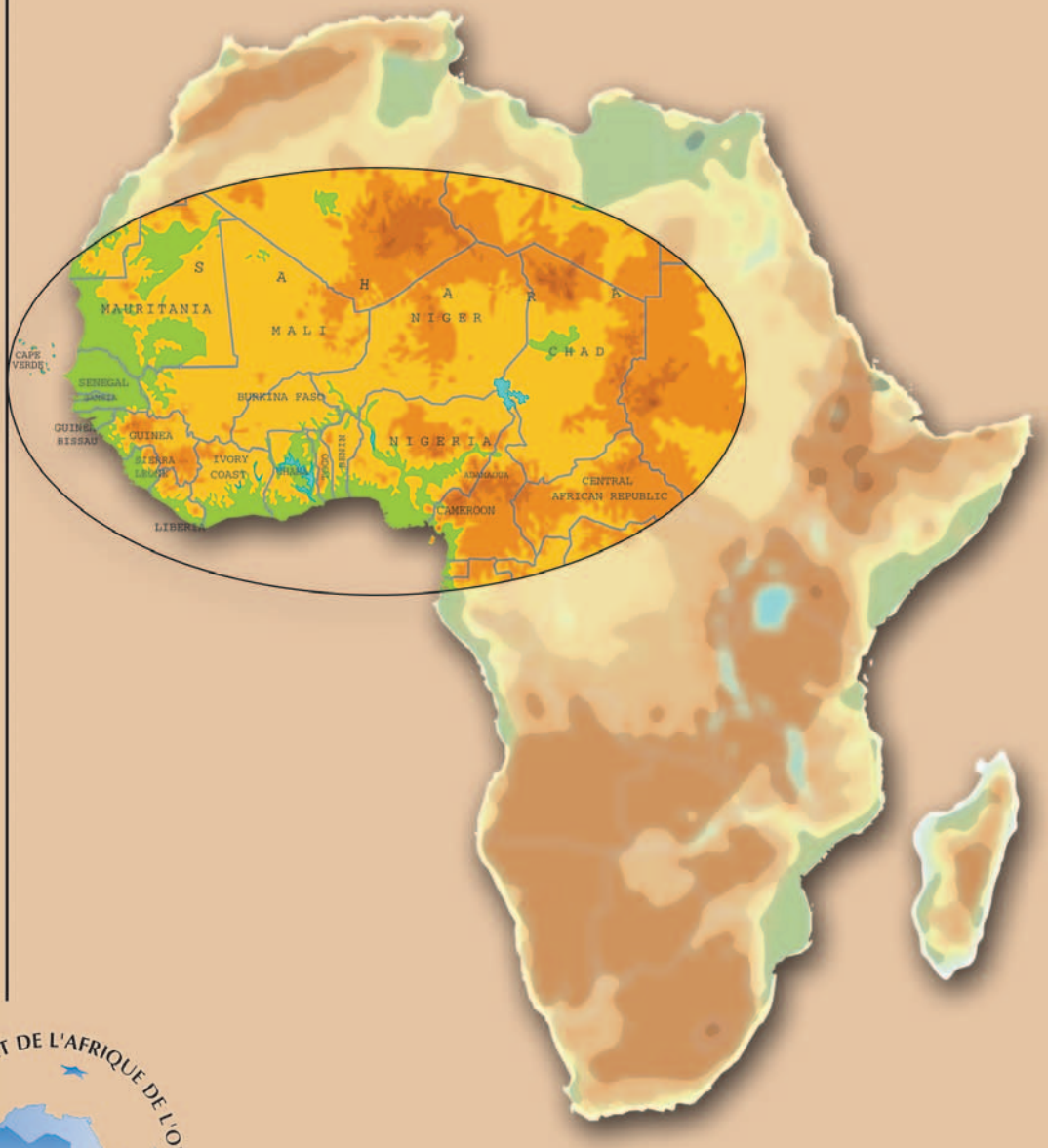
TOWARDS A BETTER REGIONAL APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT IN West Africa

Conclusions of the Special Event of Sahel and West Africa Club

Accra (Ghana), 20-21 May, 2002



CLUB DU SAHEL ET DE L'AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST
SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA CLUB

Edited by John IGUE and Sunhilt SCHUMACHER

OECD OCDE

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACP	Africa Caribbean Pacific
ADB	African Development Bank
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
AU	African Union (former OAU, Organisation of African Unity)
CEMAC	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahelo-Saharan States
CEPGL	Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries
CET	Common External Tariff
CILSS	Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
CIRAD	French Scientific Organisation Specialised in Tropical Agronomy
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DFI	Direct Foreign Investment
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreements
FAOSTAT	Statistical Databases of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGO	Intergovernmental Organisation
INTERREG	International initiative for regional development
LAC	Least Advanced Countries
MRU	Mano River Union
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NIPSS	National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies
NBA	Niger Basin Authority
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OMVG	Gambia River Basin Development Organisation
OMVS	Senegal River Development Organisation
REPA	Regional Economic Partnership Agreements
RPA	Regional Partnership Agreements
RPSS	Regional Priority Solidarity Spaces
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCA	States of Central Africa
SKBo	Sikasso-Korhogo-Bobo Dioulasso
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMI	Small and Medium Industries
SWAC	Sahel and West Africa Club
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WTO	World Trade Organisation

C O N T E N T S

Foreword

Preface

Introduction

Building the regional process in West Africa has been such an ambitious undertaking that an ongoing analysis of regional dynamics is henceforth necessary. This volatility is a function of numerous trends affecting the continent. It has become a factor of ongoing spatial recomposition, leading to new forms of polarisation and regional integration schemes.

1 OPENING SPEECHES

Speech by ***Mrs. Jacqueline Damon***, Director of the SWAC Secretariat

Speech by ***Mr. Joan Boer***, President of the SWAC

Speech by H.E. ***Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré***, President of the Republic of Mali

Speech by H.E. ***Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor***, President of the Republic of Ghana

I PART ONE
Globalisation, regionalisation and the crisis of nation-states

Part one focuses on question-raising data depicting a heterogeneous image of Africa in the world. Africa is described as geographically and demographically imposing, yet poorly economically integrated with the rest of the world. Transformations affecting states are also identified, most of which have been encountering increasing difficulties in ensuring basic governmental functions and assimilating existing regional dynamics.

General overview of issues - *Achille Mbembe*

The disjointed nature of data collected on Africa makes analysis and identifying prospects difficult. Some of the presentations show that tension and changes impairing nation-states need to be examined in light of transformations due to globalisation. Three sectors are affected: the economy (where enclaves emerge), war (the consequence of crises linked to identity, land and citizenship) and culture (modernisation of tradition). However, the current recompositions are not symptoms of a pathological state but rather of society undergoing a process of pluralisation. Nonetheless, this process further weakens the ability of states to implement viable national or regional institutions.

Changing African states - *Antoine Raogo Sawadogo*

African states are struggling to both carry out governmental functions and to take into account local dynamics. These states are undergoing a crisis, the consequences of which have an impact on the performance of regional institutions. Regional integration requires rebuilding states so as to permit decision-making and implementation at a local level. Decentralisation is one way to facilitate the process by helping to restore legitimacy to institutions and foster responsible citizenship.

Regional dynamics in West Africa - *John Igué*

An overview of local and regional dynamics provides a better understanding of spatial structuring. The colonial period created socio-cultural constraints and new poles of production without stifling a penchant toward regional integration. However, the strong desire for national identity during the struggle for independence crippled the process of regional integration, despite various punctual initiatives. Today, several scenarios are possible; the most immediately viable seems to be the creation of a development zone within the ECOWAS area.

Remarks on the first three presentations - *Daniel C. Bach*

Building upon the first session, Daniel C. Bach questions the relevance of the regional process in West Africa in light of the obstacles to be overcome. To support this opinion, he compares two contradictory views on the idea of regional integration: intelligence's pessimism and will's optimism.

Despite difficulties stemming from regional construction, there appear to be three main trends characterising the process: a political will strongly expressed within intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), the fragility of key regional issues and a need to focus debate on the effects of globalisation.

Come what may, regional concerns cannot become reality in West Africa unless they are embraced by dynamic actors in the field and unless states become more credible, more peaceful and more willing to adopt them.

II PART TWO
"Cross-border areas"

The "cross-border areas" concept put forth by the Malian authorities is seen as a means of accelerating regional integration and reinforcing decentralisation. It is defined as a geographic space overlapping two or several neighbouring countries in which populations are linked by cultural and socio-economic bonds. This concept concurs with certain West African academics' research on cross-border cooperation as well as the Sahel and West Africa Club's analyses present in its local economy studies. Lastly, it sheds new light on key issues associated with real regional integration.

The "cross-border area" concept in the West African sub-regional integration process: results of the Sikasso seminar - *Aguibou S. Diarrah*

West African states are grappling with the challenge of building fairer, democratic societies while maintaining a climate of sustainable peace with neighbouring states. In order to succeed, populations need to actively participate in managing national public life and adopting a more realistic integration policy. In enacting these different policies, the issue of national borders is pre-eminent only as an obstacle to their implementation. This is why the "cross-border area" concept was proposed and initiated in response to a show of willingness to move towards common management of cross-border zones and grassroots integration of cross-border communities.

Managing borderlands in West Africa: the lived experience of Nigeria and its immediate neighbours - *Anthony I. Asiwaju*

Over the past fifteen years, Nigeria, in line with "borderland" policy, has continued to encourage bilateral and multilateral cooperation in addition to peace and sustainable development through regional integration. Three priorities were set: vigorous and systematic cross-border cooperation, definition of border areas and border demarcation. These three measures have led to bilateral agreements amongst neighbours, the outcomes of which are explained in this issue paper.

Is regional integration already occurring in "cross-border areas"? Sikasso, Korhogo, Bobo Dioulasso: the SKBo triangle - *Karim Dahou*

The towns of Bobo Dioulasso, Sikasso and Korhogo form a cross-border triangle straddling Burkina Faso, Mali and Côte d'Ivoire. In this zone, the key threats of a typical "cross-border area" and grassroots integration are exemplified. A study of this triangle will provide 1) an assessment of borders and their local effects 2) the local impact of certain national policies and practices. Lastly, taking a closer look at these towns will provide evidence of the structural transformations brought about by cross-border trade in the region and hence, the overriding necessity to involve local authorities in defining and implementing regional integration projects.

Remarks on "cross-border areas" - *Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi*

The "cross-border area" concept needs to be discussed and improved in light of other heavily employed terms such as "cross-border zones", "cross-border peripheries" and "countries without borders". Debate should focus on the lessons and prospects for action that can be derived from this concept. Regardless of the term used, "cross-border area" expresses a political will to identify a regional space beyond existing models. It points the way to alternative frameworks and spaces to be identified and analysed. Once well assimilated, the "cross-border area" policy should help stabilise migratory flows and facilitate the harmonisation of sectoral policies and regional authorities while creating a new basis for regional development and promoting community-based endeavours involving authorities present on several borders.

III

PART THREE
Market access and trade development: key actors

The weakness of regional integration programmes stems from a lack of regionally-based competitive production strategies which would lead to better trading prospects. This is why, although West Africa is continually influenced by transformations due to globalisation, it remains more of a victim than a beneficiary. Are the modes of market integration proposed by the sub-region then relevant? Improved market access depends on the involvement of regional-scale companies to promote trade with an eye toward increased regional competitiveness and engaging economic actors in the field.

Market access and trade development: key actors - *Pape Demba Thiam*

The classic approach to promoting regional integration is based on the premise that opening markets automatically triggers dynamics of production and trade. That is why emphasis is placed on fiscal and customs questions and on internal harmonisation within WAEMU and ECOWAS. However, because the region is lacking economic opportunities it is judged more worthwhile, in the immediate, to import and distribute than produce. What new strategies can regional institutions envision to construct integrated, productive regional spaces? Henceforth, the question is to determine how to increase trading opportunities by prioritising cooperation between institutional actors and those in the field.

Private enterprise and regional integration in West Africa – *François Bost*

Intra-region trade levels are very low, and yet they remain underestimated in official statistics. Intra-regional trade volumes are insignificant compared to external trade. Actors in the field must adapt to national and regional disparities in order to carry out their economic and social activities. To do this, they have developed several strategies, some "legal" and others not, depending on whether their status is formal or informal.

African merchant's strategies - *Boureima Wankoye*

The lack of trade between African countries is emblematic of a cruel reality: insufficient regional integration and the ensuing loss of income are unbearable in a context of extreme poverty. The author begins by looking more closely at the reasons for this trade deficiency before examining strategies implemented by merchants and industrialists to overcome regional hurdles.

Remarks on market access and trade development - *Kofi K. Apraku*

ECOWAS has certainly made efforts to increase market access. They are insufficient however and the region is increasingly marginalised by continual impediments to competition. The process is further slowed down by the weight of history and language differences. Regional integration tools exist and they need to be developed politically, economically and socially.

PART FOUR
West Africa's future

The risks of failure for the NEPAD are great: Heads of State must agree to put words into action. How can this initiative position itself vis-à-vis existing development programmes? How can a coherent policy be elaborated given the multitude of existing institutions? The only viable option is a regional approach based on real dynamics and a West African vision implicating all actors in the field. The NEPAD must take this into account for its own success. Kwesi Nduom, Minister of Integration of Ghana and facilitator of the NEPAD panel, drew the participants' attention to decisions taken by ECOWAS Heads of State at the Yamoussoukro summit on 17 May 2002 regarding applying the NEPAD in West Africa. ECOWAS was placed in charge of the initiative's co-ordination and implementation. Each state, in association with the Executive Secretariat of ECOWAS, was mandated to designate a focal point. It is strongly recommended that synergies be established between ECOWAS's and WAEMU's development programmes to avoid redundancies and facilitate the coordination of all regional issues concerning the NEPAD.

Opening remarks, discussion on the NEPAD - *Michel Leblanc*

The debate was launched based on a paper presented by Michel Leblanc of the SWAC Secretariat.

Long-term proposals for the NEPAD - *Vincent Géronimi*

The NEPAD's successful implementation depends on two things: its credibility and its coherence. The NEPAD's credibility is primary, Africa being labelled as a "cemetery" for well-defined projects, few of which lead to concrete results, is often due to a lack of involvement in the field. Coherence is also essential in ensuring its credibility. West Africa has harboured a large number of trends following differing rationales. It is therefore crucial to install coherent financing, time frames for primary proposals, delineated areas of reference and decision-making levels involved in implementing these proposals.

Regional stakes and prospects for West Africa - *Philippe Hugon*

The prospects and key regional issues in West Africa depend, for the most part, on a follow up to macroeconomic and institutional reforms suggested by international institutions. For the moment, the way in which these reforms are implemented does not offer the leeway necessary to Africans leaders for them to integrate and emphasise the results of prospective studies that should serve as bases for drawing up strategic development plans.

FOREWORD

Reforms proposed to the African continent by international institutions have enabled better management of macro-economic disequilibria and have given rise to some prospects for growth. However, these reforms have not appreciably improved African people's standard of living and they have had little influence on the still mediocre performance of state institutions and administration.

For a number of years, African societies have experienced difficulties in finding adequate solutions within the strait jacket of state borders inherited from colonisation which invariably accentuate the problem of regional integration. Could the poor results of the 1980s and 1990s be related to the dysfunctional nature of a purely national approach to policy-making?

Throughout the world, economic successes are built on the basis of increasingly integrated and solidarity-minded regional blocks. Africa is aware of this and is launching initiatives like the recently created African Union and the NEPAD. In spite of this, regional cooperation is still solely approached from an institutional standpoint. Moreover, projects for legal, customs and monetary integration are too systematically based on foreign models, principally that of the European Union. The WAEMU example is a reminder that defining common rules is a necessary but insufficient condition for developing regional trade.

Entrepreneurs and their transactions, the rapid evolution and shifts in settlement geography and homogenising cultures and values, are all forces that naturally outline areas in which regional policies are rarely taken into account, if at all. These spaces are further reshaped due to shifting political alliances and crises. From these complex dynamics new forms of polarisation and spatial composition are born, and with them, new models of regional integration.

Knowing and understanding these dynamics that involve all actors and factions is a challenge the Sahel and West Africa Club would like to raise. In our opinion, this is the only way regional development policies will be implemented in line with realities based on diversified production and innovative entrepreneurship.

The Accra meeting was an opportunity for these actors to demonstrate their analytical capacity and put forth proposals that would benefit African regional integration, building upon outside experiences.

Two important questions emerged from the Accra debates:

- How to harmonise "real" spaces with institutional integration spaces? Do certain groups of actors have a constructive vision and can they contribute to the formulation of a credible regional project?

- Do these "real" spaces, especially those defined by "informal" exchanges, along with those targeted by multinational companies have positive or negative effects on the regional economy? Could they prefigure future official areas for integration?

Some initial responses were provided. The Club Secretariat will ensure that these avenues of reflection and action remain open.

PREFACE

On May 20th and 21st 2002, the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) organised a special event in Accra (Ghana) under the co-chairmanship of Presidents Alpha Oumar Konaré of Mali and Kufuor of Ghana. The goal was to increase participant awareness concerning the evolutions of regional integration by encouraging a politically committed, informal and informed debate between representatives of OECD and West African countries. The meeting was also an opportunity to discuss the implementation of the New Partnerships for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in the sub-region. It enabled West African political figures, members of the private sector, international cooperation and the research community to exchange views on the issue of regional integration in West Africa.

The meeting was called because the SWAC deems that despite the efforts of African leaders and the international community to reinforce regional integration via regional institutions, the desired impact has not yet been attained. For several years, Africa's economic and social marginalisation in the globalisation process has led to renewed interest in regional integration. Likewise, new African initiatives such as the transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) and the NEPAD attest to a political willingness to renew to regional cooperation.

Nonetheless, certain promising regional dynamics observed in the field have been neglected by analysts and official programmes. They reflect, however, the vitality and true progress of regional cooperation and can improve the impact of regional integration policy in West Africa.

The meeting focused on four themes (see table of contents). Each theme deals with structuring the regional space based upon the strategies implemented by various actors, the "cross-border area" concept put forth by President Alpha Oumar Konaré of Mali, access to markets and implementing the NEPAD.

Discussions on each of these topics led to the following conclusions:

- Africa participates in globalisation without designing the rules that govern it. African interests are scarcely taken into account in international negotiations because Africa does not invest in lobbying these organisations and has little weight in world trade. At times presented as an alternative to globalisation, regionalisation could constitute a step towards globalisation. In order to do so, the sub-region would have to opt for integration strategies adapted to its historical, political and cultural specificities;

- African political regimes are often presented as responsible for the crisis of nation-states in Africa. How can this crisis be resolved? In the context of reinforced regional integration, could decentralisation improve the efficiency of these States? Given the artificial nature of borders and certain States' lack of economic viability, the sub-region is seeking to redefine State-citizen relations;

- The "cross-border area" notion remains to be analysed and tested. It is understood as a gateway between the local and regional, a pillar on which could be founded a space of stability and solidarity, built upon the cultural and socio-economic complementarities of populations on either side of borders. Promoting this concept could result in the construction of a peaceful space and the implementation of appropriate frameworks for regional development. However, one may also question whether or not States are ready to reinforce these cross-border spaces;

- Access to world markets depends on the West African economy's competitiveness. This competitiveness derives from the capacity of States to improve support for the private sector and that of companies to adjust their production to demand, among other factors. A more efficient public-private partnership could greatly benefit from international trade agreements and regional development programmes through the creation of attractive investment poles. Each of these points merits more detailed development. For instance, why does it seem more profitable to import and redistribute than to produce, process and export? How can standards of production and quality aligned with the world market become more accessible?

- The NEPAD is an approach that aims to restore the image of Africa in the world. It is a programme based upon regional integration and sustainable development. This initiative needs to rest on a credible and coherent backbone. West African Heads of State prefer the ECOWAS framework, but does this structure have the capacity to achieve its goals? What will be the role of private funding compared to that of public development aid or concessional funding?

By making public the contents of this meeting, my wish is to share these questions with others. My hope is that this publication will stimulate reflection on regional integration and encourage increased interest in the activities carried out by the Sahel and West Africa Club to enhance understanding of real dynamics in the field which are a source of hope for the future.

Jacqueline DAMON
Director of the Sahel and West Africa Club

INTRODUCTION

The Accra seminar organised by the Sahel and West Africa Club and co-chaired by Presidents Alpha Oumar Konaré of Mali and John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana, focused on regional development in West Africa. It addressed strategic questions revolving around the links between globalisation, regionalisation and the State, the notion of "cross-border areas", the role of actors in market access and the NEPAD.

Three major areas of reflection and guidelines for action arose from this highly informative seminar.

• Reconstructing the State, politics and public action

The seminar underlined several observations and contradictions regarding the roles of the State, politics, and public action.

On the one hand, African States are considered to be historically imported, imposed (Antoine Raogo Sawadogo), out of touch with civil society, offering few incentives to the private sector and limited to actions within their borders, which become dividing lines rather than gateways. They do not fully ensure basic State functions. They are overwhelmed from below by local cross-border dynamics and the pluralisation of society (Achille Mbembe) as well as from above by globalisation-related constraints and, due to extensive debt, by the "supervision" of donors and international organisations.

On the other hand, the need remains to ensure basic State functions, in particular, maintaining security, implementing long term strategies and policy guidelines as well as keeping an eye to the ground in order to foresee and prevent risks of conflict. A development strategy implies rebuilding legitimate States capable of meeting the various challenges facing Africa and fostering the transition from "rent economies" to mass production economies. This issue underlines the need for public or collective action to play a role in the production of public goods (local, national, regional, global), to determine and implement pre or pro-active strategies favouring sustainable development. The nation-state as such remains essential, but needs to be subordinately linked to public action at local levels (decentralisation) and at regional levels (transfer of sovereignty). In order to redesign public action, the existence of legitimate decision-making processes is fundamental to enabling various factions to express themselves and their power relations.

• Regional integration processes and coordinating regional with national levels

The limits of regionalisation were reiterated. Regionalisation, a de facto process carried out by individual actors, differs from de jure regionalisation, carried out by institutions (Daniel C. Bach, Philippe Hugon). West Africa is characterised by weak trade and ineffective regional entrepreneurs (François Bost) as well as non-integrative strategies practiced by merchants whose interests are best served by global rather than regional integration (Boureima Wankoye). It is also characterised by cross-border population dynamics and a multitude of institutions (ECOWAS, WAEMU, MRU) whose referential spaces only partially correspond to "real" spaces (John Igué). The borders inherited from colonialism are far from corroborating socio-historical and -cultural geography. West Africa is prone to globalisation and must therefore comply with its rules. Moreover, it is in the best interest of dominant economic actors to import and distribute rather than produce and diversify production on a regional basis (Pape Demba Thiam).

However, *regional integration* is a multidimensional and conflictual process that leads to:

- Reciprocity between economic spaces. Interdependence can be identified at the level of merchandise flows *(free trade zone, customs union)*, capital flows *(common market)* and population flux *(informal or bottom-up integration)*,

- Tangents between economies that can be evaluated in terms of convergence, trade, or financial indicators,

- Joint regional projects set up by local actors *(functional or thematic cooperation)*,

- Coordination, harmonisation, if possible, unification of economic policy *(monetary, economic unions)* that involves transfers of sovereignty and implementing institutional structures *(institutional integration or federating regionalism)*. These various processes are both complementary and conflictual.

Discussions centred on three main means of implementing policies at various regional and national levels:

The *"cross-border areas"* concept, modelled on Asian growth triangles (Aguibou S. Diarrah, Anthony I. Asiwaju, Karim Dahou, Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi), is a potent one. It refers to functional cooperation linking decentralisation to local dynamics. However, it also reveals tensions between the spatial dimension of *de facto* regionalisation (national ties between the local and regional) and the socio-political dimension of *de jure* regionalisation (politically oriented institutions). Decentralisation is one of the answers to this dilemma.

Regional institutions are multiple and of varying size and scope. ECOWAS has been delegated the responsibility to coordinate and follow-up on the implementation of NEPAD (17 May 2002, Yamoussoukro). A timeline has been set for monetary convergence within the Union. The question remains: How to reduce the institutional gaps between the WAEMU (highly integrated via its currency and rules) of large countries such as Nigeria and the UFM (weakly integrated, notably because of war)? How can decision-making bodies be established within ECOWAS to coordinate aid, carry out public action and devise long term development strategies, more specifically, implementing the NEPAD? The issues again raised are those of transferring sovereignty and devising new means of political expression.

Lastly, regional spaces must be constructed in tandem with the demands of globalisation as has been proven by regional integration zones elsewhere in the world. Active participation in globalisation and regulated openness to trade require developing comparative advantages, employing West Africa's potential and placing pressure on international regulation so that West Africa takes its place in the world market. The regional dimension can play a role in reaching these objectives by mobilising various actors. Diversified production is a factor of competitiveness both regionally and globally. Speaking with a single voice should increase Africa's leverage in international negations. The West Africa space could become a forum for coordinating aid.

• The role of the NEPAD and long-term strategies

The NEPAD would like *to redress the macroeconomic trends* leading to marginalisation and long-term economic stagnation, as well as the drop in financial flows towards Africa. It targets sustainable development and uses the regional framework as its basic referent. It favours the direct involvement of Africans in the development process and targets a new partnership based on shared responsibility and mutual interest. "Peer pressure" and reviews are necessary. The NEPAD is an ongoing process that should foster true political dialogue enabling overall development strategies to be defined. It is original in its emphasis on the private sector.

The NEPAD raises, however, a certain number of issues. It can only be judged in the long-run. It remains a *"top down"* process that still lacks credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of several African states and agents of civil society and is wanting in consistency (Vincent Géronimi, Philippe Hugon). The 7% growth target seems over-ambitious. Annual financial needs of the NEPAD are estimated at 60 billion US$; four times the annual amount of PDA and DFI. Another discrepancy lies in the NEPAD's lack of concurrence with G8 donors' other agendas, notably the European Union's (Cotonou agreements). Will the NEPAD lead Africa to meet the numerous challenges it faces (demographic, environmental, technological and political)? How can Africa actively take part in the world economy? To what extent will donors, foreign savings fund holders outside Africa and private investors from industrialised countries respond to this ambitious initiative?

The final prerogative stressed in Accra was to connect political, spatial and temporal analyses in order to derive a clear vision toward which to steer West Africa's future (Philippe Hugon, Vincent Géronimi). How can discrepancies be tempered at various regional and national levels (from the local to the global)? How can economic, social, cultural, political and environmental dimensions be equally taken into account to build all-encompassing strategies? How can long-term strategies be implemented through legitimate, effective public and collective action by various actors both responding to urgent situations and possessing a long-term outlook? How can we devise an endogenous, inclusive development model? Africa needs to resituate itself in terms of key world issues. To do this it will have to take into account its own cultural heritage alongside global public goods, devise comprehensive strategies, modify timeframes (by linking the very short run to the very long run) and spatial denominations (by linking the local to the global). Sustainable development is contingent upon increasing aid, sharply reducing debt, opening markets, increasing private investment and technological transfers toward the South, as well as decreasing subsidies if not entirely altering modes of consumption and production in the North.

The Accra seminar succeeded in raising the issues extrapolated above, although answers remain to be found. To come up with them will require a long-term process of reflection and action in which the Sahel and West Africa Club could play a key role.

Philippe HUGON
Professor Paris X - Nanterre University

1 OPENING SPEECHES

Speech by *Mrs Jacqueline Damon*

I would like to take this opportunity to present the Sahel and West Africa Club a subsidiary of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development based in Paris, France. I will also outline what we hope can be achieved during this Special Event.

First, a bit of background will be necessary since we are not very well known in this part of West Africa. The Club was created in 1977 as the "Club du Sahel" in response to successive droughts and their dramatic impact on the Sahel region. Very quickly the Club developed a comparative advantage in observing and analysing field-level realities, and using them to help correct misperceptions and policy distortions. The first such effort focused on developing markets and trade in cereals in the Sahel region which eventually lead to the dissolution of marketing boards and cross border trade liberalisation.

To remain effective and relevant, the Club has often had to adapt to changes on the ground. A new chapter in the life of the Club began in April 2001 with reforms designed to make it more effective and to transform it into a forum for promoting African views on future West African development.

One year ago shareholders and stakeholders agreed to expand the geographic coverage of the Club and change its name accordingly to include both the Sahel and the other parts of the ECOWAS zone. They also agreed to encourage greater West African involvement at all levels of the Club's dealings:

- Strategy and Policy Group which sets the broad outlines of the work programme and general directions;
- Secretariat based at the OECD in Paris;
- Thematic working groups established to reflect upon major topics.

Finally, it was agreed to open up the Club's activities to more participation from private sector and civil society groups in OECD and West African countries. While the Club had developed ties with regional civilian networks in West Africa, participation from OECD countries has almost exclusively been from development cooperation agencies.

The Club's work programme is now exclusively focused on regional integration dynamics and draws heavily from West African sources of expertise and intellectual leadership. The underlying philosophy is that successful development programmes must be designed and implemented by people in the sub-region. It chooses to build on existing dynamics and emerging networks and institutions, taking fully into account constraints and opportunities associated with the rapid pace of change in the field.

The approach involves:

- Identifying growth centres and areas where socio-economic transactions are the most concentrated;
- Looking at the West African space by breaking down artificial sectoral divisions and mapping-out links between rural and urban areas, formal and informal sectors and private and public sectors;
- Developing and formalising tools that could be replicated throughout West Africa.

Our underlying premise is that regional integration and cooperation is taking place irrespective of official actions or development cooperation programmes. Economic actors, entrepreneurs and trans-national

corporations are constantly making decisions and seizing opportunities to operate more effectively in the regional space. The Club's work will focus on identifying key motors of change in the medium-run and discussing these with regional networks such as farmers' and other producers' associations, businesses, local officials, regional institutions, applied researchers, decision-makers etc. The essential question is not whether regional integration will continue but rather under what conditions, around which growth centres and incurring what costs and benefits?

The Accra Special Event is the first one of its kind since the recent changes in the Club, thereby testing the validity of a number of our working hypotheses:

- First, there are new ideas and concepts emerging from field-level realities that could help provide strong insights for the future. These need to draw on the uniqueness of West African experience while reflecting the fact that the region is continually coping with the impacts of globalisation and increasing international regulation;

- Second, dialogue, especially among West African political figures, regional integration institutions, researchers and economic operators is key to identifying and implementing practical steps toward accelerating growth through the construction of viable regional spaces;

- Third, development cooperation agencies can also benefit from exchanging ideas and concepts in an informal context that does not involve negotiating or speaking on behalf of one's institution. We hope that this will allow ideas to be assessed on their intrinsic merits;

- Finally, there is indeed a new impetus in Africa to look beyond national boundaries for solutions and a firm resolve to take responsibility for shaping the future. The NEPAD vision is a compelling one and the extent to which Heads of State have been involved is impressive. Nonetheless, the vision needs to be transformed into a development strategy that includes programmes, projects and operational funding from local, national, regional and international resources.

In terms of specific goals for this Special Event, the main one is to agree on a limited set of concrete actions for accelerating regional integration and cooperation in West Africa. These actions could enhance the Sahel and West Africa Club's value added to NEPAD. Ideally this should include soliciting volunteers to participate in core task groups responsible for pursuing them.

The debates will certainly bring to the fore many additional ideas and proposals that have not been included in the impressive documentation prepared for us by eminent thinkers, practitioners and private sector leaders.

However, based on what has already been prepared, I see at least four possible areas where specific outcomes could be achieved:

- Identifying a limited number of cross-border areas that could become building blocks for strengthened regional cooperation in West Africa;

- Establishing a group of West African politicians, regional institutions and economic actors to regularly review obstacles to regional trade and investment and help identify practical solutions;

- Initiating policy dialogue among all key stakeholders on how to promote regional economic opportunities around specific plans for regional infrastructure, spatial planning and communication facilities for business promotion;

- Examining possible modalities for guiding the design and implementation of future NEPAD programmes and projects in West Africa. These should include a road map to delineate regional inter-governmental organisations' respective roles.

I would like to close these opening remarks with special thanks to all the people who have contributed to the preparation and organisation of this event, in particular Professor John Igué and Mrs. Sunhilt Schumacher. I would also like to extend a word of special thanks to President Kufuor for agreeing to host this event and to President Konaré who helped promote recent changes in the Club through his vision of the Sahel as an integral part of the West African space. A general word of welcome is also in order to all ministers and guests who have taken time out of busy schedules to be here today. Last but not by any means least, I would like also to pay tribute to the unflagging commitment and support of the Club's Presidency team, Mr. Joan Boer and Ms. Gerda Dommerholt of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Speech by *Mr. Joan Boer*

Questions linked to regional integration are drawing significant attention in current debates. There is renewed interest because many countries recognize that with accelerating globalisation participation in a regional block is necessary to extract potential benefits, including a greater say on socio-economic trade-offs being made.

Regional integration has therefore also become a response to globalisation as. In the world today, the major forces pushing for globalisation originate in the private sector. Yet those bodies negotiating regional agreements, and have increasingly lost leverage as a result of globalisation, are from the public sector. Regionalisation could give the public sector more leeway to influence events.

In Africa, this course is clearly understood, as shows the increasing political commitment to regional institutions. Yet, in Africa, this undertaking is not exclusively driven by a need to respond to globalisation but also by a need to prevent any further fragmentation and marginalisation of a continent strewn with a considerable number of small and economically weak nation states. There is also an increasing need to jointly manage natural resources and environmental constraints. The existence of regional cooperation institutions such as the OMVS (Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Sénégal), the Niger Basin Authority, the Organisation for the Lake Chad Basin and the CILSS illustrate this trend.

Despite the compelling reasons that push Africa: towards regional integration the process is not yet sufficiently endogenous. For the moment, experience is drawn mainly from exogenous sources, particularly, the European Union. As a result, current efforts do not build enough on what Africa itself has to offer. These efforts have not yet been assessed in terms of the capacity of Africans to manage a process primarily foreign to its own experiences.

Africa is a unique continent with a specific history of negative external influences, failed externally-driven development processes and severe internal crises and contradictions, including, the slave trade, wars for colonial conquest, struggles for independence, religious and tribal conflicts, autocratic regimes etc. Many of these phenomena have destroyed social equilibrium and discouraged grass roots initiatives.

Development can neither be fully imported nor fully exported. Africa must focus on its own realities in order to find an appropriate way of adapting to the rest of the world. It is for this reason that the Sahel and West Africa Club concentrates its work on identifying and analysing field-level realities. What are these realities in relation to regional integration?

Official statistics present a highly distorted view of Africa: recurrent crises, mediocre economic indicators, endemic illnesses and widespread poverty. This is the negative image prevailing through out the 1980s that provided little hope for an African future. Against this backdrop of crises and failing development approaches, some real endogenous dynamics are now appearing with the emergence of regional development poles that define the space differently: demographic concentration around cities, social solidarity and traders' networks. These dynamics rarely conform to the logic pursued by public authorities working for regional integration institutions. However, they do not compete with it or threaten official approaches. Field level dynamics can lead to changes in border areas and the nature of nation states, becoming increasingly dysfunctional through patronage, paternalism and corruption and hence undermining their own legitimacy in the eyes of the people. Faced with these trends, a number of possible responses suggest themselves:

- Promoting decentralisation as a means of reinforcing local productive capacity, strengthening relationships among actors on the ground and accelerating integration among local communities, essential to building successful regional organisations;

- Building on these endogenous dynamics by paying closer attention to patterns of settlement, urbanisation and economic productivity.

One practical aspect of these spatial reconfigurations is the emergence of new areas of solidarity around borders which represent real "cross-border states" and, as such, show that some groups with strong and long-standing historical, socio-economic and cultural ties are not willing to accept the verdict of borders. These "cross border states" also illustrate what decentralisation can contribute to regional integration. In fact, "cross border areas" can act as building blocks for integration and, especially, help unite the Sahel region with coastal states. From this perspective, President Konaré (Mali) is right to assert that "policies for managing 'cross-border areas' should be based on a strong commitment to integrating neighbouring communities and consolidating 'cross-border states' so as to clearly address the role of borders in West African regional integration."

The last question to be addressed during this special event deals with market access and trade development. These issues are key for mapping out, on the one hand, the relationship between the informal and formal sectors and, on the other, analysing the role of actors on the ground and the way they respond in meeting market requirements. Ways that African economies can adapt to the challenges of international trade will be examined through an analysis of the structural elements of West African competitiveness.

In all three of the above cases, it is clearly not possible to focus solely on regional integration institutions' responses. Field-level dynamics provide firm evidence that the regional question is one concerning everyone and that the region has already developed a number of effective links between different ecological zones, especially the Sahel and coastal states. The Sahel's future is not exclusively within the Sahel. The next two days discussions should also help identify what can be done to improve the effectiveness of sectoral regional institutions by re-examining their mandates.

We hope that this special event will contribute to answering a number of crucial questions:

- Why is Africa's image so multifarious at the onset of this millennium, despite a series of institutional and macro-economic reforms implemented over a number of years?

- What type of strategies needs to be put in place to change this distorted record and reconcile nation states with regional dynamics led by actors in the field?

- Are West African states prepared to give up some of their national sovereignty to conform to the intrinsic changes brought about by regional dynamics and their impact on border areas?

- How can regular consultations be established between regional integration institutions and field-level actors in order to strengthen productive capacity, promote enterprise development, reinforce economic competitiveness and create more trading opportunities?

- Will Africa be able to build a common vision around the NEPAD that fosters regional approaches and redirects current policies towards shared objectives such as collective resources, infrastructure and equipment whose cost exceeds the capacity of individual nation states?

Answers to these questions will require a stronger, more active partnership around new forces of change and spatial reconfiguration in Africa. Political elites, intellectuals, entrepreneurs, development associations, trade unions and external partners need to come together to support this partnership. The Accra meeting has been called to think about ways to account for field-level realities and build them into the new partnership. If the meeting comes up with relevant conclusions, it can help West Africa contribute to the NEPAD agenda.

In order for this new agenda to reach its objectives, development cooperation agencies must also support regional programmes that build on endogenous, field-level dynamics and processes. I would like to use the opportunity provided by this special event in Accra, to make a special plea in this regard. I hope that representatives of development cooperation agencies present at this meeting will relay this message to their respective institutions as a means of effectively promoting increased productive capacities in Africa.

The presence of Presidents Kufuor and Konaré at this event is a strong indication of the types of changes that need to take place in Africa, notably West Africa. This should be an impetus for us to approach the questions and problems discussed with as much objectivity and frankness as possible.

Speech by *H.E. Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré,* President of the Republic of Mali

Your Excellency Mr. President of the Republic of Ghana, Dear Brother,

Your Excellencies, Honourable Ministers,

President of the Sahel and West Africa Club,

Ladies and Gentlemen of the diplomatic corps and consular services and representatives of international organisations,

Honourable guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me first of all to express my gratitude to my friend and brother President John KUFUOR and to the Government and people of Ghana for the very African hospitality they have extended to me and my delegation since we arrived in your esteemed city of Accra.

I would also like to thank the President of the Sahel and West Africa Club for the honour of co-chairing this Special Meeting on a subject of vital importance to Mali.

Our vision of a United Africa in the 21st century stems from a deep conviction. It is based essentially on our vision of the future of ECOWAS and a strong, united the auspices of Africa under a West African Federation and the African Union.

I am convinced that progress in integrating West Africa means gradually applying the "supranational", taking a confederal approach at first and then, in the long run, a federal one.

Within our overall approach we must also take into account the four indissociable dimensions of integration: democracy, peace, security and joint, collective and sustainable development.

With this in view, we must make sure we involve civil society in the process of regional integration and promote suitable mechanisms, combining modern diplomacy with African values, to prevent and manage conflicts and settle disputes.

There are three aspects to the building of an integrated West Africa:

- The political aspect, the main tasks here being progress towards a Federation of West African States within the African Union, and building democracy, starting with essential, basic democratic requirements;

- The security aspect, setting up a mechanism for preventing and managing conflict from the standpoint of a shared defence and security policy;

- The economic and cultural aspect, with the creation of a unified economic space, a common market and a single currency zone.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Integration is Africa's only viable option. Today, it is more evident than ever that integration will be achieved together or not at all; it is together that we will succeed in building ECOWAS, the African Union and NEPAD. If we are divided, we have not a chance in this quickly changing world, a world in which everywhere else, economic units based on strong social bonds are taking shape to contend with the inevitable and inexorable changes in relations between nations and between people. If we are to take on the challenges of a globalisation none of us can avoid, integration is a necessity.

We, within ECOWAS, mean to keep up the fight. We have decided to adopt the pace of the world at large, wake up to the real issues at stake in globalisation, draw lessons from the past and integrate all aspects of the ongoing changes in the world around us.

This is why ECOWAS has decided to drive economic integration forward with determination, but together, in solidarity, in a realistic and pragmatic way, gradually and efficiently building on ECOWAS's many strengths. That is our ambition.

Our sub-region has huge potential which, if it is developed at the regional level, can be a major asset for development.

The assets I refer to, Ladies and Gentlemen, are these:

- Over 6 million square kilometres of land and more than 220 million inhabitants;
- Two of Africa's greatest rivers, the Niger and the Senegal;
- Vast tracts of farmland and grazing land;
- Countless livestock resources;
- Seas rich in fishing resources as far as the eye can see;
- Huge mineral and energy resources.

All this potential needs to be realised. We can start by developing strategies with clear objectives and identifying those fields in which integration can advance most quickly. In a space where peace, security and stability reign, this can be achieved.

ECOWAS now has a system for peacekeeping and conflict management: it already embodies elements for developing a common defence and security policy. The system has been strengthened by the recent adoption of the additional Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

ECOWAS has achievements to consolidate; it has perspectives and new tasks to which we must devote all our efforts.

From January 2000 and throughout its mandate as Chair of ECOWAS, Mali's strategic objectives have been based on the concern to speed up the integration process in West Africa. The themes we have chosen to focus on have been strengthening the political dimension of integration and promoting certain promising concepts for progress towards integration and the African Union, such as the central role played by big countries like Nigeria, the driving role of ECOWAS in West Africa, and the concept of inter-communal economic cooperation across borders.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To achieve harmonious integration in our sub-region, we must also rationalise our numerous inter-governmental organisations.

The coexistence of a multitude of different integration and cooperation structures in almost all spheres of activity, some in competition with each other, puts an unbearable strain on our States, three quarters of which are among the world's least developed countries. Needless to add that besides the lack of financial resources, we also lack sufficient high-quality human resources.

This obviously points to the need to rationalise sub-regional cooperation and integration organisations. To be sustainable, this rationalisation must be conducted in light of a shared political vision.

Harmonious integration depends on the proper management of our sub-regional organisations, which I would classify as follows:

- Organisations involving neighbouring countries, aimed at promoting stability and development. Examples are the Liptako-Gourma, the Mano River Union, the Senegal River Development Organisation (SRDO) and the Gambia River Development Organisation (GRDO);

- Cross-country organisations, some of which provide a link between regional ensembles. Examples are the Niger River Basin Authority (NBA), the CILSS (Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel), IGAD (Inter-Governmental Authority on Development), CEN-SAD (Community of Sahelo-Saharan States) and CEPGL (Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries);

- Economic development and cooperation organisations such as WAEMU, the West African Economic and Monetary Union;

- Regional integration organisations, such as ECOWAS, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Union of the Arab Maghreb (UAM) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) which, in the long run, require a transfer of sovereignty. Transferring sovereignty within these communities will be gradual and may evolve first towards confederal, and then federal management. Their end purpose is to become unified economic spaces.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Strengthening ECOWAS must be a priority. Its achievements must be consolidated, keeping the initiative in our hands and making sure ECOWAS embodies our political vision. We must envisage the stages and restrictions on our path towards a Federation of West African States. For this, it is essential to reform ECOWAS institutionally, giving it a more confederate function based on sub-regional achievements and setting up a community executive body with extensive prerogatives and power to take initiatives in trade, the economy and currency matters.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To realise such a goal we must build on our assets and achievements. In recent years, the integration of our sub-region has resulted in political and strategic advances that have helped to boost its momentum and make our sub-region one of the driving forces for African unity.

To consolidate these gains in the coming months and years, we must deepen the integration process and take practical steps in such important fields as:

- Strengthening our peacekeeping and crisis management capacities and instruments;
- Creating a common market and single currency;
- Reducing the isolation of parts of our Community by developing roads and telecommunication infrastructure, and rapidly developing our ECO-Air airline and ECO-Marine shipping line;
- Interconnecting electrical grids as soon as possible and building the West African oil pipeline;
- Promoting the private sector;
- Developing sectoral policies and programmes;
- Promoting human resources through education, culture and health;
- Involving civil society more closely in the integration process.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The success of our common enterprise will depend on the conscious support of our peoples, the political elite and all sections of civil society: women, young people, economic operators, farmers and trade unions.

I am firmly convinced that our political will must be buttressed by a vast campaign to inform our populations, raise their awareness and mobilise them with respect to the issues and challenges of regional integration.

We are all aware that integration can only become a reality if people make its ideals their own and contribute to its realisation.

The creation of the ECOWAS Parliament strengthens our initiatives and will help to consolidate democracy in our sub-region.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I shall never tire of insisting that our regional Community has no future without an African Union that expresses Africa's strong determination to exist and to take on full responsibility in grasping today's challenges, the better to respond to African peoples' concerns.

The African Union will, I trust, unite African countries and peoples through specific activities; it will promote continent-level management of matters of common interest.

Above all, it will help to consolidate peace, security and stability throughout the continent. We should extend support to ongoing efforts at setting up the Peace and Security Council within the African Union so that Africa will at last have an efficient instrument to prevent, manage and settle conflicts.

To be effective, an instrument of this kind requires genuine African political leadership. As I stressed at the last OAU Summit, the Peace and Security Council must have permanent members with no right of veto, and temporary members, taking into account the fact that some countries, because of their demographic, financial, political and military size, have greater responsibility for finding credible, applicable African solutions.

A special responsibility, indeed, but in a democratic context.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It seems to me important to emphasise here that NEPAD, the New Partnership for African Development, this new challenge for Africa and the international community, is an especially promising tool for accelerating integration and promoting development.

The challenge before us is to win the approval of all sections of our populations for NEPAD. It must be a unanimously shared initiative to which all African States are fully committed.

If there is a sound bond between NEPAD and the African Union on the one hand and the Regional Economic Communities on the other, African economies have a good chance of achieving sustainable, harmonious development and proper integration into the world economy.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no justification for border conflicts today; now that all of us have adopted integration as our goal, borders must take on a different meaning.

As part of the job of strengthening sub-regional integration policy, the creation of "cross-border areas," i.e. areas of advanced integration that overlap national borders, is intended to develop homogeneous spaces where people can live, share, develop and co-operate through:

- Strengthened trade and socio-cultural exchange across borders;
- Creating the conditions for freer circulation of people and goods;
- Promoting cross-border links between local authorities with an eye to sharing infrastructure and capital goods and carrying out joint development actions in health, education, the arts, culture and sport, crop farming and livestock, transport, energy, the environment and industry;
- Harmonising sectoral policies between countries, particularly for health, education and capital equipment, and intensifying trade by providing infrastructure and capital equipment for border markets;
- Creating and strengthening production-distribution sectors and forming a "cross-border area" unit at the sub-regional level and a "cross-border area" monitoring unit at the Sahel and West Africa Club.

Mali means to apply this vision of "cross-border areas" to certain sub-regional spaces capable of starting and sustaining efforts towards greater complementarity, more trade and closer social ties between communities that, at present, remain separated by artificial borders.

"Cross-border areas" should mark the starting point of a process by which State frontiers will wither away, providing an ideal focus for grass-roots sub-regional integration.

With the sub-regional integration process now gearing up, it is up to our States to create a permanent synergy allowing this new grass-roots community integration to function.

"Cross-border" areas in the form proposed would be an ideal framework for creating real local development areas shared between countries; areas at peace that can lead the way in cooperation and free trade.

Their creation requires a political will on the part of our States, delegating much more responsibility to local authorities in defining development strategy. It also requires closer involvement by our development partners.

Cross-border areas are a supreme example of a local approach to bottom-up integration. They are also a way to combat poverty. They offer our governments the opportunity to foster the development of local initiatives in areas where our countries naturally meet.

To make our desire for integration a reality, our governments must ignite the process. This can be done by generating a coherent process of integrated development that will improve living conditions for neighbouring border populations.

I hope your deliberations will be fruitful; I am hopeful that they will lead to a coherent action-based strategy capable of breathing new life into the integration process so that a united, mutually supportive, dignified and responsible Africa will emerge.

I wish you every success in your discussions.

Thank you.

Speech by *H.E. Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor,* President of the Republic of Ghana

Your Excellency, Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, President of the Republic of Mali,

Your Excellencies, Heads of Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations,

Honourable Sirs,

Members of the Sahel and West Africa Club,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to welcome all of you to this meeting and extend a special welcome to my friend and brother His Excellency Alpha Konaré, the President of the Republic of Mali, my co-chair for this special event.

Ghana and Mali have had a very unique and special relationship that dates back through centuries of contact between our two countries. The bond of solidarity and mutual respect has blossomed since I took office and I am happy to acknowledge the commitment our countries share in the areas of multi-party democracy, rule of law and regional integration.

I appreciate the opportunity provided and the efforts made by the Sahel and West Africa Club and the OECD to bring us all together at this Special Event.

Today, Africa is again attracting attention from the international community more than ever before. This time around, it appears the attention is not exclusively aroused by bad news.

Two important events have affected Africa's potential in a positive way over the past twelve months: agreeing to bring into being the African Union; and launching the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) designed by African Heads of State and adopted by the African Union as a blueprint for Africa's development.

In the NEPAD document, African leaders have clearly demonstrated their commitment to take full responsibility for the continent's development and for building an active partnership with the rest of the international community.

This renewed interest in Africa is an encouraging development.

At the same time, we in Africa have to acknowledge that today, our continent lags very much behind in all economic and 'standard of living' indicators. The conditions in which most of our people live are unacceptable and destitute while both ancient and modern diseases are part of our daily lives.

As a continent, Africa appears disconnected from the rest of the world and internally, countries are poorly interconnected in terms of trade and communications.

I believe that NEPAD currently provides a framework for a quick way out of our predicaments. But this promising initiative can only be successful if we, the leaders of Africa, move swiftly in the area of integration, in terms of trade and the movement of people across borders.

It is crucial that good governance become a uniform state of affairs across borders. Our people should not be forced to move across borders as hapless refugees or displaced persons.

This meeting in Accra has been organised by the Sahel and West Africa Club to focus our attention on this necessity. Reconnecting Africa to the rest of the world is to be grounded in regional integration. Luckily, in addition to formal integration processes pursued by governments, internal dynamics already exist that aim at similar development objectives.

In this context, the concept of "cross-border states" that will be addressed during this meeting is quite relevant to the NEPAD and to regional integration. On official levels, relations between Ghana and its French-speaking neighbours have been hampered by differences in colonial heritage and monetary policy.

However, on the ground, our peoples have never allowed these differences to interfere with trading and cultural contacts. Our indigenous traders have shown that they can turn what are considered administrative obstacles into dynamic factors in cross border relations.

We should, for example, consider the differences that the two colonial languages, English and French, impose on the region not as barriers, but as challenges that we can overcome to our advantage. Were the peoples of ECOWAS to become bilingual in French and English, this could open doors for all of us in the international market.

The behaviour of our people at border areas is a good example of how to overcome barriers and make good use of them.

With the substantial flow of people and goods between Togo and Ghana, the cities of Lome and Aflao can be seen as part of the same economic space, despite official borders. The same can be said of the towns of Kpandu (Ghana) and Palime (Togo).

Near our northern border, the towns of Bawku (Ghana), Bitou (Burkina Faso) and Dapaong (Togo) constitute a triangle of solidarity among the Gourmatche people spread across the three countries. The same is true for the towns of Navrongo and Paga on the border between Ghana and Burkina Faso.

On the western border, several "cross border areas" link Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire:

- A space along the coast is delimited by Elubo (Ghana) and Framo (Côte d'Ivoire);
- In the centre is a space between Takyikrom (Ghana) and Agnibelekrou (Côte d'Ivoire) and between Sampa (Ghana) and Boudoukou (Côte d'Ivoire).

In each one of these spaces there are several regional markets that bring people together regularly in these "cross-border areas".

We should seize the opportunity provided by this meeting to explore how to use these regional markets to make integration between Ghana and its French-speaking neighbours practical and 'real' for the average man and woman.

My government will examine the meeting's conclusions and recommendations with much enthusiasm.

I am pleased that the NEPAD will be discussed during the meeting since it is a central challenge and one that needs to be nurtured in these early years of the 21st Century. I am pleased to note that this past Friday, ECOWAS' Heads of State agreed on an Action Plan for the implementation of the NEPAD in West Africa. We are poised for action and I want to urge all of you to support the work of ECOWAS toward implementing this important African initiative.

I wish you very fruitful deliberations with the hope that you will come up with practical solutions that will help speed up the pace of integration in West Africa.

I am particularly interested in solutions that will affect in a positive way, the daily lives of our people as they endeavour to trade and move across borders in West Africa.

Thank you and may God Bless us all.

I

PART ONE:
Globalisation, regionalisation and the crisis of nation-states

General Overview of Issues

Achille ***Mbembe***

By overemphasising the African crisis, many analysts have lost sight of the continent's current social recomposition. This report deals with these transformations, which differ from country to country according to political, economic and cultural structures.

I would like to put forth the following four general hypotheses:

- These recompositions do not reflect a pathological condition but rather a pluralisation process of society;
- Pluralisation is one of the direct consequences of globalisation;
- Pluralisation affects three domains above all: economy, war, culture;
- This process cannot culminate in a unique outcome since it stems from political, spatial, and social diversity, and various forms of power that must be assimilated by regionalisation.

I. ECONOMY

Since the early 1970s, dozens of methods purporting to integrate Africa into the international economy have been launched and replaced. The structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s and 1990s, some of the most noteworthy, largely contributed to the introduction of new economic configurations, although they hardly fulfilled their proponents' expectations.

1.1 New economic configurations intensified by the globalisation process are characterised in the following way:

- During the last quarter of a century, developing a market economy in Africa neither led to the emergence of new cities, nor to the establishment of important growth poles (with the possible exception of South Africa). The market economy in Africa is a diffracted economy composed of several interwoven elements whose relationship with their surrounding environment is continually changing;

- Globalisation has accelerated the polarisation and spatial discontinuity originally instated by colonial development policies. This extreme fragmentation often gives rise to a large number of enclaves, sometimes embedded in each other, and often disjointed within a nation-state;

- This applies, for instance, to mining, petroleum, fishery enclaves and natural parks and reserves. Whether at sea or on land, enclave economies have an extractive nature. They are either entirely disconnected from the national territory, or connected through weak informal links. These economies are, however, directly connected to international trade circuits and, in many cases, negate the hypothesis of Africa's complete marginalisation;

- Enclaves tend to be disputed areas. They are often controlled by multinationals, to which central governments extend, if not, delegate sovereignty. They sometimes conspire with dissident armed forces, thereby exemplifying the all too commonplace osmosis between warfare and local trade (i.e. diamonds in Sierra Leone and Angola, and other strategic mineral ore in the Democratic Republic of Congo.);

- The transnationalisation of African economies during the last 25 years is also reflected in emerging free trade zones and corridors, extraterritorial entities designed to create propitious conditions for businesses in a well demarcated area that enjoys fiscal privileges. Just like the enclave economy, these "corridors" are uniquely export-oriented; therefore sensitive to sharp rises and drops in world demand and volatile short-term economic conditions;

- A third instance of this process is the proliferation of zones of increased capital flows (i.e. import-export zones). Cross-border zones and metropolitan areas are two noteworthy examples.

1.2 Consequence of the process of dispersion

The "dispersion" of the African market economy has had five social and political consequences:

- First, two forms of violence that were previously isolated from one another, are now correlated and interdependent: (1) market violence induced by the struggle for privatisation of resources, and aggravated by situations of extreme poverty; (2) widespread social violence (war, crime, even the mere struggle for survival), a result of public authorities losing previously exclusive rights to coercion;

- Second, the terms of sovereignty have been redefined. A result of the multilateralisation of external interventions (especially international financial institutions, humanitarian organisations and various private or semi-public networks). The proliferation of intervening parties, in turn, has blurred classical distinctions between public and private inputs;

- Third, a labyrinth of institutional networks is developing at the local level. The contradictory logics that various actors adhere to largely explain the fragmented character of their interventions and the brutality of the struggle for access to external financial resources. Endless conflict, volatility of alliances, instability of leadership and manifold power games attest to the diffraction and pluralisation of these organisations;

- Fourth, traditional forms of social stratification have also been diversified. At the bottom of the scale, precariousness and exclusion affect more and more levels of the population. This is especially true for young people and women who are structural victims of mass poverty. Towards the top, an ever smaller class of owners is created thanks to their control over distant resources and to their capacity to mobilise local and international "socialities". Between the two, a middle class is trying to survive and possibly build up a foundation of wealth by accumulating resources from the formal economy and the parallel market;

- Fifth, the social struggle, now either appears as a radical clash of generations or as unprecedented opposition to traditional gender relations. Without really implying class awareness, the antagonism between the rich and poor is becoming clearer and the hostility between indigenous (autochthones) and alien (allogènes) populations or national and foreign populations is growing more intense (Côte d'Ivoire). Religious differences can also lead to violent conflict, e.g. the sharia imposed in Nigeria.

From a formal perspective, sovereignty is being eroded; economic transnationalisation as part of globalisation is simultaneously delineating arenas open to independent operations by private networks quick to take advantage of them. Paradoxically, one form of exercising this new found autonomy is by waging war.

Wherever it may occur, war is the outcome of a patchwork of processes.

Some wars are political. Many are the result of a constitutional type of discord, the general capacity to live together being challenged.

Discord is also linked to the conditions in which citizenship is exercised. When the State allocates ever fewer benefits, people contest the moral relevance of a system apportioning powers and privileges among the numerous communities that make up a nation. Many communities feel excluded or marginalised.

Increasingly, these two types of discord (around conditions of belonging, and the reality of exclusion) coalesce around the triptych of identity, ownership and citizenship, reflecting the duality inherent to the concept of State and nation. This crisis is multiform, with spatial repercussions, exemplified as follows:

2.1 Shifting spaces and infinitely variable borders

The most significant example of these shifting spaces and amorphous borders is the outskirts of the Saharan desert, which runs from the borders of Algeria and the Western Sahara to the borders of Borkou, Ennedi and Tibesti, and extends to the western edges of Sudan, thus embracing both sides of the desert. As in the 19th century, there are several corridors (commercial, religious, warfare) and roads that now connect the two banks of the desert. Within these corridors live highly mixed and hybrid clusters of people where the Arabo-Berber world meets the Black-African world. In these moving, fluid worlds, institutional borders do not act as fixed barriers. They are, in fact, corridors divided up into networks of clans, brotherhoods and tribes defined by cycles of alliances and conflicts (recurrent wars in Chad, conflicts between nomadic and sedentary populations).

The sovereignty of this vast expanse is being eroded, borne off by a tendency toward fragmentation strengthened by a framework of networks and clientele mentality. This area is constantly traversed by state and non-state actors alike; nomads, traders, and adventurers. The area is structured on both sides by feudal-like ties, and is strongly influenced by a culture of raids and spoils. Here the people's relationship to land is principally itinerant and nomadic.

2.2 Landlocked states and captive markets

In southern Africa, South Africa is establishing asymmetric relations with neighbouring states taking advantage of their institutional weakness. As a result of investment flows and regional trade networks, Swaziland, Lesotho and Mozambique are becoming integrated parts of these provinces. Through its transport and maritime development policy (ports of Maputo, Beira and Nacala), South Africa is transforming each of the landlocked countries into captive markets. Some 15 land development projects are being carried out in areas leading to the coasts. If they become operational they will change the face of the sub-region forever.

2.3 Ghost states and informalising power

In step with 19th century tendencies, the last 25 years have witnessed a steady division and segmentation of power, hidden behind the mask of authoritarian states inherited from colonial times, e.g. Central Africa (the two Congos, CAR, Chad), some parts of the Horn of Africa (Somalia) and West Africa (Liberia,

Sierra Leone). In these regions, most of the State structures and functions have been "informalised". Relations between the central state apparatus and the people it administers are constantly loosening up. In many places, war has aggravated this process of decline (Angola, Congo-Brazzaville, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi). In some countries, state control goes no farther than the capital's city limits.

2.4 Factions

These wars sometime culminate in the victory of one side over another. Victories of this sort are nearly always short-lived, and are very often followed by increasingly destructive cycles of violence. In other cases, struggles end with colonial states disappearing altogether, as was the case in Somalia. There are also cases in which no party wins a decisive victory. War goes on and humanitarian networks get involved usually adding to, rather than soothing, existing confusion around the notion of sovereignty.

Gradually we find social structures emerging in which war and wartime organisation tend to become normalized. Under these conditions, war permeates the whole social and political spectrum. It stands out as a factor of regional differentiation, part of a process of reproduction-destruction, punctuated here and there by massacres and human butchery, pillage and banditry (patterned after 19th century raids).

2.5 Militarised Trade

In the context of increasing international trade and new forms of exploiting underground resources, two major players in "de-territorialisation" appear: oil and diamonds, which are the two most abused resources. An "ultra-marine economy" was born of oil and is now centred around the Guinean Gulf (Nigeria, Chad, Angola, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea). As for diamonds and other minerals, they were the financial source for wartime economies in the Great Lakes region, Congo and Angola.

In both these cases, "de-territorialisation" dynamics shift in several directions:

On the one hand, various forms of spatial delineation intersect. A nation-space is the outcome of superimposed historical, administrative, as well as cultural and religious local communities. Each locality is subject to various jurisdictions: state, traditional, religious. A variety of governing orders coexist because "countries" and "communities" overlap. Local conflicts between indigenous and alien populations disturb this coexistence. In such contexts, citizenship, defined on ethnical and territorial grounds, does not reflect civic equality between members of a same national community.

On the other hand, through repeated conflicts regional epicentres for petroleum production (e.g. the Delta region of Nigeria) are torn apart. These provoke opposition between communities within a country, short of taking on the formal aspect of a classical war. Regions known for their mineral wealth and proliferating multinational firms intent on exploiting local natural resources are the most affected.

2.6 De facto partition

A State loses sovereignty over vast regions within its national jurisdiction. The State's territory is then divided up into economic fiefdoms, each of which has specific wealth (mineral ore, timber, plantations, etc.) and whose markets are exploited by franchise or appropriated in some other way. Part of the territory is controlled by government and another part by armed rebels (Angola, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo). Each zone has its own rights and independently manages its diplomatic, commercial, financial and military interests. The war treasury is composed of sold or saleable minerals and petroleum products are often used as collateral.

2.7 Savannah versus coastal communities

The distinction between forest lands and savannah (e.g. Nigeria, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea) lends itself to another form of spatial delineation. War, peddling, spreading the Moslem faith and ancient migrations resulted in formidable mixes of populations throughout the 19th century. Colonisation revived population movements on other scales and accentuated the cleavage between coastal and hinterland populations. At present, the logic of "de-territorialisation" is developing along three lines:

- Human and economic capital is conglomerating around large coastal urban areas. These metropolitan areas have planes of influence that spread beyond national borders (Abidjan, Lagos, Dakar). Entrepot cities or entrepot states (as in the case of Touba in Senegal, the Gambia, or Benin) are emerging, along with border-towns where networks are woven and trafficking is organised, with both regional and international ramifications;

- A mix of inland peoples is reinventing their identity under the banner of Islam. Powerful networks are organised throughout urban centres. They've been able to build-up fortunes because diasporas support them. Then their goal becomes to convert buying power into political power, either through party representation or by calling for the establishment of strictly Islamic law, e.g. debate on the sharia in Nigeria;

- Lastly, the underlying causes and consequences of seemingly localised conflicts are in fact intimately associated with trans-regional social structures and historical precedents (Casamance and Guinea-Bissao, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea).

III. CULTURE

The irreconcilable natures of tradition and modernity is not, as frequently assumed, the main cleavage is not in the cultural domain. Two processes have dominated African cultural production for the past quarter of a century: (1) a strong tendency to modernise tradition (stemming from administrative centres) and (2) tension between broadening horizons (transnationalisation) and village-bound logic. This tension was mainly felt in three ways: state authority being transferred from the centre to new territorial communities (decentralisation), the continent "urbanised" around large regional, cosmopolitan city centres, and new living styles emerging.

3.1 Decentralisation and its impact on indigenous populations

On the one hand, decentralisation led to new territorial divisions with many cultural and political ramifications. New services and jobs were typically offered. In many countries, decentralisation enabled local elites to strengthen their role as intermediaries between locality, State and international networks. Local-level logic and the logic of globalisation were seen to reinforce each other; pooling local resources is essential in international negotiations.

As local resource control largely depends on who controls administrative, political and financial sectors, many social actors have tried to advocate traditional bonds in order to gain the upper hand in competition, opened up by the democratisation process. Hence how decentralisation and democratisation processes have contributed so strongly to the resurging inter-group conflicts, aggravating tensions between natives of a local community and between migrants and foreigners.

Integration into global networks while relying on values assumed to be indigenous. These are two facets of a single momentum, also impelled by the State (creation of new communes and regions, promulgation of new laws, recognition of customary rights), international financial institutions and NGOs. A variety of actors (traditional chiefs, notables, marabouts, professional and urban elites, various associations, political parties, traders, high-level civil servants and their deputies, civil servants, and solidarity networks) are orchestrating integration.

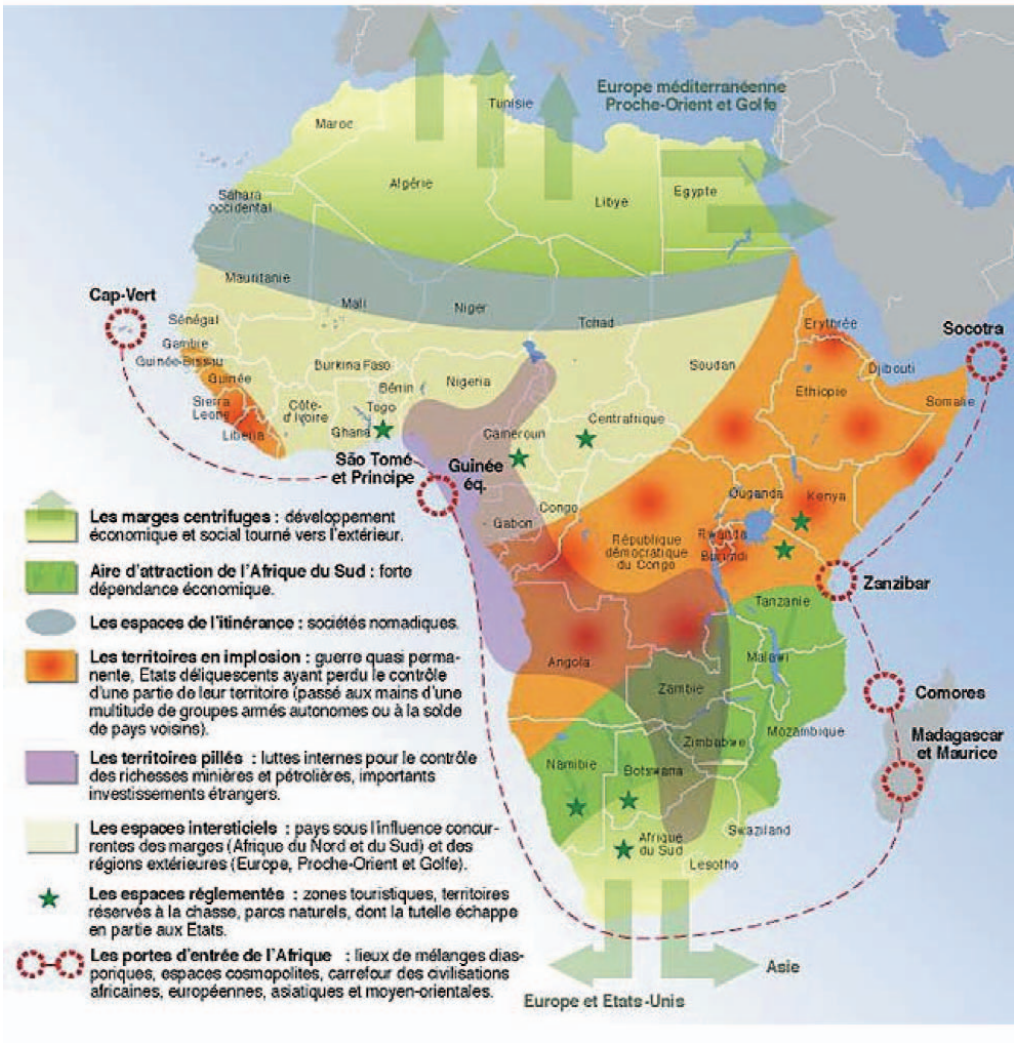
3.2 Migration, "cosmopolitism" and new lifestyles

Hybrid cultural groups are emerging from new urbanisation and migration cycles, and their "creolisation" is accelerating. This is true of so-called "enlightened" religions, languages, music and fashions. A cosmopolitan, urban civilisation is being established.

From a spatial perspective, migrations have induced clandestine areas. "Unofficial" towns with "irregular forms of land access" testify to this. Host countries have responded to this fluid movement of illegal migrants by xenophobia which only contributes to keeping them ever further underground. In an atmosphere prone to illegal undertakings, community structures fall apart and new bonds are created. In extreme cases the elite zones, untouchable by law and order, are created. The elite barricade themselves behind the walls of their own property while between institutional and informal economies a criminal one proliferates and provides geographical turf for local and international trade systems. Social actors are forced to create resources in a very short time frame, under conditions marked by permanent instability and quasi-absolute uncertainty.

Altered family and sexual values exemplify this cultural transformation. Family, religious authorities and the State have lost control over sexuality over the last twenty years. An economy of individual pleasure and sensations has been growing in pace with economic decadence. People are getting married at a later age. The role of men is being widely challenged while the number of female heads of household is on the rise. "Illegitimate births" are no longer stigmatised. Early, frequent sexual relations have become commonplace. Despite the traditional family model's resilience, many taboos have disappeared. Ideals of fecundity are evolving and contraceptive practices are spreading among the middle classes. Homosexuality has increased just about everywhere. Pornographic literature and films have become more accessible. At the same time, sexually transmitted diseases are spreading dramatically and AIDS has become the main regulator of population growth, henceforth spearheading a new cultural rapport between pleasure and death.

Shifting Borders in Africa



Source: Le Monde Diplomatique, November 1999.

Changing African States

*Antoine **Raogo Sawadogo***

INTRODUCTION

The first approach to African development was "National development" at the state level. It was soon superseded by "local development" in infra-state spaces. Now efforts are being made to create inter-state spaces of cooperation at sub-regional and regional levels, in a bid to contend with the implications of globalisation and the market economy at a time when Africa's states are undergoing major socio-political and economic changes. What regional integration approaches can be envisaged in this context?

Without strong states, fully able to play their part in regulation, arbitration and policy-making, and without a confirmed sense of citizenship at the national and local levels, regional integration will remain a devout hope. The region's future depends primarily on well-organised states, capable of building and overseeing societal projects underpinned by coherent economic programmes that can offer competitive products on the African and global markets.

This presentation outlines socio-political and economic changes that reflect demand for a certain form of state, and the need to redesign the African state at of regional integration context.

I. CHRONOLOGICAL STAGES

1.1 The colonial period: states imposed from outside

During the colonial period, Africa was divided into territories according to colonial powers' own socio-economic interests. Some territories were designated as labour sources (e.g. Burkina Faso, ex-Upper Volta), others as entrepots (e.g. Benin and Togo) and yet others as raw material suppliers (e.g. Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana). The first African intellectuals were trained to serve the needs of this cause and the population was marshalled into producing, transporting and migrating in line with the present interests. Two reactions followed: the intellectuals took on an struggle for identity recognition and for liberation from colonial overlords, while the people sought to oust the "foreign body", live peaceably as ordinary citizens, and no longer as beasts of burden.

It should be recalled that the local intermediaries carried out the colonial state's bidding, namely the traditional chiefs, first generation intellectual elite and war veterans. This category derived considerable benefits from their function as local servants. Independence hence spelt the end of cherished privileges.

1.2 The post-colonial period: "strong", arrogant, pretentious states

The epoch in itself spelt change because territories were defined by confining people within borders and establishing state authorities that acquired sovereignty by being recognised by international bodies, primarily the United Nations. This period was marked by struggles for identity recognition, emancipation and the right to self-determination. The new states, however, did not offer a political or economic vision, i.e. societal projects that might answer the local population's deep-felt aspirations.

The new political elite, sometimes well-intentioned, introduced a uniform ideology attempting to rally the population around one party and one union in order to counter the disorienting effect of their new identities, as fragile as they were artificial.

How did post-colonial states and their populations respond?

The Western-style nation state replaced a type of state-formation underway in the colonised territories. Its basic framework was laid down: people living a territory, obeying an established authority. However, these nascent states lacked sovereignty, legitimacy and transcendent citizenship. In fact, they merely "aped" the western state model, simplistically equating state with nation, a people, a territory and possibly a political ideology. The population was relegated to a picturesque dress-up role to artificially legitimise various governments in power. Development projects instated prestigious programmes and "white elephant" investments. The state provided everything: education, health, environment, agriculture, livestock, etc.

This type of state left no room for freedom or initiative. It took responsibility away from all kinds of actors acting as a source of easy financial benefit or paternalistic provider of goods and services. In reality, several types of state co-existed: the legal nation or the "state"), the sociological nation described in various contexts as "developmentalist", "client", "rent-seeking" or "ethnic".

The developmentalist state positions itself as the sole actor in development. With varying degrees of success, the post-colonial state tries to play its role as socio-economic developer. It succeeds in some tasks, achieves mixed results in others and fails in many more. The need for the state stems from its success at establishing itself as the main instrument for social welfare. No one challenges the state's utility in the development process, for which it has appropriated all resources. The state has people, goods, services, legal violence and land at its disposal.

With donor's resources and revenues from the services offered to the population, the state hopes to provide adequate development without having to foster the propitious conditions. The evolution of State development strategies can be grouped into three stages. The first was the "project" era, with projects designed, drafted and implemented by outsiders. When projects failed to produce desired results, they were replaced by a second strategy, known as the "programme" approach. Programmes were supposed to draw on the project approach and make it more efficient. Project-duration was extended, the actors given a little colour by involving the local populations, and procedures were made more flexible by including some token awareness-raising, promotion, participation, shared responsibility, etc.

The "process approach" came third. Since development programmes[1] proved unsatisfactory, this approach claims to take into account the unexpected factors that arise during a project's progression thereby ensuring their successful implementation.

The problem is the same: state and donors are still the ones who initiate, design and execute the action.

The client state, lacking infrastructure and manufacturing or processing industries for its raw materials, has no choice but to depend on its former colonial power for imported supplies. African states maintain a "subject-master" or "client-patron" relationship with their former French, British, Portuguese or Spanish overlords. Add to this the United States and the Soviet Union, competing for world hegemony, with the capitalist countries on one side and socialist-communist regimes on the other. In this dispute for control, African states were courted and positioned as client states in relation to sponsors or patron states.

The rent-seeking state: a new category of leaders who appropriate revenues from commodities (oil, diamonds, gold, coffee, cocoa, cotton, etc.) for their own personal gain at the expense of the public good.

[1] For a theoretical approach tou outside interventions in rural areas and local population participation, see JP. Chauveau, "Interventions étatiques, société civile et mouvements sociaux : points de vue théorique" *Les associations paysannes en Afrique : Organisations et dynamiques*, Paris Karthala, 1994.

Those best serving the interests of foreign multinationals are established as political leaders (local servants).

The ethnic state: Africa is replete with examples of state power dominated by ethnocentrism and state resources are appropriated in favour of a particular group usually leading to armed conflict and mass population displacements.

Ethnicity has rapidly become a powerful political weapon in Africa. Emotional attachment to an ethnic group and political affiliation are two coinciding phenomena in Africa. Indeed, to quote Mamadou Diouf[2], the ethnic group is the primary site of engagement. In situations of extreme domination and where one group controls all common goods, the regulatory powers are particularly deficient, ethnic affiliations are particularly visible.

Populations are rejecting the established order by spontaneously organising grassroots communities into networks and traditional or modern associations to ensure their own security. Several reactions ensue:

Rejection: There are two types of rejection. Rejection of the state as a foreign body which is seen as an unfamiliar, ill-accepted institution that does not spring from African society; and rejection based on deep distrust of the people running the new machine.

Indifference: A more moderate, disguised, passive form of rejection that is in fact more worrisome. People "go through the motions" showing superficial allegiance. They devalue the state through excessive ritual or mockery. This weapon of the weak and oppressed, widely adopted by farmers, is an implacable form of resistance.

Misappropriation: Using the state for ends other than those intended is also a form of appropriation. The private sector or particular social group having seized power, the state is used to legitimise the power of these new "big men".

Reinvention: Not a servile copy of the existing model, but local variants that guarantee the lasting acceptance of an innovation, this is genuine appropriation.

State and population have developed a selfish and mutually distrustful relationship. The population seeks to profit from it with all the vigilance of someone sitting down to dine with the devil. The *Guinaroud*[3] has already crept into the house, so there's no point in closing the door now. They neither totally nor permanently reject the state. There are calls for a state and a certain form of state. Clastres raises relevant questions here: "Can we defend ourselves without states? Wasn't it simply to survive that some human societies organised politically into states? Can a society without a state react to aggression by a society with a state in any other way than flight or passive resignation?"[4]

1.3 End of the post-colonial era: Failing nation states and weakened states rebuilt by various actors

Caught between global and local levels, the state is at once diluted in a larger space and fragmented into smaller spaces. Colonisation is no longer the culprit. We are coming to accept shared responsibility for the failure of development action. Analysing current development policies reveals some vital issues concerning the post-colonial African state's future.

Many political leaders see the post-colonial state's failure as central to Africa's marginalisation and the spread of violence now plunging whole swathes of the continent into chaos. State failure is also implicated in the exponential rate of poverty that is threatening the survival of tens of millions of people,

[2] Economist specialising in Economic Analysis and Industrial Economics.
[3] *Guinaroud* is used here in the sense of djinn (good or bad) in some African beliefs.
[4] Pierre Clastres, *La société contre l'Etat*, Editions de minuit, collection "critique", 1974.

destroying what remains of social ties and creating ideal conditions for AIDS and malaria to thrive. Meanwhile graduates have emigrated, are unemployed or have been dumped into a bankrupt civil service, wasting knowledge acquired at tremendous costs in Western universities.

This failure casts doubt on our capacity to live together and reflects a crisis of direction and purpose. Yet pessimists rarely suggest a new state model, inspired by African traditions, a pre-requisite to overcoming crises and contending with the challenges of globalisation.

II. REDESIGNING THE AFRICAN STATE

Artificially propping up weakened states will not miraculously spur their development. Insufficient resources and political will are still problems. Reliable, viable and stabilising state entities must steer integration and progress towards globalisation. As it stands, the state is ambivalent; at once real and fictitious, authentic and hybrid, formal and informal, private and public.

The state needs to be completely redesigned from within rather than being reformed from the outside. It is up to us to invent, maintain and develop the state on a locally manageable level. This would be the basis for genuine, lasting legitimacy. It is important to remember that today's citizen is a "local" citizen, who needs to look beyond himself and beyond his town or village, because he is also part of a globalised economy. He is also a "global" citizen or a "glocal" citizen, to borrow that apt new expression.

2.1 A leading role for decentralisation

Decentralisation is one of the starting points for redesigning the state. It is the most promising way forward because it fosters new, emerging centres of decision-making and brings consensual management closer to actors. It offers a way to harmonise local governance, reconcile diverging interests and transform the many co-existing citizenships into "state-bound" citizenships. Decentralisation can be viewed as an attempt to rebuild the state so that the local serves the global. This emerging structure could be a new way of allying vertical networks between global and local elites, with the latter managing the local level according global level requirements.

2.2 "Unstable modernity"

Citizenship is breaking its ties to the nation state and expressing "supranationality" through emigration and socio-professional networks, in a sort of cultural melting pot. But tribal and ethnic conflicts persist against a backdrop of intermingling populations. The causes of current major population movements are known. How can we prepare local and state governments to manage these populations? Sub-regional integration policies currently advocated are ineffectual and limited to institutional and legal aspects.

CONCLUSION

Political and institutional frameworks for sub-regional and regional integration exist and they are overseen by State presidents, ministers, members of parliament and ministerial civil servants and ad hoc bodies. These key players are aware of the objective limits to implementing regional development policies. Meanwhile, populations organise themselves, form coalitions or confront each other on infra-state and supra-state levels. How can these actors be involved via their local arenas in sub-regional and regional policies?

We hypothesise that the generalised existence of a local space managed by legitimised bodies will contribute to regional integration by fostering a new, responsible and fully accepted sense of citizenship. This will require the following actions:

- Pursue and consolidate decentralisation processes in each state;
- Implement transnational policies to regulate territorial development based on natural resources (water, grazing land, forests, etc.) and the construction of basic socio-economic infrastructure;
- Create forums for dialogue and consultation within official regional bodies, which genuinely involve local communities and marginalised actors;
- Create frameworks in which a wider range of actors can propose societal projects and initiatives;
- Identify and develop ambitions shared by various local spaces;
- Design consistent, concerted socio-economic policies not constrained by national boundaries;
- Develop mutual learning strategies between local, national and transnational socio-professional actors.

One can already observe cultural convergence at play in cross-border areas. Unofficial local spaces have spawned regional cooperation networks. Some African towns boast centres of excellence in craftwork, culture, agri-business, engineering, food, textiles, transportation, tourism, multimedia, etc. All these local practices and dynamics should be analysed with a view to providing appropriate technical and financial support. The aim is to establish conditions that allow for twofold acceptance by nations and citizens. Reconciling citizenship (individual needs) with "multinationality" (community needs) are the two poles of legitimisation and healthy emulation.

Regional Dynamics in West Africa

John Igué

INTRODUCTION

Building a viable regional economic space is a permanent preoccupation in West Africa. Different kinds of spatial structuring are the result of various interactions affecting the subregion:

- History of its peoples;
- Colonial legacy;
- Nation States and their post-independence role;
- Actors' strategies;
- Outside influences.

These factors all have an impact on the evolution of regional integration and future prospects.

I. EXPERIMENTS IN REGION-BUILDING: HISTORICAL LEGACIES

1.1 The pre-colonial period: 1250 – 1850 A regional-scale empire emerges

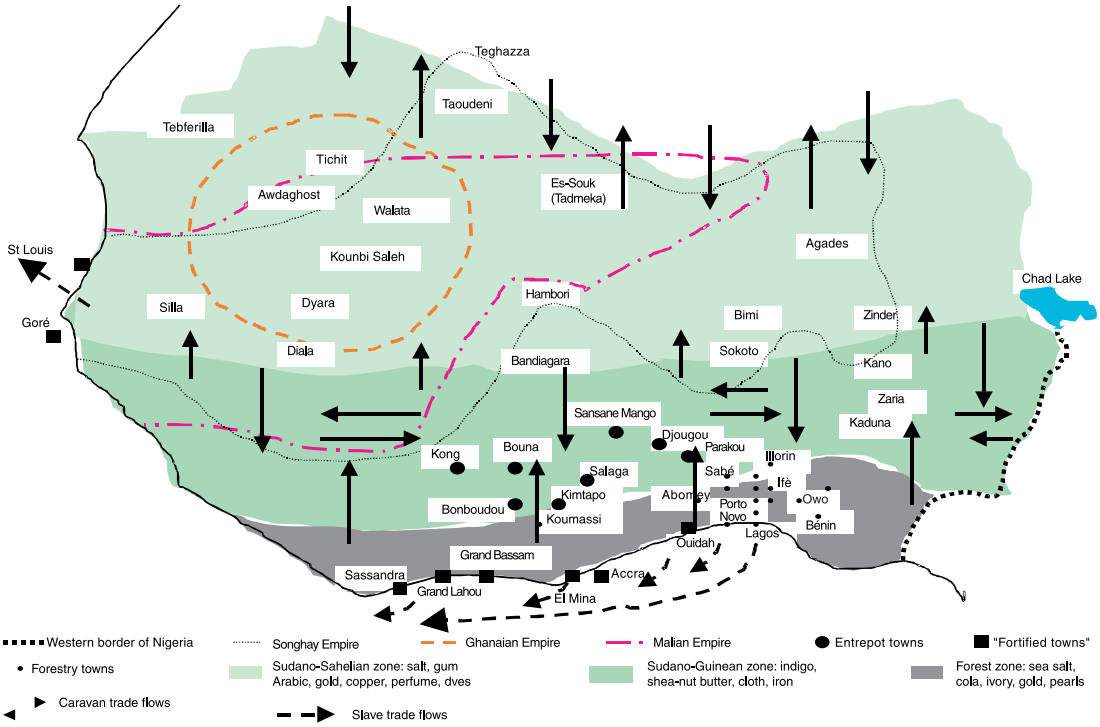


Fig. 1: Pre-colonial West Africa

Produce:

- Sahelian zone: Salt, arabic gum, gold, copper, perfume, dyes;
- Sudanese zone: Indigo, shea-nut butter, cloth, iron;
- Guinean zone: sea salt, gold, ivory, cola.

Traders:

- Mandinka:
  - Dioula (Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso),
  - Wangara (Ghana, Togo),
  - Dendi (Benin, Niger).
- Hausa Kanuri (Niger, Nigeria, Chad, North Benin, Togo and Ghana);
- Yoruba (Southern Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana).

Direction of flows:

- Mediterranean basin (North Africa and Middle East);
- All of West Africa with entrepot towns developing along the fringe between forest and savannah.

Means of payment:

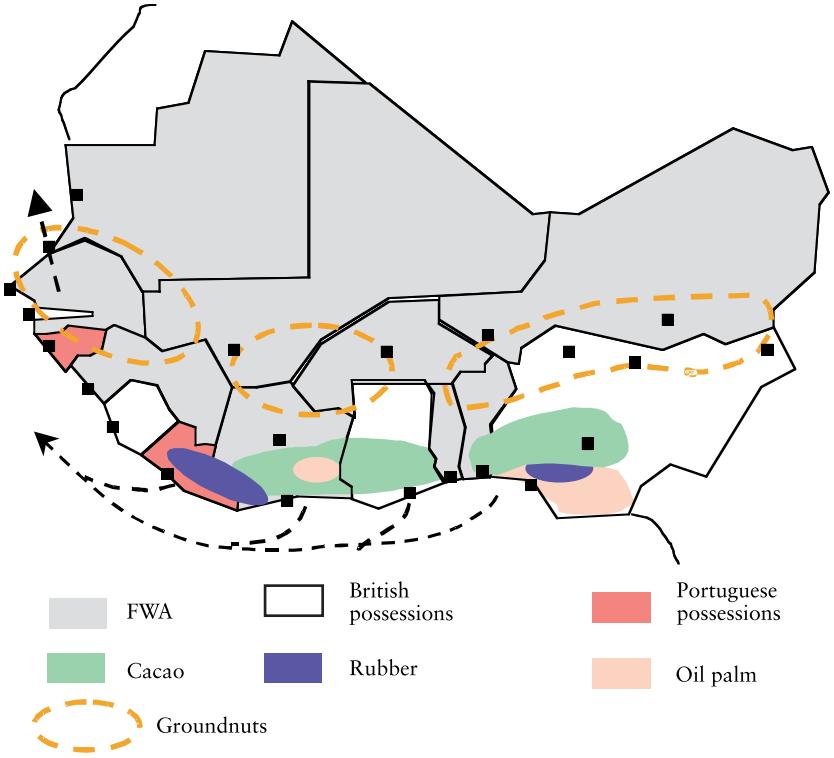
- Salt blocks (local currency used in the Sudano-Sahelian zone);
- Lengths of cloth, manillas (local currencies used more generally in the forest zone);
- Cowry shells (regional currency);
- Gold nuggets (international currency).

Regional assets:

- Ethnic and cultural integration based on trading networks;
- Economic integration based on diversified, complementary production and a flexible currency system.

1.2. The colonial period (1850 – 1960)

In this period, large blocks were purchased together, such as French West Africa.



FWA: French West Africa

Fig. 2: West Africa during the colonial period

Produce:

- Savannah zone: Groundnut;
- Guinean zone: Palm oil, cacao, rubber, coffee.

Traders:

- European-based trading companies;
- Lebanese-Syrian traders, a few West Africans.

Direction of flows: Métropole

Means of payment:

- CFA franc (French West Africa);
- Pound Sterling (British Empire);
- Escudo (Portuguese colonies).

Results:

- Ancient social bonds are undermined;
- Unofficial circuits are developed as a form of resistance;
- Entrepot towns along the Savannah are ruined;
- Two urban belts
  - From Cape Verde to Lake Chad,
- Coastal towns provide links to the outside world.

1.3 Independence (1960 – 1970)

Characteristics of this period were:

- Necessity to build strong nations;
- New nations joined all the international organisations;
- Development of bilateral relations.

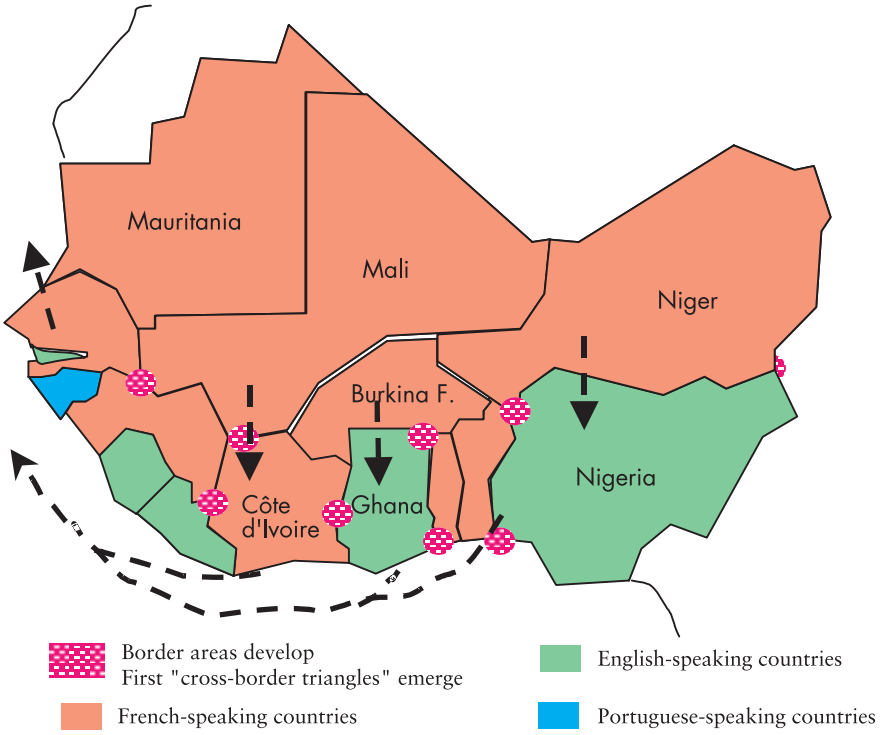


Fig. 3: The Independent States of West Africa

It produced:

- Sharp opposition during the Cold War between pro-Western States and socialist States, English- and French-speaking States, etc;
- Traditional and colonial integration areas are disrupted.

- Markets are "balkanised" with too much State-controlled economy, while economic rents and commodity trading (cash crops, mining and international aid) are reinforced;
- Unofficial cross-border trade grows rapidly due to national egotism;
- A greater range of trading actors: State, trading companies, a few local middlemen and emerging multinationals;
- Directions of flow did not change:
    - Former colonial home countries (Métropoles) owing to currency systems,
    - International market,
    - From Sahelian countries to coastal countries.
- More currencies involved:
    - Two convertible currencies (CFA franc and Liberian dollar),
    - Eight non-convertible national currencies.

Consequences:

- End of opportunities for regional cooperation;
- Beginning of border conflicts;
- Informal activities gain momentum;
- Development of border areas.

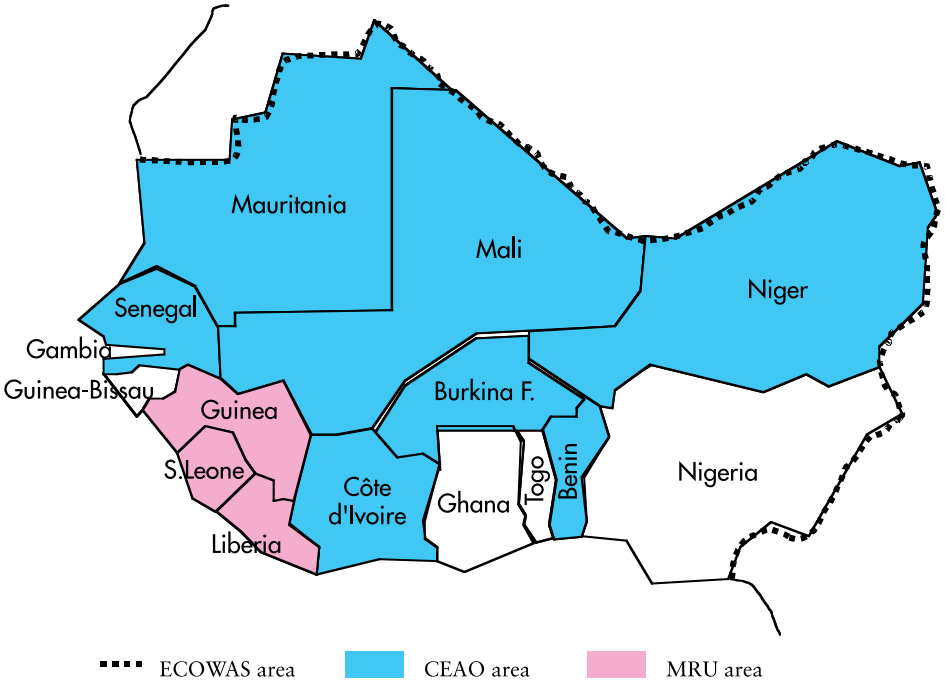
II. REACTIONS TO NATIONALISM

A new need for region-building based on the following goals:

- Successful management of the historical legacies;
- Solve problems caused by the small size of the market;
- Lay the groundwork for a dynamic, competitive economy;
- Improve conflict and endemic disease management.

2.1. Institutional experiments: two phases

1970-1990: Apart from the many regional organisations, three regional institutions were created.



ECOWAS: Economic Community of West Africa States

CEAO: Communauté Économique d'Afrique de l'Ouest

MRU: Mano River Union

RCT: Regional Cooperation Tax

FOSIDEC: Fonds de Solidarité et de Développement Économique

Fig. 4: First experiments in regional integration

CEAO (created in 1973 - Seven States)

- Achievements:
  - Common currency except for Mauritania,
  - Regional cooperation tax (RCT), FOSIDEC created,
  - 10% increase in trade within the community.

- Problems:
  - RCT is of little benefit to Sahelian countries,
  - Senegalese and Ivorian economies dominate,
  - Embezzlement at FOSIDEC, State membership fees frozen.

ECOWAS (created in 1975 – Sixteen States)

- Achievements:
  - Free movement of persons within ECOWAS area,
  - Inter-community road and telephone infrastructure projects.

- Problems:
  - Struggle for influence among Member States,
  - Membership fees are paid at irregular intervals,
  - Treaties are revised and new objectives adopted.

MRU (created in 1973 - Three States)

- Created in October 1973 Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia;
- Little success, given the degree of political conflicts in the region.

1990-2001: Most of the institutions created in 1970-1990 have undergone major changes

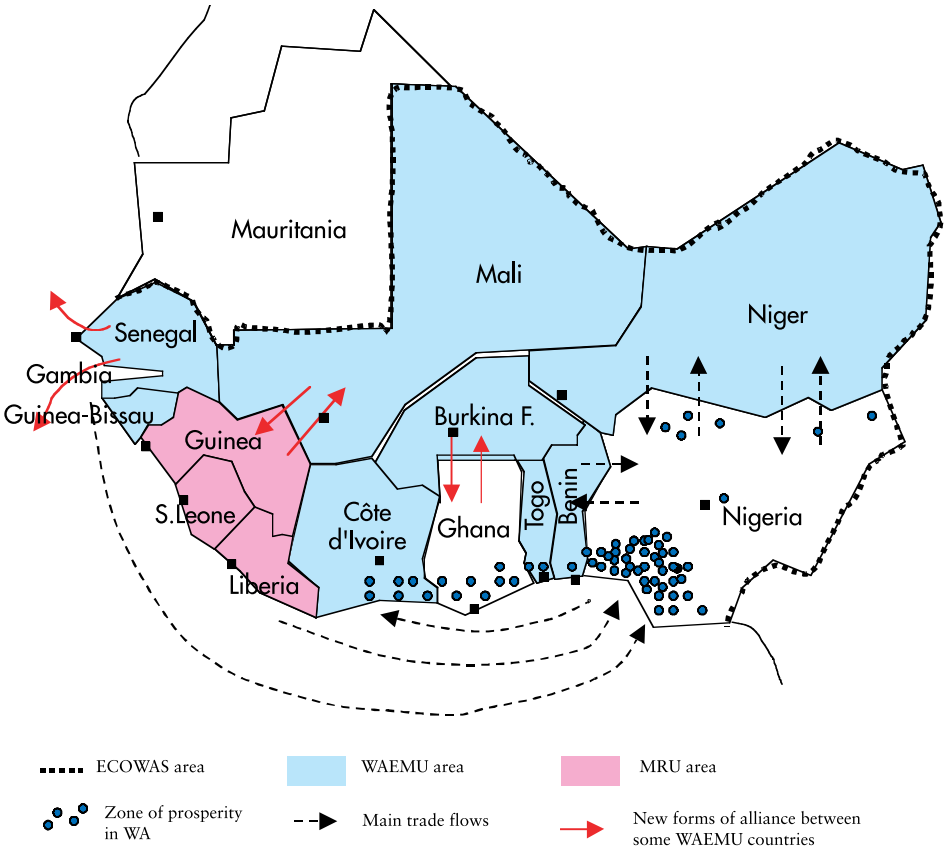


Fig. 5: Changes in regional integration areas

To be complete, this diagram should include the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), which has some twenty member States including, in West Africa, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. CEN-SAD was created on February 4th, 1998.

ECOWAS:

- Potentiality:
  - Mauritania withdraws and membership falls from 16 to 15 States,
  - Population of 250 million which includes 100 million urban dwellers,
  - Prospect of a large market by 2015.

- Achievements:
  - Free movement of persons within the area (ECOWAS passport),
  - Creation of second monetary zone (West African Monetary Institute) with head office in Accra,
  - ECOWAS fund has become an investment and rationalisation for regional integration institutions (CILSS, WAEMU and ECOWAS).

- Problems:
  - Political problems: political conflicts and persisting tensions in Nigeria,
  - Economic problems: little produce diversification in a region still dominated by major commodity crops.

WAEMU:

- Potentialities:
  - Extended to include Guinea Bissau (formed in 1975, Eight States),
  - Population: 72 million including 30 million urban dwellers and 33% of West Africa's GDP.

- Achievements:
  - Group discipline in applying reforms imposed by the Customs Union has reinforced monetary advantages,
  - Application of the Common External Tariff (TEC).

- Problems:
  - Political problems: unstable alliances, leadership quarrels; political crises impact on growth centres essential for integration,
  - Economic problems: inter-zone trade stagnation, with 8% of the region's trade compared to the 25% target. Main trade flows mainly out of the WAEMU area,
  - Geographical problems: zones of prosperity are outside the WAEMU area, while Senegal and Guinea Bissau are poorly connected with the rest of the area.

UFM: Future jeopardised by conflict over mineral resources.

2.2 How West Africa's populations have structured the sub-region

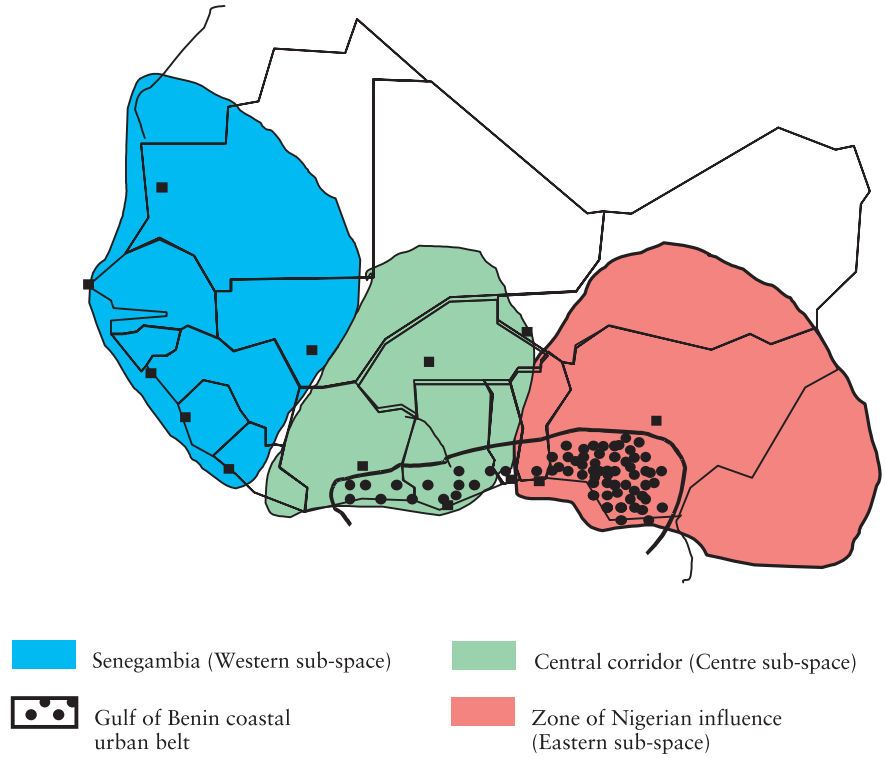


Fig. 6: Sub-regional structural areas

Zone under Nigerian influence (Benin, Cameroon, Niger, Chad)

- Integration factors of Nigerian cross-border trading networks:
  - Haoussa Kanuri, with ramifications in Chad, Niger and Cameroon,
  - Ibo established in Benin and Cameroon,
  - Yoruba in Benin and Niger.

- A unified single market unified thanks to dynamic parallel currency exchange system.

Central corridor (Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina, Togo, Eastern Mali)

- Structuring factors: population, migration and cattle trade.

Senegambia (Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Western Mali)

- Unifying factors: Islam and rice;
- Networks: Fulani, Dioula, Moor and Wolof.

Coastal urban belt (Abidjan to Port Harcourt)

The most urbanised sub-space and the most densely populated with a large potential for production and consumption.

2.3 Grouping experiments suggested by West African leaders: integration driven by markets proximity

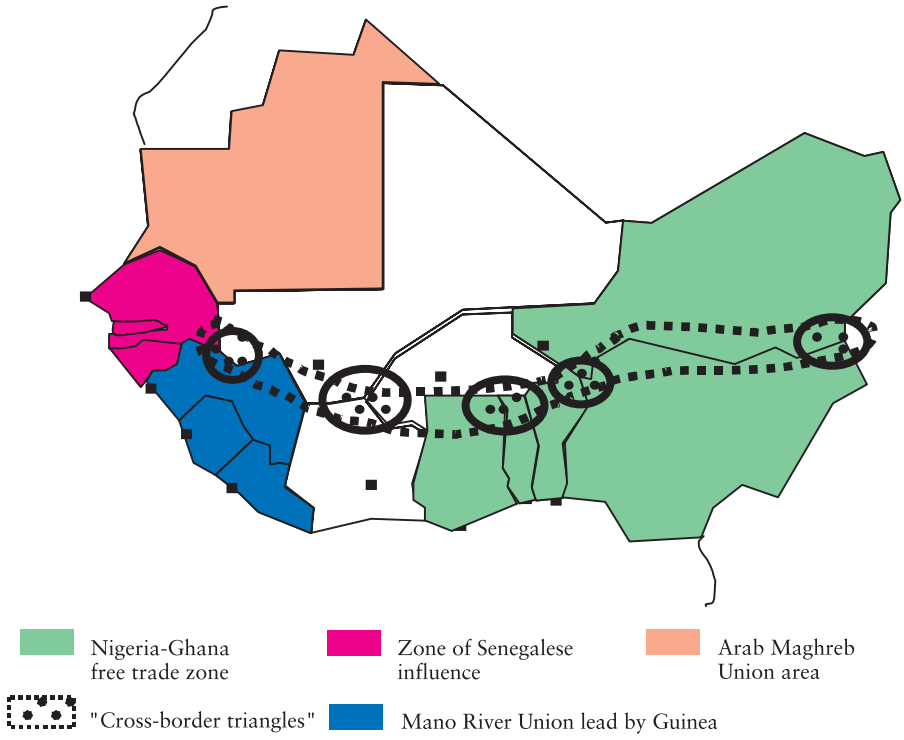


Fig. 7: Areas defined by proximity to markets

Sub-space value:

- Security;
- Maintenance of historical social bonds by minimising border barriers;
- Desire for local hegemony.

To strengthen links between Sahelian and coastal countries, hence the value of these "cross-border triangles" in terms of agricultural and real estate potential for the sub-region's future.

3.1 Foster nation-building and abandon regional integration goals

Weak nations cannot create a strong integrated area; this scenario could help them consolidate their national bases.

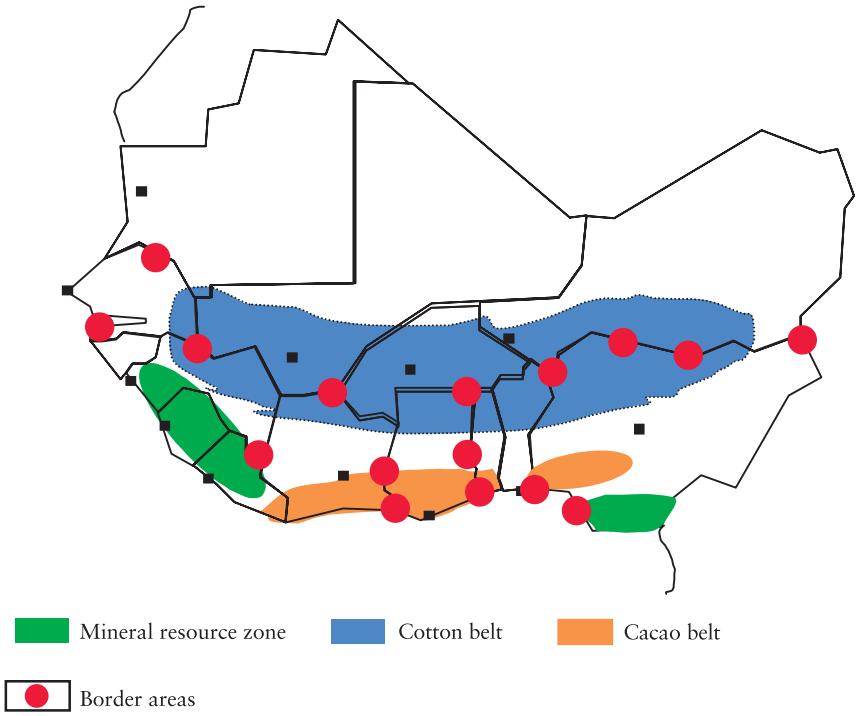


Fig. 8: Nation-building option

Nonetheless, this choice may have two repercussions:

- Strengthening rent-based economies from:
  - Farm commodities (cacao, coffee, cotton),
  - Mineral resources (oil, gas, petrol, diamonds),
  - Development aid.

- An increasing proportion of the economy would be informal as border areas continue to develop.

3.2 Focus on emerging urban belts

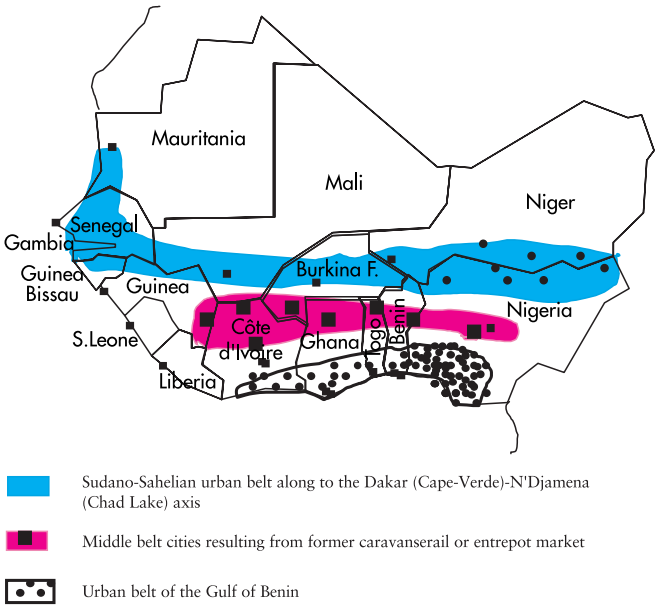


Fig. 9: Urban belt option

This option allows:

- Urban areas to drive development;
- Formation of zones of real complementarity, as was the case before colonisation.

3.3 Focus on monetary union areas

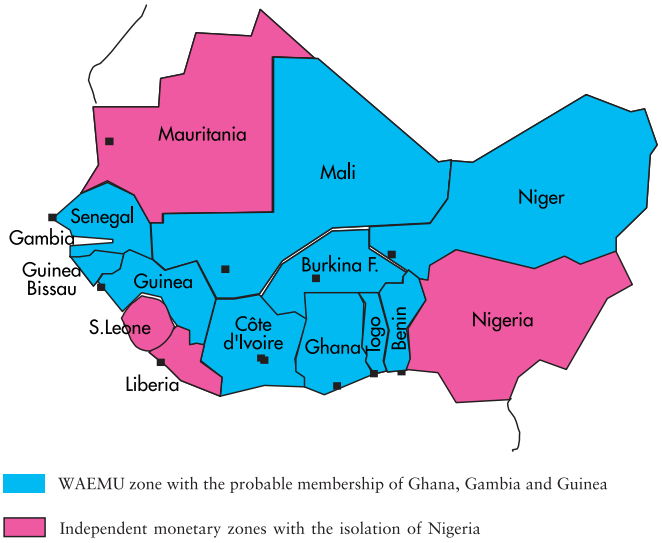


Fig. 10: WAEMU option

The WAEMU area by 2015:

- Possibly 11 States (with Ghana, Guinea and Gambia);
- Population: roughly 100 million;
- Urban population: 50 million;
- GDP: 40%.

Nigeria by 2015:

- 40 federal States?
- Population: 150 million;
- Urban population: 80 million;
- GDP: 55%.

This scenario would split West Africa into two antagonistic blocs and possibly isolate Nigeria. Given the importance of Nigeria's historical and economic role, this scenario would be prejudicial to Africa's future.

3.4 Focus on ECOWAS and create one uniform zone of prosperity

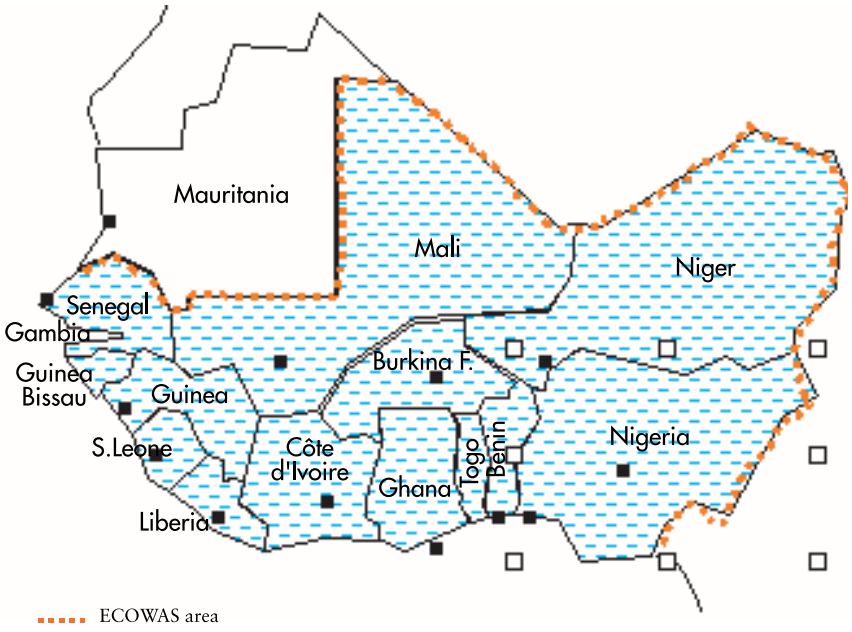


Fig. 11: ECOWAS option

This scenario assumes that WAEMU is absorbed into ECOWAS, with a common currency. This way a large consumer market could be created between now and 2020, with a population of 350 million including 250 urban dwellers with a consumption potential twice as great as that of France today.

This optimistic scenario also predicates an end to the rivalry between former colonial powers and African leaders truly committing to their sub-regions.

This is the only scenario capable of solving real problems, such as:

- Management of region's public goods;
- Management of human resources for development;
- Better organisation of security issues, recurrent conflicts and endemic diseases;
- Need to protect countries from damaging outside influences and lay the groundwork for better integration into the world market.

Presentations of *John Igué, Achille Mbembe* and *Antoine Raogo Sawadogo*

Remarks on the First Three Presentations

Daniel C. Bach

INTRODUCTION

Each in their own way, the three contributors emphasize the extent to which the appraisal of institutional regionalism in West Africa invites us to combine pessimism of mind with optimism of the will. In spite of the disappointing outcomes of existing regional programs, the need for territorial re-composition based on enlarged spaces has never been so acute. This can only incite additional caution against the risk that rediscovering the merits of regionalization and 'neo-regionalism' may give rise to unrealistic expectations, in a somewhat similar fashion to the recent flair of domestic expectation during the initial stages of democratization.

It is somewhat reassuring in this respect that debating regionalism has deep historical roots in Africa. Regionalism, whether named Panafricanism, federalism or sub-regional integration, has always remained an issue of core concern in West Africa, probably because colonial borders have always been particularly porous to cross-border trade, a trend nurtured by their being perceived as arbitrary constructs (see John Igué). On the eve of independence, regionalism was at the fore of debates on the "balkanisation" (Senghor) of the French West Africa Federation which led to several experiments: the "Conseil de l'Entente" and the Mali Federation to name but two of the most pre-eminent unions in West Africa; under the impulse of Nkrumah, a continental project to create the United States of Africa (based on the Ghana-Guinea-Liberia Union as nucleus) was also born in West Africa. During subsequent decades, promoting panafricanism on a continental scale or through sub-regional cooperation increasingly became viewed as complementary initiatives, as the Lagos or Abuja Plans of Action illustrate, and have recently been superseded by the transformation of the OAU into an African Union, and the NEPAD initiative.

Transformations associated with the development of synergies between regionalization, globalization and fragmentation have prompted a renewed debates and issues associated with the rise of what is now known as "neo-regionalism." As a global trend, neo-regionalism is associated with two key features: broadening institutional agendas, which, as West Africa's ECOWAS demonstrates, are no longer confined to financial or economic integration and cooperation objectives, now including explicit social and politico-strategic concerns; and neo-regionalism's close relationship with globalizing world economies.

Broadening institutional agendas includes an unprecedented emphasis on state security, and increasingly on citizens' safety; fighting multiple sources of insecurity, including those which result from a "variable geometry" implementation of commercial law, has become a necessary precondition for implementing regional integration's development objectives. Across Africa, the diluted effects of cold war and post-colonial legacies on domestic and inter-state conflicts has regionalized their scope and impact, thus creating a new space in which to assert regional powers and regional conflict resolution mechanisms.

The rise of neo-regionalism as a key component of post-cold war international relations is also strongly linked with the advance of globalization. In former communist states and developing countries alike, regional integration schemes which aimed at promoting independence from the international system, all but collapsed under the pressure of macro-economic adjustment policies imposed upon them. Far from bringing about the formation of mutually exclusive trade blocs, the rise of neo-regionalism during the 1980s coincided with neo-liberal policies enforced domestically by industrialized powers and regulated internationally through the World Trade Organization's (WTO) arbitration mechanisms.

The domino effect generated by strengthened European integration and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has simultaneously triggered a rush to (re)-institutionalize regionalism in Africa, South East Asia and Latin America. In Africa, this has resulted in new mandates and priorities assigned to all major regional IGOs, namely ECOWAS (revised Cotonou treaty of 1993), SADC (Windhoek treaty of 1992), WAEMU (Dakar treaty of 1994), the PTA of Eastern and Southern Africa (now known as COMESA) and lately the OUA, transformed into the African Union (Lusaka Treaty of 2001).

Three major trends mark West Africa's specific brand of neo-regionalism. They are:

- The progressive imposition of a holistic conception of regionalization within regional Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs). Regionalism, initially solely conceived as economic cooperation by the ECOWAS Charter, strives to promote integration since the revised Cotonou Treaty. The organization has come to assert the preservation of peace including when conflicts occur within states. The linear, step-by-step conceptualization of integration which mainstream economists used to promote until the 1980s, the refusal to take into account grassroots and informal components of cross-border transactions, or the reluctance to discuss politico-strategic dimensions of integration have been superseded by analyses in tune with the sub-region's concrete problems;

- An awareness of the interactions between various components of regionalism has also grown, due to the breakdown of the line between sub-regionalism, regionalism and globalization (see Achille Mbembe), but also due to strong interactions and quasi-organic links between domestic and foreign components of regionalism (Antoine Sawadogo). Consequently, states are less and less apt to claim that their treatment of domestic integration issues is dissociated from the foreign affairs section of their regional policies;

- The spread of macro-economic adjustment policies has brought on a reduction of the previous gap between conceptions of regionalism as a steppingstone towards globalization, and representations of regionalism as a stumbling bloc for globalization. The more successful experiments in the field of regionalization (i.e. the European Union and North American Free Trade Agreement) point to the significance of strategies capable of transcending these two historically typical approaches.

Unprecedented plurality in phenomena attached to neo-regionalism is a source of conflicting expectations resulting in some confusion in the definition of priorities. Regionalism is expected to both contribute to (a) mediating the pressures of globalization, and (b) fending off mounting domestic demands for autonomy. Expectations are all the greater because of IGOs' failure to achieve substantial results in the field of integration – decisions are rarely incorporated into state legislation, or implemented in the field. Ways in which to identify priorities and effectively implement them need to be developed.

I. SYNERGIES BETWEEN REGIONALISM AND REGIONALIZATION

The numerous dimensions, actors, strategies and modes of implementing regionalism can be divided into two platforms: the explicitly defined project or idea and regionalization, conceived as a social process.

Regionalism refers to the idea, the ideology, the policies and goals that seek to transform a geographical area into a clearly identified social space. Regionalism also implies the construction of an identity and is thus very much a cognitive notion. It postulates the implementation of a program and the definition of a strategy and is therefore often associated with institution building. Conversely, regionalization refers to processes that may or may not be associated with or result in the emergence of institutionalized structures and transactions. Regionalization may therefore stem from regionalism being put into practice, or emerge irrespective of state policies, and at times, in opposition to them. In West Africa as in Asia, traders and Diasporas have never aimed to build regional integration per se. Regionalization, as promoted by Yoruba or Hausa trade networks in West Africa, is an aggregate of micro-economic agents' strategies who are not specifically intent no promoting the ideals of regional integration, nor automatically supported in their pursuits by their national governments. Regionalization through networks, illustrated by interactions between Japan, North & South Korea, China and Taiwan, has developed independently and despite frigid political relations. On another note, transnational corporations operating within the European Union have greatly contributed to its consolidation as a single space through policies of establishment, acquisition, and penetration of new markets motivated by their own corporate imperatives.

Two of the presentations (Igué & Mbembe) invite us to consider a) the gap between West African regionalism's institutional ambitions and the dynamism of regionalization processes, as well as b) the ambivalence bred from the developing regionalization at the expense of state-related policies, due to increasingly sophisticated exploitation of criminogenic asymmetries. Such asymmetries can originate from disparities in tariff and customs policies visible along international borders. They are also born of the strong disparities in state authority over the national territory. Multiplying conflicts in West Africa have also prompted a distrustful perception of trans-border trade due to their contribution to spreading regional economic accumulation through violence.

For policy-makers, ensuring the overall congruence between regional programs and regional economic dynamics of represents a challenge. Debates around integration cannot ignore this, even though taking advantage of the opportunities offered by criminogenic asymmetries has been conceived by some states (such as West Africa's famous 'warehouse states') as an opportunity to enhance their international insertion.

For the time being, South Africa alone offers a convincing case of complementary synergies between state regional integration policies and the behaviour of non-governmental regional actors. The migratory flows within Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean (with Indian communities acting as an interface, or Afrikaners settling in Mozambique and Southern Africa) the activism of South African multinationals (through direct investment, exports and supplying technical know-how) coexist with kernels of politico-institutional integration such as SACU and, to a lesser extent, SADC.

In West Africa, the ambivalent effects of rationalisation's increasingly informal nature are not to be underestimated. The process springs from citizens adjusting to states' inability to meet their demands. Two remarks should be added to conclude on this point and stimulate debate:

- Cross-border trade and migration no longer solely proceed from the illegal exploitation of cross-border disparities. They are also tied to insecurity and corruption within states (car theft, illicit trade in gems, oil, wood bunkering, manipulating the financial system, or money laundering...);

- To a large extent, the regionalization of insecurity is a result of state agents' behaviour in the borderlands as much as from the multiplication of illicit "check points" deeper inland. Achille Mbembe's study indirectly poses a blunt question: if nothing is done to reverse current dynamics, will the State still be a relevant unit for analyzing the progress of African regionalisation in the future?

II. FAILING STATES

The debate on failing states (Antoine Sawadogo) first and foremost focuses on their inability to meet the most elementary expectations of their citizens, including their personal security. Regionalization can therefore not be dissociated from domestic dimensions of regionalism and state reconstruction.

Failing states enhance and contribute to promoting a 'dark side' of regionalization, which is underscored by processes of de-institutionalization (the informal privatization of states' modus operandi) and de-territorialisation (loss of control by the state over part or all of the national territory). Related state marginalization as international agents accompanies preserving their internationally valued national spaces, such as mining enclaves. Similarly island-states are often tightly integrated into global economic networks. This contributes to patterns of regionalization that simultaneously promote states while deeply undermining their borders even though they're not formally challenged. The few areas where strongly institutionalized and territorialized regimes of regional integration do exist - namely WAEMU, CEMAC and SACU – appear to be well worth specific attention in this context.

Regional integration unavoidably draws attention to the issue of domestic integration: the promotion of regional integration through the dismantling of border constraints does not make much sense when the common space created is not promoted by significantly integrated territorial and societal spaces within the states concerned: How can the interactions between domestic integration and regional integration be articulated? The frequently mentioned options of decentralization policies postulate significant transfers of functions and sources of revenue. Yet, a number of questions remain: what happens to such a transfer when the state is unable to exercise these functions, is impoverished or unwilling to transfer any resources, not to mention cases when the state operates on a patrimonial basis that tends to be further consolidated when decentralization occurs.

In order to promote regional integration domestically, a "new foundation" (Sawadogo) for the state is necessary. This brings on questions with respect to:

- The growing regionalization of conflicts which, in West Africa as in other areas of the continent, result primarily from internal conflicts spilling over and acquiring inter-state or trans-state dimensions;
- The frequent gap between states' limited capacity to exert territorial control or implement national policies and their formal claim to comprehensive sovereignty entitlements. As a result, programs for the reduction of inter-state boundary constraints contrast with the diluted distinction between domestic and international boundary-lines due to the growing gap between capitals and the rest of the country in a number of African states.

The adoption of protocols aimed at free circulation of people and goods across international West African borders should not hide the often significant obstacles to transactions and migration resulting from spatial discontinuities within some of the states of the sub-region. Far from becoming residual, the segmentation of national territory has tended to consolidate itself over the past decade, sometimes due to challenges to state authority over parts of the country, but also through the corrupt behaviour of state agents operating at check-points.

III. WHAT STRATEGIES FOR INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS?

Two issues are central in view of the historical experience of West African IGOs: (i) the slow implementation of ECOWAS decisions; (ii) the longstanding coexistence within the region of several IGOs which, even when they share similar objectives, have tended to consider each other as mutually incompatible.

West Africa offers a good illustration of the extent to which the capacity of IGOs to promote regionalism through intergovernmentalism or supranationalism exclusively relies on the degree to which member-states internalize the implementation of decisions. Supranationalism can relate to transfers of sovereignty, to common institutions, or to the decision to entrust a particular state with the regulation of such transfers. This does not offer any guarantee for the implementation of regional policies as the following example shows.

In order to speed up the pace of regional construction, Article 9 from the revised ECOWAS Treaty adopted in Cotonou in 1993 stipulates that the powers of the Authority of Heads of States and Government, the supreme decision-making body of the Community, are to automatically enter into force 90 days after their signature. This disposition assumes that Heads of states are such omnipotent rulers that they may commit their countries independently of any ratification process, and economize preparatory work on decisions by their national administrations. One may wonder whether the price for overlooking internal decision making structures and agencies is not in the end very heavy, when many ECOWAS decisions still continue to be unimplemented despite repeated calls from the executive secretariat.

The case of the recently established ECOWAS Court of Justice provides a similar reminder of the key role ascribed to Member-States. The Court is to carry out its mission independently of the Member States and the institutions of the Community; its rulings should also be binding on Member-States, on the institutions of the Community and on individuals and corporate bodies alike. In those areas under its jurisdiction, the Court is located at the apex of the hierarchy of West African judicial institutions. This also means that its effectiveness depends on the attitude of domestic courts towards the enforcement of Community Law. The powers of the Court as a supranational organ of jurisdiction in West Africa are only equal to the capacity and will of Member States legal systems to implement Community Law. The supranational competence of the Court of Justice can only make sense if it is supported by national legal systems.

The multiplicity of regional institutions in West Africa has fuelled a longstanding debate on the 'rationalization' of IGOs and the future of WAEMU within ECOWAS. These debates are clearly not specific to West Africa: similar problems have affected relations between SACU and SADC in Southern Africa, or between the EAC and COMESA in East Africa. To this issue add the more recent problems created by the ongoing existence of a myriad of sectoral regional organizations while the mandates of larger institutions tend to expand and diversify into new thematic issues.

Three problem areas deserve special attention insofar as they contribute powerfully to shape the patterns and prospects for regional integration in West Africa: (i) the gap between the substantial degree of integration achieved institutionally by WAEMU (customs and currency) and the concentration of transnational trade patterns around Nigeria; (ii) the difficulty for Nigeria to exert a stabilizing regional hegemonic influence so long as its political stability cannot be achieved domestically; (iii) the weak commitment of ECOWAS states towards the implementation of regional programs whenever transfers of sovereignty or lasting financial commitments are at stake.

The value of the 'fast track' program towards monetary integration adopted by ECOWAS in 1999 deserves to be emphasized in view of its pragmatic grasp of interactions between ECOWAS and WAEMU, in accordance with the Heads of States recognition of the relevance of differentiated approaches in the march towards integration. This inclusive approach opened the way for the Nigeria-Ghana initiative towards a West African monetary zone which, once macro-economic convergence is achieved, should merge with WAEMU and form a single West African monetary zone. The practical difficulties of implementing such an ambitious scheme are not to be underestimated, yet the acceptance of the notion of 'variable geometry' and the acknowledgement of different possible paces in the implementation of West African integration and cooperation, have cleared new paths which should be well worth exploring more systematically.

II

PART TWO:
"Cross-border areas"

The "Cross-Border Area" Concept in the West African Sub-Regional Integration Process: Results of the Sikasso Seminar

Aguibou S. Diarrah

INTRODUCTION

Once national sovereignty achieved, West African States chose to unite in order to bring down barriers erected by colonial administrations. Their aim was to create frameworks that would help them accomplish shared development goals in a coordinated manner and provide a real momentum for building and strengthening mutual solidarity. This ideal remained sub-regional co-operation policy's overarching prerogative throughout the 1990s.

The creation of sub-regional institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), the Mano River Union, the Liptako Gourma Authority, the Senegal River Development Organisation (OMVS), the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Niger River Basin Authority, etc., bear witness to the determination of West African States to work together and move towards real integration.

Although the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) asserts, in principle, that borders inherited from colonisation are make-shift and intangible, in reality, they are impediments to integration in many respects. Borders continue to be sensitive hot spots giving rise to most of the region's conflicts and territorial disputes. States have created border cooperation structures to put an end to these disputes and adopt a policy of cordial coexistence to maintain a climate of peace.

The desire to overcome boundaries, to make them zones of contact and exchange rather than lines of confrontation between separate "sovereignties," is the driving force behind Mali's national border policy.

The Republic of Mali's Government is promoting a new form of border co-operation based on the "cross-border area" concept with a view to joint management of national borders. If successful, it could speed up the sub-regional integration process and strengthen decentralisation; it would also be an opportunity to provide infrastructure and stimulate development in shared border areas.

The Sikasso seminar (March 2002) on the "cross-border area" concept raised a number of questions and focused on several points that we would like to share with you today.

I. THE CONCEPT OF THE "CROSS-BORDER AREA"

Most governments in the sub-region face the challenge of building a more just, democratic society while maintaining a climate of lasting peace with other states. Recently, it has become essential to involve local populations in managing national public life and to adopt a more realistic integration policy.

In practice, the border question is a key issue for decentralisation and sub-regional integration - it being an obstacle to both these processes.

The "cross-border area" concept is a means of moving towards jointly managing border zones and integrating neighbouring communities across national frontiers.

1.1 Definition of a "cross-border area"

During the Sikasso seminar a consensus was reached on the "cross-border area" concept: "a cross-border area or triangle is a geographical area that overlaps two or more neighbouring states, and whose populations are linked by socio-economic and cultural bonds".

This definition recognises the existence of borders between countries while referring to a dynamic community united by socio-economic and cultural realities.

1.2 "Cross-border area" objectives

Formalising co-operation and development in "cross-border areas" is a new approach to bottom-up integration. As such, it has the following objectives:

The "cross-border area's" **general objective** is to strengthen West African sub-regional integration policy by creating local integration zones.

Specific objectives are to:

- Create homogeneous areas of development and co-operation;
- Encourage trade and socio-cultural exchanges across borders;
- Create better conditions for the circulation of goods and people;
- Promote cross-border co-operation and help communities undertake common development action in health, education, arts, sports and culture, agriculture, transportation, energy, environment and industry;
- Harmonise national sectoral policies on health, education, infrastructure, sports, arts and culture;
- Intensify trade flows by providing infrastructure and capital for border markets and creating/ strengthening production-distribution chains;
- Create a sub-regional unit on "cross-border areas" and a monitoring unit at the Sahel and West Africa Club.

1.3. Challenges

The "cross-border area" represents:

- A public policy platform for states wishing to establish a democratic society and ensure social, economic and cultural progress;
- A way to speed up sub-regional integration for sub-regional integration institutions.

It could provide a cohesive framework for various actors to establish fruitful partnerships.

1.3.1 West African states

For West African states, initiating "cross-border areas" is a way to involve local authorities in the grassroots integration process. By enhancing local jurisdiction, community-elected officials will be more implicated in defining new development strategies in common border areas.

As a basis for exchange and consultation, "cross-border areas" could provide opportunities for fruitful dialogue between states and amongst civil societies on either side of borders.

"Cross-border areas" are new forums for joint development between West African states confronted with similar problems of underdevelopment and inadequate infrastructure in common border lands.

1.3.2 Regional integration

Establishing "cross-border areas" could help strengthen sub-regional integration. The process would certainly benefit from a partnership framework to coordinate efforts between states, local authorities, private actors and aid agencies, collectively manage border areas and implement development plans.

"Cross-border areas" could also be focal points to harmonise sectoral policies between countries and endow the idea of a West African community space with greater coherence.

As part of cross-border co-operation, "cross-border areas" would certainly allow greater flexibility in addressing such problems as:

- Regulating migration;
- Environmental management;
- Security;
- Shared use of welfare, education and sports infrastructure, airports, roads and railways (e.g. Sikasso airport could be run by a governing body made up of Burkinabè, Ivorian and Malian operators).

While border issues must be dealt with as integration accelerates through developing cross-border zones, questions regarding the type of sub-regional state this policy will lead to will inevitably arise. What kind of state is suitable for the ECOWAS area (federate or confederate)? What type of management should be adopted (centralised or decentralised)?

II. THE SIKASSO "SPIRIT" AND KEY QUESTIONS

The "Sikasso spirit" is this "cross-border area," notion set forth during the sub-regional seminar.

2.1 Demarcating "cross-border areas"

While there need not be a contradiction between "cross-border areas" and legally recognised national borders, delineating "cross-border areas" is a first step towards breaking down the barriers state lines create. Each country's administrative or local district lines will become the overlapping "cross-border area's" natural borders.

For example, "cross-border areas" between Mali and Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Burkina Faso, Senegal, Guinea, Algeria, or Niger, can be delineated on the Malian side by the boundaries of Malian administrative divisions, and on the other side of the border, by the neighbouring country's administrative divisions. Areas so defined are the "Mali-Côte d'Ivoire cross-border area", the "Mali-Burkina Faso cross-border area", the "Mali-Senegal cross-border area", the "Mali-Guinea cross-border area", the "Mali-Algeria cross-border area" and the "Mali-Niger cross-border area".

The limits of these "cross-border areas" now have to be defined. What will the new territorial entity's status be? Can it be extended to cover the whole of an administrative region?

2.2 Managing "cross-border areas"

Once the cross-border area has been delineated, a system of management has to be defined. This raises the following questions:

- How will these "cross-border areas" be managed?
- Will an administrative commission be needed?
- How will such a commission work?
- Will inter-community meetings be needed?

These questions need to be answered by all implicated parties – state representatives, local elected officials, private actors and aid agencies.

Joint administrative commissions will be set up to manage "cross-border areas". Members will be representatives of structures involved in managing local affairs within the "cross-border area".

In addition, a legal framework will be introduced enabling local authorities on national borders to make cross-border co-operation agreements with each other, provided that principles of state sovereignty are complied with. Agreements of this kind might concern:

- Conventions between local border authorities;
- Introducing shared services;
- Joint fund raising efforts.

Since the "cross-border area" is to be a bridge between states, perhaps it can be regarded as a district under local jurisdiction, to be run by an elected council.

III. ESTABLISHING "CROSS-BORDER AREAS"

After discussing how to demarcate and manage "cross-border areas," the Sikasso seminar sketched a strategy for putting the new concept into practice.

3.1 The strategy's key points

Components outlined were as follows:

- Identifying potential "cross-border areas";
- Identifying sectors for intervention;
- Financing;
- The institutional framework.

3.1.1 Identification

In addition to several border zones already identified to illustrate the "cross-border area" concept, the Sikasso seminar recommended that states continue to identify such areas, including:

- Borderlands throughout West Africa;
- Borderlands of countries not yet members of WAEMU or ECOWAS.

3.1.2 Intervening sectors

Several sectors were chosen to house the "cross-border area" concept:

- Infrastructure: roads, dirt tracks, bridges, dams, rural supply of electricity, telecommunications, irrigation and drainage networks, etc.;
- Sectors indispensable to production: health, drinking water, education, sanitation, environmental protection, micro-projects;
- Services that strengthen local capacity and security: institutional support, project identification and preparatory studies, technical assistance, advisory services, etc.

3.1.3 Financing

The seminar noted five levels of programme and project financing:

- Local level (commune or district budget);
- National level (country budget);
- Regional level (financing by regional integration bodies);
- Private sector (financing by NGOs and associations);
- International level (banks, ECOWAS funds, FAIR, European Fund, etc.).

3.1.4 The institutional framework

The seminar suggested that Joint Commissions (bilateral border management structures) should be established to plan and supervise structures working towards implementing "cross-border areas".

3.2 Recommendations

To put the concept into practice, the seminar concluded with the following recommendations:

- Create structures to plan and implement the "cross-border area" concept;
- Involve local elected officials in thinking about and implementing the "cross-border area" concept;
- Involve sub-regional integration organisations and international development agencies in implementing the "cross-border area" concept;
- States should jointly demarcate "cross-border areas";
- Pool infrastructure in "cross-border areas";
- Draw up bilateral and multilateral legal instruments inspired by the 1984 European convention on cross-border co-operation among territorial and local authorities in the European Union;
- Optimise the use of common cross-border languages.

CONCLUSION

Integration aside, the "cross-border area" concept is a policy instrument to enhance stability within states and regulate neighbourly relations between them. To put the concept into practice, the sub-region's states must uniformly adhere to the idea.

States must commit to executing the project in order to substantiate a common desire for community integration and stimulate trade relations. Full participation is crucial.

Sub-regional integration organisations and international development agencies are also invited to become involved in implementing the "cross-border area" concept and thus help West African states speed up the integration process.

The Malian Ministry for Territorial Administration and Local Authorities, through its National Frontiers Directorate, thanks the Sahel and West Africa Club's for organising this special meeting in Accra.

The Malian delegation intends to take the forum's conclusions into account. Our meeting will certainly add breadth and depth to the "cross-border area" concept and provide impetus for its implementation, for the good of all communities living in "cross-border areas" in our sub-region.

Functioning and Management of Borderlands in West Africa: the Lived Experience of Nigeria and its Immediate Neighbours

*Anthony **I. Asiwaju***

I. THE POLICY PROFILE

Starting with the National Boundary Commission (NBC), created in 1987, Nigeria's policy on boundaries and shared borderlands has been determined by bilateral and multilateral concern for international cooperation, peace and sustainable development via regional integration. In spite of setbacks due to long-standing border disputes with Cameroon, militarized in 1993/1994 and eventual litigation at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, Nigeria has over-all remained engaged in cross-border cooperation for peace and sustainable development.

The new policy broadly emphasises three points: systematically promoting cross-border cooperation policy and related confidence-building efforts, border region development, and border demarcation. These three priorities led to a series of interwoven measures carried out in the last fifteen years.

In terms of cross-border cooperation and confidence-building, the new policy regime's most visible endeavour has been hosting a special series of bilateral consultative workshops on cross-border cooperation, one with each neighbouring country[5], along with carefully planned and executed confidence-building missions to all of them, including Cameroon, from 1988 to 1992.

Joint border tours were set up by Nigeria's Internal Affairs Minister and his counterpart across each border, beginning with the Nigeria-Benin border in February 1986. Other critical features of the new policy regime include sustained support for and strengthening of existing bilateral and multilateral cross-border cooperation mechanisms such as the Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission on Cooperation with its secretariat in Niamey; the N'Djamena-based Lake Chad Basin Commission including representatives from Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon; similar institutions such as the Gulf of Guinea Commission with representatives from Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe; reviving the Niger River Basin Development Authority with Nigeria, Benin and Niger as three key member states; implementing the bilateral treaty between Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea for a joint exploration and exploitation of petroleum resources around their maritime border; recently resumed work on negotiating and drafting the Treaty on Transborder Cooperation Between Nigeria and Benin; and, perhaps the most innovative, establishing a separate Ministry for Cooperation and Integration in Africa.

Border region development is the new policy's second area of focus. Nigeria's First National Planning Conference for the Development of Border Regions in Lagos was held August 10-12 1989 under the auspices of the NBC[6]. This second axis is now buttressed by a National Border Region Development Committee (NBRDC), a branch of the National Boundary Commission, set up in 1990, with the Nigerian Vice-President and Chairman of the NBC acting as Chairman and Governors of all 21 border or 'gateway' States as members. Like the NBC, the NBRDC was to be replicated in each federated State and constituent 'gateway' local government in light of an agreed formula for sharing responsibility between the three branches of government[7]. Although an initial border region development fund was created, the need to substantially increase funding led to a Bill for Establishing a Border Communities Development Fund currently set before the National Assembly and actively supported by the Presidency. While waiting for the Act to pass, a preliminary amount of N 2.5 billion (about 25 million US$) was included for a Border Region Development Fund in the Federal Government's 2002 Budget.

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[5] The workshop's published proceedings can be found in Asiwaju and Igue, eds. (1994); Asiwaju and Barkindo, eds. (1993); Asiwaju, Barkino and Mabale, eds. (1995).

[6] For further details see Asiwaju ed. (1993)

[7] The States and Local Governments Border Region Development Committees (BRDCs) are chaired by the Deputy Governor and Vice-Chairmen respectively and members are appointed at each level to include functionaries with relevant responsabilities and competence.

Delineating the boundaries themselves is the new borderland policy initiative's third and most remarkable achievement. Here again, a great deal of progress has been made in the last fifteen years, thanks to a generally peaceful atmosphere ensured by the new cross-border cooperation regime. These achievements include: approval, though not without some bickering over details (notably Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon), of proposed demarcations in the Lake Chad basin under the Lake Chad Basin Commission; long abandoned work resumed in March 1989 on delineating the Nigeria-Benin border – substantial progress has been made; resuming work on delineating the Nigeria-Niger border; remarkable agreements reached on delineating the Nigeria-Equatorial Guinea maritime boundary; and negotiations resumed on the Nigeria-Benin maritime boundary.

II. THE NATIONAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION: THE CONTEXT OF ITS CREATION

Since the NBC is the main instrument Nigeria created to define and execute the new boundary and borderlands policy regime, the rest of this paper will focus on the Commission. A background history is provided to help put the NBC's structure, roles and functions in perspective. It is important to bear in mind that Nigeria shares boundaries with five distinct neighbouring sovereign states: Benin to the West and Niger to the North, both member states like Nigeria of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); and Chad, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea to the northeast, east and southeast, all member states of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

As elsewhere in Africa, if not the world, borderlands or "border-countries[8]" (lands and peoples in straddling an international boundary) along and across state lines are substantially inhabited by the same people, culture, land, flora and fauna. These areas also share their substantial distance, peripheral location and consequent marginalisation vis-à-vis national and regional capitals and politico-administrative headquarters where modernisation processes are concentrated.

In the pre-NBC era, Nigeria's official attitude was based on the traditional or classical nation-state model concerned with asserting sovereignty perceiving border areas as peripheral, politically disadvantaged because of their actual and potential military vulnerability. From this perspective, borderlands were generally lacking in any noteworthy investment or economic development; they were avoided as much by private investors as by states who officially designated them as 'no-man's lands'.

The Western Yoruba, the Aja, the Borgu on both sides of Benin's western border; the Hausa and the Fulani on Niger's northern border; the Kanuri across the north-eastern border with Chad; the Mandara, the Fulani, the Ododop across the eastern border with Cameroon; the coastal Efik and the Ibibio who share close affinities with extended communities in Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea in the south-east, are all vivisected "transborder peoples" with indivisible constituencies. Established policy only recognises fractions located on the Nigerian sides, totally excluding extended communities on the other sides of shared borders. A similar official attitude determines how cross-border natural resources (land, water, solid and liquid minerals and the environment) are perceived and managed.

Conflict with neighbouring countries naturally followed from this nationalistic and essentially unilateral policy and, by the mid-1980s, the region was dotted with actual and potential border/territorial disputes. There was the alleged incursion in 1981 of Beninese policemen into border areas of present-day Kwara, Niger and Kebbi States on the western border; conflicts over the Nigeria-Cameroon maritime border which brought the two countries close to out-right war in 1982; the actual armed conflict between Nigeria and Chad in April-June 1983.

These circumstances did not leave time for leisurely contemplating a common policy on the nation's boundaries and borderlands with neighbouring countries; nor was it possible to avoid flagrant

[8] "Pays-frontière" in French.

contradictions with commitments to ECOWAS and wider regional integration programmes. An ever increasing ultra-nationalist policy preference over a regional integration approach to managing Nigeria's borderlands reached its climax when, from April 1984 to March 1986, all Nigeria's borders were closed and militarised pretexting what came to be known as a "War Against Indiscipline (WAI)." This included smuggling and currency trafficking and other forms of activities officially dubbed "economic sabotage".

A shift in the official stance came gradually but steadily in response to public outcries against the then military dictatorship's authoritarianism, especially between late 1983 and mid- 1985. Protests included well articulated scientifically researched criticism of the Government's nationalistic and unilateral border and borderlands management policy.[9] The official reopening of borders on March 1, 1986 marked the beginning of a new era of improved attitude towards the nation's borders, borderlands and neighbours.

A Border Defence and Security Research Project was launched by the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) at Kuru, with Government funding and carried out from 1985 to 1987 by an admirable multidisciplinary team of experts drawn from the nation's universities and research institutions. Its recommendations eventually became the basis for the new policy turn-around on the function and management of Nigeria's boundaries and borderlands with each of its neighbours. Although ultra-nationalist vestiges remain, (i.e. military presence on the Nigeria-Cameroon border in late 1993 and eventual litigation at the International Court of Justice in The Hague) the over-all policy stance since the National Boundary Commission was created by Decree 38 on December 17, 1987 has been based on commitment to cross-border cooperation and developing border regions.

A specialized state agency, the National Boundary Commission, was also needed to compensate for the complete absence of policy coordination. Beyond the internal boundaries situation (i.e. those between federated states, between Local Governments and between local communities), which poses serious threats to internal security and orderly development, there was no coordinated management of Nigeria's international boundaries by 1987. For example, until the National Boundary Commission was established, each border was placed under parallel authorities of various government agencies.

Under such a decentralized management system, Nigeria's neighbours had to deal with the Nigerian Government through multiple agencies, each with its own approach to basically identical problems. Nigerian borderlands and regional/local border authorities had to deal with the same panoply of national agencies, without the benefit of a common forum for coordinated interaction. Needless to say, the National Boundary Commission put an end to this obviously undesirable policy disarray.

III. THE NATIONAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION: CREATION AND FUNCTION[10]

A Federal Executive Body with extra-ministerial bodies entrenched in the Constitution, the National Boundary Commission is a high-powered body with a mandate "to deal with, determine and intervene in any boundary dispute that may arise between Nigeria and any of its neighbours or between any two states of the Federation with a view to settling it.[11]" Created by Decree 38 on December 17, 1987 and formally inaugurated on July 20, 1988, the Commission is also mandated to set up relevant mechanisms and programmes for preventing border conflicts and promoting cross-border cooperation.

Cross-border cooperation was underscored in the enabling enactment that empowered the Commission to "set up Committees to deal with matters affecting Nigeria's borders with neighbouring countries, either on political, economic or legal matters or on development and security of border areas."[8] Cross-border cooperation is particularly compelled by concerns for "matters relating to development and security of border areas." It is impossible for authorities on one side of a border to successfully undertake coherent development programmes, including law-enforcement, without the effective cooperation of

[9] See, in particular, Asiwaju 1984, a public lecture with enormous policy impacts that led, among other developments, to the government-funded Research Project on Border Defense and Security, National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru, Jos, 1985-1987. The NIPSS study recommended establishing the National Boundary Commission in more or less the shape it was enacted in December 1987.

[10] For more information, see the official monograph published in 1993 by the National Boundary Commission Secretariat; "National Boundary Commission: History, Structure and Operation.

[11] See Section 3 (a) of the National Boundary Commission Decree 1987.

adequate inputs from their counterparts on the other side of a given border[12]. Accordingly, the Commission's commitment to development and security of border areas includes a continuous exploration of cooperative, non-conflictual relationships with authorities in adjacent countries.

Presided over by the Vice-President and a permanent secretariat housed in the Presidency, the Commission has eleven regular members: nine ex-officio members (Heads of Federal Ministries and Heads of semi-public institutions with border-related roles and functions) and two non-ex-officio members appointed from the public or private sector by the President.

The objective is to confer on the Commission the duty of border policy coordination and awareness-building without infringing on member institutions and their statutory functions. A national consensus in border policy matters is especially crucial in the Commission's dealings with neighbouring national authorities. Its policy-coordinating role is two-fold: policy-making based on decisions taken at its meetings; and, more importantly, policy implementation, enacted by the Commission's Secretariat.

Since implementation is key to all policymaking processes, the Commission Secretariat has been allocated the power and government funding needed to fulfil its functions. Though not an executive secretariat by statute, it is headed by a Director-General, a state functionary with a status equivalent to a Federal Civil Service Permanent Secretary. The Secretariat is divided into four major Departments: namely, International Boundaries; Inter-State (Internal) Boundaries; Research and Documentation Centre; and Personnel and Finance.

There is perhaps no better indication of the Nigerian government's confidence and resolve, based on the cross-border cooperation policy initiative's perceived success, than a 1993 declaration by Admiral A.A. Aikhomu, then Nigerian Vice-President and Chairman of the National Boundary Commission. He is reported to have stated:

> *"Nigeria will not go to war with its neighbours over issues that can be resolved amicably. It will instead take the path of peaceful negotiation. We believe in resolving crisis through dialogue. Towards the realization of this objective the Federal Government has established a Boundary Commission with a mandate to examine Nigeria's boundary problems as well as finding solutions. In the past three years alone, the Commission has organised workshops and seminars in which Nigeria's neighbours participated. These measures have been building confidence among all parties."*[13]

The fact that Nigeria went to war with Cameroon so soon after Aikhomu's solemn declaration is a significant lapse in Nigeria's otherwise highly successful efforts to create a regional-integration-friendly borderlands regime[10]. This setback is a major lesson for ECOWAS Member States and other African Sub-regional groups intent on adopting 'cross-border area' policies and a new approaches to regional integration: an exceptionally strong political will is required to withstand provocations and a level of commitment of the type presented in the Malian Constitution, to sacrifice national sovereignty for the sake of achieving African Integration.

If there is any other lesson to be drawn from the Nigerian experience, it is the need for partner states to have and operate similar, if not identical, mechanisms and institutional frameworks. Hence the Nigerian effort, through NBC confidence-building interactive activities, to advertise the Commission as an adoptable model for other African states, especially in West and Central African sub-regions where Nigeria is geopolitically prominent.

In 1991, escalating border and border-related conflicts in Africa led Nigeria to reactivate a 1981 proposal to establish an OAU Boundary Commission with national chapters that would function like Nigeria's own National Boundary Commission[11]. Although the proposal for a Commission at the OAU level was not approved by the Organisation's Council of Ministers, each member-state was encouraged to do with

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[12] Ibid. Section 7.
[13] The New Nigerian, 9 March 1993.

adjacent countries what Nigeria has been doing with its immediate neighbours. Provisions in Chapter 58 of ECOWAS's 1993 Revised Treaty – on creating national border administrations in each Member State and twining settlements across borders – suggest that what the OAU Council of Ministers rejected was actually embraced in principle by counterpart authorities within ECOWAS.

The third major impediment to the Nigerian experience was the shortage of funds. Major funding is needed not only for revising the educational system, with special emphasis on bilingualism in French and English (plus Portuguese and Spanish where appropriate) in ECOWAS, but also to develop hitherto virtually abandoned border areas. Capacity-building for local, regional and national planning authorities12 also involves enormous costs usually beyond resources available to isolated national authorities. Nigeria is currently launching a major national border region development fund and specialized agency. Unilateral planning and development of border regions on one side can only be a first step towards cross-border planning and development.

Hence the need for sub-regional and wider regional funds at the ECOWAS and African Union levels exclusively allocated to accelerating the development of especially disadvantaged border regions. This also requires donor community support, especially the European Union which has experience in gathering similar funds for projects such as INTERREG (International Regions Development Initiative) in Europe. EU members such as France, Britain, Germany, Portugal and Spain also have a moral responsibility as historical authors of problematic African boundaries and borderlands.

Democratic survival and internal political stability is the fourth and perhaps greatest challenge facing the Nigerian "cross-border countries" policy since 1987. It is well known that lapses in policy drive from 1993 to 1999, including the military border dispute with Cameroon and widespread doubt about the genuineness of Nigeria's policy intention, were repercussions of the collapse of the Democratic Transition Programme in 1992. The Nigeria-Chad Transborder Cooperation Workshop project has remained suspended because of protracted internal crisis first in Chad and, later, in Nigeria.

A cross-border cooperation policy's success is inherently bound to peace and stability not just between but also within partner states; border peace is inland peace. The policy's spectacular success within the European Union was based on common platform of democratic norms, shared respect for human rights, transparent governance and ensuring public security.

Hopefully, the Malian Government's new policy initiative based on "border-countries" will re-direct attention to relevant provisions in the ECOWAS Revised Treaty and related protocols. These stress the need to re-conceptualise borders and borderlands in the sub-region and greater Africa, no longer as centres of conflict but as veritable spaces of international cooperation and cornerstones for regional integration.

In this event, Nigeria's lived experience in exploring peace and development potentials of boundaries and borderlands with its immediate neighbours may be used as a roadmap for pitfalls to avoid and guidelines to success.

In spite of problems encountered, the Nigerian experiment should be used as an essential guide for an Africa in urgent need of innovative strategies to achieve sustainable development via regional integration.

Is regional integration already occuring in cross-border areas? Sikasso, Korhogo, Bobo Dioulasso or the SKBo Triangle[14]

*Karim **Dahou***

INTRODUCTION

Research done by the Sahel and West Africa Club in recent years has revealed various patterns of spatial organisation in West Africa such as Sahelian and coastal urban belts and sub-markets. The "cross-border area" concept reflects another type of spatial pattern, and has a number of implications:

First, it is a framework of solidarity and social bonds between different spatial units. This solidarity is primarily economic, but based on socio-cultural bonds. Cross-border areas are also where the Sahel links up with the coast. They lie at the heart of regional exchanges and are transit areas for goods and migration between Sahelian countries and the world market. They are also a good basis for studying urban-rural ties by examining intermediary towns.

The solidarity forged in cross-border areas between regions and amongst communities tempers border disputes and provides appropriate conditions for sustainable development. Cross-border areas also act as a focus for West African regional infrastructure plans involving more than one country. All in all, the "cross-border area" concept is useful for examining the validity of regional integration beginning with local areas that overlap between neighbouring States and possess a degree of geographical, ethno-cultural, social and economic homogeneity. Deriving production and trading systems from history and geography and from socio-cultural practices could help progress towards integration in these areas.

The SKBo triangle — Sikasso, Korhogo and Bobo Dioulasso — is one such area, encompassing borderlands of Mali, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire, all in the CFA franc zone. Since this area possesses a certain geographical unity and price differentials do not totally determine the historical mobility of its societies, it could be a good place to assess how firm a foundation sub-regional solidarity-based areas provide for human exchange and genuine integration.

Like other cross-border areas, SKBo illustrates the tensions that exist between 'vertical' nation building and 'horizontal' means of exchange. These processes are determined by history, geography and trade, raising the issue of the link between a territory at least potentially united by social bonds and the idea of the nation-state. Although various districts share a similar stage of local development, the area is still linked to three regional capitals (I). Its production systems continue to be structured by cotton-growing, although food-crop farming is expanding fast (II). Intra-regional trade relies on a cultural homogeneity that is both traditional and developing (III). The SKBo triangle may also display a degree of complementarity between local development, nation building and sub-regional integration (IV).

[14] This paper presents the preliminary results of the Sahel and West Africa Club's work in the SKBo triangle. These concern the essential economic, historical and socio-cultural bonds that unify the area. More research is needed into these and other factors. The Sahel and West Africa Club is developing an action-research methodology to that end. The results also identify major issues specific to the SKBo triangle, which need to be addressed to make the "cross-border area" work.

I. BETWEEN THREE CAPITALS, A PATTERN OF SECONDARY CITIES ON AN URBAN RURAL CONTINUUM

The SKBo triangle is longer North to South than East to West, since Korhogo is equidistant from Sikasso and Bobo Dioulasso, some 250 km to the South, while the latter cities are roughly 150 km apart. The triangle lies between three major sub-regional capitals: Bamako, Bobo Dioulasso and Abidjan. While the first two belong to the Sahelian hinterland, Abidjan lies on the Gulf of Guinea coastal strip. This location determines similarities and complementarities between production and trading systems, not only within the triangle but also between the triangle and its sub-regional partners. Climatic and ecological variations between the Sudanian zone (Sikasso and Bobo Dioulasso) and the Sudano-Guinean zone (Korhogo) have given rise to cattle-grazing within the triangle. Cattle are driven southwards to traditional grazing areas around Korhogo.

Fourth largest city in Côte d'Ivoire, Korhogo counterbalances the economic weight of the coastal urban belt to the south (with its forests and plantations) through trade with the North, particularly Southern Mali and Western Burkina Faso, whose climates are suitable for a variety of crops. For example, trade in kola (from Côte d'Ivoire to Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal), cattle and onions (from the Sahel to the coast) reflect the two-way pattern of trade between north and south that has shaped regional trade historically. The construction of a port in Abidjan in 1952 and the re-opening of the road from Sikasso to the Baoulé also strengthened the triangle's commercial function, providing distant markets for cash crops, and local markets for European goods.

Sikasso, Korhogo and Bobo Dioulasso, like Kankan, Tamalé, Odienné and the like, are typical examples of regionally significant secondary Sudanian cities interacting with rural hinterlands for which they are market-capitals, creating needs and stimulating local agriculture. Their suburbs have flourishing market gardening and orchards in areas where the water table is at or near the surface. Typical crops are mangoes, citrus fruit and potatoes. This type of farming is driven by the three cities' urban development, with surplus increasingly sold throughout the sub-region. The triangle's urbanisation thus follows the urban-rural continuum characteristic of secondary cities in West Africa. The many regional markets and weekly fairs are trading places for crop and cattle by-products, and act as relay stations between rural and urban zones.

The three cities have relatively large populations: Sikasso, 575,000; Korhogo, 476,000; and Bobo Dioulasso, 309,000 (Ecoloc). Sikasso and Bobo Dioulasso's relative wealth compared to the rest of Mali and Burkina Faso may explain this. At $342 and $692 respectively, per capita GDP is much higher here than in the two countries' northern areas. At $401, Korhogo, on the other hand, has a lower per capita GDP than anywhere in Côte d'Ivoire. Sub-regional migration has historically gone from North to South, from the Sahara to the savannah and from the savannah to forests of the coastal South. In recent years, however, problems in plantation farming and the modern sector crisis seem to have reversed the flow, and a number of immigrants from Mali and Burkina Faso have left Côte d'Ivoire to return to their home countries. The main farming areas of Mali and Burkina Faso, Sikasso and Bobo Dioulasso, may therefore be subjected to even greater migratory pressure than at present.

II. PRODUCTION SYSTEMS STRUCTURED AROUND COTTON FARMING

With a minimum average of 1,100 mm, rainfall in the SKBo triangle is well above the West African average. This is a basically agricultural region, where urbanisation stimulates not only rural production but also small-scale construction (metal- and wood-work). High demand for farm equipment in turn stimulates ironwork, which flourishes in towns. The value of primary production (over $200 million) is greater than secondary or tertiary ($133m and $158m). As in other parts of West Africa, there appears to be more informal than modern-sector activity; informal sector producers use networks of traders who are often more experienced in cross-border trade than official operators.

Cotton-farming structures both production and trade systems in the SKBo triangle. Grown on one-third to half of the area's arable land, cotton has induced diversification of the primary sector, primarily through other crops grown in rotation with cotton. Revenues from cotton then boost the use of draught animalsæboth Mali and Burkina Faso are major cattle producers and most of their cattle is in the Sikasso and Bobo Dioulasso areas. Intensification therefore affected not only cotton-growing but also grain. Consequently, major cotton-farmers took to growing grain and keeping cattle, integrating all their activities in one agro-pastoral system. In the last twenty years, millet, sorghum, cowpea and maize, have been cultivated throughout the triangle.

The cotton system has had contradictory effects. Its development has clearly been a positive factor in integrating the SKBo triangle in terms of production systems, but the marketing of cotton has "extended" the system beyond the sub-region. Although cotton stimulates local production of farm equipment, grain and cattle, cotton seed and fibre are mainly exported outside West Africa, and cotton sub-products (oilcake, oilseed) are rarely used locally. While the triangle is a natural cotton-growing basin, the cotton industry is structured "nationally" for historical reasons. States used cotton to build up foreign currency reserves and the system was organised so as to break up the cotton-growing basin, leading to differentials in standards and prices that impeded integration.

For example, cotton prices have never been the same across borders between Korhogo, Sikasso and Bobo Dioulasso. Input and seed distribution arrangements (subsidies, loan conditions, etc.) have also varied over time. Cotton companies have been subject to varying degrees of official constraints and producer bargaining power has also fluctuated. Local peoples, with their history of continual intermingling, did not stand idly by. A whole range of actors in the cotton system regularly crossed the borders to take advantage of these market distortions. What effect will cotton market liberalisation, starting in Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire, and well underway in Mali, have on these distortions? Will it reduce them and even out prices across the borders? Will some actors speculate on future integration of the cotton basin?

The cattle circuit is particularly dynamic in the triangle and increasing herd sizes are not solely due to the greater use of draught animals, but also to greater urban demand in Côte d'Ivoire. Côte d'Ivoire imports cattle from Mali and Burkina Faso under an ECOWAS framework regulating cattle trade in the sub-region. But the market is still hindered by poor transport (shortage of trucks and bad roads) and many official and unofficial road-blocks imposing taxes for whatever purpose. During the grazing season in the Korhogo area of Côte d'Ivoire, heavy fines are also imposed if cattle stray.

The grain market expanded in the wake of cotton, but more rapidly. Maize is prospering and is a major cash crop in the Sikasso and Korhogo areas. Production has grown considerably; the two areas supply two different markets. The demand for maize, however, is variable, depending as it does on grain shortages in exporting regions, mainly Burkina Faso and Niger. The first market operation of the season takes place in Sikasso in September, but it also involves grain from Korhogo. The second operation occurs when Sikasso production is at its height and the grain is redirected to Korhogo and Bobo Dioulasso, where stocks are being built up in case of famine.

Market gardening is also a growing sector in the SKBo triangle, the area being suitable for this type of crop because of its extensive marshlands. Sikasso produces some 50,000 tons of potatoes, which are dispatched all year round to Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire. It is a far more profitable crop than cotton (nearly 1.5 million FCFA per hectare compared to 200,000). The main difficulty is the fact that imported potato seed is extremely expensive (four times their price in France) and represent 30% of production costs.

Mango output in Sikasso was 27,000 tons in 1996-1997, yet there are post-harvest losses of 50% due to the lack of conservation methodsæmost of the packaging units are in Côte d'Ivoire. Exports from the Sikasso zone rose from 1000 t in 1996/67 to 3000 t in 2000/01, but nearly all these mangoes are packaged in Korhogo and re-exported with an Ivorian label. Bobo Dioulasso and Korhogo also produce mangoes in abundance (average 2.5 ha compared to 3.5 ha of cotton).

In this way cotton has acted as a driving force for all the SKBo triangle's production systems. Grain farming in particular has greatly benefited from the cotton sector's expansion. However, the reversal in world market conditions for cotton and its low profit margins raise doubts as to its future. A producer's net income from cotton is much lower than from maize, for example (11% compared to 46% according to CIRAD, FAOSTAT and the World Bank). However, cotton has the most stable outlets: it is purchased by commercial boards and so brings in a guaranteed cash income. Demand for maize is more variable as it is subject to the vagaries of grain glut and shortage elsewhere. But maize is the crop that best fits into the cotton cropping system, since crop treatment products used on cotton are also suitable for maize, for which organic manure is added. While grain cultivation has increased faster than cotton cultivation (from 1 to 4 ha between 1967 and 1995 compared to 0.9 to 2.3 ha), farmers will no doubt continue to grow both crops for a while. Proportions of each may change, with more maize and less cotton.

III. CULTURAL UNIFROMITY FAVOURS TRADE

The triangle's various ethnic communities have been living side by side in the same territorial entities for hundreds of years. The kingdom of Kenedougou was born in Korhogo, but reached its prime and ultimate decline in Sikasso. The Samory kingdom temporarily attached Bobo Dioulasso to the other two towns. Production and trading complementarities also built a culture of mobility and trade, encouraging populations to intermingle. As in other parts of West Africa, ethnic groups are now so intermingled - linked by ancient or renewed alliances, settled on either side of a border - that it is hard to match any ethnic group with a particular state. Dioulas, Senoufos, Bambaras, Bobos, Fulani, Samos and Mossis are closely linked through their histories, languages and economic activities. These groups have a shared sense of belonging that is strengthened by many factors. Religion, marital ties and customs (often, families from several countries come together for a wedding or funeral), economic activities and trade all give them a chance to get to know each other, appreciate each other and share similar values that are expressed in their particular identities.

Community membership still plays an important part in trade within the SKBo triangle. This results in reshaping identities that has a dual function. While retailers want lasting socio-professional integration, large-scale merchants rely on personal allegiances to meet their professional obligations. Thus the Senoufos who integrate into Dioula trading networks tend to gradually adopt Moslem cultural habits, changing their names and gradually abandoning their language (senar). This kind of "ethnic conversion" through professional identity shows the new arrival adopting the Dioulas' cultural and professional value system. The trust established in this way oils the wheels of economic relations.

The wholesale market in Korhogo illustrates the ethnic makeup of trade in the region. There is a core group of European traders as a result of redeployment, mergers and changes in legal status of commodity

trading firms. There is another core group of African traders which emerged shortly after independence from an initiative of traders from Mali and the Voltas who were used to trading between Bamako, Bobo Dioulasso and Bouaké. Trading networks in the savannah region still have this dual structure, exemplified by the two biggest wholesalers. One is CNCI, a company born in the old trading posts of Côte d'Ivoire that distributes rice, powdered milk, oil, soap, stock cubes, beverages in returnable bottles, flour, etc. throughout northern Côte d'Ivoire. The second is Soukpafolo & Fils, a family firm run by a young Dioula entrepreneur who has built up a large network of retailers using the capital accumulated by his father, who was an important trader in Korhogo. These two firms are potential competitors since they distribute the same products, but they do not serve the same customer base.

In the cattle trade too, some regional trade is founded on identity-based ties. These help to bypass the many customs barriers and racketeering on highways. Convoys are usually escorted by Ivorian Senoufos who handle informal deals with authorities to reduce transport costs; they have a good command of administrative relations and the official language, which is French. These "escorts" start from the border and accompany cattle all the way to Abidjan, where they are met by slaughtermen from the country where the cattle was raised, usually Burkina Faso. So although one community handles the whole production–distribution chain, it is helped by a second community which is better equipped to negotiate with Ivorian authorities along the route to the place of slaughter.

There is also considerable trade in grain between Korhogo and Sikasso. Burkinabè traders and halazai take maize to the Mossi plateau and Niger, while sorghum is shipped to Burkina Faso. These flows are handled by extensive networks which are particularly well organised, both formally and informally. The Burkinabè rely on Mossi salesmen who are housed by Bobos in Sikasso to help them integrate in the city. The Dioula of Côte d'Ivoire use their historical alliances and are housed by the Senoufos, who run the city's traditional networks. Trade heading for Niger is usually handled by Hausas of Niger origin, who are housed by their city correspondents.

IV. SKBO: A TRIANGLE BETWEEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, NATION BUILDING AND SUB-REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Writers on sub-regional development usually highlight the opposition between states and supra-national integration frameworks. States are regarded as organising most economic and social exchange while trying to protect their prerogatives; supra-national integration organisations as governing the normative aspects of sub-regional integration while often overlooking practical dimensions. Decentralisation is supposed to be lead to better local management, but the local is rarely regarded as a relevant level for improving real integration.

However, a look at any West African country shows that states only control a marginal fraction of economic and social activity and many supposedly local dynamics actually spill over into neighbouring countries. Thus actual social practices seem to point to the local decentralised level as an effective vector for regional integration. While the supra-national seems to be the best level for optimizing management of comparative advantages, for example, actual production is often rooted in the local level. Clearly, normative frameworks have to be adapted to real dynamic interactions between local, national and supranational levels.

The SKBo triangle seems to confirm these assertions. Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Burkina Faso are three different territorial constructions, each with its networks and flows, its agricultural areas and urban armature, and its particular settlement patterns shaped by economic activities, domestic and international migration. The SKBo triangle is rooted in these national territories, but is also a set of sub-regional areas with social and economic bonds that unify each one and link them together. These areas are both local

(as is the triangle itself, despite the frontiers that run through it) and genuinely sub-regional in that they bear inter-regional complementarities.

Migration patterns in particular illustrate this dynamic overlap between local, national and international. SKBo has somewhat better agricultural potential than most parts of Mali and Burkina Faso, but doubtless less than the forest belt parts of Côte d'Ivoire. This explains both the number of domestic migrants in the Sikasso and Bobo Dioulasso areas, and the historically high rate of migration from Mali and Burkina Faso to Côte d'Ivoire. With the recession in plantation cropping, some of these migrants seem to be returning to their home countries. They are naturally drawn to areas with relatively high potential: Sikasso for Mali and Bobo Dioulasso for Burkina Faso. This is likely to increase pressure on land, which is already high. Around Korhogo, pressure is increased by seasonal cattle herding which, as we saw, results from climatic differences between the Sudan zone (Sikasso and Bobo Dioulasso) and the Sudano-Guinean zone (Korhogo).

Thus factors generating land problems lie in local, national and sub-regional migration. Regulations must therefore be adapted to all three territorial levels. While international migration could be limited by concerted state action, national development planning departments should be able to guide economic flows in ways that help maintain the country's demographic balance. Seasonal migration and relations between stock herders and crop farmers will probably have to be regulated by local authorities within the SKBo triangle working together. Since these different processes are closely connected, various levels of authority must also be interlinked.

While trade in farm and livestock products highlights the existence of inter-regional complementarities, coordinating national policies could facilitate the circulation of these goods and so reduce migration pressure. With production sectors better organised at both national and sub-regional levels, transaction costs could be reduced and population movements adjusted. More diverse agricultural production should also reduce migration.

With maximum effort invested in growing one crop at the expense of another, substitutions could develop according to complementarities between zones and the role of traders in shipping the goods.

However, experience shows how hard it is to control migration. If it cannot be done by acting on factors that generate it, action can be taken to solve land tenure problems. These are still exclusively managed at the national level, whereas existing regulations, based on customs, are usually local. Local authorities in the SKBo triangle ought to be granted the jurisdiction to adjust regulations to customs and traditional ways of thinking, which are mostly identical throughout the triangle.

Social dynamics in the SKBo triangle connect different territorial scales and seem to show that "cross-border areas" are relevant spatial units for sub-regional integration. Appropriate emphasis must be placed on local development for this kind of integration to work. Then the different normative regulation levels must be linked together.

Towards a Better Regional Approach to Development in West Africa: Remarks on "Cross-Border Areas"

Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi

The three presentations on "cross-border areas," border dynamics and the SKBo triangle address a few essential facets of managing regional integration:

- The "cross-border area" concept highlights integration via services located on either side of a border, organised for people from nearby towns and villages to use regardless of national boundaries;

- The Nigeria example establishes cross-border cooperation and relations of trust between neighbouring countries as essential for integration. This trust may include managing certain key resources communally, as Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea have done with oil-fields in the Gulf of Guinea;

- The SKBo example confirms the importance of trade dynamics in providing integration with a practical foundation.

The three presentations stress the need to involve local authorities and other actors in the integration process, for without them, it is likely to remain a hollow premise. Most States, intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), and even development partners do not seem fully conscious of the singular role played by local populations in integration. Foreign partners have always considered local issues as purely domestic matters for national decentralisation policies, and integration policy as a matter to be exclusively dealt with amongst national governments. The presentations, however, propose to blur the distinction between local, national and regional levels. The three levels need to be combined in ways relevant to specific actions, respecting the principle of active subsidiarity. It is relevant to note that each of the approaches presented recognises the local level as strategic for integration. Local authorities should be regarded as the backbone of regional integration, and along with other local actors, as central motors for the process. What these ideas truly imply requires elaboration.

If local authorities are to become actors in regional integration then they must be legally designated as such. Therefore decentralisation laws must explicit in their tasks the preservation of peace and concord among peoples of the region and contributions to regional integration.

If local authorities are to play a role in the integration process, then central governments must grant them more leeway in terms of decentralised cooperation. This "para-diplomacy" is particularly suited to implementing "cross-border areas" and also potentially applicable to managing cross-border cooperation. However, legal state provisions still greatly restrict local authorities' ability to conclude partnership agreements across borders. A possible solution would be to specify "para-diplomacy" by local authorities as one of the new functions of regional cooperation.

Recognising the role of local authorities in integration implies allocating appropriate representation to local actors within integration-oriented IGOs. The case has been argued by regional elected officials for setting up a cities and regions committee in ECOWAS, so far without success. Civil society organisations would also have to be represented (perhaps in a forum for NGOs and associations) as well as economic operators and professional groups (perhaps in an economic and professional forum). Failure to grant local actors an appropriate status in IGOs would be a sign of insufficient commitment to practical integration.

NEPAD's plan to count on close private sector involvement to achieve regional structural investment depends on the region's capacity to plan and set up the various types of equipment and infrastructure envisaged; either the region acquires the means to create a coherent regional infrastructure plan as a provisional framework for private sector investment; or the plan applied in practice will be decided by private investors according to their own priorities. This has proved a problem for public authorities in the SKBo triangle: will the infrastructure provided in the area correspond to the type of management chosen by authorities to regiment it, or will it coincide with choices made by the Bolloré Group according to its own business development strategy, particularly logistically? Such dilemmas are likely to repeat themselves. The question is, how can public authorities under NEPAD acquire an autonomous capacity to influence the choice and location of infrastructure in order to achieve the type of regional development desired?

The idea of a regional infrastructure plan raises the issue of whether the political will exists to build a genuine regional space both desired and committed to by its citizens, beyond a passive 'moving with the tides'. Clearly, integration will not benefit every country in the region simultaneously in the same way. The northern parts of Sahelian and coastal countries appear to be the overall losers of integration as it is currently conceived. Without a deliberate policy to relocate housing and businesses, the region runs the risk of irreversible and accelerated depopulation of disadvantaged zones and intolerable pressure on zones classified as 'useful'. Globalisation induces this kind of territorial reallocation. Other types of territorial reallocation need to be devised in order to create a network of cities and local economies that will counterbalance population movement towards the coast.

In this respect, the SKBo triangle is a working model for repositioning settlement patterns and regional infrastructure initiatives. But which societal actors are apt to take on the challenge? The SKBo case-study suggests using forces and networks that control traditional trading circuits among Sahelian countries and between the Sahel and coastal countries. One may question the value of this proposal, however, and ask whether these historical circuits themselves are not also being influenced by globalisation. Is business success in Sikasso or Bobo not likely to involve looking for a head-office for the network near a port, in other words in a coastal country? Can encouraging the emergence of an urban network in the Sudano-Sahelian contact zone to counterbalance the attraction of coastal cities be effective, if it is not endorsed by local actors likely to gain from such a network? Are local actors sufficiently aware of the issues and challenges involved in the survival and development of Sudano-Sahelian contact zone economies? If so, who are they?

There is an increasing need for in-depth analysis of specific areas and their future prospects, based wherever possible on detailed accounts of local economic and social systems and an understanding of strategies employed by various actors. The Ecoloc exercises in Sikasso, Korhogo and Bobo Dioulasso have provided models of such an understanding and have prompted discussion on how present driving forces might be mobilised around the issues of local economic development. Recent surveys of the SKBo triangle show that local authorities are increasingly aware of common interests between these three cities and their hinterland; however, a similar degree of awareness is yet to emerge among the cities' economic operators, who still perceive each other primarily as competitors. This suggests that cooperation cannot be taken for granted within a competitive environment, and that in this respect, laissez-faire is not a good policy to follow. To spur on and justify such co-operation, opportunities of interest to and beneficial to all must be identified. The Regional Public Goods concept might be useful here.

Regional Public Goods is a version of the Global Public Goods concept that has recently appeared in international development cooperation vocabulary. It comes from the UNDP, which uses it to justify maintaining large public financial flows to international development cooperation in order to improve the operation of the free-market economy and globalisation. Global Public Goods can include civil security, environmental security, the international financial system's stability, or such infrastructure deemed crucial for humankind as a whole. Regional Public Goods are at the heart of regional integration.

Key questions are: what aught to be the focus to determine a Regional Public Good, and what should its legal status be? Typical examples are ports and road or rail links for the region's landlocked countries. Were these ports and road/rail links to become Regional Public Goods, with a regional public infrastructure status, a major step towards mutually beneficial regional integration will have been taken. Regional Public Goods require a corresponding regional political authority and appropriate tax system. Until these matters are seriously examined, genuine regional integration will remain hypothetical. In the SKBo triangle case, it is easy to see the advantages that a sub-regional logistical centre would provide for all economic operators and citizens in that area. The logistical centre, possibly linked to a regional wholesale market, would need to be located so as to maximise the advantages for each sub-zone. Deciding on the location of a Regional Public Good will not be easy as it will lead to one of the three cities becoming the area's leader. Among decision-making criteria, the Bolloré Group's views will carry their weight. Given the consequences of such a decision for the cities and hinterlands involved, is it right for such negotiations to occur outside the area, as is the case at present? Shouldn't these local areas provide the principle designated negotiators, with possible State and IGO support? This reasoning can also be applied to "cross-border areas", with the proviso that these areas not be taken as subject to bilateral arrangements between neighbouring countries, but rather as priority regional solidarity zones in the fullest sense. This constitutes a much broader vision than the one currently presented and may provide a more concrete justification for the planned creation of regional structural funds.

To conclude, the "cross-border area" concept appears promising for introducing bottom-up regional integration. It places local areas and local actors at the heart of integration processes – a novelty when it comes to discussions on African integration. Guidelines need to be drawn for policy and action: policy dialogue forums will be needed within integration IGOs and between States and new actors in regional integration (local authorities, professional and business communities and other civil society organisations). However, the "cross-border area" concept also needs to be placed in a wider context than its original bilateral framework. It needs to be used to define priority regional solidarity zones (PRSZs) that would form the bases for creating regional structural funds. Cross-border cooperation should gradually shift from a State concern to primarily involving border area communities. Decentralised cooperation chosen by these communities should consequently be one of regional cooperation's new tools and be included among the indicators for NEPAD's joint reviews. This new partnership puts pressure on the region to adopt a regional infrastructure plan reflecting public authorities' intention to define a shared vision for regional development. Devising such a plan requires a regional political authority to promote it. However, political will alone is insufficient. A campaign is necessary to raise awareness and mobilise all the region's actors. This could be promoted within the framework of a Regional Public Goods debate that IGOs should instigate without delay. In all events, the "cross-border area" concept is a welcome move from strictly bilateral thinking currently practised towards recognising a regional area endorsed by citizens at various levels of governance. This concept deserves to shed its marginal status to become the central theme of development cooperation.

III

PART THREE:
Market access and trade development: key actors

Market Access and Trade Development: Key Actors

*Pape **Demba Thiam***

I. MARKET ACCESS AND INTEGRATION: INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERAL ISSUE

There was a time when deteriorating terms of trade, increasing poverty, the lag accumulated by African economies in general and West African economies in particular, etc., felt like exclusion from the circuits of a world economy. Or it was thought that taking part in those circuits would be of no benefit to African economies. This, together with an awareness of having inherited micro-states with small markets, revived the idea of regional integration. The hope of economic integration actually spurred a revival of visions of grandeur and nostalgia for the great empires (a pluralistic approach) against a background of ideological debate between "production-driven integration" and "market-driven integration".

In West Africa, the desire to circumvent the minimal weight of nation states (market corollary) in "mechanistic" ways based on a pluralistic approach lies behind both these conceptions of integration. Yet the various economic integration processes necessary to this approach have never been achieved. Structure has always preceded content, the result being an unresolved situation forty years on. Meanwhile the context has changed and the conceptual approach to economic integration will have to evolve to fit it.

West African enterprises see both advantages and threats in the prospect of economic integration. It could create a larger market by facilitating the free movement of goods and people within the economic community area, but could also put firms in competition with each other in that same market. The most prepared firms –most competitive and commercially aggressive– would obviously come out on top.

The idea of competing with other companies seems to worry West African firms less than the integration process's slow pace. This is partly because firms in the region are getting used to gradual liberalisation of the region's economy, for example the marked reduction in real market protection. It is also because the two integration zones, WAEMU and ECOWAS, are not frameworks developed to deal with the production side, so there is no zero-sum competition between producers of any product available on the regional market. This may be due to under-developed purchasing power in the region (due to low income levels). But as things stand now on production and marketing sides, there can be no explosion of mass production in the economic community without higher incomes, more purchasing power and a larger market.

As for the trade balance, density of revenue flows between the regional economic area and the outside world is far greater than the density of internal flows. This means that overall regional revenues are higher than GDP; the regional economy is thus more extroverted and vertically vulnerable.

In the WAEMU area this situation has long disguised the CFA franc's overvaluation. Since the second oil shock, it has been increasingly more worthwhile to import than to produce. With access to a currency guaranteed simply by a political agreement backed up by accounting operations, it was possible to spend without the corresponding productive capacity. The WAEMU countries could spend money without earning it.

In short, from a regional standpoint, low output combined with regulatory obstacles (delays in implementing laws) and physical barriers (poor transport and communication infrastructure in general) still create situations of pure economic rent for the best-prepared firms, which then pay less attention to costs and other aspects of competitiveness.

So the threat does not yet come from adjacent production zones. It comes from farther afield geographically, but much closer in terms of the inescapable effects of trade globalisation. West African companies have been doubly protected until now. Their protection in domestic markets is still too high by the standards of the Uruguay Round Agreement that marked the end of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the creation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). On the international market they are protected by maintained preference systems sanctioned by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and by EU-ACP agreements.

However, ACP countries lost the battle over bananas when American producers operating in Latin America claimed compensation from the European Commission for ACP countries' preferential access to European markets compared to restrictions imposed on other banana exporters. European Union tax-payers will not be prepared to continue paying fines to the WTO for giving ACP producers preferential access to their markets.

In any case, the derogations granted to developing countries in general and ACP countries in particular were already tolerated violations of the "most favoured nation" clause. These violations have now been removed in no uncertain terms, and irreversibly, by the Marrakech agreement. For the moment, ACP countries, including West African countries, are covered by a moratorium that will end at the latest in 2006. So action must promptly be taken.

The purpose of the present document is to set out some essential issues that arise from an analysis of the most widespread technical barriers to trade in the region. This should help to structure a constructive debate on the issue.

II. TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE

The problem of market access is still a matter of prime importance, and one for which no adequate solution has yet been found. With the onset of globalisation, companies are subjected to the same rules whether they sell on their "own" market or export. Even if West African firms are not trying to establish themselves in external markets, they cannot keep foreign firms out of their own markets. They have to become competitive. There is no alternative.

The problem of market access is also a matter of policy: lower customs barriers, end of quota systems, direct and indirect subsidies, applying the rules and discipline of the WTO, etc. This debate is one structured by the WTO, UNCTAD, the forthcoming EU-ACP regional partnership agreements and many other fora, and is not the present paper's subject. However, removing these "non-technical barriers" to markets will not in itself guarantee effective market access. After all, ACP countries have always had "potential access" to European markets, enjoying special favours that discriminate against non-ACP countries; yet ACP businesses have never managed to gain a foothold in these markets.

Effective market access depends on a firm's capacity to establish and maintain a customer base. It is a question of West African firms' capacity to overcome technical barriers to trade, stand their ground on domestic markets and capture the most demanding external markets. That calls for an integrated strategy of market access that can only emerge from a well-thought-out public-private partnership at national and regional levels.

To address this problem, it will be useful to consider, first of all, what the obstacles to market access actually are. The ones usually identified are as follows:

- **A mediocre macroeconomic environment that does not encourage private investment.** Private investment is essential for adapting production lines to current standards, adapting products to market demand, developing competitive products, acquiring appropriate modern technology, etc. A real public-private partnership should be promoted in order to see what improvements should be made to the business environment to create a macro-economic and institutional context that is more cooperative and attractive to investors. This should also involve a better policy for promoting investment in the region;

- **The lack of physical infrastructure along trade corridors and at export points.** Goods often deteriorate at ports and airports, owing to the lack of infrastructure in transit areas. This is a vital missing link which may discourage firms that could otherwise align with standards. Obviously, lack of transport infrastructure in general also penalises trading capabilities;

- **The complexity of transit operations and customs inspections is another handicap.** Besides the damage to produce that wallows in transit areas, transit operations are tediously lengthy. Many of the region's ports and airports are avoided for this reason. There are lessons to be learned from cases where the installation of new transit systems and structures has reduced waiting time from several days to a few hours;

- Another kind of obstacle is **the lack of commercial and technical information on market demand.** Most producers and exporters lack market exposure. They lack information about the markets they target, about demand and the technical and trading standards in force. This especially penalises smaller businesses. Proactive information systems must be introduced. A good information system is one that is not only easy to access but also supplies technical assistance to help users apply the information in practical ways by adapting and developing products and production sectors;

- **The absence of vital services to business** is also an obstacle to market access. All firms, regardless of their size, rely on the same vital conditions. But while subsidiaries of multinational corporations have ready access to certain resources, smaller firms do not, especially those operating within under-developed structures. A genuine policy to help smaller firms expand would involve making sure they can receive from external sources what they cannot provide for themselves. A real public-private partnership should also lead to programmes capable of activating the market for non-financial services to business;

- Among these vital business services, the one that affects market access most directly is **sales promotion**. In fact, sales promotion bureaus have been set up, but they themselves often lack expertise and market exposure. Their promotion style is a passive one: they do not intervene at the production stage of demand-assessment, yet were they to initially help firms adjust to market demand; they would then be more successful in promoting goods supplied. The capacities of these sales promotion structures need to be strengthened, if only to enable them to fulfil their mandate and improve their services to business;

- **The lack of infrastructure for standardisation, testing, metrology and quality promotion** is another major obstacle to market access. This is important not only because companies' output must meet standards and must therefore have access to those standards, but also because even firms that can solve this problem themselves may be banned from a market on the grounds that there is no recognised and accredited structure to certify compliance with quality and other standards. Several

West African firms have been penalised in this way. West Africa must not only strengthen the agency of existing standardisation, testing, metrology and quality-promotion infrastructure, but also redefine how their activities should mesh with those of other business support and promotion structures working to solve market access problems. This will ensure a more integrated and efficient service capacity all around;

- **Delays in the regional economic integration process** prevent harmonising procedures for standardisation, metrology, testing and quality promotion. Capacity-building for these structures should be handled through a regional programme to revise and update normative procedures and create networks to link them with each other and with other structures promoting market access. The private sector should also be involved in this;

- **The lack of public-private consultation** is precisely one of the biggest obstacles to defining suitable market access policies. The economic integration process should address this issue through a real policy dialogue – one that would have a real impact on the revival of West African economic integration, its objectives, ways and means.

All the shortcomings described above are what are generally called "technical barriers to trade." They limit economic growth and the competitiveness of West Africa's economies and it is essential to rectify them.

III. KEY PROBLEMS

The weakness of regional integration programmes lies in the absence of pertinent, coherent strategies to construct regional spaces that open up trading prospects for regional economic operators. It also seems that rules and procedures governing regional trade, far from encouraging a sustainable trade dynamic, actually obstruct market integration. Furthermore, the region's situation has changed, and will continue to change now that globalisation has been institutionalized through the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Even before formal globalisation, it was fair to ask how adequate the type of market integration proposed by West Africa's regional integration structures would be. The question is all the more relevant now that regional economic integration has to take into account terms imposed by a new world trade situation brought on by the globalisation process.

These changes have an impact on the region's position vis-à-vis an increasingly unified world market. In light of this we need to re-examine the forms, rules and disciplines of regional market integration proposed by orthodox institutional approaches: how coherent, relevant and adequate are they?

These points should help to analyse regional integration more clearly, looking for the structural factors that determine regional trade development. They should also open up new avenues for designing and implementing substantial strategies to build integrated regional spaces that will generate growth and stimulate trade.

Trade in the region is very low. Yet it is greatly underestimated in official statistics. Supposing real trade is three times greater than official figures suggest, the volume of intra-regional trade is still no more than 9% of trade between the region and the rest of the world. This is still a very low figure in terms of intra-regional economic expansion.

That said, actors in the field are not indifferent to the inadequacy and perverse effects of existing regulation. They are enterprising people, and they carry out their business and social life as best they can in light of their own interests. So they make use of regional and national disparities, and develop strategies accordingly – legal or otherwise, depending on whether they are acting within a formal (and therefore verifiable) sector or an informal, less visible one. These strategies do help to develop trade; proving that there are trading opportunities in the region and that they are actually being exploited.

The essential question is how to boost the momentum of trade opportunities, using policy dialogue between institutional actors and operators in the field. How can this consultation process be initiated and provided with a content that will lead to coherent policies on trade and development? Globalisation is an opportunity to re-conceptualise institutional approaches to regional market integration; how can this opportunity be seized? Gaining a better understanding of actors' strategies in the field is key in assessing what adjustments should be made to rules, procedures and disciplines.

The current level of trade and prospects for developing trade can be considered as results of an integration process (formally organised or not) and/or as an impetus for integration. In fact it is a two-way process. Orthodox, linear thinking tends to postulate that opening markets elicits an automatic dynamic response in production and trade. This is certainly the case where coherent cooperative structures are in place. That is why, in both WAEMU and ECOWAS, the emphasis has been on customs and taxation issues, whether in terms of internal regulation and harmonisation or in terms of relations with the outside world.

Following an increasingly obvious slump in economic opportunities, which makes importing and distributing more attractive than producing, productive output in the region has stagnated. The slump seems to be partly due to the lack of harmony between national and regional economic structures, and their radically "non-cooperative" natures. Since all countries in the region will be taking part in the WTO, it is no longer possible to ignore the necessities and processes of standardisation and quality control, be it for intra- or extra-regional trade. Strategies for expanding trade in the region can no longer ignore this essential factor.

How can the regional space offer economic opportunities? How can the macroeconomic framework make it easier for business people to perceive economic opportunities? What economic stimuli and policy instruments would make it easier to transform opportunities into business? How can the regional integration process be redesigned so that it also attends to these prerogatives, providing the regional economic space with an infrastructural network and regional institutional framework that will jump-start growth? How can the region's production capacity be built up to increase the volume of regional trade and give the region a competitive edge in external markets? Who are key actors in this dynamic? What roles can they fulfil? How can these different roles be correlated within a dynamic process of economic expansion?

By answering these questions we will be better able to identify new strategic directions for regional integration programmes and sketch in objective guidelines for enhancing the agency of regional integration structures.

Several countries in the region have set up export processing zones, while others are thinking of doing so. The purpose of these zones is generally to stimulate exports so as to improve the trade balance, accumulate hard currency and create jobs. In the CFA franc area there is no currency exchange problem because France guarantees the franc, so accumulating hard currency is not the issue. Generally speaking, very few lasting jobs have been created in these zones, and exports have not increased significantly. In terms of goals actually attained, export processing zones have failed due to inadequate economic policy.

Analysed in terms of their relevance to economic development, the way export processing zones function tends to make them poles of attraction rather than growth centres. As such, they attract most of the vital

elements from adjacent economic spaces but distribute nothing in return; they produce no positive externalities and have no domino effect in spurring growth in neighbouring spaces. From this angle, export processing zones would seem to weaken rather than strengthen national and regional economic fabric. It would be difficult to use export processing zones to advance internal division of labour and involve as many economic units as possible in an export-driven growth process; these zones seem actually to hamper such development.

What place can export processing zones have in national and regional integration. If successful economic integration depends on a coherent and exhaustive structuring of economic activity in a given area, what role can export processing zones fulfil in that process? If the export processing zone logic destructures a country's national economic space, what does it do to regional space?

Another problem is that produce from export processing zones are increasingly likely to encounter technical barriers to trade such as WTO rules of origin. Anticipating this, firms in these zones now want to turn their attention back to national and regional markets. Togo, for example, allows firms in its export processing zone to sell 30% of their output on the domestic market, paying customs duties to do so. However, WAEMU does not grant them access to other countries, with or without customs duties. This is understandable given the exemptions and other favours these firms benefit from at the onset to help them produce 'artificially' competitive goods. Customs duties at the outset would not counterbalance the initial distortion.

This raises the more general problem of the relevance of export processing zones in a context of globalisation and regional integration. Answers to this problem will certainly make it possible to reconcile the logic of export processing zones with (i) the logic of economic integration and (ii) the rules and disciplines governing trade in the new international order.

It seems important at this stage to definitively discard the widespread belief that it is the insubstantial size of markets that discourages firms, and multinationals in particular, from setting up in West Africa. That, we are told, is why there has to be integration to broaden the market. This is probably true. However, globalisation could posit an alternative reality.

The size of local and/or adjacent markets is no longer a constant factor in geographical choice. The proof of this, in Africa itself, is Mauritius. Mauritius is an island with a very small population, yet it manufactures millions of articles of clothing for export every day; and the 30% of output that is authorised for sale on Mauritian territory has transformed the island into a vast discount clothing store. Another illustration is Botswana, with its population of 1 million. It is now home to assembly lines for Volvo, Mercedes, BMW etc. The output is certainly not heading for domestic or regional markets, which are amply supplied by South Africa.

In reality, big corporations transfer production to areas endowed with conditions necessary for producing competitively and in accord with standard norms, regardless of domestic or regional market size. The notion of "connectedness" no longer applies merely to distance/mileage and static infrastructure, but also and above all to time and rapid access. From this standpoint, Paris and New York are closer to Dakar than is Bamako or Conakry; so why should a Senegalese exporter carry on selling to the Burkinabè? Business is based on analysing opportunities, not obeying a sense of regional identity.

West Africa's economic space has production potential. It has resources that can be harnessed with infrastructure to help people perceive opportunities and transform them into business. If the region's businesses produce such a narrow range of products, it is for lack of opportunity. That is why production has not diversified, hence why there are so few opportunities for trade.

Tasks for integration structures:

- To analyse the prospect of transforming potential resources within the existing regional economic space;

- To divide the regional economic space into homogeneous "interface sub-markets" so as to have a content for homogeneous infrastructure policies;

- To design infrastructure policies, strategies and programmes for "interface sub- markets";

- To distribute integrated, complementary growth potentials among different "interface sub- markets" to stimulate trade dynamics and simultaneously solve the problem of reviving economic growth and the region's economic competitiveness.

Public-private cooperation will be decisive in this exercise.

More attention must be paid to operators' initiatives and the need for infrastructure. West Africa must (i) re-define economic integration objectives, (ii) design effective strategies, (iii) define coherent integration programmes, and (iv) enhance the agency of regional integration structures. Policy dialogue must commence at regional and sectoral levels. It should aim at properly establishing the mission of regional integration: distributing integrated and complementary growth potentials between regional economic sub-spaces. The road to more competitive economies and better market access is strong regional capacity to create opportunities and transform them into business.

What Future for Private Enterprise in West Africa?

François ***Bost***

INTRODUCTION

Economic globalisation is now inevitable. It is the result of

- Widespread reduction of customs duties and deregulation of financial markets, resulting in an unprecedented rise in trade flows and foreign investment;
- The spread of the capitalist economic model to the entire world following the virtual disappearance of centrally planned economies (in Eastern Europe especially);
- Rapid regional economic integration (European Union, NAFTA, ASEAN, MERCOSUR etc.);
- The emergence of new competitors and the opening of new markets in third world countries;
- Globalisation of the production process within multinationals, leading to greater organisational and geographical flexibility.

This process would, of course, not have been possible without a continual drop in transport costs and spectacular progress in telecommunications that has effectively abolished distance as far as capital and information flows are concerned.

Economic globalisation does not mean that all parts of the world have become equally attractive to multinational corporations. Quite the contrary. The map of direct investment stock, which reflects the multinationals' global strategies, shows the sharp geographical distinctions these corporations make in favour of those regions that are most attractive in terms of market size and solvency, regional economic integration, political stability, quality, skills and cost of labour, etc. Of the developing countries, they are only really interested in a dozen or so, in Asia (China, South Korea, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) and South America (Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Argentina before the present crisis). Moreover the multinationals were responsible for roughly 90% of total direct investment flows to this zone in 2000. These "emerging" countries are undeniably the big winners in globalisation. What distinguishes them is that their industry has taken off and they are increasingly involved in world trade flows.

Most third world countries are altogether marginalized by multinationals' globalisation strategies. The 48 countries of sub-Saharan Africa together attracted only 0.5% of total foreign investment in the world in 2000 – barely more than Norway or Singapore on their own. And over half those flows to Africa went to oil-producing countries.

1.1 A regional framework not yet favourable

Becoming more attractive to foreign investors has therefore become a priority for countries excluded from these corporations' foreign investment plans. In light of this, regional economic groupings now play an inescapable role, since they provide an institutional framework and large markets, in accord with multinational strategies. The recent polarisation of foreign direct investment in the MERCOSUR area, is a good example of this, which resulted in a tripling of trade within that group of countries between 1990 and 2000.

Many African observers have taken note of this trend. They think that although improving the business environment (with lower factor costs, training, infrastructure development, combating corruption etc.) is a necessary condition for attracting investors and developing new economic activities, it is insufficient. At most, it provides better working conditions for firms already present in the region and enables them to increase their margins. So hopes are placed in West Africa's regional unions, WAEMU and ECOWAS especially, which could potentially offer the vast market hoped for by multinationals and smaller businesses alike.

Since the balkanisation of sub-Saharan Africa after independence, African markets have essentially been limited by country borders. With the exception of the Nigerian market, West Africa's markets are considered too small, lacking the business opportunities that would justify mobilising capital and expatriate human resources. Their small demographic size (Nigeria apart) and their peoples' weak purchasing power readily explain why these countries are not for the moment included in the multinationals' investment plans, except in a few sectors like oil. While multinationals have been rushing to Asian and Latin American developing countries so as not to lag behind their competitors, the prevailing view at top management level is that there is still plenty of time to think about establishing a foothold in sub-Saharan Africa.

One good reason why Africa is not a strategic pole for investment, is that economically, West Africa's regional unions are not yet efficient. The corporations wishing to deploy their strategies on a regional scale in Africa stumble against major practical obstacles. Regional infrastructure is lacking: roads are generally disconnected; few roads are in good condition; the few existing railways are in a lamentable state and rail transport very slow; deep-water harbours are inefficient and not attractive to business, etc. There are currency conversion problems. Other obstacles to fluid trade include customs duties, unofficial road blocks, corruption, etc. For all these reasons, formal sector trade flows are discouraged and are still very weak in West Africa as a whole (about 10%).

1.2 Outdated business strategies

The strategies of firms operating in West Africa have scarcely evolved since the 1960s and 70s, and are out of step with the strategies that parent companies have been applying for many years now in parts of the world where region-building is more advanced.

The predominant manufacturing pattern in West Africa is the classic market-based strategy: "one country, one factory". It was a response to the adoption of a development model best known as "import substitution": producing manufactured goods that had hitherto been imported, in order to supply the local market. From the 1960s on, this policy led to the creation of numerous small production plants intended to supply local markets. Among the product sectors involved were textiles, beverages (the Castel group, Heineken, Coca-Cola etc.), dairy products (Nestlé etc.), industrial gases (Air Liquide), vehicle assembly (Peugeot, Renault etc.) and simple manufactured goods (bicycles, metal containers, etc.).

This has impeded the development of an industrial strategy based on seeking lowest labour costs, not only in West Africa but in the whole of sub-Saharan Africa apart from Mauritius. Large corporations developed the latter strategy during the 1970s and '80s, delocalising manufacturing from industrialised to developing countries throughout Asia, Latin America and the Mediterranean basin – but not Africa. The reason being that West Africa had not significantly shifted from its "import substitution" based development model to one based on "export substitution", as had countries of East and Southeast Asia (South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China etc.) and, more recently, Eastern Europe.

The region's few export processing zones (in Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo), set up in order to attract delocalising manufacturers, suffer from the lack of a clearly stated development model. They are also penalised by the disastrous industrial image that prevails. Mere appendages of the local economy, they have attracted only a few dozen firms each, and at best employ only a few thousand people. They produce a disparate range of very low-value-added goods which do not give much access to world markets.

As for the old development strategy based on commodity processing and exports (cacao, coffee, latex, gum Arabic, palm oil etc.), it sparks little interest from foreign firms. In the world as a whole these products generate very little in the way of investment flows.

For all the aforementioned reasons, very few multinationals have tried to set up in West Africa since the 1970s and '80s. Worse, there has been a trend to de-industrialise: many local manufacturing plants closed down in the 1980s and '90s, precisely because already small markets were shrinking as a result of the recession. Add to this the absence of business opportunities for mergers and acquisitions (the main impetus for international investment), the unattractive state of privatised industries, and the great difficulty foreign firms have in creating joint ventures with local investors, and one understands better how West African business strategy got into its present bind. Rather than risk setting up a new factory, parent companies prefer to supply West African markets with exports from their home countries or elsewhere.

1.3 Stronger regional integration brings new prospects

By offering a larger, more attractive market to flows of all kinds, regional integration should generate new corporate strategy dynamics, especially as the rapidly growing population offers increased consumption outlets. Companies cannot remain indifferent to a potential market that could amount to 295 million people by 2010 and 408 million by 2025 (204 million in 2020 for Nigeria alone).

Foreign investment designed to capture larger consumer markets could find its way to West Africa once more, to build larger industrial units providing greater volumes of production. Trade flows within the region should also increase, to the benefit of transit companies and other transport operators. Designed to meet international standards, future factories could, in some cases, increase their outlets by supplying countries in the North with certain types of products.

As the path strewn by other regional groupings has shown, some division of labour and manufacturing specialization should develop in the medium and long run. This would provide greater diversity in production structures and more complementarity among West African economies. To this effect, present export processing zones could find the impetus they have thus far lacked by specialising to meet West African market demand.

Lastly, private enterprise has everything to gain from region-wide coordination of policies and institutional arrangements (harmonised regulations), provided it remove internal obstacles and allow greater freedom of movement for production factors.

Although regional integration is an opportunity to be grasped if Africa is to avoid becoming even more marginalized, it will not solve all problems. Many changes are to be expected.

II. CORPORATE STRATEGIES IN WEST AFRICA: CONSEQUENCES FOR REGIONAL INTEGRATION, LIMITATIONS

2.1 The role of multinationals in accentuating geographical imbalance

As has happened elsewhere in the world, regional integration by private enterprise will have major consequences in terms of spatial organisation, and will generate new challenges for West African governments. The notion of territory is likely to become more important than ever, since it will play a larger part in corporate competitiveness.

Future investments will certainly not be equally distributed. They will obey the laws of polarisation, concentrating mainly in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria, and in urban centres that are already well structured and offer the best business opportunities. Needless to say, port cities will benefit to the detriment of regions with poor infrastructural links. Further marginalisation of landlocked countries and coastal countries with inadequate or non-existent infrastructure is to be expected. There will therefore have to be some sort of compensation mechanism to limit imbalance within the region.

Newly arrived corporations may hence refrain from implanting a large number of subsidiaries as classical market-based strategy would dictate. They will design their strategy on a regional basis from the outset; selecting sites with care, and focusing on local units whose mandate will be to export throughout the region. Meanwhile, multinationals already established in the region will gradually rationalise their networks and subsidiaries, concentrating on some and closing down the smaller, less profitable. All in all the active units in this future regional framework will be fewer in number but larger in scale.

2.2 Integrating a West African regional dimension into corporate strategies is likely to quickly encounter certain limits

Despite its innovative nature, regional integration in West Africa will not abolish characteristics specific to each country, or to the sub-region itself. These particularities are likely to play a major role in multinational firms' decision-making process:

- Consumer purchasing power in West Africa is still low, and consistently so in the different countries. This will continue to limit business opportunities and the establishing of subsidiaries. Furthermore, foreign firms pay close attention to economic growth rates. It was largely because of rapid growth in the emerging countries that they rushed to invest there in the 1980s and '90s;

- There is little manufacturing industry in West Africa, and the examples of MERCOSUR and ASEAN show that it is precisely countries with manufacturing industries that best complement each other and have most to trade amongst themselves;

- Existent industrial activities are fairly unsophisticated. This means that trade within sectors, between firms and between branches (intermediate and semi-manufactured goods) on a West-Africa-wide scale will remain limited for a long time, whereas in Southeast Asia, for example, they act as the very basis for trade. Operating on a regional basis is unlikely to provoke major sectoral changes in the short term (e.g. with regard to new technologies), although this scale of operation will make it more feasible to develop high-value-added activities;

- Transport and telecommunications infrastructure is mediocre throughout the region while inertia and blockages will continue to hamper the mobility of production factors for a long time to come;

- The lack of both a well-educated, skilled labour force and small local sub-contractors as well as equipment suppliers, service firms and other small businesses to meet outsourcing needs will have a major effect on multinationals' choice of locations;

- The basis of international trade is complementarity between countries. In West Africa, however, complementarities are as yet fairly weak, and countries inevitably find themselves competing with each other to supply the same markets.

CONCLUSION

Through the new economic framework they offer to private enterprise, regional integration groupings are proving to be a powerful revitalising factor for international investment, although this investment takes on new forms and generates far-reaching change. Traditionally a weak zone for international investment, West Africa may hope regional integration will enhance its credibility and attractiveness. Yet as discussed above, without supporting measures the effects of the regional integration process will be limited in scope. The challenge to West Africa's governments is a major one.

African Merchants' Strategies

Boureima ***Wankoye***

INTRODUCTION

By nature, merchants and entrepreneurs adapt to their environment to make the best of a situation. When dynamic actors in an economy are given the freedom to operate, results are spectacular. This has not happened in Africa, despite a few isolated success stories.

Minimal trade between African countries highlights a lack of regional integration, causing unaffordable loss of revenue in a context of extreme poverty.

This situation is the product of a very particular context borne by all actors.

First, the origins of economic closure and obstacles to trade are outlined. Then, we will look at adaptive strategies used by merchants and manufacturers, exemplified by certain members of the West Africa Enterprise Network.

We will show how entrepreneurs' patient, determined and often unsupported efforts can foster the regional economic development and benefit the community as a whole.

I. HISTORY OF INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE

Africans have a reputation as born traders. Prestige associated with trading has always attracted the most dynamic people, here as elsewhere. This is still true today.

Trading is the main way to attain social status and prosperity in a traditional society that places a great deal of importance on ostentation and often rejects constraints involved in anticipating and investing for the future.

Over the years, trading networks such as the Hausas and Dioulas developed and became extremely efficient at distributing staple products like salt, animals and cola nuts. Cola, originally from the east coast, became virtually indispensable to Sahelians, while cowpea, native to drylands, was a very popular food in forest areas.

African cuisine reflects this lively trading tradition. For example, almost all African dishes use onions grown in one specific area and traded intensively.

Dozens of similar examples exist. Togo's "Nana Benz" have been prominent in the textile trade for generations. Today these formidable businesswomen handle billions of CFA francs and run an empire extending over all West Africa.

Origins of trade date back to the beginning of human settlement and Africa is no exception, contrary to popular belief.

However, we are right to question why trade has developed so little since African independence.

II. IMPACT OF STATES CREATED AFTER DECOLONISATION

Goods circulated freely within the large regions delineated by colonial powers. Cash and food cropping developed at an unprecedented rate, in the interest of the West and Africans profited from it.

Then came independence. The continent was divided up into smaller segments. Movements of people became more complicated and circulation of goods virtually ceased. Bureaucracy and its direct corollary, corruption, are responsible for this contraction.

Traditional traders did their best to adapt to this situation. Many refused to work with the State, except when mutual interest was evident and deals made.

Business and clientelism go hand in hand for many of these traders and networks often have a strong religious element.

The private sector was excluded or marginalised in many sectors of the economy because it was considered outdated, unworthy or weak. Nationalised companies exploited their monopoly, particularly in rural areas where they financed only minimal infrastructure in exchange for markets. Farmers benefited little. International financial institutions moved into a context of almost total economic fiasco. Structural adjustment plans were introduced in many countries. Results were inversely proportional to expectations and amounts of money invested. They had almost no positive impact.

Privatisation mainly profited multinational companies. Local private companies got no support and were unable to take advantage of the wave of liberalisation. Some sectors collapsed. Many local products' output stagnated or declined.

Traders preferred the informal sector where they could operate freely because the African business environment remained highly compartmentalised despite a single currency area.

Crushed by bureaucracy and ignored by banks, modern entrepreneurs have reacted in whatever ways they could. Let's take a closer look at these actors and their strategies.

III. SOME ACTORS' ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES IN DEVELOPING TRADE

The West Africa Enterprise Network is a rich pool of entrepreneurs with similar backgrounds, handicaps and strategies.

These entrepreneurs almost all have:

- A trading background and/or an international education

Most modern entrepreneurs have studied in European or North American universities or have experience working for an international company. They often come from trading families and make radical changes to the family business.

Combining international experience with a strong local base is the only way to juggle the demands of a unique local context and global market forces. African entrepreneurs have to perform a constant balancing act — a position that few Westerners are aware of, let alone understand.

The way people think and work in Africa is quite different from developed countries. This explains both our difficulties and, paradoxically, our successes. Local entrepreneurs are able to seize opportunities and boost traditional family trading businesses to an industrial scale because they are attuned to local mentalities and have a strong taste for risk. This pattern is typical of developing countries, Africa included.

- International ambition

Our network is eager to develop trading relations with countries in the sub-region and in the North. It defies national borders out of necessity.

However, Africans have encountered many problems faced with world market realities, explaining the many business failures and a visible preference for less demanding sub-regional markets.

The following conclusions and suggestions are drawn from difficulties experienced by African entrepreneurs, lack of ban support and a local environment inconducive to trade.

Our countries will be able to take off only if large-scale cooperation reaches entrepreneurs directly.

This is no figment of the imagination; many business people in our enterprise network are living proof that it can work.

Their successes have impressed researchers from Grenoble University, who are now integrating their methods into a "new development model". Of course, many more would have been successful sooner with the backing of private capital from the North. We can still learn a lot from what has been achieved.

Our own enterprise is the fruit of genuine North-South cooperation, our associates and partners being French. We have implemented a vertical integration strategy in different sectors, with the same basic components:

- Decent income for producers,
- Quality control,
- Value added.

We tested this strategy on the gum arabic market, from which Niger, my country, was absent until our involvement.

By offering attractive prices and guaranteed purchases, we encouraged many people to take up harvesting again. Quantities of produce received tripled in five years time.

To ensure the quality of marketed products, our business also invested heavily in plantations, distributed free seedlings, and taught farmers and traders about quality requirements. We also extended our supply system which now spans four countries (Niger, Nigeria, Chad and Mali).

Simultaneously, a company in Europe specialised in processing gums, resins and raw plant products in general (grinding, atomisation, extraction) was acquired. This subsidiary became our group's bridge with Europe.

The acquisition completed our business's integration. We started from scratch are now a major player in the industry. All of these common-sensical steps would have been difficult, if not impossible had we embarked on this venture alone. Without management skills, capital and markets from the North, we would still be in limbo, an African speciality.

On the other hand, few Western companies would have been able to achieve the same results alone, i.e. without our constant support on the ground. It would have cost them huge investments in human and logistical resources.

In this case, the business founder's commitment was fundamental because it was based on genuine complementarity. Complementarity and a mutual commitment to work together was the key to our success.

We all know that returns on investment in Africa are exceptionally high, which is all the more surprising in a hostile global environment.

Let's think for a moment what could be achieved if Western companies overcame their fears and invested with us, if our governments decided to help us instead of harassing us and if international institutions replaced parsimony with genuine investment in the private sector.

I am too much of a realist to be naïvely optimistic. And yet, if all of us were adventurous enough to imagine our future together...

Remarks on Market Access and Trade Development: Key Actors

Kofi K. Apraku

Barriers erected by Governments to promote national markets have been substantially reduced over the last 30 years thanks to successive negotiations within the ECOWAS framework. Despite these efforts West African nations still risk being further marginalised. Because of this, I fully share concerns raised in earlier presentations. Nevertheless, a certain amount of things can be added.

Although some remaining technical obstacles require governmental attention, business practices also tend to have a debilitating effect and deserve the attention of other key actors within the Community. The region's Common Customs Area is essential to providing a competitive relationship between our products and services and those of other contracting parties. It must be vigorously pursued by all actors involved.

Once such anti-competitive restrictions are eliminated, we can begin to discuss providing an enabling atmosphere for firms to have greater market access through foreign investment. We should begin to explore the potential scope of ECOWAS regulations complemented by both private sector partners and International Development Agencies to make a significant impact on sub-regional trade and development.

Earlier presentations outline problems facing the integration process. The language issue has not yet been evoked. Indeed, three main languages are used in the region: English, French and Portuguese.

This obstacle has been analysed before with regard to communication but has overlooked inherited colonial traditions which narrow everything down to national interest and obscure the common good. This explains why in some countries, everything British is first class while all other competing products are second rate. Having said this, let me expand a little on the structure of West African integration. There are three aspects:

- Political Aspects of Regional Integration

The democratisation process is generally in earnest, with a few exceptions. A new awakening is taking place in terms of distribution of power between the Presidency, Parliament and the Judiciary. The West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) combines effectively with UEMOA to give a new impetus to ECOWAS, defined as the Fast Track Approach to integration.

- Economic Aspects

Adjustments to liberalise productive sectors of the economy are underway to provide a basis for building a competitive regional economy. This was well highlighted in the preceding presentations. Macro-economic distortions, particularly in English-speaking West Africa, are being eliminated to pave the way for converging national economic policies. While we appreciate International Development Agency's strong political support, henceforth development programmes should have a regional scope.

This would enable multi-nationals to take full advantage of local infrastructural facilities which could be made to serve the whole region. Such regional approaches are necessary for sustainable development. A regional focus may bring multi-national corporations to have a second look on Africa in areas where investments have the highest returns.

- Social Aspects

Three main issues are common to all countries in the region: corruption, crime and poverty. National programmes have been put in place to combat them. Regional Programmes are needed, however, to avoid problems shifting from one country to the next according to how successfully these programmes are being implemented nationally.

To conclude, I would like to draw attention to the following:

Benefits of integration and the preferential treatment enjoyed by developing countries under WTO Schemes have a very short life span. It is true that the problem of long-run market access will come down to how competitive a company is;

Regional infrastructural development and managing shared infrastructure are prerequisites for developing production and trade areas within the sub-region; and

ECOWAS should provide a common direction by asserting its role as co-ordinator of regional integration agencies and their activities.

Effective market access depends on eliminating technical and non-technical barriers to trade, ensuring that internal government measures do not distort equal competitive opportunities and attenuating fear that such a situation may inhibit smaller companies from existing.

Regional Integration has been much discussed. Now political commitment to this objective must be established, both in terms of opening the ECOWAS internal market and through an overall market-access strategy developed in close collaboration with large inter-national and multi-national corporations.

Regional integration requires:

- Establishing common customs regulations,
- Dismantling centrally controlled economies,
- Creating regional blocks and,
- Catering to multi-national trading concerns.

By remaining focused, we should begin to see signs of all these in the sub-region. We will therefore be able to discard the gloomy indefinite future the sub-region has been consigned to.

IV PART FOUR:
West Africa's future

Issue Paper on the NEPAD

Michel ***Leblanc***

INTRODUCTION

NEPAD is presently the talk of the town. All institutions, including the OECD, are trying to position themselves vis-à-vis this African initiative to be debated at the next G8 summit. The Sahel and West Africa Club would therefore like to conclude the Accra conference with a discussion on how to implement NEPAD in West Africa.

NEPAD's popularity and mobilisation around it are justified by the initiative's original political character and the need to improve the impact and scope of assistance OECD countries supply to Africa through bilateral and multilateral channels. Africa and the international community risk missing yet another opportunity for cooperation if NEPAD implementation fails or only partially fulfils its promises.

I. RISKS

It will not be plain sailing; a number of obstacles can tip the NEPAD ship:

- Will Africans have the courage to uphold their convictions? Heads of State must act, not just talk. Obstacle N°1: if one of the African leaders' priorities is to improve governance, specifically by setting up a peer review system, how are they going to deal with "free riders?" What to do with those that don't play the game or only pretend to play it to acquire NEPAD membership advantages? What peace and security initiatives will they take in areas of conflict or lawlessness?

- Is NEPAD an alternative or a complement to existing sectoral (SWAP) and poverty reduction programmes in heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs)? The answer to this question will determine the level of mutual understanding (or lack of it) between donor countries and Africa;

- Africa suffers from a surfeit of institutions that are generally too inefficient to help it achieve its aims. If NEPAD simply adds an institutional layer to what already exists, the vessel is going to capsize on the first rock encountered. Africa needs to consider the best way to implement its programme;

- Everyone agrees that the private sector will be the driving force behind Africa's development. This is one of Africa's weak points, since there are few African entrepreneurs and little domestic or private foreign investment. Aside from Heads of State appealing to private investors, to what extent will African countries be capable of fulfilling investors' expectations by reducing obstacles to investment?

- The large number of organisations and forums co-ordinating ODA and OECD countries' contributions to NEPAD might generate competition between Northern institutions; this would jeopardise the initiative's success, make it more difficult for Africans to exercise leadership and create more confusion than coherence in actions. If everyone wants to be bandleader in the North, Africans will have a fine cacophony to listen to!

- NEPAD should not be an opportunity for OECD countries and their multilateral organisations to shrug off some of their responsibilities, particularly their duty to examine donor practices with a negative effect on African development;

- For NEPAD's initiators, thinking out regional approaches to African development is a necessity and a priority for sustainable development. But curiously enough, unlike other priorities, no lead agency has been named to make proposals in this field.

II. THE SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA CLUB SECRETARIAT'S STANCE

The Sahel and West Africa Club's secretariat is convinced that:

- Africa being such a huge continent, the NEPAD initiative has to be implemented regionally, as was decided by the Heads of State who devised it. This does not diminish each country's responsibility: a group of weak states cannot form a strong region, but concerted regional action, efficiently carried out, can help individual countries develop;

- To have any real impact, NEPAD should be implemented regionally rather than nationally. A regional approach should not be seen as a sum of national needs. It should be worked out on the basis of real dynamics, real development hubs and a West African vision of the future. And generally speaking, none of these correspond to existing borders and regions (WAEMU, ECOWAS etc);

- The West African region, i.e. the ECOWAS area plus Mauritania, Chad and possibly Cameroon, does form a coherent development area, as its Heads of State have already recognised. It is now time to act, taking care to avoid overlap in resource-allocation to WAEMU and ECOWAS. West African states and their donors should re-examine the coherence of these two institutions from a NEPAD viewpoint;

- The roles and programmes of each regional organisation (there are over forty in West Africa) should be redefined in light of NEPAD priorities, to give actions planned the best possible chance of success;

- Setting up a peer review system should include considering questions of national sovereignty and introducing supranational mechanisms, especially for conflict resolution, as in other regional groups like NAFTA, the EU and ASEAN;

- To produce hoped-for results, development planning for West Africa should fully involve the region's stakeholders (entrepreneurs, smallholders, artisans, local elected officials, etc.).

CONCLUSION: IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT CONDITIONS

The Accra conference will address these questions from various angles and provide an opportunity for open, informal exchange between some of the region's political decision-makers, regional actors and members of the international community. ***This informed, informal discussion is just that; it does not mean negotiating or stating formal group positions.*** It should facilitate studying the question in-depth from a variety of viewpoints, to participants' mutual benefit.

Questions that could be addressed are:

- Surely implementing NEPAD in West Africa, particularly the infrastructure component, requires considering West Africa's infrastructure geography pragmatically? For example, should transport not be seen in terms of corridors? Surely improving the transport system of a coastal country helps make production in landlocked countries more competitive? Improving sections of these corridors in landlocked countries must likewise benefit seaports that ship goods to and from these corridors. Should we not start to consider transport corridors as we do rivers, negotiating and sharing actions taken upstream or downstream?

- Infrastructure (communications or other) implies heavy investment and takes time to come to fruition; it can take 5, 10 or 15 years from concept to inauguration – even more for major structures such as dams and power stations. But half a generation from now, West Africa will have changed enormously in terms of population size and distribution between town and country, and different economic sectors relative importance etc. This infrastructure will be built to last far beyond one generation. All this means that a shared medium- and long-term vision of West Africa is crucial for implementing NEPAD in the region. How should this vision be formed and shared?

- What should this vision be based on? a) The region's urbanisation seems inevitable whatever policies are applied; however, it may be possible to develop a regional strategy for building a network of secondary towns faster than what would naturally occur. b) Likewise, no one can "decide" that "marginal" Sahelian regions should not depopulate compared to regions with greater potential; but it is possible to develop specific strategies for these areas so as to preserve the ecological balance essential to West Africa's overall equilibrium. c) The Sudano-Sahelian zone, i.e. the southern half of the Sahel countries and the northern half of the coastal countries, has the greatest agri-business potential and a network of growing towns. A concerted policy could be developed on with this as its basis, etc.

- If the goal is regional co-operation in implementing NEPAD, what of border issues? Present day African borders provide no real control and are often transit points for contraband. They do not prevent smuggling; they often foster it. When major political crises erupt, it is often at borders that confrontation occurs, despite the ancient social bonds between communities on either side of most borders. This is probably why President Konaré considers that genuine regional integration can only be achieved by resolving these border contradictions. That hypothesis needs to be studied. He has suggested creating "cross-border areas" focused on solidarity, development and shared management. There are many potential "cross-border areas" in the heart of the Sudano-Sahelian zone mentioned above. Should their development be made a priority? If so, it seems obvious that local communities, elected representatives and operators should play a leading part. Is this in contradiction with national interests? And finally, if a "cross-border areas" initiative is to be developed, who should be responsible, and how should it connect with major Africa-wide initiatives like NEPAD? *[For more information, see "NEPAD explained" by Vice-Presidency Senegal].*

The NEPAD in Perspective

Vincent ***Géronimi***

INTRODUCTION

As previous presentations have demonstrated, the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) conveys several prospective images of a desired West African future. Restating several of these visions (Part one) and comparing them to NEPAD's long-term aspirations (Part two) underlines the primary challenges NEPAD must face in order to fulfill its promises

I. PROSPECTIVE VISIONS FOR WEST AFRICA

NEPAD raises numerous questions and diverse analyses, as the past two days of discussions has shown. To this diversity can be added greatly differing long-term views. We can schematically oppose a spontaneous vision of West Africa defined by local actors' rationales and informal markets (*"de facto"* integration) to a vision built around institutions and interventionism (*"de jure"* integration).

These overtly opposed conceptions can be partially reconciled within an overall perspective recognizing the complexity of dynamics at work and the multiplicity of levels on which to analyse them.

As Philippe Hugon explained, many analyses and insights regarding these dynamics exist:

The *long term stagnation and marginalisation of West Africa* in international flows is the whole story from an international, macro perspective. Regional integration crises and failing voluntarist policies are hallmarked as representative of the situation. In terms of global prospects, Africa is rarely factored in (cf. global economic prospects of the World Bank, ADB or OECD).

The *vitality of "de facto" integration, informal exchanges and private dynamics* does emerge from a more "internal" vision. It has enabled the region to deal with a tripling total population and a six-fold increase in urban population since independence. New forms of decentralised regional cooperation, under the "cross-border areas" framework, mean to take advantage of these bottom-up dynamics (cf. WALTPS and Sahel and West Africa Club).

A third approach emphasizes *permanent long-run factors related to certain structural characteristics:* complementarities between coastal and Sahelian zones (large migratory flows), the importance of rent rationales in relations with outside countries and economic sensitivity to varying types of instability.

Several elements signaling breakdown are present alongside these permanent factors. States are overwhelmed from the top-down (regionalisation, conditionalities...) and from the bottom-up (decentralisation, informalisation…). Administrations have lost a good amount of their capacity for action and reflection. Several countries are prey to latent conflict and rent economies are running out of steam. These factors of breakdown are leading to new social and spatial structures.

The realm of options for Africa lies at the juncture between external and internal factors, bringing to light deep-seated trends (economic, demographic, social, political, cultural and global).

No vision proposed for West Africa is superior to another. At most, they vary in completeness and complexity. A substantial and informative image of West Africa should appear by overlapping various

dynamics and time frames, actors' strategies and spaces. As Achille Mbembe noted, there is no single outcome. Several parallel directions are simultaneously being followed and many more trajectories exist.

II. NEPAD'S LONG-TERM VIEW OF WEST AFRICA

The NEPAD is part of a pro-active, voluntarist approach intended to direct current trends towards the best possible scenario for West Africa. NEPAD's framework is aimed at a regionally integrated West Africa, at peace, stable, with high growth and the ability to attract and develop private investments. More precisely, a West Africa capable of:

- Taking advantage of spontaneous regional dynamics ('cross-border areas');
- Negotiating its integration into international dynamics (financing and access to markets in the North);
- Benefiting from settlement basins' demographic and social dynamics;
- Producing regional public goods (stability, credibility, infrastructure);
- Creating necessary compensating mechanisms to deal with polarisation through redistribution;
- Taking advantage of complementarities.

CONCLUSION: PRINCIPLE CHALLENGES

The primary challenges to NEPAD's implementation are the following:

- Credibility
- Coherence

For NEPAD to succeed, it needs to be credible. Africa is too well known as a cemetery for well-defined economic policy projects, hence the need to truly implement NEPAD. A successful economic policy is the result of actions, not words. National and international private actors can only react positively to the NEPAD initiative if it is credible.

How can NEPAD credibility be ensured?

Three essential ideas:

- Participating states must be irrevocably committed, perhaps by:
  - Implementing peer monitoring mechanisms,
  - Implementing compensation mechanisms for inevitable losers of regional integration.

Coherence depends on credibility. West Africa is prone to a large number of trends that follow different rationales. A number of projects are currently being financed or defined. It is that much more important to ensure coherence on the following levels:

- Financing, by bringing into line existing projects and donor strategies;
- Time lines for annual budgets, multi-annual plans, time frames specific to NEPAD implementation. A gradual approach would be appropriate here, based on a clearly defined priority agenda;
- Referential spaces and decision-making levels. Subsidiarity principles, delegating power through decentralisation, insertion into APERs, and new decision-making levels must all be clearly defined.

Regional Stakes and Prospects for West Africa[15]

*Philippe **Hugon***

INTRODUCTION

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a long-term process launched by Africa to introduce long-term, sustainable national development strategies. Its regional dimension is vital.

In West Africa regional dynamics stem from both de jure regionalism heralded by government institutions and de facto regionalisation carried out in trans-border practices. Prospective studies directed by the Sahel Club highlight regional and transnational population dynamics, cohesive cross-border zones, and the effects of polarisation between land-locked Sahelian countries and coastal countries. They also focus on local trans-border dynamics and the actions of private sector operators in regional areas as opposed to officially integrated zones. These studies have helped unfold long-term development strategies.

This report reviews the main prospective studies on West Africa and then examines how NEPAD can meet the challenges of long-term regional integration.

I. REGIONAL PROSPECTS FOR WEST AFRICA: TRENDS, MAJOR CONSTRAINTS AND WORTHWHILE OPPORTUNITIES

1.1. An overview: perspectives that vary depending on vantage point and territorial scale

The main regional prospects for West Africa differ according to the frame of reference adopted. Three angles emerge:

1.1.1 The "top down" vantage point leads to stagnation and marginalisation

Most state level[16] macro-economic forecasts show that West African states are heading towards long-run stagnation in terms of productivity and per capita output. All are experiencing various degrees of instability and are marginalised by the combined effects of minimal trade flows and soaring foreign debt. West Africa must meet challenges created by the new international context (WTO rules, decline of trade preferences, the Cotonou agreement, European Union support for LDCs in "everything but arms," etc.).

1.1.2 The "bottom up" vantage point: dynamics 'from within'

A more comprehensive take shows "dynamics from within," in particular regional dynamics, above and beyond statistics and national accounting balances.[17]
Since independence, West African countries have coped with tripling national populations and a six-fold growth in urban populations. Despite slight drops, these trends are expected to continue. Regional dynamics are now being instigated around cross-border areas, tribal networks and development basins. Grassroots actors are skilled innovators that use innate know-how to engage in so-called informal activities that satisfy basic human needs. Creating new urban markets stimulates productivity, in a 1 to 4 ratio between "rural" and "urban productivity." This usually leads to new dynamic sub-sectors connecting rural and urban zones, especially in the agro-food sector. New forms of decentralised regional cooperation are emerging.

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[15] This report draws on the study prepared for the Sahel and West Africa Club by Philippe Hugon, Olubenga Adesida and Ben Caiquo entitled: "Bilan des travaux de prospective en Afrique de l'Ouest et cadre méthodologique pour les études prospectives en Afrique de l'Ouest", Dec. 2001.
[16] World Bank, ADB and OECD Economic Prospects, in particular, Emerging Africa 2000 and Economic Prospects for Africa 2001.
[17] WALTPS uses the "motor force" method to analyse population dynamics and changes in land ownership, creating areas for integration other than those used within institutional frameworks. (J.M. Cour) Preparing for the future "A vision of West Africa in the year 2020", (1998), OECD.

1.1.3 Continuity and breaking points in the long term

A multi-disciplinary approach, with a pointed historical focus, brings out the enduring nature of social values and structures, highlighting both ruptures and continuities.[18] Past trends strongly condition scenarios adopted for the future. West Africa's evolution is intimately linked to high risks of soil erosion, migratory flows from the Sahel to coastal areas, income dependant upon external relations, and ODA's (Official Development Aid) role. Its pace is far from following the global tempo. This long-term vantage point prioritises environmental issues, food dependency, overburdened social structures, power relations at play, and socio-political arenas that stretch beyond the nation state.

Breaking points also emerge. States are under pressure from top to bottom and find it difficult to define long-term strategies. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, Official Development Aid has been decreasing. Latent conflict is simmering in several countries (Chad, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone). At the same time, new social and spatial structuring is taking place in a waning rent-generating economic context. Foreign support is drying up, agro-pastoral systems tend to run out of steam, land shortages are appearing at a time when West Africa must face ecological and demographic challenges and cope with the tide of globalisation.

1.2 Major foreseeable trends and actors' strategies converge

The prospective studies also highlight areas of convergence. Major historical trends in West Africa have had specific impacts on a vast array of fields: economics (growth, competition, productivity, technology), demography (growth, age and sex pyramids, spatial population distribution), sociology (history-makers, changes in social structures), national politics (democracy and governance), culture (value systems), global politics (risk management, development of conflicts and catastrophes). The regional level best reveals these interrelations.

Alongside structuring mechanisms, it is important to pinpoint certain innovative actors while factoring in potential uncertainties. The realm of options available to West African societies depends largely on how internal and external factors are coordinated, providing necessary elements for societal actors to seize, enabling them to convert a desired future into a feasible one.

1.2.1 Regionalisation as part of globalisation

Lower trade preferences and prominent free trade both threaten production systems and create opportunities. Market access restrictions for certain products and unfair competition due to export subsidies and dumping thwart the development of comparative advantages. Present-day globalisation puts increasingly powerful virtual economies and information technology at play. Institutional and political stability play a vital role in attracting capital and competition is based on product quality and high logistical capacity, especially infrastructural.

Discrepancies between Europe and West Africa may be increasing as the latter is caught in a "poverty trap" brought on by exogenous factors and maintained by cumulative processes. However, we know that comparative advantages are constructed on voluntarist policies. Competitive innovations in agriculture (cotton, flowers, off-season fruits and vegetables), industry (textiles) and the arts (arts and crafts, music) should pave a new road for African competition. Future access to developed countries' markets is of strategic importance to West Africa (e.g. sugar, bananas, textiles).

[18] Sahel Facing the Future, 1990.

Regional trade agreements put more emphasis on free trade than on reconstructing productive systems. They are based on efficient trade circuits and more generally concern transiting products from outside the region that are distributed within the region in de facto free trade zones. But intra-African trade in cereals and livestock against textiles and manufactured goods also exists. How then to create or promote regional dynamics for internal productive systems that cover cross-border areas in terms of private sector trade (trade networks, organising regional channels for key sectors, e.g. agro-foods, cotton-textile)?

1.2.2 De jure and de facto regional dynamics

The future of West Africa will inevitably depend on institutional frameworks, regional agreements, and relations between MRU, WAEMU/UEMOA and ECOWAS. These institutional agreements, in turn, depend on North/South agreements, in particular the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) between the European Union and regional integration zones. They include free trade arrangements, financial support and political dialogue. It is important for regional organisations to have the institutional capacity needed to implement regional development strategies, and produce and finance regional public goods.

West Africa's future is predicated upon (de facto) regional population dynamics. These go well beyond national borders, migration playing a significant role. West African societies will have to cope with a 100% population increase (fourfold increase in urban areas) before 2025, plus major uncertainty around the effects of HIV/AIDS. They have to reconstruct their ecosystems and make necessary collective, productive investments. To meet these challenges will require higher productivity and accumulating long-term financial and human resources in order to develop essential areas such as education, health, food, housing and access to water. Most requirements will be spelled out by urban demand, although rural populations are still growing at a rate of 1% per annum.

West Africa needs to find out whether the nation-state will maintain its position as exclusive referent or whether de facto regionalisation by local actors and de jure regionalism by institutions will produce integrated economic zones and a transfer of sovereignty. Building up the region implies that regional institutions like ECOWAS, MRU and WAEMU correspond to coherent zones in terms of movement of goods and factors of production. It is important to identify cross-border areas that stem from a socio-economic and cultural logic based on real polarisation between landlocked Sahelian countries and coastal countries, and existing cross-border networks operating throughout West Africa.

1.2.3 Local dynamics and cross-border areas

In local grassroots economies, *"informal" dynamics* are the prevalent form of economic engagement and will continue to play a prominent role. Activities are developing in cross-border areas around decentralised local communities. Local and regional dynamics are giving rise to new forms of regional cooperation. The question is whether this socio-cultural-economic fabric can be used to build up a productive industrial system, whether links will be developed with national and multinational firms and whether a network of SMEs – today's "missing middle" – will emerge.

1.2.4 Risk prevention and actors' strategic options

The rent-generating model in West Africa has run its course. Three disruptive factors appear:

- The agro-export model based on tropical products for narrow markets and growing competition has lost its impetus;

- Import substitution strategies have failed in micro-states (Nigeria, and possibly Côte d'Ivoire are exceptions) where markets are stagnating and borders are porous;
- The extensive agro-pastoral model based on non-renewal of ecosystems (shorter fallow periods, deforestation, etc.) has its limits.

Productivity and yield of factors of productions will probably remain low because education, infrastructure and profit-generating investments have slackened. National markets are still narrow and generally highly unstable. Agriculture is under-financed. Vulnerability to climate and strong dependence on food aid are ever present. Both the Sahel and forest areas (e.g. Côte d'Ivoire) are consuming their natural assets. Tax evasion and the low tax base curtail tax revenue while foreign debt ricochets onto domestic public debt.

In the absence of pro-active or pre-active action, the smallest spark can ignite a crisis (drought, land tenure arguments, defensive identity position). Hence West Africa's economic future is largely contingent upon preventing contagion and systemic risk. These range from natural catastrophes, desertification, soil erosion, epidemics such as AIDS or famines, to arms and drugs sales, and the mafia's monopoly hold on products such as diamonds and oil. Prevention measures require a stance that opts for transparency, public involvement and due opposition.

Research on West Africa indicates that growth and sustainable development are linked to a stable political and institutional environment, and that internal strife is a decisive factor in poor economic performance, increased poverty and demographic change. The sustainability of development depends on the state's capacity to dispense public funds to both regional and community groupings in an equitable manner, and to design long-term development strategies.

2.1 Issues at stake for NEPAD

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), adopted on 23 October 2001 by the OAU, is based first and foremost on African decision-makers reappropriating their own future, and, secondly, on partnership. It seeks to break away from the logic of externally imposed conditions and launch political dialogue. NEPAD has a political component that prioritises conflict prevention and strengthening democracy in order to ensure sustainable development, and an economic component that stresses mobilisation of resources (increased savings, easier access to capital) and sets out seven sectoral priorities: infrastructure, ICT, health, education, culture, agriculture, and production diversification and exports with easier access to global markets. Each of these domains should be handled through coordinated continent- or region-wide initiatives. G8 and African prerogatives seem to converge in terms of education and infrastructure. Bringing the private sector in as a leading actor is primordial. Good governance and the U.N.'s millennium objectives put forth in September 2000 are set priorities. Millennium commitments to poverty reduction include doubling the ODA's share in GDP from 0.22% to 0.44%.

NEPAD represents a crucial reality. On the one hand, it is based on African leaders aware of the need to reverse present trends in Africa in order to avoid a massive humanitarian disaster. On the other, Africa cannot reverse this trend on its own. NEPAD expresses a whole continent's determination, reflecting the need to treat a full range of problems inclusively. Clearly, Africa alone does not possess the resources to resolve all that threatens its growth. This is what led to the idea of a partnership that would initiate changes needed to jumpstart the continent's progression, under the auspices of African countries.

2.2 Overcoming ambiguities

Several questions emerge concerning the future of NEPAD and West Africa's position:

- The 7% growth target seems highly ambitious. Key questions of private and public funding have not been resolved. The priority given to infrastructure will not only require heavy investment but also state budgets providing recurring cost payments;

- Compatibility between NEPAD and G8 donor agendas, more specifically the European Union, needs to be considered: what must be done to ensure consistency with the 1999 Cairo Action Plan developed by Africa and the EU, the Cotonou Agreement (June 2000), the Barcelona programme and the MEDA programme between the European Union and North Africa, or with the EU's "everything but arms" operation for LDCs which contradicts the EPAs advocated by the European Union?

- There is also a legitimacy question attached to this top-down process initially implemented by five states alone (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa). NEPAD is a process that should be absorbed and internalised by the intellectual elite, governments and, more importantly, by the representatives of civil society;

- NEPAD can only be successful if local and national problems are previously solved. This means internal issues such as governance, conflict prevention and resolution, due attention to crises such as HIV/AIDS;

- A new development model is required to make it possible:
  - React to various challenges facing West Africa,
  - Move from rent-generating to cumulative productive economies,
  - Attract African savings to domestic investment by reducing risks, and by creating a secure environment and institutions needed for productive investment.

2.3 NEPAD's regional dimension

It is essential to promote *de jure* regional integration through institutional capacity-building of often unprepared organisations, along with *de facto* regional integration by supporting cross-border movement; in other words, upholding recognised regional institutions and present day efforts while managing a constantly changing process. With this in mind, NEPAD should help structure existing regional organisations from the start to enable their subsequent West African expansion. This will involve converging monetary unions and sectoral alliances such as OHADA (Organization for the Harmonisation of Business Law in Africa) which spans some 15 countries of West and Central Africa.

Regional integration is a way to curtail the risks of uneven development through appropriate spatial planning policies (in particular allocating investments at the territorial level and among different social categories) and revenue-sharing policies. It would also relieve state organisations with obvious resource shortages. Regional integration may be made a tool for improving good governance by creating modern, adapted institutions capable of mobilising expertise.

"Good governance" makes it mandatory for the top-down approach to be complemented by a bottom-up approach, to secure the involvement of all African governments, representative institutions and civil societies. NEPAD could provide the "peer pressure" necessary to transform good governance into an attractive and necessary prospect.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, West Africa will have to face increasing global competition in a world of declining preferential measures. Development will have to come from within (dynamic grassroots economies, reduction of costs for basic goods and services.) This will facilitate market expansion thanks to a process of appropriation by national stakeholders (parliament, associations, unions, civil organisations). The challenge to NEPAD is to find out whether suitable endogenous conditions will actually be created and if international relations and globalisation dynamics will be flexible enough to leave room for this internal development.

NEPAD needs to be transformed into a genuine development strategy that includes projects, programmes, and operational funding. Foreign private funding, vitally needed to supplement public development financing, should be made available to Africa, beyond investments in petroleum, mining, forestry and cash crops. Long-term development strategies, mainly designed at the national level, must be made compatible with regionalisation. NEPAD's approach is a long term one, and should be conceived as a process. It also involves several territorial scales and needs to be thought out at the regional level. Ultimately, the idea is to design a new, international structure with fewer exclusions.

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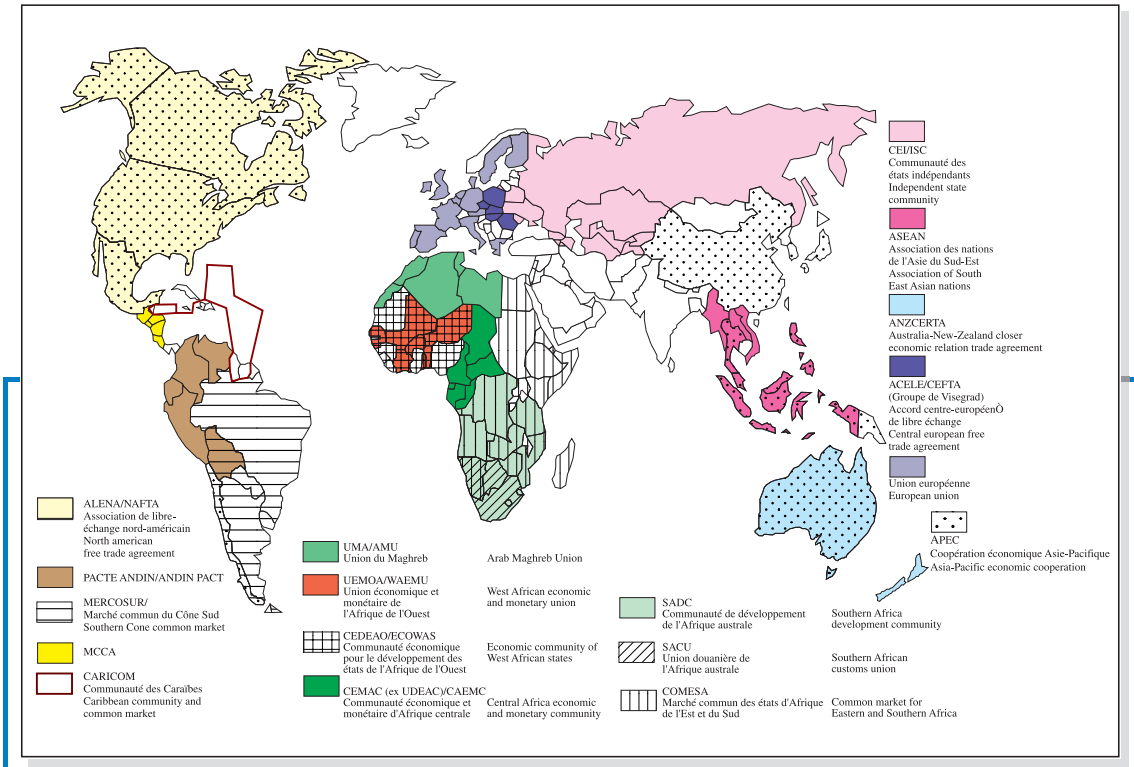
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MAPS

Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
Sahel and West Africa Club

ORGANISATIONS ÉCONOMIQUES
ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES

■ Principales organisations économiques du monde en 2001
■ Major Economic Communities of the world in 2001



OECD OCDE

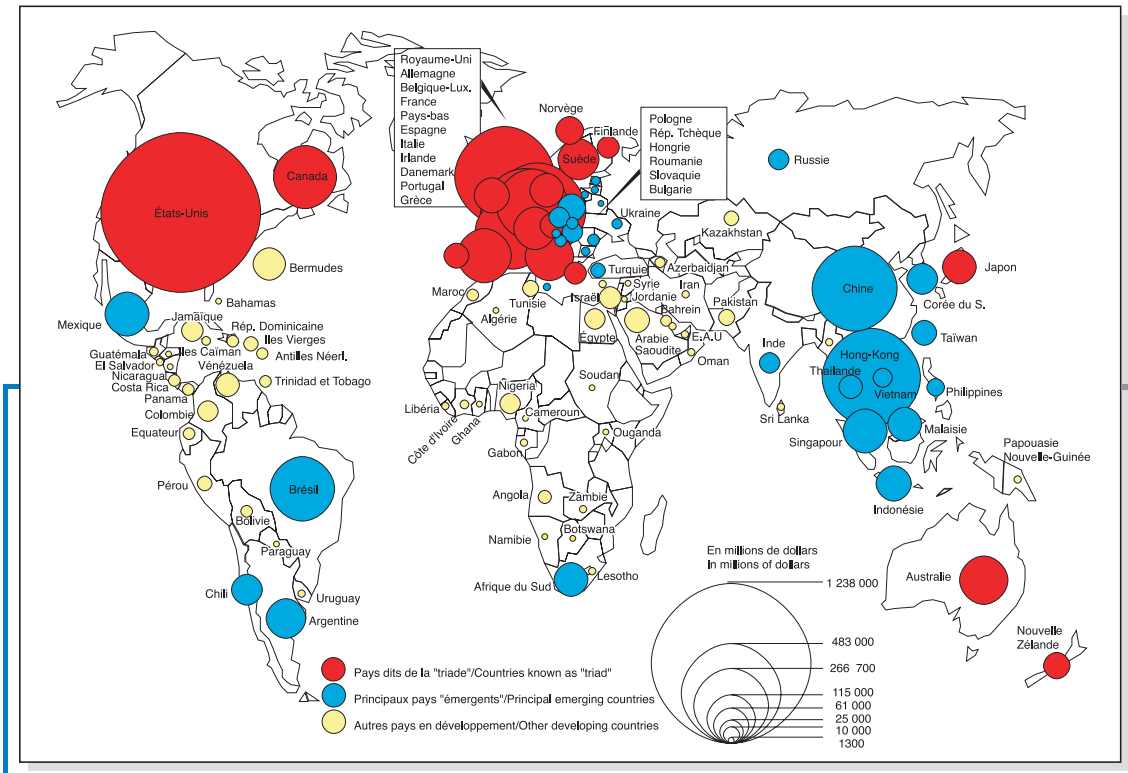
Cartographie : Anne-Marie Barthélémy et François Bost - Source : *World Investment Report 2001*

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Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
Sahel and West Africa Club

INVESTISSEMENT DIRECT
DIRECT INVESTMENT

■ Stocks d'investissements directs étrangers par pays d'accueil en 2001
■ Stocks of Foreign Direct Investment by Host Country in 2001



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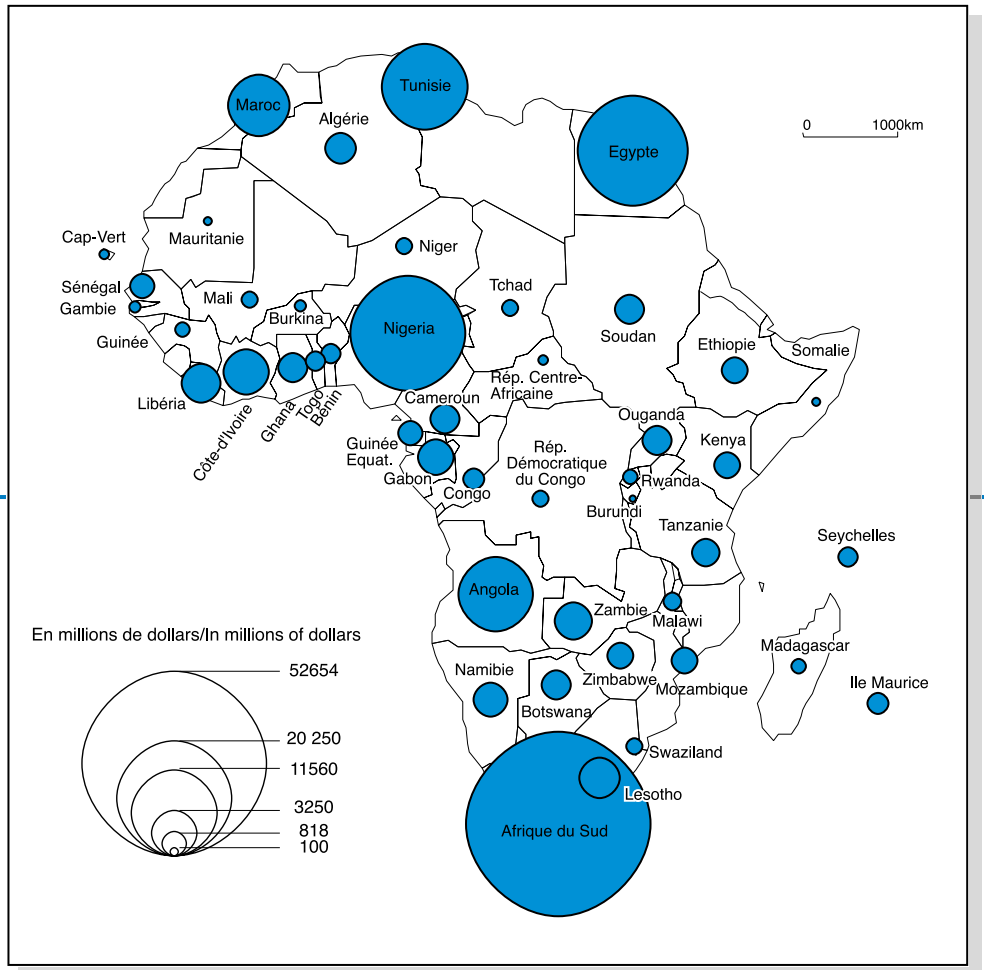
Cartographie : Anne-Marie Barthélémy et François Bost - Source : *World Investment Report 2001*

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Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
Sahel and West Africa Club

INVESTISSEMENTS DIRECTS
DIRECT INVESTMENT

Stocks d'investissements directs étrangers par pays d'accueil en 2001



Level of Foreign Direct Investment in Africa in 2001 by Country

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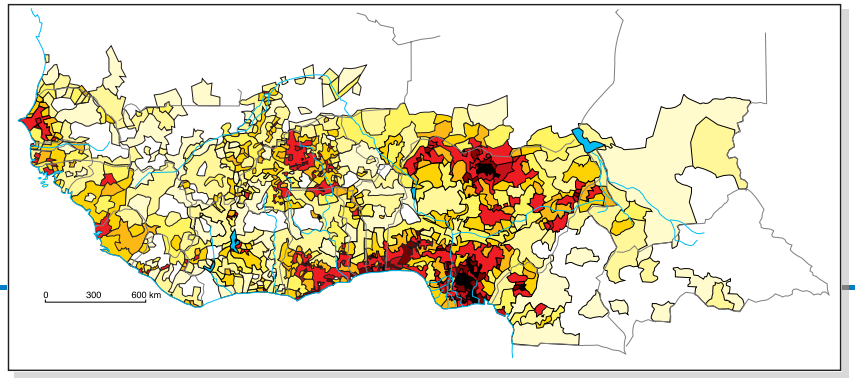
Cartographie : Anne-Marie Barthélémy et François Bost - *Source : World Investment Report 2001*

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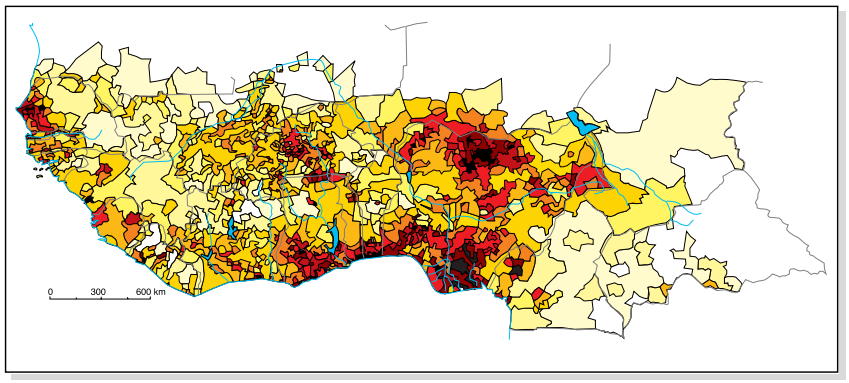
Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
Sahel and West Africa Club

PEUPLEMENT - SETTLEMENT

■ Densité rurale en Afrique de l'ouest en 1960
■ Rural Population Densities in West Africa in 1960

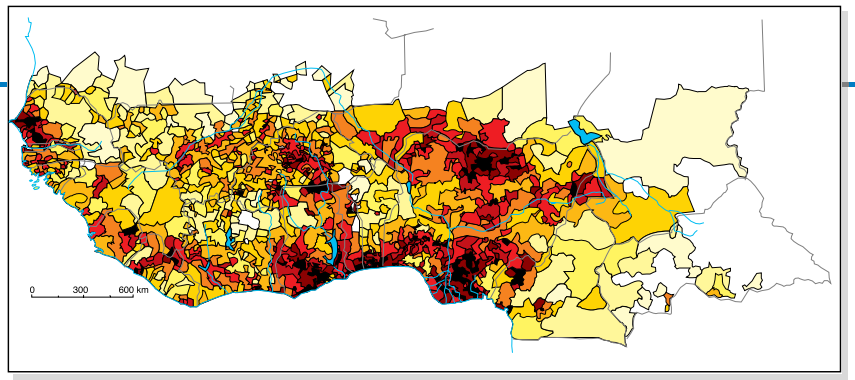


■ Densité rurale en Afrique de l'Ouest en 1990
■ Rural Population Densities in West Africa in 1990



Densité au km²
Density/km²
<2,5
2,5-5
5-10
10-15
15-25
25-35
35-50
50-75
75-100
100-150
>150

■ Densité rurale en Afrique de l'Ouest prévue en 2020
■ Rural Population Densities in West Africa Projected in 2020



OECD OCDE

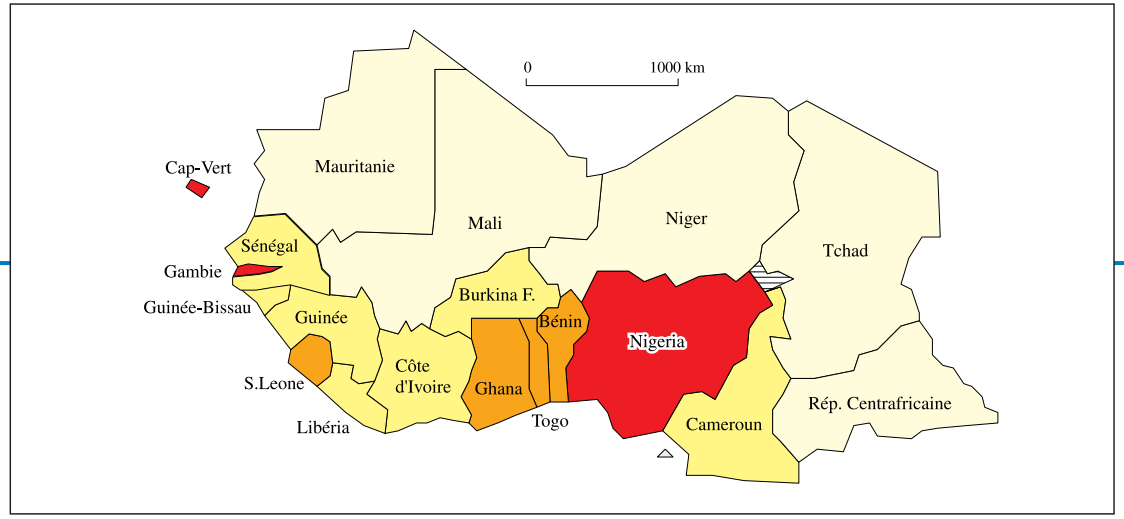
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DENSITÉ DE POPULATION
POPULATION DENSITY

Densité de population dans les pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest en 2000



Population Density in West Africa in 2000

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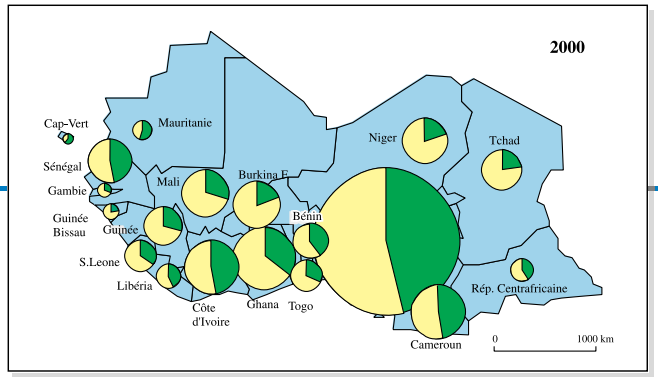
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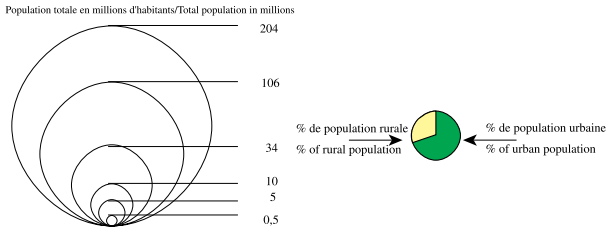
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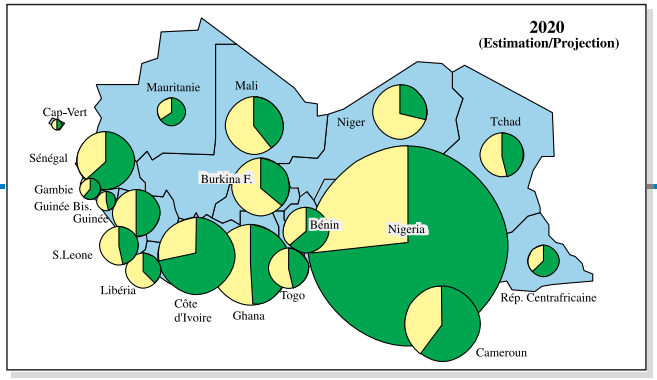
POPULATION URBAINE/RURALE
URBAN/RURAL POPULATION

■ Part de la population urbaine dans le total de la population des pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest (2000 - 2020)



■ Urban Population as a Share of Total Population in West Africa (2000 - 2020)





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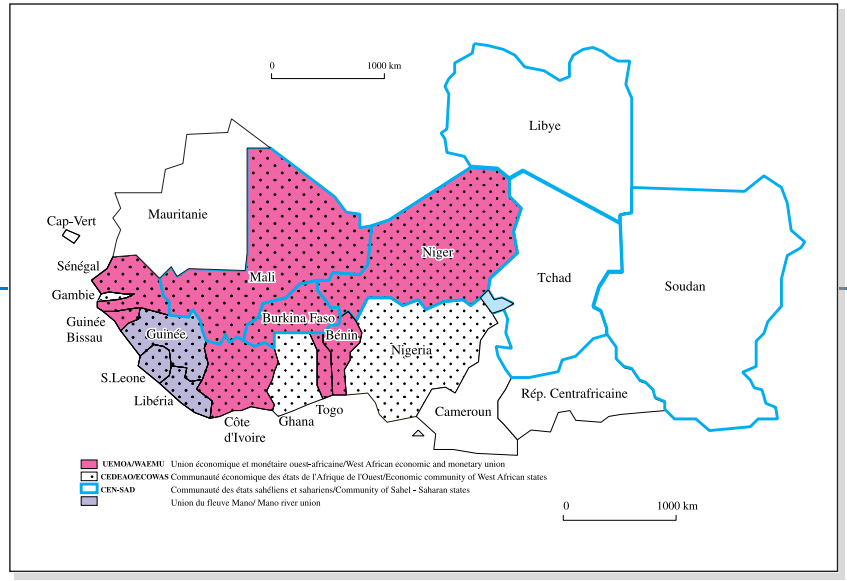
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Map 7

UNIONS REGIONALES
REGIONAL UNIONS

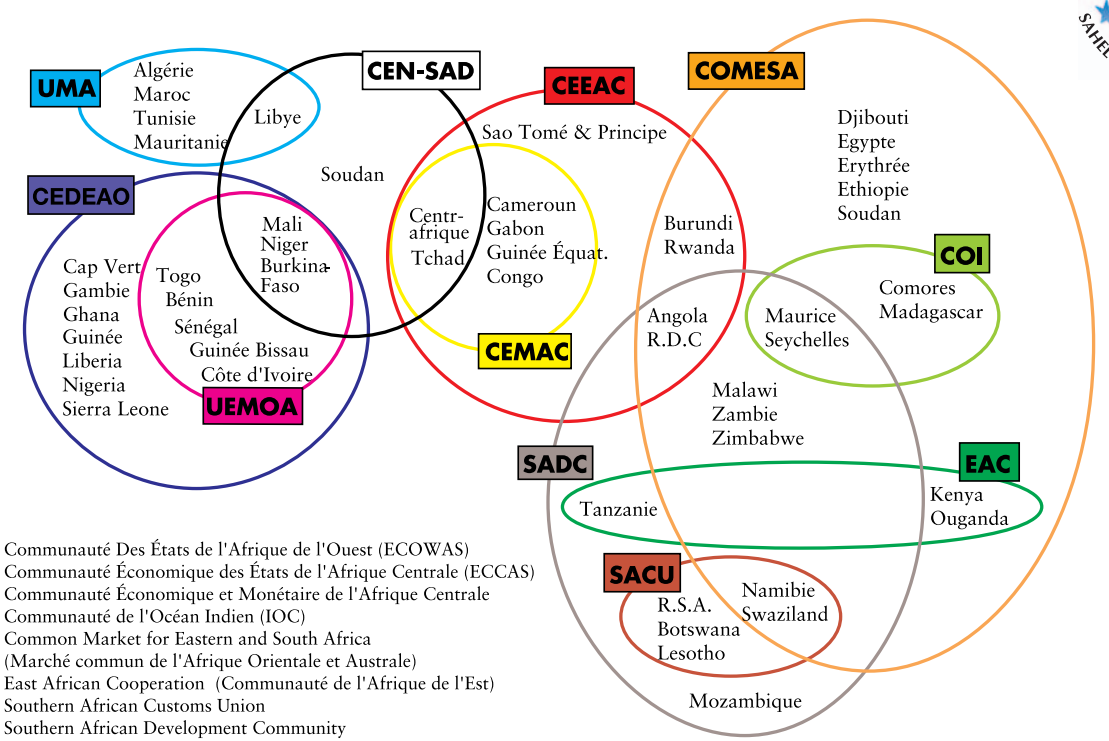
■ Principales unions régionales en Afrique de l'Ouest en 2002



■ The Main Regional Unions in West Africa in 2002

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Cartographie : Anne-Marie Barthélémy et François Bost

INTEGRATION ECONOMIQUE REGIONALE ET SOUS-REGIONALE EN AFRIQUE
REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION IN AFRICA



CEDEAO : Communauté Des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (ECOWAS)
CEEAC : Communauté Économique des États de l'Afrique Centrale (ECCAS)
CEMAC : Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale
COI : Communauté de l'Océan Indien (IOC)
COMESA : Common Market for Eastern and South Africa
(Marché commun de l'Afrique Orientale et Australe)
EAC : East African Cooperation (Communauté de l'Afrique de l'Est)
SACU : Southern African Customs Union
SADC : Southern African Development Community
(Communauté de développement de l'Afrique Australe)
UEMOA : Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine
UMA : Union du Maghreb Arabe (AMU)
CEN-SAD : Communauté des États sahéliens et sahariens

F.B /A.M.B

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OECD PUBLICATIONS, 2, rue André-Pascal, 75775 PARIS CEDEX 16
PRINTED IN FRANCE
(44 2003 01 1 P) – No. 531945 2004

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