2035 as already mentioned in Chapter Four.

Within Africa the defunct East African Community was the most progressive economic integration because member-countries, namely, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda had established political and institutional cooperation before and after independence. The demise of this institution was occasioned by the overthrow of President Obote of Uganda by Idi Amin whose repressive rule led to destabilizing effects not only among Ugandans, but also relations among the other two EAC member-countries deteriorated over the division of institutional apparatus of the community. Such a situation could have been avoided if Amin had refrained from his dictatorial, tyrannical, and repressive stance and especially the seizure of community's institutions located in his country.<sup>270</sup>

## **5.7 Summary**

In this Chapter, an attempt has been made to reveal the prevailing social and political instability in ECOWAS member-states arising from constant coup d'etats throughout West Africa. Most vexing is the military and authoritarian regimes which have seemingly resolved to remain in power perpetually once they gain control of state apparatus, especially in the present world that is

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<sup>270</sup>See Livingstone and Goddall, Op Cit. p. 182.

constantly changing from authoritarianism to democracy. Military regimes that have indicated their willingness to relinquish power have not kept their promise. Moreover, hegemonic relations resulting from ethnicity has made it impossible for leaders of ECOWAS states to recognize the importance of both political factor and loyalty to the states they control. Rather, leaders are self-centred as they are only concerned with what they can get through corruption, nepotism, and other devices they use to amass wealth from the public treasury. In the process, the interests of the masses they pretend to safeguard are relegated to the background of ruling elite's minds. The urge to enrich oneself through corruption becomes more important than human, infrastructural, resource, and institutional development. The underlying cause of these is the underdevelopment of political system that will allow citizens' participation in matters that directly affect them. Instead, military regimes have become more pervasive throughout the West African subregion, making it difficult for citizens to make input in the art of governing. Added to this is the autocratic nature of military regimes in West Africa. To challenge their policies or attempt to expose corrupt top military officers is occasionally misconstrued to mean treason against the state, leading to imprisonment without trial.

There is also the problem of inter-state disputes which must be overcome by ECOWAS member-states. One way of achieving this, as articulated in this thesis, is for member-states to insitutionalize without delay a process that will lead to political cooperation which, in turn, will enable member-countries to make

effective input in the development of ECOWAS as a an important institution. Two cases of successful economic integration - the European Community and Latin American Integration Association - that began with political cooperation and then integration have been highlighted above. There are several things ECOWAS could learn from these two economic organizations. There is substance in the popular saying that 'Rome was not built in a day.' The earlier ECOWAS member-states put their organization on a better footing, the better things are likely to be for their peoples. This, however, cannot be done in an atmosphere of fear, imprisonment of political opponents, outright killing of those who reveal their leaders' corruption, and several other activities considered inimical to progress or the development process. Lastly, ECOWAS should be made to operate in accordance with the aims, principles, objectives, and protocols embodied in the new Treaty, while efforts should be directed towards creating atmosphere for internal and inter-state stability within the West African subregion.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Conclusion

An examination of economic integration assumes that it is a healthy phenomenon specifically for the West African countries and for the rest of Africa in general. The subregion being the most economically backward area of the Third World, economic integration is one of the most vital strategies for development especially if backed by total commitment toward serious economic cooperation by member-countries involved in the integration process. It should be noted that the motive for economic integration is the desire to maximize social, economic, and political potential, and to tap human and material resources necessary for multi-sectoral industrial development whose gain will be evenly shared among the various peoples of the subregion. Because most member-countries of the organization are economically powerless, and unable to keep pace with economic competition with industrialized countries for various reasons outlined in this work, ECOWAS seemed to be the only viable strategy that can make their impact felt in the global economic system. It is also one of the various strategies through which member-countries can utilize their productive resources to address their economic problems, thus the generating of overall development which they lack.

That the trauma of decolonization remains active cannot be over-emphasized. Africa's present realities, particularly the entrenchment of the various nations into the global economic system, makes this statement more

true. As pointed out, some people in these countries would probably have preferred to remain colonized given the present socio-economic and political realities. The orthodox arguments advanced by neoclassical economists for international trade did not favour the subregion's trade with the rest of the world, as experience has shown. Despite the fact that some ECOWAS countries are well endowed with natural resources, paucity of capital did not allow effective use of these resources to generate income for development several years after independence.

The theoretical exposition by various economists and development economists on the gains of economic integration were cited. Viner's argument on trade creation and diversion assumes a healthy phenomenon for the participating nations. So also are the analyses of Harrop, Bracewell-Milnes, Caves, et al, Mikessell, Meade, Lipsey, Belassa, Cooper and Massell embodied in this work. Against the opinion of the above are Linder, Hazlewood and Vousden. While Linder and Hazlewood regard Viner's theory as inappropriate for the Third World for the simple reason of the Third World's inability to generate adequate productive capacity, Vousden's objection is grounded on the possibility of "bribery" playing a greater role (See Chapter Three). In this regards the general consensus is for economic integration, primarily due to the overall welfare gains accruing to participating countries.

While ECOWAS member-countries may or may not have been guided by the theoretical underpinning for economic integration, it is important for one

to assume that the impetus for the formation of this integrative body in the subregion is the probable hope that economic integration would create an expanded market, greater scope of opportunities in intra-regional trade enabling countries to increase exports of goods and services, increased employment of labour, factor movement, industrial expansion, leading to over-all development in each of the countries involved in the integrative process. Economic development was thus an important goal in the formation of ECOWAS.

ECOWAS member-states are currently confronted by a number of problems such as low labour productivity, low agricultural productivity, capital shortage, increasing external debt, limited technical progress, high population growth rate, low intra-export capacity, and, most significantly, the adjustment programs imposed on them by both the IMF and the World Bank. The consequence of SAP continues to be felt by over three quarters of the population in each of ECOWAS states implementing such programs. As elaborated in the subsection dealing with SAP, the inter-relationship between structural adjustment programs and economic integration cannot be subjected to any serious debate. It was clearly stated that both have the inseparable goal of promoting economic growth and development, particularly since the two involve actions on the same macroeconomic and sectoral variables. It was also emphasized that without any conscious attempt to link SAP and economic integration programs, a policy in one particular area necessarily has implications for actions in the other area. This means that in examining the inter-relationship between the two, the crucial

issue must be how to ensure that SAP policies and integration objectives are mutually reinforcing rather than conflicting.

The revised ECOWAS Treaty is praiseworthy given the fact that the organization has broadened its objectives and protocols to include tourism, the environment, joint production enterprises, joint ventures, and the harmonization of investment codes. Of equal importance is the protocol which provides for the establishment and promotion of relations among rural populations, women, workers and trade unions and the adoption of a population policy - all of which were absent in the old Treaty. It now remains to be seen how long it will take for concrete results to emerge, given political instabilities in most countries of member-states and persistent inter-states problems.

In addition to the above, ECOWAS must overcome the weak economies, characterized by limited markets and low productivity in the countries constituting the organization. It is indeed a reality that development programs have, in the last years been punctuated for various reasons highlighted in this study, and this is not an exaggerated phenomenon.

The cost of financing major development programs is enormous and none of these countries has the wherewithal to generate adequate capital needed for effective development without outside support. The basic economic indicators of these countries shown on Table 1 gives only a partial picture of the current economic climate of each country, as data provided is inconclusive because of manipulation by governments, and the fact that some data are never

accounted for. With the exception of three countries - Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, and Senegal - which fall within the middle income bracket, the rest are among the World's poorest nations.

The early 1970s witnessed an unprecedented downturn in the economies of these countries, caused by both world recession and the *oil shock* of that period. This poor economic situation was exacerbated in global recession of the early 1980s and subsequent debt crises among nations of the subregion. The establishment of ECOWAS in 1975 was an attempt to ameliorate the economic conditions of these nations in order to allow for the development of their economies. While most of these problems have been attributed to exogenous factors, such as the absorption of these countries' economies into the global economy through various mechanisms highlighted in this Thesis, there have also been endogenous factors such as deep-rooted ethnicity, persistent military seizures of power, and authoritarian regimes.

The alarming number of coup d'etats - 64 in West Africa alone between independence and July 1994 - goes to substantiate Kposowa's and Jenkins' penetrating study with regard to military regimes vis-a-vis political instabilities in West Africa. The number of coup d'etats in the subregion points to an important conclusion: the institutionalization of military regimes in most countries of the subregion. From this study, one can conclude that there is a strong link between ethnic dominance and military coups that have taken place in the past. The vivid nature of ethnic diversity is well known. In fact, the numerical strength of ethnic

groups has acted to aggravate both economic and political situations, and in most cases, has become a major factor leading to the repression of some ethnic groups, massive killings, detention without trial of political opponents as the dominant groups tend to shut minority groups out of the apex of authority as demonstrated in this work. Consequently, hegemonic rather than accommodative ethnic politics characterize the newly independent states of West Africa. Thus the proliferation of military and authoritarian regimes can rightly be seen as an outcome of this ethnic domination. Indeed, Connor's assertion that ethnic domination has been that of nation-destroying rather than nation-building captures the real issue. The number of coup d'etats in West Africa, and the repressive nature of these regimes go to substantiate Connor's assertion.

Factors leading to coup d'etats were identified as hegemony arising from deep-rooted ethnicity, military and political factionalism among the elites, political crisis rooted in the tension between an increasingly disenchanted citizens over the role of the state and weak political institutions. There is also political centrality of the military rooted in its resources and organizational cohesion, and lack of citizens' participation the political processes in various West African countries due to the dictatorial nature of these states.

The need for political cooperation among the ECOWAS states was clearly stated. In fact, this is more important now than ever, particularly with the presently changing world order. I stated that political factor is important in that it is the key element in making ECOWAS succeed in its integrative endeavours.

If African countries were able to form a unified political unit through the long-established *Organization of African Unity*, this author believes that ECOWAS can equally do the same thing. Establishing political cooperation in the subregion will have the effect of strengthening ECOWAS, at least, in the long term.

Besides political cooperation, there are also cultural, language, and institutional differences between the Francophone and Anglophone countries. Culturally, ECOWAS has more than two distinct cultural backgrounds - the French speaking countries and the English Speaking countries both of which are dominant, and one Portuguese speaking country, Cape Verde - within the subregion. Because of the different colonial backgrounds among the three group of countries, each group automatically introduced the culture and values of their colonial powers before and after independence. Thus while we have the Francophone countries adopting the French culture and language, the Anglophone countries adopted the British culture and language, whereas Cape Verde took to Portuguese culture and language. This cultural milieu will have to be overcome if change is to be recorded. With three distinct official languages in ECOWAS member-countries, this makes the learning of languages important, and this can be achieved by member-countries making it mandatory for educational institutions to incorporate at least the dominant ones such as French and English in schools' curriculum beginning from high schools. This is more so since ECOWAS involves the movement of peoples across national boundaries and communication is vital in both business and commerce as well as exchange

of ideas. In fact, immediate action is needed in addressing this cultural milieu, at least for the benefit of future generation of ECOWAS leaders. In this study, a brief look at two existing integrative organizations, namely the European Community and Latin American Free Trade Association, was made with the ultimate goal of tracing their respective historical evolution from political cooperation through to economic integration. In the case of the EC, it was clearly pointed out that its evolution took several centuries with repeated calls before and after 1815 for a unified Europe. From the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on, the frequency of such calls by notable personalities such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Abbe de Saint-Pierre, and Jeremy Bentham intensified, all advocating for a European senate or parliament and a European army both of which were considered important in achieving a political unification of Europe. Winston Churchill of Britain repeatedly echoed similar call for a political unification through the establishment of a Council of Europe which, indeed emerged in 1948 through the Treaty of Brussels. Over this period several treaties were signed by European countries for cooperation with regard to military, political and economic aspects. Some of the outcomes of these treaties were the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, and the European Economic Community In 1957. The latter, as I have mentioned earlier, has since become Europe's most powerful economic organization.

As analyzed in this study, the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA) is another classic case of an economic unit which evolved over several

centuries. I pointed out that just as political factors led to the formation of the European Community, so also did political underpinnings exhibited a powerful influence in the formation of LAFTA. I indicated in Chapter Five that member-nations of LAFTA unanimously agreed to replace the Association with the *Latin American Integration Association (LAIA)* in 1981. To avoid ambiguity, it was also noted that the organization is generally referred to as the *Central American Common Market (CACM)*. Since then the *Caribbean Free Trade Association* (which influenced the establishment of the *Caribbean Community (CARICOM)*), the *Andean Group*, and the *East Caribbean Common Market* have been established as sub-units of LAIA. To date LAIA continues to operate with immeasurable success compared with ECOWAS. And there is no way the latter could equate its achievements with those of both the EC or LAIA. As revealed in Chapter Five, the EC and LAIA evolved gradually from political cooperation respectively before moving into economic integration. Through this method inter-state stability had been fully established. Perhaps this accounts for the reason why these organizations have been successful in their development initiatives.

ECOWAS can learn a lot from the experience of these two organizations. But have the organization's leaders the will to do so? Can they refrain from dictatorial tendencies or eliminate ethnic tensions? Are the military ready to relinquish power and give in to democracy? I believe answers to these few questions can be answered affirmatively. There are certainly few leaders who

are 'clean' and who place the interests of their people at heart. In reviewing the past efforts of ECOWAS over the last nineteen years, that is, since its inception, it is clear that progress has been limited. Its yearly gathering provides an avenue to exchange ideas or rhetoric which are hardly translated into pragmatic terms. The authors who prepared the new Treaty were drawn up by elites who have little or no knowledge of the plight of the marginalized poor. Even those knowledgeable of the plight of the poor exhibit an 'I don't care' attitude. To make matters worse, women who are supposed to have special consideration in development projects are hardly thought of, perhaps because of chauvinistic tendencies of African leaders.

What is important, however, is for the nations of the subregion to give consideration to political order and peaceful co-existence, not only of individual countries, but also in inter-state relations. Of paramount importance is for the subregion to give thought over political cooperation - a condition which is vital for an effective economic integration. Otherwise the purpose for which ECOWAS was established would have been defeated and its demise is likely to have occurred just as it had in the East African Community.

Finally, the expanded principles, objectives, and protocols embodied in the new ECOWAS Treaty are an attempt to revamp the organization. This study does not, therefore, advocate for the scrapping of the organization. Rather, the organization must be made to work effectively while, at the same time, member-countries must create atmosphere for internal and inter-state stability throughout

**all countries of the subregion constituting the Economic Community of West African States. It is only under politically stabled conditions can member-countries make meaningful contribution to the development of their respective countries and subsequently, the development and growth of the organization.**

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