

**THE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF
REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION IN
WEST AFRICA**

BY

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DECLARATION

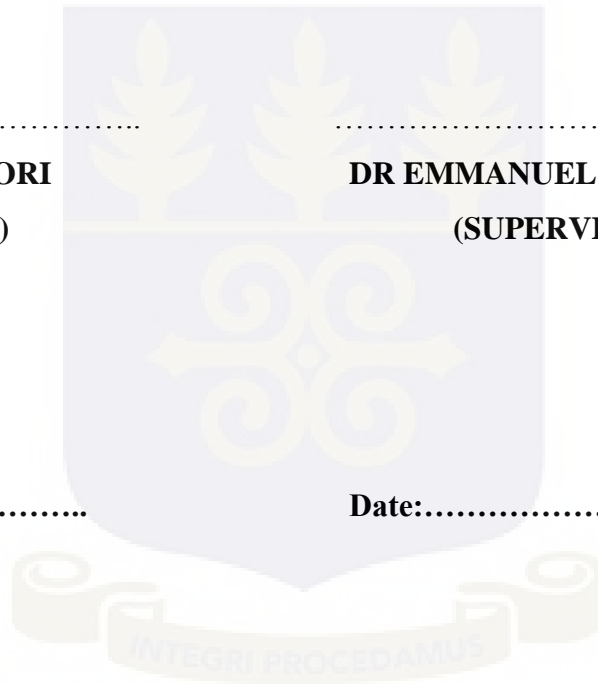
I hereby declare that except for the references to other people's work, which have been duly acknowledged, the study presented here was written by me, under the supervision of Dr. Ken Ahorsu. It is a record of my own research work and has not been previously presented in any form whatsoever in any application for a Degree elsewhere. All sources of information collected and materials used have been duly acknowledged by means of references and bibliography.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my family for their support and understanding in the course of the study. This is also to appreciate their individual sacrifices during the period of my absence from home in an effort to complete the project.



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ABBREVIATIONS

AAFC	-	Allied Armed Forces of the Community
AFISMA	-	African-led International Support Mission in Mali
AFRC	-	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
ANAD	-	Accord d' Non Aggression et d' Assistance en Matiere de Defence
ASF	-	African Standby Force.
AU	-	African Union
COE	-	Contingent Owned Equipment
ECA	-	Economic Commission for Africa.
ECOFORCE	-	ECOWAS Peacekeeping Force in Cote d' Ivoire
ECOMIL	-	ECOWAS Mission in Liberia.
ECOMOG	-	ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group.
ECOWARN	-	ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network
ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
EU	-	European Union
GAFSC	-	Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College
LECIAD	-	Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy
MAN	-	Mutual Assistance on Non-Aggression
MAD	-	Mutual Assistance on Defense
NPFL	-	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
PSC	-	Peace and Security Council
RSLMF	-	Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force
RUF	-	Revolutionary United Front

UNMIL	-	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNAMSIL	-	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
USA	-	United States of America



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ABSTRACT

Established in 1975 as a platform for accelerating the pace of economic development of West African states, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has grappled with several issue areas for approximately the past four decades. Originally pre-occupied with market-driven objectives that emphasize trade liberalization, ECOWAS has been confronted with resolving the myriad of security challenges that confront the sub-region. Mindful of the interconnectedness of security to economic development, therefore, ECOWAS has also focused its resources on regional security cooperation in the light of the interdependence of the security profiles of West African states especially in the post-Cold War international system. Employing a qualitative analysis of existing literature on security cooperation-regional integration, this work examines regional security cooperation through the prism of the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security adopted in December 1999, and that of its Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good governance incepted in 2001. This research delineates the historical evolution of security mechanisms of ECOWAS since its establishment, focusing on how the new wars of the post-Cold War era exposed the security challenges of West Africa and how that culminated in the 1999 Security Mechanism. This research contends that although the aforesaid Protocols hold lots of promise based on its emphasis on operational mechanisms such as early warning systems and the institutionalization of good governance, the lack of political commitment by leaders in West Africa coupled with poor implementation record, among others, could scuttle the benign promise of the Protocol. To enable an effectual implementation of the Protocol and for that matter, a formidable security profile of West African states, this research recommends an emphasis on good governance and demonstrable political commitment towards a safe West African sub-region.



CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Introduction

Global interdependence has been in vogue even before the inception of the Westphalia Treaty (1648), which canonized the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty. In practice no country can claim to be self-sufficient in an evolving international system where socio-economic challenges transcend borders. It is against this background that states have created mechanisms to promote their shared goals and address their mutual vulnerabilities. The most powerful states in the international system form alliances, whether bilateral or multilateral, for purposes of political, economic and social ends.

For sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), the creation of regional organization can be traced to a desire to rid the continent of the adverse effects of colonial heritage ranging from economics and governance. Economically, colonialism ensured that the economies of African states were intimately linked to the global economy, an asymmetric economic relationship that was beneficial only to colonizers. Politically, colonial powers retained the power and influence in the governance of colonial territories, while indigenes played relatively minuscule role in the administration of their territories.¹

Decolonization, however, has not led to economic transformation, though. The fact is that the economic and political dysfunctions, such as limited political participation and over-dependence on raw material exports, have been accentuated. These culminated in the poor state of development in several African countries by the early 1970s as many countries witnessed

declining economic growth and rising debts levels.² The 1980s also saw arduous economic reforms prescribed by international financial institutions “that eroded the political legitimacy and institutional capacity of states, destroying the social safety nets and survival mechanisms of many populations”.³ For several states in Africa, the provision of basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, and water were lacking.

From the point of view of West Africa, declining economic growth and rising debt level in the sub-region was deleterious to development of the sub-region.⁴ It was also conceived, among others, that resolving economic and political challenges requires cooperation.⁵ In that regard West African states pooled their efforts and established the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975. The ECOWAS was originally mooted as a vehicle for promoting intra-regional trade, bearing in mind that improved trade relations would accelerate the pace of development in the sub-region.

In terms of security, ECOWAS also incepted two conflict management mechanisms. The first, known as Agreement on Non-Aggression and Assistance in Defense (ANAD), incepted in 1978, and the second, Protocol on Mutual Assistance and Defense (MAD) incepted in 1981. The ANAD and MAD were established to curtail both external aggressions perpetuated by mercenaries or driven by the imperative of the Cold War as well as internal insurrections, inspired by socio-economic grievances or greed.⁶ However lack of political commitment to implementing the operational framework for the above stated security architectures conspired to undermine their effectiveness. This was evident in the lack of a standby force when the civil war in Liberia started in the late 1980s and which coincided with the thaw in the Cold War.

An enduring feature of post-Cold War West Africa is the increasing incidences of “new” conflicts and subaltern revolts,” particularly intrastate, in the sub-region.⁷ With the structure of the international system no longer buffeted by the politics of the Cold War, the simmering political crises in Liberia and the ensuing civil war in the late 1980s and that of Sierra Leone subsequently served to remind West African states about the need for a peace and security architecture which would nip in the bud, disputes before they mutate into protracted civil wars.

The view that West African states needed a formidable peace and security architecture was accentuated due to, among other things, the operational and logistical challenges of ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in both Liberia and Sierra Leone.

In addition the spectre of transnational crimes such as narcotics trade, maritime insecurity, and global terrorism were beginning to fester in West Africa. Furthermore the prognosis that improved trade relations is not mutually exclusive of security was also important to re-thinking regional integration. In 1999, therefore, ECOWAS incepted the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security and a supplementary Protocol on democracy and governance, incepted in 2001—the Security Mechanism and its supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance would be known as ‘the 1999 Security Mechanism’ hereafter.

The 1999 Security Mechanism is expected to serve as the pivot of regional security cooperation and to be wielded as a tool to promote peace and security. It has been approximately fifteen years since the 1999 Security Mechanism was incepted. To this end, how has the 1999 Security Mechanism fostered peace and security in West Africa? What, for example, has been the role of

the conflict prevention framework of the 1999 Security Mechanism in pre-empting conflicts in countries such as Mali and Cote d' Ivoire? To what extent has the 1999 Security Mechanism resolved transnational security threats such as terrorism and narcotics trade? What is the state of governance in ECOWAS member-states? These questions are probed as the challenges and prospects of regional security cooperation are brought to the fore.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The 1999 Security Mechanism established by West African states was envisaged to serve as a bulwark against insecurity in the sub-region. However, the challenges of past security architectures such as the inability to put together a regional standby force and lack of political commitment are still prevalent. Meanwhile, challenges of funding and logistics have not been ameliorated after more than two decades since ECOWAS inaugural intervention in Liberia. Thus the response of ECOWAS to cases of conflicts in the sub-region remains tepid.

Meanwhile, transnational threats such the activities of terrorist cells and maritime piracy have become pronounced in West Africa. The crux of this work is to examine the extent to which the 1999 Security Mechanism addresses pitfalls of previous security arrangements, and the extent to which its institutional and operational attributes are tailored to ameliorate current security and perils of ECOWAS member states, especially those of the Cote d' Ivoire crisis in 2010 and Mali in 2013. In addition, the prevalence of transnational threats such as cross border movements of terrorists' cells is ominous? In essence, what then, are the challenges and prospects of regional security cooperation? How should West African states proceed with regional security cooperation?

1.3 Objectives

The overarching objective of this research is to examine the trajectory of regional security cooperation vis-à-vis the amelioration of the dire state of security in the sub-region. The specific objectives are as follows:

- (a) Examine the trajectory of the 1999 Protocol on conflict management by focusing on the 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression and that of the MAD Protocol, 1981;
- (b) Outline contending threats to peace and security in West Africa;
- (c) Critically examine the institutional and organizational features of the 1999 Protocol on conflict management vis-à-vis that of the Non-Aggression pact and the MAD;
- (d) Examine the challenges and prospects of the 1999 Protocol on conflict management by interrogating its institutional and operational safeguards;
- (e) Recommend measures which would ultimately help an effectual implementation of the Mechanism as well as improve the state of security and governance in West Africa.

1.4 Hypothesis

This research is guided by the hypothesis that the 1999 Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security is integral to safeguarding regional security in West Africa.

1.5 Data Collection Methods and Analysis

This research is a combination of qualitative and descriptive analysis of secondary data from journal articles, books, and relevant online sources and one primary source. The primary source entails a qualitative analysis of a structured interview conducted with Major General Adu-

Amanfoh, a former Director General of Defence Intelligence, Ghana Armed Forces and former Ambassador to Liberia. The secondary data are sourced from the following: The Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), Institute of African Studies (ISA), Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College (GAFSC) and Balme Libraries.

1.6 Significance of Study

This study contributes to existing knowledge on conflict discourse in West Africa by reinforcing the primacy of peace and security in regional security cooperation. This is done to bring to the fore the challenges and prospects of regional security cooperation, mindful of the raft of security threats posed to the sub-region even after the inception of the 1999 Security Mechanism.

1.7 Scope of Study

This study focuses mainly on the ECOWAS Protocol Relating to the Mechanism on Conflict Prevention, Resolution, Management, Peacekeeping and Security, 1999. The backdrop to an analysis of the 1999 Security Mechanism is a panoramic overview of previous security architectures, namely the 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression as well as the 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence (MAD). Although this study interrogates regional security cooperation from the lenses of ECOWAS member-states, recent crises in countries such as Cote d' Ivoire in 2010, Mali in 2012, and Nigeria are of particular interest. This is against the backdrop that the aforesaid crisis, juxtaposed to the 1999 Security Mechanism, encapsulates to significant extent the challenges and prospects of security cooperation in the sub-region. Other areas of interest to the security of West Africa are also discussed.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This study is situated within the theoretical constructs of functionalism and neo-functionalism. As a theoretical construct, functionalism presents the view that the complexity of challenges confronting states are essentially technical and, this implies that persons with specialized skills and knowledge must play leading roles in regional integration. The intellectual foundation of functionalism is rooted in David Mitrany's work on the state of integration in continental Europe after World War II, a work that Mitrany captioned "A Working Peace System". At the time of his writing his epochal book, "Working Peace System", Mitrany was resentful of political elites, and was of firm belief that collaborative efforts by technocrats help to resolve questions about development, ranging from economics to telecommunications. Thus Mitrany posited that collaboration among technocrats, not political elites, in resolving economic, social and scientific challenges presents the optimal approach to regional integration. It is the successful collaboration at the technocratic level, Mitrany contends, that would have a domino effect on subsequent collaborative efforts through the process of ramification. Through the process of ramification, cooperative efforts by technocrats would yield positive results and subsequently, governments and political elites would have no option than to encourage such efforts.⁸

Mitrany's work, however, has been criticized for de-emphasizing the role of political elites as well as interest groups in integration.⁹ Out of this criticism has emerged, another strand of thought neo-functionalism, a theory whose proponents include Ernst Haas, Philippe Schmitter, Leon Lindberg, Joseph Nye, Robert Keohane and Lawrence Scheinman.¹⁰ Neo-functionalists, particularly Haas, reject the view by Mitrany that resolving technical tasks is a mutually exclusive task, adding that the success or otherwise of integration is also dependent on the role

played by political elites and that political commitment is indispensable. Haas is of the view that it is inconceivable to downplay the role of political elites in integration and that developmental challenges confronting states also require collaborative efforts among political elites.

Key to understanding Haas' work is also about his caution to states not to abandon cooperation endeavours in a "turbulent" world where there are "confused and clashing perceptions of organisational actors."¹¹ This means Haas is cognisant that there exists a possibility for states to pursue relative gains as well as zero-sum games. It is against this backdrop that Haas concedes that his earlier "theory of regional integration ought to be subordinated to a general theory of interdependence."¹² But in practice, the establishment of regional integration implies that states within a particular region understand that their developmental fortunes are intimately linked. Successful collaborative efforts predicated on the premise of interdependence and supported by regional group formation and functional linkages would, therefore, lead to what Haas conceptualizes as "spill-over" a re-alignment of Mitrany's concept of ramification. Indeed, the concept of spill over remains central to Haas' work. This is in the light of the fact that in his prognosis of the trajectory of the erstwhile European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), Haas discovered that it was only after initial gains that the pace for integration was accelerated. This was because of the desire by political elites as well as interest groups to ensure that the initial gains would 'spill over' into other functional necessity areas thus widening the frontiers of regional integration within Europe.

There is no doubt that the foregone theoretical postulations of functionalism and neo-functionalism chime with this study. Both functionalism and neo-functionalism emphasize that

collaborative efforts in one functional area can spill-over or have ramifications for other spheres of cooperation. In this case, although ECOWAS was originally established to promote free trade, the imperative of security has nudged ECOWAS into regional security cooperation. This explains the basis for the incorporation of regional security cooperation as one of the core themes after the demise of the Cold War. Although ECOWAS had evolved previous security arrangements as mentioned already, it was the prevalence of internal conflicts after the termination of the Cold War that accentuated the utility of regional security cooperation.

The focus on regional security cooperation is also indicative of the fact that the coalescing of efforts by states be it at the technocratic or political levels, under the aegis of ECOWAS, is indispensable to resolving security challenges of the West African sub-region. There is no doubt that a conflict in one West African state can spill-over or have ramifications for the rest of the sub-region. In that regard no West African state is immune from conflict as was witnessed in the extent to which the Liberia civil strife had adverse effects on the security profiles of Sierra Leone and Guinea. Similarly, a benign security profile in West African has implications for the development of the sub-region. With regional stability perceptible for instance, West African states can sustain a more collaborative efforts among themselves to accelerate the pace of regional integration. This, however, cannot be achieved without peace and security. These crystallize the view that a regional peace and security architecture is absolutely necessary for the socio-economic development of the sub-region. The inception of the Mechanism is, therefore, recognition that the security profiles of West African states are closely intertwined and their resolution must entail a regional approach under the auspices of ECOWAS.

1.9 Literature Review

One of the often cited nexus between colonialism and the present state of development of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is enunciated by globalism, a strand of thought in International Relations (IR) which emphasizes the point that the historical antecedents including colonialism are integral to explaining the social, political, and economic context of countries, particularly developing countries.¹³ This informs Andre Gunder Frank's thesis that "we cannot formulate adequate development theory and policy for the majority of the world's population who suffer from underdevelopment without first learning about their past."¹⁴

The relics of colonialism, which include tenuous political institutions and export-dependent economies, have culminated in the poor state of development in Africa.¹⁵ An antithesis to the historical-based prognosis of the socio-economic and political challenges of Africa is the view that African states have failed to modernize in response to the globalization of finance, trade, and governance, thus the peripheral status of African states on the international market.¹⁶ The outcome of this is the vicious cycle of poverty that has afflicted many states across Africa, including West African states.

At the time of the establishment of ECOWAS in 1975, the notion was that a trade-driven approach to regional integration would spur intra-regional trade and encourage investments in the productive sectors of the economies of West African states. Schiff and Winters, for instance, are of the view that regional integration provides a platform for trade liberalization and non-discriminatory trade practices, key components required for expanding trade within the sub-region.¹⁷ In essence, trade liberalization would require West African states to work progressively

towards the establishment of full economic union where factor endowments such as goods and services can move unhindered across the sub-region. To a significant extent, therefore, the establishment of ECOWAS was originally predicated on expanding the Washington Consensus-inspired economic policies, such as broadening the frontiers of free trade and private sector-led economic development. In the process, enacting and promoting neo-liberal policies such as Free Trade Area (FTA), Common External Tariff (CET), common currency, among others, were construed as imperative.¹⁸

At its incipient stages, ECOWAS' focus on free trade within the sub-region had the effect of pushing other issues to the background including that of security, albeit momentarily. Thus although issues bothering on security were acknowledged they were not intimately linked to free trade and by inference, regional integration. However the primacy for regional integration was heightened particularly after the termination of the Cold War, whose encumbering effect prevented the spiralling of intra-state conflicts.¹⁹ The War's demise, therefore, left in its trail security perils across West African states. Liberia and Sierra Leone had to contend with internal strife that left in its trail "massive killings, internal displacement, refugee flows, plunder and pillage."²⁰

The incidence of intra-state conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia are heart-rending with reference to the natural resource–conflict nexus. This nexus finds support in the works by Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, who contend through a *greed* mechanism, that the natural resources provides a war chest that enable rebels to undertake predation.²¹ Collier and Hoeffler have been criticized for ignoring the explanatory value of socio-political *grievance* in explaining the

inception of conflicts in resource endowed countries.²² Proponents of the grievance-based explanation of conflicts, such as Frances Stewart and David Keen, emphasize the role of socio-economic inequities in the inception of conflicts in West Africa. This has been the case in several countries where conflicts have arisen as a result of grievances such as lack of development and political participation. To that extent, an adequate explanation of the causative mechanism of conflict must, as a matter of prudence, include the grievance-mechanism.

Nonetheless the greed-grievances dichotomy is indicative of the multi-faceted security challenges that confront West African states. On the one hand, the presence of natural resources has created incentives for rebel groups to be predatory. On the other hand, the prevalence of mal-governance has engendered a grievance mechanism that has often triggered conflict and in certain instance, encouraged the military to truncate democratic transitions in many West African states. The internal strife in Liberia, and Sierra Leone, among others, mirrors what pertains in a number of West African states, where natural resource endowments and the paucity of good governance have led to conflicts. And it is these conflicts, which have had adverse effects on the socio-economic development of West Africa, which inspired a discussion on regional security cooperation.

The trajectory of regional security co-operation in West Africa can be divided into three epochs. The first epoch can be traced to ECOWAS' efforts at incepting security mechanisms during the Cold War period. Thus the Non-Aggression Defense (ANAD) pact and that of the Mutual Assistance in Defence (MAD), as mentioned earlier, were established in 1978 and 1981 respectively. These security mechanisms were expected to serve as bulwarks against insecurity,

whether internal insurrections or external aggression, against ECOWAS states. However these security mechanisms failed to ameliorate the dire state of insecurity in West Africa.

The second epoch coincided with the termination of the Cold War in the late 1980s, when ideological-driven imperatives of global powers thawed as the former Soviet Union capitulated. For West African states, the thawing of the Cold War had ramifications for internal strife across the sub-region. This marked a defining moment in the history of security cooperation as ECOWAS was soon saddled with addressing dire humanitarian straits in Liberia and subsequently, Sierra Leone. These two cases of military interventions in West Africa are important to delineating the factors which have structured the context of regional security cooperation in West Africa. These are namely ECOMOG's foray into Liberia and Sierra Leone. In these two countries, preparations towards the deployment of peacekeepers, as noted earlier, were not well planned and executed because of myriad of factors, ranging from lack of stand-by armed force and operational and logistical difficulties

In Liberia, for example, ECOMOG's operations were blighted by the francophone-Anglophone politics within ECOWAS. This politics was fuelled by suspicions that Nigeria was keen to assert its dominance over other West African states on the one hand, and the desire by France to use Francophone West African states as proxies to undercut the influence of Nigeria. Eventually when ECOMOG intervened in Liberia, the sub-regional force had to contend with logistical challenges, weak command and control structures, limited funding, among others. In Sierra Leone, ECOMOG, again, was confronted with similar challenges to that of what pertained in Liberia. However the inception of the conflict in Sierra Leone was also indicative of the fact

that ECOMOG's successes in Liberia were limited as a result of several reasons. First the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) between Liberia and Sierra Leone was not adequately addressed by ECOMOG, thus the ability of rebel groups in Sierra Leone to access SALWs. The inability of ECOMOG to immediately establish a link between the predation of Sierra Leone's diamonds and the civil strife in that country was evidence that ECOMOG had not undertaken robust fact-finding efforts to understand the nuanced nature of, and the linkages between civil strife in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

The interventions in Liberia and Sierra were important because they highlighted a need for an institutionalized framework that would serve as a platform for regional security cooperation. Further, the ramifications of the civil strife in the aforesaid countries including the proliferation of arms and rebel movements and the spillage of refugees into other West African states, among others, were indicative that the security of the sub-region was threatened. An important feature of the second epoch was the challenges that confronted ECOMOG in their interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone. It was this ominous state of affairs, in addition to previous failed attempts at regional security cooperation, which further compelled ECOWAS craft a security mechanism that would endure. It soon became apparent that security cannot be de-emphasized even as West African states pursue trade-driven economic integration.

The third epoch of regional security cooperation, which saw the establishment of the 1999 Security Mechanism, was influenced by a number of factors. First the emergence of 'new' regionalism, the view that regional integration cannot be de-linked from security cooperation, was important. Other factors include, as noted earlier, the ad-hoc nature of the establishment of

ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), and the operational and logistical travails that characterized ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and the institutional and operational weaknesses of both the aforementioned Non-Aggression Treaty, 1978, and that of MAD, 1981. The coming into force of the 1999 Security Mechanism, therefore, was heralded as a giant leap towards ameliorating the challenges that buffeted previous security arrangements namely the Non-Aggression Treaty and MAD. It was also a manifestation of the insatiable desire, by ECOWAS, to institutionalize an enduring peace and security architecture in West Africa.

Since the inception of the 1999 Security Mechanism, ECOWAS, through ECOMOG, has made efforts to stymie internal strife in countries including Cote d' Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Mali, Niger, among others. These efforts have centred on deploying peacekeepers and facilitating political transitions in the wake of military interventions or disputed elections. Nonetheless, ECOWAS still grapples with logistical and financial challenges, notwithstanding the fact that an ECOWAS Fund has been established. In addition, the verve for a stand-by force has not translated into deed. In addition, ECOWAS is confronted with varying degree of transnational threats such as maritime piracy, narcotics trade and terrorism, which have not been adequately addressed by regional security cooperation. As noted by Harold Trinkunas, threats such as "organized crime, narcotics, smuggling, gangs, and other non-violent state actors"²³ must be countered if regional integration can be achieved.

The Niger Delta region has become a beehive of insecurity as gangs and armed groups apply violence to extort money from cargoes.²⁴ Other West African states along the Gulf of Guinea

region may soon be mired in insecurity in the wake of oil discovery in Ghana and Cote d' Ivoire. Furthermore, the threats posed by terrorist cells such as 'Boko Haram' and Tuareg rebels, armed groups which have devastated Nigeria and Mali respectively, could easily spread to other West African states. These further reinforce the need for regional security cooperation in West Africa. It is evident that the mutual vulnerabilities that confront West African states have created a context for regional security cooperation. As mentioned already, from the proliferation of weapons to the illicit trade in narcotics to maritime insecurity, West African states have several security challenges. This is compounded by the fact the security profiles of West African states constitutes a "subsystem of security relations . . . [and are] locked into geographical proximity with each other."²⁵ Invariably, West African states have become "a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another."²⁶ The re-alignment of the institutional objectives of ECOWAS to include that of security cooperation reinforces the interconnectedness of the security profiles of West African states.

For example the Liberia civil war of the early 1990s had a domino effect on the conflict in Sierra Leone (1997-2000), through the sale of blood diamonds to oil the war machinery of rebels in Sierra Leone, leading to the influx of refugees into Ghana. That of Guinea Bissau in the late 1990s also created a humanitarian bedlam in countries such as Senegal, Guinea and Gambia. The activities of militant groups in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria undermined maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, a resource hub for both the oil and fishing industries in West Africa. These underscore the interdependent nature of the security profile of West African states, further strengthening the case for regional security cooperation. No single state in West Africa has the

financial and logistical wherewithal to solve all the security perils of the sub-region. Through regional security cooperation, therefore, West African states will be expected to address mutual vulnerabilities that confront them through a common platform, ECOWAS. In that regard, the 1999 Security Mechanism provides a framework to understand the challenges and prospects of regional security cooperation in West Africa.

The fact that ECOWAS incepted the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance in 2001, supplementary to the 1999 Security Mechanism, underscores the need to put into practice, the virtues of good governance such as transparency and accountability and investments into the welfare of the citizenry. If it is accepted that conflict originates from a developmental malaise, then it is plausible to conclude that the prevalence of conflicts in the sub-region is as a result of the paucity of “functional necessities of welfare in the most crucial areas of poverty reduction, education, health, agricultural development, energy and housing, infrastructural development in over all terms.”²⁷ Anchoring regional security also on the promotion of good governance and democracy is, therefore, laudable.

In conclusion, it cannot be gainsaid that a benign security profile provides a context for regional development as no region can achieve meaningful progress without robust security. As noted by Robert Rotberg, “when, and only when, reasonable provisions for security exist within a country, especially within a fragile or newly reconstructed nation-state, can its government deliver other essential political goods”.²⁸ The experiences of West African states including Liberia and Sierra Leone show the futility of conflicts, and an endorsement of the use of regional arrangements to

promote peace and security. To that extent the prospects and challenges of regional security cooperation are worth interrogating, an objective that this research seeks to achieve.

1.10 Organization of Chapters

This study comprises four chapters. Chapter one constitutes the research design; chapter two examines the historical trajectory of security mechanisms evolved by the ECOWAS; chapter three analyzes challenges and prospects of security cooperation in West Africa. Chapter four constitutes the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.



End Notes

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CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed historical trajectory of regional security cooperation in West Africa. The discussions in this chapter are framed from the prism of the governance and security weaknesses of West African states from colonialism to the Cold and post-Cold War epoch. The chapter also examines previous security mechanisms vis-a-vis ECOMOG's interventions in some West African states, and how the experiences of ECOMOG and other factors, such as the prevalence of transnational crimes and the emergence of "new" regionalism informed the creation of the 1999 Security Mechanism.

2.2 Colonial and Post-Colonial West Africa

Understanding the socio-political and economic profile of West Africa necessarily requires a snapshot of history. In that regard the colonial experiences of West African states is an important reference point. Economically, colonizers such as Britain and France exploited natural resources including gold and cocoa from across West Africa for the international market.¹ Politically the indigenes of the colonies remained on the periphery of governance and the colonialists dominated the governance machinery of the state, from the public bureaucracy to decisions that affect the socio-economic well-being of the colonies.² From a social standpoint, colonial powers, particularly France, ensured that their language and values systems were foisted on the colonies, leading to a loss of identity for all states in the West Africa sub-region.³ In terms of governance the "the power of the colonial state was not only absolute but arbitrary"⁴ At

independence, therefore, West African states were characterized by weak governance institutions, artificial boundaries, theory-based educational systems, and export-based economies.⁵

As West African states began to loose the iron curtain of colonialism progressively, it was expected that the vestiges of colonialism would have no role in post-colonial West African states. This optimism became elusive as the euphoria that was widespread in the aftermath of independence withered. This was due to the fact that the first generation of West African leaders, most of whom had won power through their vitriol advocacy against colonialism, were confronted with the realities of nation-building.⁶ The task of nation-building was herculean due to several factors that had been triggered by colonialism. For example, the colonialists had carved West African states without cognisance to the existence of multiplicities of ethnic identities.⁷

The first generation of leaders in West Africa had the onerous responsibility of uniting people from diverse and fragmented ethnic groups within the state. There was also the need to focus on ameliorating poverty through development, an important facet of nation-building. But in their attempts to vitiate the challenges of nation-building, a considerable number of first generation of leaders in Africa centralized power.⁸ This approach to governance, “which was drawn from the legacies of colonialism and anti-colonial struggle”,⁹ did not meet any resistance from the citizenry initially. This is because “preoccupation with development overwhelmed all other governance considerations, including concerns about democratization.”¹⁰ However “centralized governance became an extractive, repressive machine . . . postcolonial modes of governance

resembled the native authority structures of the colonial era.”¹¹ This was done against the backdrop of stagnant economic growth, rising poverty levels, limited share of global trade, among others.¹² From a conflict perspective, these economic challenges constituted fault lines of conflicts which would, as would be discussed later, implode in the late 1980s.

In terms of governance institutions and political contestations, post-independence West African states did not exhibit any unique characteristics from that of the colonial states, notwithstanding the waves of democratization that swept through the sub-region. These governance challenges were rooted in dysfunctions including widespread corruption and weak state institutions. Other dysfunctions include the wielding of ethnic identity for the promotion of sectarian interests, and the prevalence of one-party state, where leaders cling-on to party as though they are the only persons with the intellectual wherewithal to lead their nation. For Crawford Young, one-party rule in Africa was a disguised manifestation of “bureaucratic authoritarianism . . . the institutional essence of the colonial state.”¹³

These dysfunctions represent a missed opportunity for West African states. The immediate post-independence period could have been a unique opportunity for leaders in the sub-region to promote the tenets of good governance. Rather post-independence West Africa, similar to other sub-regions in Africa, “weakened solidarity of people, premium on political power and the intensity of political competition.”¹⁴ Incidentally the Cold War, the contest for ideological supremacy between the West and East, only helped entrench despots who served as proxies for global powers. Nonetheless the salience of the Cold War, which had been enmeshed in the post-independence period of West African states, did not deter the sub-region from regional security

cooperation in an ideologically divided international community. Regional security cooperation during the Cold War era, however, took place against the backdrop of economic and governance challenges.

2.3 The Cold War: Economic Challenges and Governance, Regional Security Cooperation in West Africa

The subsequent discussions focus on some of the economic, governance challenges as well as regional security cooperation in West Africa in the Cold War epoch.

2.3.1 Economic and Governance Challenges

The Cold War remains an important frame of reference when interrogating governance, security and development on the continent. This is because the War “constitutes about three quarters of Africa’s post-independent existence.”¹⁵ For West African states, the Cold War had several ramifications for nation-building. For example, former colonies became proxies for global powers embroiled in the Cold War. In this regard, financial or military aid was tied to the predilections of former colonial masters, who were keen to assert their influence even after the demise of colonialism. Thus the survival of governments in some West African states, particularly the francophone, was tied to the support of their former colonial powers. This was more prevalent in Francophone West Africa, where France propped-up several of its former colonies and even frustrated attempts at regional integration in West Africa using Cote d’Ivoire as a proxy.¹⁶

The propping-up of regimes in West Africa, however, failed to mask the economic difficulties in the sub-region. For example, West African states grappled with socio-economic difficulties

especially in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when prices of primary export commodities including cocoa and gold plummeted.¹⁷ These were reinforced by the prevalence of mal-governance. To ameliorate the economic crises of the 1980s, several West African states had to resort to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB).¹⁸ The prescriptions from the Bretton Woods institutions revolved around reducing government expenditure and increasing government revenue.¹⁹ Unfortunately these austere policies rather undermined the legitimacy and cohesion of governments in West Africa and in the process, laid the foundations of internal upheavals.²⁰ This is in light of the fact that the implementation of austere policies including retrenchment of workers and removal of government subsidies on health and education sectors led to a wave of popular protest and discontent in many countries including West African states.²¹

The use of coercions by governments to crush the protests that were triggered after the implementation of structural adjustment programmes was inauspicious. State militarism and coercion “impaired the ability of many governments to act as centres of cohesion, inhibited accountable governance, implanted a culture of violence and discouraged peaceful conflict resolution and reform processes . . . laid the foundations for the more deadly new militarisms and conflicts of the 1990s.”²² It was only because the Cold War “held murderous and barbaric violence in abeyance”²³ that West African states did not witness considerable intra-state conflicts as “West-East confrontations imposed constraints on intrastate conflict.”²⁴ The encumbering effect of the Cold War also reinforced the inherent institutional weaknesses of West African states. This is predictable because as noted already governance institutions in post-independence West Africa were either non-existent or served as tools of extraction and rent-seeking. In

addition governance institutions in post-independence West Africa were symptomatic of colonial relics or legacies. State arbitrariness and militancy, therefore, were bound to be witnessed even after the termination of colonialism.

Incidentally the Bretton Woods institutions, during the implementation of structural adjustments, made efforts aimed at ameliorating the governance weaknesses of West African states.²⁵ The mode of operation was to tie financial aid to the practice of democracy and good governance including accountability and transparency. To that extent West African states were “whipped” to democratize and work progressively towards attaining the ideals of good governance. The conduct of credible elections and the opening-up of the political space, for example, were considered important aspects of economic reform. Governance challenges are, as would be explained later in this chapter, still widespread. But the fact that the promotion of good governance and democracy remain important themes of regional security cooperation is important.

2.3.2 Regional Integration and Security Cooperation during Cold War

The establishment of ECOWAS in 1975 was not a happenstance. From a regional perspective, the economic difficulties of West African states and the insecurity it engendered had been on the agenda of states such as Ghana and Nigeria. These states had argued, since the late 1960s, that regional integration can help resolve the governance, economic, and political challenges of the sub-region.²⁶ Globally the clamour for regional integration had been inspired by theorists including David Mitrany, who demonstrated that successful cooperation in for instance, transportation can spill over into improved trade relations among states.²⁷

In its fledgling stage, ECOWAS adopted a two-prong approach to deal with the insecurity and development travails of West African states. The first approach was the mobilization of efforts towards the promotion of development through economic integration. It was determined by ECOWAS member states that regional integration would be driven by trade.²⁸ The expectation of West African states was that the desire to improve trade relations would have ramifications for the development of road and rail infrastructure, telecommunications, energy supply, health, free movement of persons across borders, education, culture, science, technology, services, and the adoption of a single currency, among others. It was also expected that ultimately member states of ECOWAS would harmonize all their policies and work progressively towards becoming a full economic union.

The emphasis on trade-driven regional integration came with other ramifications as a result of the security risks posed by the Cold War. Threats to security including internal insurrections and external aggression remained. The second approach by ECOWAS to regional integration, therefore, was focused on regional security cooperation that encouraged pacific settlement of disputes within and between states, and to deter external aggression against member-states of ECOWAS.²⁹ In this regard, as noted the previous chapter, the Agreement on Non-Aggression and Assistance in Defense (ANAD) of 1978 and the Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defense (MAD), 1981, came into effect.

2.3.3 The Treaty of Non-Aggression, Assistance in Defense (ANAD)

With the Cold War still in vogue at the time of the creation of ECOWAS, threats including external aggression, and the importance of pacific settlement of disputes were critical to regional

stability. In that regard, ECOWAS, in 1978, decided to incept a non-aggression pact in Lagos, Nigeria, to safeguard peace and security in the sub-region. Some minimal successes were chalked as ANAD, for example, was invoked in resolving disputes between Burkina Faso and Mali in 1985-1986. However, the implementation of ANAD was hampered by some institutional bottlenecks. For example, Articles 1 and 2 of ANAD, to vitiate any form of aggression, reinforce the principle of territorial integrity and sovereignty. This resonates with the Treaty of Westphalia and UN law, which proscribe interference in the internal affairs of states with the exception of enforcement action authorized by the UN. Unfortunately, a *carte blanche* against non-intervention, as iterated in Article 1 and 2, was a poisoned chalice because of the unwillingness of predatory leaders in West Africa to balance sovereignty with human security.³⁰ Thus leaders in the sub-region were most likely to reject any kind of intervention even if there exists justifiable reasons such as crimes against humanity and genocide—under the cloak of territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Furthermore, the weakness of the Non-Aggression pact lay in the fact that “its provisions did not anticipate contemporary developments, particularly intra-state civil and ethnic conflicts, and thus was limited in its objectives.”³¹ In essence, the pact was unable to meaningfully address the peace and security challenges within the region. Rather, by proscribing the possibility of interventions in the internal affairs of states, the Protocol proved to be “a protection racket for autocrats.”³² This was to be expected because the 1970s as well as 1980s were characterized by military coups and therefore, it was not conceivable, to a significant extent, that leaders in the sub-region would be pre-occupied with regional imperatives. Political leaders’ predilections, most likely, would be how to internally shore-up support for their regimes. The demise of the

Non-Aggression Pact did not come as a surprise if the implementation record of West African states with regards to regional policies is interrogated.

2.3.4 The Protocol on Mutual Assistance and Defense (MAD)

The Protocol on Mutual Assistance and Defense (MAD) was incepted in 1981 to safeguard peace and security in the sub-region. The MAD Protocol in Article (2), in contrast to that of the preceding Protocol on Non-Aggression, provided for collective security when an armed attack against a member state originates from without and which has the potential to undermine peace and security across West Africa. However, there were three stipulations under which an armed attack constituted a threat to the entire ECOWAS: an internal armed conflict within a member-state that originates from without; conflict between member-states; and threats to the sub-region originating from without. In that regard, it could be noted that the MAD mirrors the United Nations (UN) Charter's stipulations on collective security when an armed attack is triggered.

Unfortunately, MAD was undermined by a number of factors. For example, the belief that MAD could serve as a mechanism to quell external aggression against the Community was unrealistic as the Community, at the time of the inception of the MAD Protocol, lacked "concrete institutional arrangement under the ECOWAS Treaty for defence or deterrence".³³ Also, by noting in Article 18 of the Protocol on MAD that the "Community forces shall not intervene if the conflicts remain purely internal", member-states circumscribed the collective security framework provided for by the same MAD in, as mentioned earlier, Article 2 (b). This is because Article 2 (b), to a limited extent, created a conduit for military intervention in instances

whereby the peace and security of the sub-region is threatened by an internal armed conflict. But Article 18 appeared to have diluted the full effect of Article 2 (b).

For example, to what extent could it be determined that an armed conflict constitutes an internal matter, particularly when the internal conflict could have ramifications for the whole of the sub-region? It has been argued that a strict interpretation of Article 18 of the Protocol on MAD would proscribe ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone since they were exclusively internal. In fact, one of the criticisms levelled against ECOWAS by a considerable number of Francophone countries—with the exception of Guinea—in the run-up to military intervention in Liberia was that ECOWAS, per the provisions of the MAD Protocol, lacked the power and authority to authorize enforcement action without recourse to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).³⁴

The Allied Armed Forces of the Community (AAFC), envisaged as the organizational and operational heartbeat of any intervention in the sub-region, was stillborn, re-igniting questions over the commitment of political leadership in ECOWAS towards regional security. MAD required member states to contribute military forces to constitute ECOWAS AAFC, with a commander responsible for the field operations of the AAFC.³⁵ Unfortunately, the inability of ECOWAS to give practical meaning to the establishment of the AAFC undermined the effectual implementation of the MAD.³⁶ As West African states muddled through ineffectual security arrangements for the sub-region, the Cold War was drawing to a close. As would be discussed subsequently, the thaw in the Cold War had adverse ramifications for the security of West African states as violent intrastate conflicts became perceptible.

2.4 Post-Cold War Security Cooperation in West Africa

The end of the Cold War in the late 1980s changed the contours of security in West Africa. As mentioned in the previous chapter of this research, the Cold War served as a lid on the simmering tensions within many states in West Africa. The end of the War, however, marked the germination of seeds of conflict that had been sown during the Cold War era, thus an increase in the incidences of intra-state conflict. This is in light of the fact that West African states no longer served the strategic interest of the West as the Cold War thawed.³⁷ Governments in West Africa that served as proxies could not count on the support of global powers when confronted by internal dissent or upheavals. Furthermore, arms became widespread in the post-Cold War era because of “massive retrenchment and growing surplus of military assets occurring simultaneously with a breakdown in supply-side and demand-side controls on global arms market; and local recycling of decommissioned weapons as most of the wars of the 1980s wound down”³⁸

Furthermore, the politics of identity became pronounced in the post-Cold War West Africa as ethnic groups were mobilized to fight against each other by political elites.³⁹ This undermined the sense of communalism that had been fostered by governments to promote social cohesion during untroubled days of independence. In addition, economic agendas in intra-state conflict became prominent as rebel groups sought sources of funding to undertake predation. By early 1990s, the increasing incidence of coup d'état that had been in vogue up to the 1980s gave way to internal conflicts “in which states and non-state formations became the main antagonists.”⁴⁰ Two countries that exemplify the violent conflict in the 1990s and for that matter, the post-Cold War era are namely Liberia and Sierra Leone. A thorough discussion of the conflicts in Liberia,

Sierra Leone, and Cote d' Ivoire are discussed subsequently. This analysis is done in order to extract the challenges of security cooperation in those conflicts and how those experiences have shaped and underscored the need for regional security cooperation in West Africa.

2.4.1 ECOMOG's Intervention in Liberia (1990-1998, and 2003)

In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, two countries that occupied the security space of ECOWAS were Liberia and Sierra Leone, which were confronted with the internecine conflicts. The Liberia civil war, which began in December 1989, was interlaced with several interludes.⁴¹ These included the organization of the 1997 elections won by Charles Taylor, and the demise of the Taylor regime in 2003 after a rebel group, Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) and Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), pushed for Taylor's exit from government. The historical trajectory of the Liberian civil war can be traced to the spate of mal-governance that encouraged deep-rooted corruption, ethnocentrism, among others.

Importantly, the inception of the civil war is not mutually exclusive from the politics of the Cold War. Then President of Liberia, Samuel Doe, was reportedly an ally of the USA, but the termination of the Cold War meant Liberia was no longer of strategic importance to the USA, thus the exposure of the vulnerability of Samuel Doe.⁴² Suffice to say that the civil war in Liberia, fought by a multiplicity of rebel movements was, among others, marked by the perpetuation of grisly crimes against humanity. It is in this light that ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) was mandated to enforce peace and security in Liberia after several months of bloodshed that threatened the security of not only Liberia, but the whole of West Africa.

2.4.2 Challenges of ECOMOG in Liberia

The institutional and operational weaknesses of ECOWAS became apparent as its ad-hoc force, ECOMOG was deployed to enforce peace and security in Liberia. First the decision to deploy ECOMOG was fraught with several difficulties, ranging from politics and allegations of overreach against Nigeria. Politically, Francophone bloc within ECOWAS argued that peace enforcement required authorization from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). On the contrary, the Anglophone bloc, led by Nigeria, argued that the situation in Liberia was an urgent humanitarian crisis that had to be resolved immediately. In addition Nigeria had to deflect criticisms that it was pushing the agenda of some of the feuding adversaries in the Liberia conflict.⁴³

President Doe had invoked the MAD Protocol of 1981, which obliged ECOWAS to deter acts of aggression against member-states. However because, as noted already, the AAFC, which was expected to serve as a standby force under MAD was not established, ECOWAS was hamstrung. In the absence of the AAFC or standby force, an ad-hoc Standing Mediation Committee (SMC), a Committee that was not originally part of the organizational features of the MAD, was established to authorize military operations in Liberia.⁴⁴ The SMC was resented by a considerable number of Francophone countries within ECOWAS, who insisted that the SMC was inspired by Nigeria's partisan predilections.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, confronted with a civil strife in Liberia, it became apparent that the ECOWAS had no option but to intervene regardless of the anticipated logistical bottlenecks and legal arguments.⁴⁶ Against the backdrop of the political intrigues that preceded its authorization, ECOMOG nonetheless proceeded to enforce peace.

However it was ludicrous that ECOMOG landed in Liberia without the benefit of the map of areas that they were expected to enforce peace.⁴⁷

As ECOMOG forces were confronted with a barrage of gunfire after first arriving in Liberia, it became apparent the enormity of the task that awaited them. The task became overwhelming as a result of the fact that ECOMOG lacked the needed logistics to deal with the civil strife in Liberia. As explained by Arnold Quainoo, the first Force Commander of ECOMOG, logistical challenges constituted one of the obstacles to ECOMOG's operations in Liberia. Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), he pointed out, had limited capacity "to manufacture military ordnances and equipment, and it remains difficult to standardize equipment."⁴⁸ Language differences among ECOMOG forces and lack of communication between force commanders and the ECOWAS Secretariat—force commanders were alleged to be at the behest of their country of origin instead of the Executive Secretary—undermined coordination.⁴⁹

The above challenges were exacerbated by lack of financial support for ECOMOG's operations in Liberia. At the inception of ECOMOG's operations, however, Nigeria bore more than a proportionate share of ECOMOG's activities in both Sierra Leone and Liberia. For example:

the initial agreement for ECOMOG in Liberia was for each contingent to fund its own troops for the first month...Nigeria ended up footing about 90 percent of the costs, and the francophone countries opposed to ECOMOG were unwilling to contribute to a mission they did not support... in some instances, such as ECOMOG mission in Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire, the force was financed and equipped from external sources notably by France and Belgium.⁵⁰

It was only at the latter stages of ECOMOG's operation in Liberia that external players such as the USA and Britain provided financial support to the mission. The financial challenges of ECOMOG highlight the inability of ECOWAS to fund its operations, thus the Community's dependence on external funding. However, funding from external sources could potentially make

ECOMOG susceptible to countries that have parochial interests to pursue in West Africa. Further, it has the propensity to reignite the perennial argument that West Africa is being re-colonized by its former colonial masters. The emergence of, as mentioned earlier, the LURD and MODEL rebel movements few years after multi-party elections in Liberia, exposed the tenuous nature of post-conflict rebuilding strategies supervised by ECOWAS and the international community. To that extent some of the questions that linger are: whether ECOWAS and the international community prioritized the collection of arms and ammunition in the hands of the civilian population after the civil war? Whether the various rebel movements demobilized and were adequately compensated after the end of the civil war?

ECOWAS should have supervised the demobilization of all rebel groups in Liberia while paying close attention to the collection of SALW. If these were undertaken, it would have been daunting for groups such as MODEL and LURD to mobilize and resort to arms. The quick-fix solution to the Liberia crises, which culminated in the election of Charles Taylor as president, was bound to hiccup and reinforces the view that West Africa needs an integrated peace and security architecture that would adequately address the causes of conflict in a sustainable manner. If an integrated approach to resolving conflict had been incepted by ECOWAS in Liberia, the contagion of the Liberia crises in Sierra Leone would have been pre-empted. The unwillingness or inability of ECOWAS and for that matter, ECOMOG to rein-in Charles Taylor proved costly because Taylor proceeded to destabilize Sierra Leone through his support for Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Nonetheless ECOMOG's role in Liberia was important as it marked an audacious attempt by West African states to take responsibility for their security, and evolve conflict management mechanisms that would endure.

2.4.3 ECOMOG's Intervention in Sierra Leone (1997-2000)

The crisis in Sierra Leone is deeply rooted in mal-governance which spanned decades. However the contagion of the Liberia civil war accentuated the crisis in Sierra Leone, triggering a civil war that was started by the Foday Sankoh-led RUF with the support of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The harmony of interests between the RUF and NPFL, oiled by Sierra Leone's infamous "blood diamonds", inspired a brutal civil war that led to the loss of an estimated 19,000 lives, while other people had their limbs decapitated.⁵¹

2.4.4 Challenges of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone

The insurrection by the RUF in Sierra Leone at the time of the Liberia civil war led to a state of affairs whereby troops had to be redeployed from the already over-stretched resources of the ECOMOG in Liberia. Even before the deployment of boots on the ground, the international community and ECOWAS had failed to safeguard the Abidjan Peace Agreement in November, 1996. The 1996 agreement, signed by rebels and government of Sierra Leone, which was expected to serve as a road map to multi-party elections in Sierra Leone, was short-lived as President Kabbah was deposed by rebel forces on 25 May 1997.⁵² In this instance, ECOMOG achieved a modest degree of success when it ousted the leaders of a 1997 military coup and restored President Tejan Kabbah in February 1998. Unfortunately ECOMOG was unable to safeguard peace and security in Sierra Leone as rebels advanced steadily towards Freetown in January 1999.

It was obvious that ECOMOG was pre-occupied with restoring the presidency of Tejan Kabbah in 1998, but had no conventional answers to the "guerrilla warfare" of the various rebel

movements, child soldiers and Executive Outcomes that became embroiled in Sierra Leone civil war.⁵³ Subsequently conflict management strategies by ECOWAS were anchored on politics of appeasement, a strategy that rather emboldened Foday Sankoh. For example ECOWAS mediated peace process signed in Lome, Togo, 1999, did not punish Foday Sankoh. Rather, the peace accord appeased Foday Sankoh as he was rewarded with a vice-presidential position, among others. In retrospect, the political concessions offered to the Foday Sankoh-led RUF were unwarranted, mindful that similar appeasement measures in Liberia also prodded Charles Taylor to undertake predation. It is inconceivable that a rebel leader, Foday Sankoh and his commanders would be rewarded after terrorising citizens as well pillaging and plundering the natural resource to fuel their war machine.

In Sierra Leone, ECOMOG's operations were littered with accusations over the complementary roles played by mercenaries in aiding ECOMOG to fight rebel groups including the Armed Forces Revolution Council (AFRC) and RUF.⁵⁴ President Kabbah reportedly requested the services of Executive Outcome or private military companies to aid the efforts of ECOMOG.⁵⁵ This reinforced the point stated already, that ECOMOG was bereft of the men and material to confront insecurity in the sub-region. Furthermore, ECOMOG was not adequately prepared to deal with the shadowy exploitation of 'blood diamonds' to support the war chest of rebel groups in Sierra Leone. This reinforced the view, iterated in the previous chapter of this work that natural resource endowment had become a tragedy for resource endowed countries in West Africa. But equally tragic was the fact that ECOMOG could not track and halt the sale of "blood diamonds" in Sierra Leone. The activities of ECOMOG, similar to that of Liberia, was also undertaken against the backdrop of poor funding and limited troops from West African states.

The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) also complemented the efforts by ECOWAS as a lasting solution was sought to the Sierra Leone crisis. By the time the crises abated and elections were held in 2002, the resources of ECOMOG had been stretched thin. Challenges did not abate as later deployment in Cote d' Ivoire suggests.

2.4.5 ECOMOG's Intervention in Cote d' Ivoire (1999-2002)

Apart from Sierra Leone and Liberia, ECOMOG also had the onerous responsibility of averting humanitarian crises in Guinea-Bissau after a military coup in 1998. The peacekeeping mission in Cote d' Ivoire, after the military coups of 1999 and 2002, highlighted some of the operational difficulties that had blighted previous peacekeeping activities. For instance it took a considerable period before the deployment of peacekeepers to form the core of the ECOWAS Peace Force for Cote d' Ivoire (ECOFORCE).⁵⁶ In addition, the activities of ECOFORCE were financed significantly by countries including Belgium, Netherlands, Britain, USA, and France. Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) from West Africa which lacked strategic air assets had to be airlifted by these donors.

These bring to the fore, questions about the ability of ECOWAS to fund its operations in the absence of these donors. Indeed, Nigeria's reluctance to become a part of the ECOFORCE at the initial stages was attributed to its inability to incur additional financial burden after spending 8 billion dollars in prior peacekeeping missions in both Liberia and Sierra Leone.⁵⁷ In all the these interventions, it was apparent that the sub-region suffered from the absence of a credible peace and security architecture in the mist of heightened insecurity of, as explained already, post-Cold War West Africa.

2.5 Building an Enduring post-Cold War Security Architecture

As ECOWAS emerged out of the Liberia and Sierra Leone conflicts, it became apparent that the insecurity of the post-Cold War required unique a peace and security configuration distinct from those established during the Cold War era. This was integral to the promulgation of the 1999 Security Mechanism—which is thoroughly discussed in the next chapter. Nevertheless, the promulgation of the 1999 Security Mechanism also gained credence in the light of the emergence of “new” regionalism, a strand of regionalism that underscores peace and security in regional integration, the current state of governance in West Africa, and transnational threats posed to the sub-region.

2.5.1 ‘New’ Regionalism and Security

As explained by Bjorn Hettne, ‘new’ regionalism, is a “multidimensional form of integration which includes economic, political, social and cultural aspects [as well as] . . . security alliances.”⁵⁸ Furthermore, ‘new’ regionalism enables “regional organizations [to attain] some kind of institutional mechanism for conflict management.”⁵⁹ In Africa, ‘new’ regionalism has come to signify the globalization of the world economy, and the need to prioritize security as a substructure of development.⁶⁰ With regards to the globalization of the world economy, ECOWAS member states recognize that notwithstanding the inherent inequalities, globalization provides a focal point for attaining development- “... a physical reality and a state of mind in which society has, through some combination of social, economic, and institutional processes, secured the means for obtaining a better life.”⁶¹

Thus, in order for ECOWAS to achieve appreciable levels of development it has undergone institutional re-alignment to, as explained by Daniel Bach, “adjust to the challenges of globalization through the revival of developmental regionalism,”⁶² the kind of regionalism which has as one of its integral components, security. Developmental regionalism and for that matter, human development will remain elusive if conflicts are pervasive in the sub-region. Against this backdrop, the critical question then, is: Is developmental regionalism possible without a viable peace and security architecture? Clearly, the answer is not affirmative. It is therefore apt for ECOWAS to, as indicted earlier, prioritize security. This is precisely because “structural elements of development can only exist within a climate of peace and security, and stability.”⁶³ Certainly, no polity can explore the positive attributes of globalization, and pursue human development without recourse to peace and security. Likewise no continent can attract investment and economic development when insecurity is pervasive. Basically, security is the substructure upon which developmental goals are built.

For a sub-region that is most in need of development, Africa is expected to pay enormous attention to its peace and security architecture. Importantly, security has evolved such that there is emphasis on human security, a form of security that identifies the individual as the focal point of development. Therefore, inability of states to provide basic necessities of life can have security ramifications. Samuel Asante, for example, notes that, “the inability of states to govern, to provide basic services, and to protect their citizens is the key to understanding the security dilemma confronting West African states.”⁶⁴ Dealing with the security dilemma that confronts West Africa must recognize that West Africa constitutes “a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national security cannot realistically

be considered apart from one another.”⁶⁵ The implication is that regional security cooperation is a matter of necessity. It is against this background that ECOWAS’ efforts aimed at entrenching peace and security through regional mechanisms are worth considering because “armed conflicts are not confined and localized within state borders, but the regional dimensions and dynamics often fuel and sustain these wars through the actions of the shadow economy and peace spoilers.”⁶⁶ The creation of the 1999 Security Mechanism, therefore, must be seen as an opportunity to promote a culture of security in West Africa. Also, the cross border movement of the Boko Haram militants underscores the justification for an integrated security mechanism.

2.5.2 Governance in Post-Cold War West Africa

Governance in post-Cold War West Africa has not been diametrically different from what pertained during the Cold War period. That notwithstanding, it is important to acknowledge the fact that the Third Wave of democratization in the late 20th Century, which some West African states benefitted, helped pushed the frontiers of democracy not only in the sub-region, but across sub Saharan Africa (SSA).⁶⁷ Eminent political scientist, Samuel Huntington, in conceptualizing democracy procedurally, explained that “elections, open, free and fair, are the essence of democracy, the inescapable sine qua non...”.⁶⁸ Fareed Zakaria, in his critique of Huntington’s perspective of democracy, has pointed to some key issues that are at the heart of democracy and governance in West Africa. According to political scientist Fareed Zakaria to merely “label a country democratic only” makes the word “democracy meaningless”.⁶⁹

Fareed Zakaria proceeds to explain that it is only when states accept, in practice, tenets of good governance such as rule of law, separation of powers, individual rights, constitutional safeguards

against coercion, among others that it can be said to be operationalising good governance. A country that merely organizes elections but is unable to implement the tenets of good governance is not democratic, but is practicing, in the words of Fareed Zakaria, “illiberal democracy”, the kind of democracy where elections, “even when reasonably fair, have resulted in strong executives, weak legislatures and judiciaries, and few civil and economic liberties.”⁷⁰

A political observer has concluded that the “wave of democratization in the 1990s has overemphasized multiparty elections . . . and correspondingly neglected the basic tenets of liberal governance.”⁷¹ Elections have been held in several West African states such as Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Liberia, etc. However these elections mask weaknesses in governance institutions. It is evident that West African states are obsessed with procedural democracy, and ignored the fact that limited emphasis on good governance can also inspire insecurity. There are at the heart of the challenges that confront governance in West Africa, a situation that underlies ECOWAS’ focus on governance as a part of its security architecture.

2.5.3 Contemporary Transnational and Economic Threats

There is no doubt that globalization offers opportunities for economic growth and technological advancements.⁷² However, as noted by James Mittelman, globalization also drives global insecurity as a result of the inequitable distributions of the gains triggered by a borderless world.⁷³ Globalization has opened-up opportunities for trade and economic advancements. For countries that have taken advantage of globalization, increased trade and technological transfer have led to sustained economic growth. By contrast, a borderless world has also led to the prevalence of transnational crimes such as narcotics trade and the spread of terror. For West

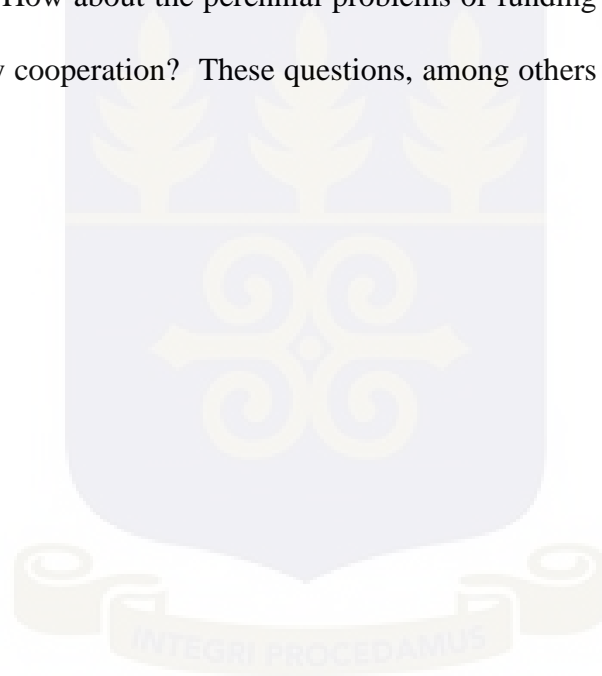
Africa, porous borders and “ungoverned spaces” across have created a safe haven for the criminal gangs.⁷⁴ This has accentuated the trafficking of arms and narcotics across borders.

The deteriorating security situation in Nigeria, the momentary triumph of Tuareg rebels over government forces in Mali in 2012, and the spectre of maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea paint a grim picture of security in West Africa. Meanwhile, economic conditions in several West African states are worsening as millions of people are unable to adequately cater for basic needs. The structure of international trade relations is still tilted in favour of developed countries. Premising development on increased trade among member states by ECOWAS, therefore, could become futile. And if ECOWAS signs the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU), small holder farmers would be dislocated in addition to millions of jobs that would be lost particularly in the agric sector.⁷⁵ Essentially ECOWAS member states need to accelerate the pace of economic development to create opportunities for an improved standard of living in the sub-region, where poverty remains endemic. The aforesaid transnational and economic threats further fuel the imperative of a regional peace and security architecture that emphasize conflict prevention and management strategies.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has summarized the trajectory of security cooperation in West Africa. Points highlighted include the extent to which the colonial history of West African states influenced the course of governance in post-colonial West Africa. The establishment of ECOWAS and its original focus on trade-inspired regional integration was also assessed. The operational and institutional challenges of security mechanisms created during the Cold War international system

in West Africa were explained. Importantly, the security ramifications of the post-Cold War era were examined, among others. And these challenges were manifest in the political, operational and logistical difficulties endured by ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone. These, in addition to the prevalence of transnational crimes, promotion of good governance and the salience of “new” regionalism led to the crafting of a security mechanism in 1999. But has the 1999 Security Mechanism resolved incidence of conflicts in West Africa, especially when assessed through the prism of current conflict in Cote d’ Ivoire and Mali? Has the issue of transnational crimes been adequately ameliorated? How about the perennial problems of funding and lack of political will towards regional security cooperation? These questions, among others are examined in the next chapter.



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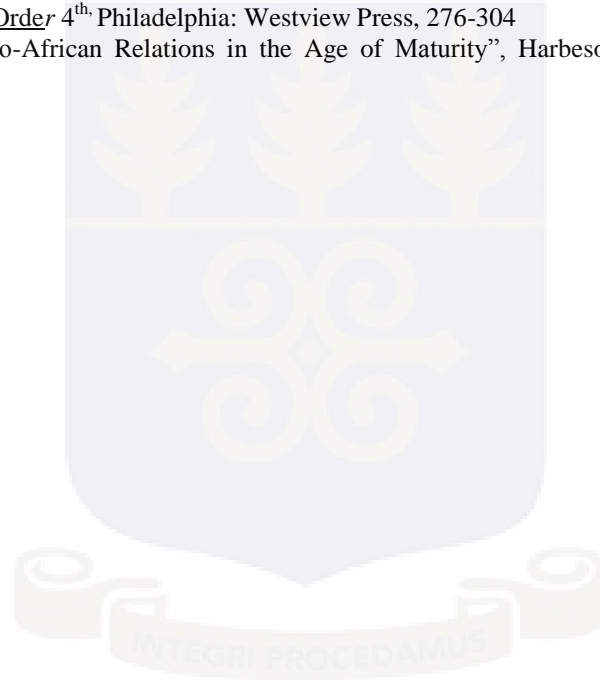
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CHAPTER THREE

CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF SECURITY COOPERATION: ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter throws a searchlight on the 1999 ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security—to be known as the 1999 Security Mechanism hereafter—and its supplementary Protocol on Good Governance and Democracy. It examines the objectives of the 1999 Security Mechanism, and examines how it resolves some of the challenges that militated against previous security mechanisms. It also examines the challenges and prospects of the 1999 Security Mechanism. In examining the Mechanism's challenges discussions are framed within the context of contemporary security perils in ECOWAS member-states generally, but with emphasis on Mali, Cote d' Ivoire and Nigeria.

3.2 Institutional Organs and Objectives of the 1999 Security Mechanism

Security is indispensable to create economic and social opportunities for all, and to generate a favourable environment to attract, retain, and productively use the investment and trade that are necessary to create opportunities for development.¹ The overarching objective of the 1999 Security Mechanism, therefore, is to promote regional development by addressing the security challenges of West African states. In this regard, the objectives of the 1999 Security Mechanism can be broadly categorized into two. The first category, which focuses on conflict prevention, emphasizes the importance of good governance and democratization, institutional safeguards for natural resource development, the salience of human development, the promulgation of an early warning system, etc. The second category focuses on conflict management. These include the

use of peacekeeping and peace support operations, the establishment of a sub-regional force, combating transnational crimes, among others. These objectives are expected to be attained through regional security among member states of ECOWAS.

To ensure effective implementation of its objectives, the 1999 Security Mechanism was endowed with several organs including ECOWAS Early Warning System (ECOWARN). The early warning system is aided by the Department of Operations, Peacekeeping, and Humanitarian Affairs (DOPHA) and Department of Political Affairs and Security (DPSA). These departments are expected to facilitate the prevention of conflicts as well as transnational crimes including arms proliferation and illicit drugs trade. A regional standby force of “brigade size comprising specially trained and equipped units of national armies ready to be deployed within the shortest possible time”² is also a part of the 1999 Security Mechanism.

3.2.1. Addressing Challenges of Previous Security Co-operation

The crafting of the organizational and operational framework of the 1999 Security Mechanism was informed by the past experiences of ECOWAS in the area of security cooperation. In addition, the difficulties encountered by ECOMOG in its operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone were factored into the crafting of the 1999 Security Mechanism. These challenges, which have been mentioned in previous chapters of this study, include: the absence of detailed preparations, both financially and logistically before troops were deployed; the perceived dominance of Nigeria in the composition of troops deployed, a situation that was resented by the Francophone bloc; the reluctance by Nigeria to play any role in ECOMOG’s intervention in Guinea-Bissau, the resultant effect being the absence of Nigeria’s human resource and financial muscle; and the

lack of communication between operational commanders and the ECOWAS Commission. With these experiences and lessons learnt the 1999 Security Mechanism is expected to breathe a new lease of life into regional security cooperation in West Africa. The 1999 Security Mechanism mirrors that of the UN Charter, which recognizes the primacy of territorial integrity and sovereignty but provides a framework for military intervention when the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) determines so, whether it is an internal matter or otherwise. It is against this backdrop that Article VII of the aforementioned Protocol provides for establishment of the Mediation and Security Council (MSC), envisaged to be the heartbeat of the Community, just as the UNSC.

Tasked to authorize a range of measures, including that of the deployment of forces for purposes of military intervention, the MSC is designed to prevent ad-hoc preparations before peacekeeping operations or peace enforcement, as was the case when ECOMOG intervened in the first Liberia civil strife. In that regard, the MSC benefits from the advisory role played by other organs such as the Defence and Security Commission (DSC), the Council of Elders, ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) or proposed standby force, Executive Secretary, Special Representative of the President of the Commission, Deputy Executive Secretary, Department of Political and Humanitarian Affairs, Observation and Monitoring Centre (Early Warning System), among others.

In providing for the establishment of these organs, the 1999 Security Mechanism is mindful of the need for thorough preparations before troops are deployed, and to regulate the authorization of ECOMOG's operations. For example, the President of the ECOWAS Commission, per Article

15 of the 1999 Security Mechanism, has a dual responsibility of preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peace-building, through a raft of measures such as fact-finding, negotiation and mediation.³ The aforesaid role of the President of the ECOWAS Commission is crucial in deciding what measures to undertake in managing a specific conflict situation. Fact-finding missions would provide critical information for the overall management of conflict while mediation and negotiation are key variables in conflict management and in preventing a relapse. The 1999 Security Mechanism also makes provision for the appointment of a special representative of the President of the Commission, empowered to coordinate efforts by forces on the ground and the ECOWAS Commission. This is very important to keep the secretariat abreast with the exact state of affairs on the ground and to avoid a situation where force commanders were beholden to their countries of origin, a symptom that adversely affected ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

One of the challenges that the 1999 Security Mechanism seeks to address is the establishment of ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) that serves the security and humanitarian needs of ECOWAS. Thus a permanent regional standby force modeled around ECOMOG is envisaged to be established. All member-states of ECOWAS have promised to avail one battalion each to the proposed permanent force.⁴ The permanent force is expected to undertake a range of activities including activities such as humanitarian intervention, enforcement of sanctions and embargos, disarmament and demobilization.⁵ The availability of the permanent force would also prevent the laborious process of mobilizing troops in the event of a conflict. The absence of a permanent force is indicative of the weaknesses of security cooperation in West Africa. Major-General Francis Adu- Amanfoh points to several reasons why the establishment of a permanent force

remains elusive: This includes unwillingness to cede command and control over own troops, inadequate equipment (logistics) and troops, and strict adherence to the principles of sovereignty.⁶

It was the absence of a permanent force that perhaps, led to Nigeria's dominance in terms of troops contribution to peacekeeping missions in West Africa. Incidentally, the perceived over-reach of Nigeria by the Francophone bloc within ECOWAS had come to the fore prior to, and during ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia. For example, the lead-nation role of Nigeria in terms of troop contribution and appointment of force commanders were misconstrued as attempts by Nigeria to implement parochial foreign policy goals in Liberia and Sierra Leone. To ensure a more diverse force while simultaneously, not overburdening Nigeria in terms of its troops and financial contributions, the 1999 Security Mechanism, in Article 28, obliges ECOWAS members to provide troops, while appointments of force commanders would be merit-based. With a streamlined approach to the configuration of ECOMOG or a future standby force, challenges such as chain of command dysfunctions and lack of standardization of equipments, which undermined ECOMOG's operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone, would be mitigated to a significant extent.

The invocation of intervention by ECOWAS is also regulated to avoid charges of arbitrariness. To this end, the 1999 Security Mechanism, as noted by its provisions in Article 25, provides for an ECOMOG-led intervention in cases of: threat or incidence of internal conflict in a member-state; inter-state conflict between or among member-states; internal conflicts which can trigger a dire humanitarian situation in the sub-region; when there is widespread commitment of heinous

crimes, the truncation of democratic governance by the military or any other actor, be it state or otherwise, and other instances to be determined by the MSC as constituting a threat to peace and security of the sub-region.

The 1999 Security Mechanism, like the previous ECOWAS Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence (MAD) of 1981, provides for intervention in member states under certain state of affairs: “firstly, aggression or conflict within a member state, secondly, a conflict between two or more member states, thirdly, internal conflicts that threaten to trigger a humanitarian disaster; or pose a threat to sub regional peace and security.”⁷ However, the point of departure between the MAD and the 1999 Security Mechanism is the latter’s contention that the MSC, made up of ten members, have discretionary powers to authorize intervention in “any other situation that the Council deems appropriate.”⁸ It has to be cautioned that the exercise of the discretionary powers of the MSC must not be arbitrary. This is because arbitrariness in the exercise of discretionary powers may become a pretext for recalcitrant leaders to cling-on to power. This is as a result of the fact that predatory leaders, mindful that the Mediation and Security Council has discretionary powers to authorize intervention;

May convince their fellow leaders to sanction interventions to protect their regimes... such an allegation was levelled against ECOMOG, and particularly Nigeria, in relation to Liberian leader Samuel Doe when its peacekeepers entered Liberia in 1990.⁹

These unintended consequences must be obviated by the members of MSC so as not inadvertently provide a window of opportunity for dictators to trigger intervention even if it is unwarranted. Nonetheless there is no denying the fact the obligations of the MSC, as stated already, if anchored on regional security cooperation. Perhaps, the single most important component of the 1999 Security Mechanism is its Monitoring and Observation Centre,

undergirded by an Early Warning System. A cardinal threat to peace and security in West Africa is that often, fault-lines of conflict are not detected during their incipient stages.

However, identifying latent fault-lines to peace and security in West Africa is important before they mutate into intractable conflicts. In providing a Monitoring and Observation Centre as an integral component of the Mechanism's Early Warning System, with observation centers zoned into four countries namely the Gambia, Burkina Faso, Benin and Monrovia, ECOWAS has shown that conflict prevention is central to conflict management in West Africa. And this is a stark difference between the Mechanism and previous security arrangements, which were mostly reactionary. In terms of its operational framework, the foregone observation centers are expected to provide data and potential triggers of conflict in the sub-region to its headquarters, based in Abuja, Nigeria. The information generated from the observation centers serve as a frame of reference in pre-empting and investigating rigorously, potential conflict triggers in West Africa for resolution before escalation.

An upshot of the 1999 Security Mechanism, the 2001 Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance also focuses on building strong institutions and a zero tolerance for the truncation of democratic dispensations by military coups. From the organization of credible elections to the guarantee of media freedoms, the 2001 Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance aims at the institutionalization of “guiding principles for...fostering participatory democracy, good governance, and the rule of law.”¹⁰ This is important because with democratization and governance, it is highly likely that West African states would focus on preventing some of the underlying causes of conflict. This is due to the fact that priority would

be given to functional necessities of welfare creation in the most crucial areas of poverty reduction, education, health, agricultural development, energy and housing, infrastructural development, on over all terms.”¹¹ By recognizing the important role of media freedoms, the 2001 Protocol on Democracy and Governance demonstrates that the media can be a tool for development and by inference, conflict prevention. This is because the watchdog role of the media, christened as the ‘fourth realm of the estate’, is important “if democratic processes are to lead to decisions that are consistent with long-term robust and equitable development.”¹²

3.3 Challenges of the 1999 Security Mechanism

The aforesaid Protocol presents opportunities among West African states for collaborative efforts towards regional security. If implemented, the provisions of the 1999 Security Mechanism can significantly improve the state of security in the sub-region and provide a substructure for regional economic development. That notwithstanding, like other regional initiatives, there are challenges with implementation, which if not resolved, would undermine regional security. The challenges of the Mechanism are discussed below:

3.3.1 Early Warning System and Conflict Prevention

A challenge that has derailed ECOWAS in the security sphere is its inability to pre-empt fault lines that can trigger conflicts. As explained by Major-General Adu-Amanfoh:

What we must understand is that violent conflicts scarcely erupt spontaneously or all of a sudden. Many conflicts that would result in violence give indicators. To be able to monitor these indicators and take preventive measures is the need for early warning systems. This is why an effective and fully functional ECOWAS Warning System is crucial¹³.

The establishment of ECOWAS Early Warning System (ECOWARN), therefore, represents a proactive approach, rather than a passive approach to maintaining peace and conflict across the sub-region. This approach will certainly enable ECOWAS to identify potential sources of conflict and breaches of peace at their incipient stages. Identifying potential sources of conflicts means ECOWAS can solve security infractions before they degenerate into humanitarian disasters. Importantly, ECOWARN provides a focal point anticipating possible cause of conflicts and the promotion of human rights and multi-party democracy. However, questions linger about the efficacy of ECOWAS' early warning system. In Cote d' Ivoire, there had been signals that conflict was inevitable. This is inconceivable because Cote d' Ivoire, after the demise of her first post-independent leader, Houphouet Boigny, had exhibited signs that showed conflict was inevitable.

Two military putsches in 1999 and 2002 were warning signals about the deteriorating state of affairs in a country that was the most stable country in Francophone West Africa. The languid implementation of a power-sharing arrangement of the 2003 Linas-Marcoussis Accord only masked deep-seated cleavages in the country, including perceived antagonism between sections of the population based on the policy of *Ivoryite*, which would implode in the 2010 elections. In other words, it needs no soothsayer to predict that the 2010 elections were likely to be contentious. Even for the uninitiated, it was obvious that it would be difficult for the pro-Gbagbo supporters to accept Alassane Ouattara as president-elect after several efforts had been made earlier to contest his Ivorian citizenship. This is notwithstanding the fact that Ouattara once served as Prime Minister under Houphouet Boigny. It is in this light that ECOWAS' failure to pre-empt the 2010 electoral conflict in Cote d'Ivoire, despite foreboding signals, is inexplicable.

Of relevance is an assessment of ECOWAS' conflict management strategy after Mali became mired in internal upheavals. The upheavals, driven by a secessionist attempt by the *Tuareg* peoples of northern Mali, threatened the territorial integrity of the country.¹⁴

The secessionist effort of the *Tuareg*, however, was not a happenstance: there have been simmering tensions since the 1960s as the Tuareg community has been marginalized by successive governments in Mali. Thus members of the Tuareg community have, through violent methods, attempted to secede from Mali. Funding and logistics for secessionist came from “young Tuaregs who had enlisted in Muammar Gaddafi’s foreign legion”.¹⁵ Therefore when there was an escalation in 2012 as Tuaregs seized key towns in Mali, the early warning system of ECOWAS’ 1999 Security Mechanism should have detected these ominous signals. As to why the Department of Political Affairs and Security (DPSA), one of the key aspects of the 1999 Security Mechanism, tasked to “organize, manage, and provide support for political activities related to conflict prevention”¹⁶, failed to help prevent conflicts is a matter of conjecture. The reactionary response of ECOWAS to the Malian crisis shows the Commission has still not shed off its reactionary approach to conflict management.

The ad-hoc deployment of the African International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA), expected to comprise forces mainly from West African countries, apart from underscoring the absence of a standby force, is an indication that the ECOWAS Commission has no strategy in place to deploy a rapid force that can quickly repel attacks on the territorial integrity of member-states. Regrettably the deployment of AFISMA was delayed by perennial financial challenges as

ECOWAS requires at least \$455 million to fund its mission in Mali,¹⁷ prompting questions about what has become of the establishment of a Peace Fund in 2003, which member-states were expected to make contributions to obviate the financial travails of ECOWAS especially with regards to peace and security.¹⁸ And when AFISMA was finally deployed, Nigeria announced that in July 2013, it was construed that West Africa's most populous country was not pleased with the selection of a non-Nigerian to head AFISMA,¹⁹ an accusation that was also levelled against Nigeria during ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia. These afore mentioned dysfunctions are not novel developments, but rather a reinforcement of the many institutional and operational challenges that have undermined peace and security cooperation since the establishment of ECOWAS.

3.3.2 Emergence of “Narco-states” in West Africa

As mentioned already, a key objective of the 1999 Security Mechanism is the prevention of illicit drugs trade in West Africa. A significant aspect of West Africa's security dilemma that the 1999 Security Mechanism has failed to address is the increasing space of drug trafficking and its implications on governance and security in West Africa. Undoubtedly, West Africa has become both a transit and destination point for illicit trade in drugs, particularly narcotics. Typically, drug barons have used their untrammelled access to wealth to infiltrate the very high echelons of society presumably to create an enabling environment for drugs trade to flourish. Writing in *The Guardian*, Kofi Annan, a former Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) warns West Africa's nascent democracy is under siege as he explains that:

There is the threat from drug-funded corruption, which can corrode fledgling state institutions and undermine good governance and the rule of law. Second, there is the risk that drug traffickers link up with other criminal elements or, worse, terrorist groups that may be trying to infiltrate and destabilise the region.²⁰

With access to wealth and with the support of officialdom, drug barons are able to compromise the neutrality of institutions of states. Access to wealth enables drug barons to infiltrate electoral politics, providing funds to political parties which are unable to mobilize funding for their activities. Thus in fledgling democracies like that of West African states, there is the ominous possibility that drug cartels wield influence and can decide “who gets what, when and how.” In unstable countries, drug cartels have untrammelled access to influence. For example, military coups in some West African states, particularly in Guinea Bissau, are said to have been inspired by drug cartels, keen to influence decisions within government whilst reports that drug money may have helped fuel the rebellion in Mali are also rife.²¹ Lamentably, it was reported that in “Guinea-Bissau, traffickers have bought off members of the government and military, turning the country into a “narco-state.”²²

This was corroborated by the 2008 “UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) which reported that Guinea-Bissau is fast becoming a strategic link in the transport of illegal narcotics from South America to Europe.”²³ West African states including Ghana and Nigeria have reported an increasing influx of narcotics, suggesting weak security measures at the various points of entry and exit in these countries. The prevalence of illicit narcotic trade has been accentuated, among others, by the prevalence of porous borders in West Africa, and that of waterways. This is ominous as in the foreseeable future the fledgling democratic gains achieved in West Africa would be undermined considerably by a network of drug barons who have no clue about good governance.

3.3.3 Threats to Maritime Domains

The proliferation of pirates globally presents security threats to all states. Specifically the militarization of the Gulf of Guinea as a result of the activities of pirates presents a security challenge to West African states such as Ghana, Nigeria, and Benin. The seizure of oil vessels and the collection of ransom is foreboding for littoral West African states, particularly those whose economic fortunes are intimately linked to oil exports. Mindful that vessels from Europe destined for Indian Ocean states and Asia ply the West Africa maritime domains, the violent activities of pirates including seizure of ships and looting could potentially increase the cost and risk of maritime commerce on maritime domains—the Niger Delta and Gulf of Guinea for example - and, may dissuade countries from importing oil from West Africa, depriving oil-exporting countries export earnings needed for development. In addition, the presence of an international maritime task force in the Gulf of Aden, off the coast of Somalia and a hotspot of international piracy, means pirates in that area may shift their focus to the Gulf of Guinea, where security remains porous. Thus West African states would soon be confronted with mounting security challenges as that of the Gulf of Aden are ameliorated by an international maritime taskforce.

Also of concern is the use of large vessels with sophisticated technology to illegally harvest fish in the territorial waters of West African states, leading to the loss of revenue running into billions of dollars to countries such as Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, among others, which are dependent on the export of fish for foreign exchange.²⁴ Illegal fishing can also potentially create unemployment as vast numbers of fishermen could be out of jobs because of over-exploitation of

fish stock by large vessels, presumably from developed countries that are willing to violate international law and take advantage of weak maritime domain awareness of West African states. These problems provide the basis for the development of an integrated naval force in West Africa, with the responsibility to safeguard littoral states from the activities of pirates as well as unauthorized fishing. Ultimately, ECOWAS has to be conscious of the fact that ameliorating the security perils of West Africa is a two-prong approach; an approach that has a broad conception of security to include threats on land and the waterways of West African states. Ultimately, solutions to insecurity must take into cognisance, threats from both land and maritime domains. A concentrated focus on land-centric security concerns and limited focus on maritime domains could derail peace and security in West Africa. To put it bluntly, promoting security on land as well as waterways are not mutually exclusive.

3.3.4 The Politics of Intervention

There is no doubt that the decision or otherwise to undertake intervention is “profoundly influenced by the concrete political interests of member states.”²⁵ Nonetheless the achievement of political ends is central in state’s decision to intervene or otherwise. However the 1999 Security Mechanism fails to adequately deal with the political dimensions of interventions, be it humanitarian or otherwise. For example as noted already the MSC has the power to authorize interventions based on specific stipulations. Endowing the MSC with the power to authorize interventions may not prevent the recurrence of the politics that plagued ECOWAS in the late 1980s over intervention in Liberia. For example the “Francophone [members of ECOWAS] possess the most united...political bloc.”²⁶ Thus the Francophone bloc can use their numbers in the MSC to frustrate efforts by ECOWAS aimed at ameliorating “critical humanitarian

emergencies for the benefit of all members.”²⁷ Apart from the use of numbers to pursue political objectives, other dynamics may operate to influence the decisions by states to either support interventions, especially when the intervention could lead to the demise of the leader of a “friendly” member-state. This scenario became apparent in the wake of political schisms in Cote d’Ivoire after the 2010 presidential elections.

At the height of the political crisis in Cote d’Ivoire, then President of Ghana, John Evans Atta Mills stated that “*Dzie wo fie Asem*”, a native expression in a Ghanaian language that can be translated literally as “mind your own business”. This was in response to allegations that Ghana was unwilling or unable to publicly rebuke Gbagbo for not conceding defeat. Mindful that a number of Gbagbo loyalists sought refuge in Ghana after the demise of the Gbagbo administration—some of whom have been arrested and extradited to Cote d’Ivoire after the administration of Alassane Ouattara had made a formal request – the enunciation of the *Dzie wo fie Asem*” policy was perceived as a tacit support for the Gbagbo administration.²⁸

By contrast Nigeria preferred the use of military force to remove Gbagbo from power, a position that appeared to resonate with France.²⁹ It was a rare moment of harmony of interest, perhaps coincidentally, between France and Nigeria, two countries that have often disagreed over the direction of ECOWAS due to the latter’s interest in Francophone West Africa. Remarkably both France and Nigeria played key roles in promoting UNSCR 1975, which tasked all members of the UN to take “necessary measures” to save the civilian population of Cote d’Ivoire from the scourge of conflict.³⁰ However the fact that Ghana and Nigeria did not present a common front

on the Cote d' Ivoire undermined solidarity within ECOWAS and sordid reminder of the politics that preceded ECOMOG's deployment in Liberia.

A worrying state of affairs with regard to conflict management in West Africa is the domineering role of France in its former colonies. To a certain extent the limited success of ECOWAS in managing the 2010 political stand-off in Cote d' Ivoire could also be attributed to the overbearing influence of France, which still retains leverage over its former colonies in West Africa. It is evident that France's perceived or real anti-Gbagbo stance in the aftermath of the 2010 elections complicated the conflict management efforts of ECOWAS.³¹ To a certain extent Gbagbo's intransigence, over whether to concede defeat or otherwise after the 2010 elections, could have been avoided if France had played a moderating role in the post-election activities—at least from the perspective of Gbagbo's supporters.³²

Admittedly France's efforts at promoting peace and security in West Africa is commendable, an example being her prompt reaction to defeating Tuareg-led rebels who have had a destabilizing effect on Mali in the wake of secessionist attempt in 2012. The role of France in Francophone West Africa fuels suspicions of neo-colonialism especially when, as noted in the previous chapter, France was averse to the establishment of ECOWAS in the 1970s.³³ It is tempting to believe that France is complementing the efforts of ECOWAS, but the lack of synergy between France and ECOWAS rather compromises the assertiveness and diplomatic clout of the latter, and could deepen mutual suspicions between ECOWAS and Paris. It has to be cautioned that the role of external actors, as seen in the Cote d' Ivoire, complicates and prevents ECOWAS from

owning its conflict management strategies, thus rendering the sub-regional body with limited diplomatic clout in its own backyard.

In retrospect, another reason why ECOWAS was unable to resolve the post-2010 electoral crisis was that the ECOWAS Commission demonstrated a limited understanding of the crises. As has been enunciated already, the electoral conflict was the immediate cause of the conflicts. The remote causes include the politics of exclusion that promotes ethnocentrism and religious-inspired violence, and the bickering that characterized the power-sharing arrangements of, as noted earlier, the Linas-Marcoussis Accord. In other words, the electoral dispute can be likened to pulling a trigger of a gun that is already loaded with bullets, thus the ensuing carnage that pitched militias and vigilantes loyal to both Alassane Ouattara and Laurent Gbagbo, the incumbent was a culmination of past grievances which escalated in the aftermath of a disputed polls.

3.3.5 Paucity of Implementation Strategy on War on Terror in West Africa

One of the important focal points of the 1999 Security Mechanism is its emphasis on terrorism. To the extent that Article 3 of the 1999 Security Mechanism “did anticipate and take measures directed at addressing the threat of terrorism even before the official declaration of the Global War on Terror (GWOT)”³⁴ is commendable. In addition member-states of ECOWAS are signatories to the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism of the African Union (AU).³⁵ However the lack of an implementation strategy, a perennial challenge to attaining regional goals, has derailed any efforts towards fighting terrorism in West Africa.³⁶ Major-General Adu-Amanfoh cautions that ECOWAS is not adequately resourced to play a

central role. ECOWAS, in its small way, can support the big powers and major stakeholders to deal with the threat.³⁷ Terrorist cells such as Boko Haram and Tuareg, which prefers a caliphate, have used tools of violence to proselytize their version of Islam and threatening to transform the West African sub-region into a hub of international terrorism.³⁸

The toppling of Muammar Gaddafi's regime in Libya has also enabled jihadist groups in West Africa including Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to access Libya's unsecured stockpile of arms, dissipated against the backdrop of Gaddafi's demise.³⁹ For Nigeria, the demise of Gaddafi has also had the unintended consequence of fuelling violence perpetuated by Boko Haram. Commenting on the nexus among terror, proliferation of arms and Boko Haram, a former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo noted that:

The toppling of the long-time Libyan dictator, the events in Mali and the US consulate attacks in Libya are all interlinked . . . the Libyan civil war produced many uncontrolled trained and armed militants who continue to fuel violence in the region, including the atrocities committed by Boko Haram in Nigeria.⁴⁰

The threats posed by Boko Haram underscores the lack of a counter-terrorism implementation plan by ECOWAS, whose members have demonstrated a willingness to formulate policies only to fail to implement them. The meeting in Accra, Ghana, of ECOWAS Head of States on the threat posed by Boko Haram on 30th May 2014, after the abduction of nearly 300 school girls in Northern Nigeria, to a certain extent, was reactionary and may be termed as "having shut the door after the horse has bolted". Whether the meeting will have any meaningful impact on ECOWAS counter-terrorism strategy is yet to be seen. It is obvious that ECOWAS has not learnt key lessons from how cross-border movements of rebels exacerbated conflicts in countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone.⁴¹ What ECOWAS require is a proactive implementation of counter-terrorism strategies that emphasize the promotion of good governance to resolve socio-economic

grievances, and the option to use military forces when the situation demands. Member-states would have to implement such measures at both the national and regional levels in order to combat terrorism.

3.3.6 Limited Funding

In February 2014, ECOWAS established a Trust Fund as a means to finance the programmes of ECOWAS, especially in the area of peace and security.⁴² If this is implemented it would minimise the perennial challenges of funding of humanitarian and peacekeeping operations of ECOWAS. This, however, masks the fact that member-states of ECOWAS have failed to adequately finance the activity of the sub-regional body. It is regrettable to note that “despite its current plans for a Community levy to raise revenues to finance its work, ECOWAS has failed to design and implement a funding formula to replace the existing reliance on member state contributions that has resulted in the accumulation of arrears by many ECOWAS states (unpaid dues stood at \$38 million in 2000).”⁴³ As expected, the 1999 Security Mechanism will rely immensely on the contributions of member states. However, it fails to provide any innovative means that would “whip” member states to fulfil their financial obligations.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with source for funding from external sources such as the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), GTZ, USAID, and DfID.⁴⁴ For example, the EU is providing funding for the establishment of observation and monitoring mechanisms within the ECOWAS Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN). However, the “EU insisted that recruitment be done according to its own bureaucratic rules, and not those of ECOWAS, revealing how donors can sometimes act in a heavy-handed manner even as they claim to

support “ownership” of sub-regional mechanisms by local actors.”⁴⁵ It is ignominious for West African states to habitually go for handouts from external sources only to complain of the overbearing influences of external factors, forgetting that “who pays the piper calls the tune.” Member states must endeavour to fulfil their financial obligations if they do not want the Mechanism to be managed on the terms of external forces. Lack of funding is not only limited to the capacity of states to pay up their contributions but also affects logistics and capacity of respective states to honour their obligations towards security of each other. During the deployment of West African troops to douse the conflict in Mali, most of the states deployed quite late because of the lack of strategic air assets which had large airlift capability.

For instance, Ghanaian troops and Contingent Owned Equipment (COE) destined for Mali delayed and were airlifted by UK’s Air Force after assurances by UK’s Minister for International Security Strategy.⁴⁶ Benin was airlifted by the German Air Force even though the initial mission was designated as African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). Limited funding is a symptom of a lack of political will and an invitation for external actors to meddle in the affairs of West African states. Francis Adu-Amanfoh is of the opinion that most of the sub-regional political leaders are self-seeking or self-centered. As a result of turf control or unwillingness to cede some authority to regional arrangements, the political will required to implement regional objectives, particularly for peace and security, is lacking.⁴⁷ It is the lack of political commitment that reflects in the poor financial state of ECOWAS, thus resort to external sources of funding. Without a predictable and sustained source of funding, however, it can be concluded that most of the objectives and aspirations of ECOWAS would not be achieved, among these objectives being that of a formidable regional cooperation.

3.4 Prospects of the 1999 Security Mechanism

The 1999 Security Mechanism, notwithstanding the above-mentioned challenges, is endowed with several prospects that can spur conflict management in West Africa. Some of these prospects are discussed subsequently.

3.4.1 Effectual Natural Resource Governance

African states and by inference, West African states are endowed with natural resources. For a region that is endowed with enormous resources, it is the expectation that appreciable development can be achieved. As iterated in Chapter one of this work, natural resources have spawned conflicts. For example, in providing a diagnostic view of the inception of the conflict in Sierra Leone, Major-General Francis Adu-Amanfoh, a former Director of Army Peacekeeping Operations, Republic of Ghana indicated that, “one thing we need to be clear about in the Sierra Leonean conflict is that the centre of gravity is the diamond fields, and whoever controls them. If you want to resolve the conflict, the first thing you need to do is to take control of the diamond fields.”⁴⁸ Theorizing from an economic standpoint, Mats Berdal and David M. Malone note that “even where military and political objectives appear to provide the obvious rationale for fighting, conflicts are still likely to be influenced by economic motives and opportunities, especially at the local level.”⁴⁹

It is in this light that the iteration of natural resource governance in the 1999 Security Mechanism is gratifying. Article 3 (I) of the Protocol, for example, provides for the establishment of “an appropriate framework for the rational and equitable management of natural resources shared by neighbouring member states which may be causes of frequent inter-State conflicts.”⁵⁰ Mindful

that the resource 'curse' conundrum has plagued a number of West African states, the envisaged natural resource governance conflict represents a useful strategy that can be used effectively with regard to conflict management. Effective natural resource governance can ensure that capital generated from the sale of natural resources is used for human development.

A positive state of human development is, to a significant extent, the best form of security in any state. Natural resource can also trigger conflicts in instances where there are doubts over the boundaries that host the resource, such as dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon over the oil resources in the Bakassi Peninsula. However natural resource governance provides a context for the prevention of resource-driven disputes that originate from maritime boundaries. According to Major-General Francis Adu-Amanfoh, natural resource governance is essential to conflict prevention to the extent that there is equitable distribution of wealth and improvement in living standards.⁵¹

3.4.2 Looking Beyond the UN: Morality and Ethics

A recurring theme in international law is the legality or otherwise for regional organizations to undertake enforcement action. The UN charter is unequivocal that without the authorization of the UNSC, enforcement action or use of force is proscribed. Beyond the legal jargons, however, ECOWAS recognizes that moral and ethical considerations as well as institutional bottlenecks within the UNSC make it imperative that the sub-region takes ultimate responsibility in certain instances. The 1999 Protocol on Conflict Management, based on experiences in Liberia and Sierra Leone, therefore, states that:

Based on the extreme reluctance of the Security Council to sanction UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau, it would be better for ECOWAS to retain autonomy over the decision to intervene and not

let the Security Council prevent ECOWAS from taking urgent actions to maintain sub-regional stability.⁵²

This bold legal cover must be applauded because ECOWAS members, while recognizing the power of the UNSC to authorize enforcement action, also carve a role for the sub-region just in case the UNSC fails to prioritize the amelioration of the security challenges confronting West African states.⁵³

However, the power to authorize enforcement action is the preserve of the UNSC, as equivocated by Chapter VII of the UN Charter. And this explains why, as mentioned already, regional organizations are recognized, in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, as mechanisms for the pacific settlement of disputes. If the idea is that ECOWAS member states, because of past experiences and the perceived ambivalence of the UNSC towards Africa, are keen to arrogate to themselves, the power to authorize enforcement action, they must notify the UN.

3.4.3 Boosting Evidence-based Decision Making

An important feature of the 1999 Protocol is its focus on evidence-based approach to ameliorating West Africa's security challenges through the establishment of information bureaus, collectively known as (ECOWATCH) in 2002. ECOWATCH is expected to provide reliable and timely database on the circulation of arms. This is extremely important because

the availability of small arms in West Africa is a very serious problem...while small arms and lights weapons (SALWs) do not, of course, cause conflicts, they soon become part of the conflict equation by fuelling and exacerbating underlying tensions, generating more insecurity, deepening the sense of crisis, and adding to the number of casualties.⁵⁴

However, there is no database on the exact number of licensed small arms and light weapons circulating within the sub-region, regardless of the fact that to a considerable extent, they are being used for illicit purposes. To the extent that ECOWATCH provides useful data on arms flows, it would help identify possible sources of illicit use of arms. The ECOWAS moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of light weapons, and the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) are also useful instruments for gathering data on the proliferation of arms.

A database on arms would serve as a basis for any policy geared toward preventing the illicit and widespread use of arms. ECOWATCH also serves as a watchdog over governance in the sub-region because it assesses and provides information on the democratic record of all member states. In recognition that policy makers require reliable database not only on arms, the Mechanism advocates the need for a database on socio-economic indicators such as unemployment, food security, environmental data, among others. This would promote the practice of incepting policies that are based on well-researched issues including that of security. With a database, it is less daunting to undertake policy monitoring and evaluation after policy implementation.

3.4.4 Promoting Democracy and Good Governance

The absence of good governance has been cited as one of the critical challenges of state building in West Africa. However, good governance is pivotal to addressing the root cause of conflicts. This is because countries that practice good governance are mostly likely to provide collective goods and services, and open-up the political space for citizens to ventilate legitimate views.⁵⁵

Therefore, the adoption of the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (supplementary to the security Mechanism), at the 25th Summit of Heads of State and Government in Dakar in December 2001, is laudable.⁵⁶ Mindful of the interdependent nature of good governance and the promotion of peace and security, the Protocol tasks member-states of ECOWAS to promote participatory democracy, good governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights and a balanced and equitable distribution of resources.⁵⁷ In this regard the Protocol emphasizes the canonization of the principles of separation of powers and checks and balances, the rule of law, fair and transparent elections, zero tolerance for power obtained or maintained by unconstitutional means; and popular participation in decision making.⁵⁸

Relatively credible elections have been held in Ghana and Sierra Leone. After a torrid time ridding itself of al-Qaeda linked terrorist groups, Mali has been able to attain a semblance of peace and security with the support of France and ECOWAS. Emboldened by good governance and democratization, ECOWAS leaders have condemned the military coups in Guinea-Bissau and Niger, suspending these countries from ECOWAS, and demanding for a quick return to constitutional democracy. Challenges remain, though. In Guinea-Bissau, the road-map towards elections remains protracted, Cote d' Ivoire is still in a post-conflict rebuilding stage with the real possibility of a relapse. Suffice to say that almost all West African states, to an appreciable extent, must accelerate the pace towards strengthening institutions of state such as the legislature, human rights and administrative justice, promote accountability, and broaden the frontiers of media freedoms. That notwithstanding, the prioritization of good governance and democracy means that ECOWAS has imbibed the truism that security is now broadly conceived as including that of human security, not regime security. In operationalising security, therefore,

what must remain paramount are investments into the socio-economic well-being of individuals, including the provision of health facilities, quality education, water, housing, etc.

Overall, the emphasis on good governance and democracy serves notice that West African states must imbibe the idea that “a new understanding of the concept of national security is evolving, one that places the security of the individual first and one that recognizes that national sovereignty can never serve as a shield for gross and systematic violations of human rights.”⁵⁹ This must be at the heart of governance in all West African states.

3.4.5 Bridging the Communication Gap between the Secretariat and Boots on the Ground

The poor state of communication was identified as one of the challenges that riddled ECOMOG’s operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Typically, force commanders were maintained and instructed by their political bosses at home while the Secretariat became lame duck.⁶⁰ This has been ameliorated by the 1999 Security Mechanism, which creates the position of a special representative of the Executive Secretary. This is envisaged to provide a conduit for improved coordination and communication between forces on the ground and the ECOWAS Secretariat. This interface would improve vastly the diplomatic presence of ECOWAS on the ground while ensuring that decisions by force commanders represent the overall interests of ECOWAS, not their countries of origin.⁶¹ Related to the issue of appointment of a special representative is the importance of sharing posts within the ECOMOG High Command so as to avoid the Nigerian dominance of senior military positions, as occurred in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Also, the allotment of posts within the ECOMOG High Command on the basis of

meritocracy would deflect suggestions that some countries crave domination in the command structure.⁶²

3.5 Contending Issues

Several issues deserve attention as West African states strive to improve security in the sub-region. One such issue is the deteriorating security profile of Nigeria in light of noxious activities, such as kidnapping and bombing of persons and key installations triggered by the armed group, Boko Haram. Motivated by a version of Islam that preaches the subordination of state to religious dictum, Boko Haram has become an existential threat to the survival of the Nigerian state.⁶³ In recent times, Boko Haram has thrived on the publicity generated by its kidnapping of over two hundred students, and has threatened more attacks.⁶⁴ West African states must recognize that if security challenges posed by Boko Haram are seen as exclusively a Nigerian conundrum, Nigeria's military resources would be overstretched. This will culminate in Nigeria having to focus on resolving internal security perils. As noted by Andrew Hurrell, threat perceptions among states can undermine efforts at preventing, managing and resolving conflicts under a regional arrangement.⁶⁵ In the case of West Africa, however, perception of threats within states could hamper conflict management of ECOWAS.

If Nigeria perceives that threats posed by Boko Haram should be the first item on its security scale of preference, it is plausible that Nigeria's commitment to regional security cooperation will be languid and lethargic. This is because Nigeria would prioritize resolving internal security challenges and her commitment, in terms of logistics and financial support, to ECOWAS may dwindle. As a regional powerhouse, Nigeria's resources are needed to resolve security

challenges at the sub-regional level. Resolving the terrorists menace within Nigeria must, therefore, be designated a regional problem that demands collective efforts by all states of West Africa. Major-General Francis Adu-Amanfoh warns that Boko Haram insurgency is assuming international dimension and a quick resolution of the insurgency is critical not only to West Africa but the world at large.⁶⁶ The security challenges of Nigeria mirrors the overall security profile of West African states, a reminder that security cooperation is not only necessary, but also a critical factor in ameliorating insecurity in West Africa. It is refreshing to note that ECOWAS has recognized areas that require immediate attention aimed at strengthening regional security cooperation at a review Conference held on February 2014 in Akosombo, Ghana.

At the Conference key decisions were made that would safeguard the sub-region from emerging threats. These include the call on ECOWAS to “initiate reflections towards a strategic approach to emerging threats to peace and security in the region, including terrorism, biological, chemical, and climate change-related threats.”⁶⁷ Furthermore ECOWAS reiterated the salience of a permanent force by encouraging member states to devise “contingency plans to ensure adherence to deployment timelines and minimum capacity requirements for intervention . . . the provision of standing units dedicated to the regional Standby Force, the ESF, which would be self-sustaining for the first 90 days of a deployment.”⁶⁸ On governance, it was agreed that “member states [must] prevent state fragility through the creation of environment conducive for strengthening democratic governance. Although the aforesaid ideas are not novel, it is important that they are reinforced at the least opportunity and at every forum. The implementation of these ideas is very critical. The noble objectives at the Akosombo Conference would remain on paper unless they are transferred onto the implementation plane. Without a time-bound implementation

plan supported with dedicated sources of funding, regional security objectives cannot be achieved.

Good governance must not be limited to the conduct of elections, but the promotion of “rule of law, a separation of powers, and the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion, and property.”⁶⁹ Good governance must also be linked to human security. In the words of Major-General Francis Adu-Amanfoh “the promotion of physical safety, economic well-being, autonomy and psychological well-being of the people”⁷⁰ is crucial to given practical meaning to good governance. He adds that “when people are safe, when they can make ends meet, when their living standards are high”,⁷¹ conflict prevention is plausible.

A prognosis of governance challenges in West Africa require a thorough look at the 2013 Ibrahim Index, an index which measures the state of governance based on four composite indicators. The four composite variables are namely safety and rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity and human development. This index, therefore paints an appreciable picture of the state of governance not only in West Africa, but across the African continent. Cumulatively the four indicators can be said to be comprehensive, thus a good metrics for gauging the state of governance in the ECOWAS region. As observed from Table One below, a total of nine countries in ECOWAS performed satisfactorily as they attained more than 50 percent of percentage scored. For countries, such as Nigeria and Cote d’Ivoire, which scored below 50 percent on the index, the task ahead with respect to governance is onerous. An observation from the table also indicates that only two ECOWAS members, namely Ghana and Senegal, were in the top 10 of the index. This is not encouraging. Specifically for Cote d’Ivoire

and Nigeria, two countries whose development is integral to both regional security and development, there is the need for marked improvement. It is auspicious that the Index reinforces what is already public knowledge: of the need for West African states to improve on their state of governance record. This explains why the salience of good governance has been articulated throughout this work. On the evidence of the table, it is without doubt that ECOWAS members should accelerate the pace of democratic governance and its corollary, rule of law, human security, and political participation, among others.

TABLE ONE: 2013 Mo IBRAHIM INDEX REPORT SCORE CARD FOR ECOWAS

RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE
7	Ghana	66.8
10	Senegal	61.0
13	Benin	58.7
23	Burkina Faso	53.0
27	Mali	50.7
28	Niger	50.4
22	Gambia	53.6
36	Togo	45.8
46	Guinea-Bissau	37.1
32	Mauritania	50.8
31	Sierra Leone	48.0
29	Liberia	50.3
41	Nigeria	43.4
42	Guinea	43.2
44	Cote d' Ivoire	40.9

Source: <http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/downloads/2013/2013-IIAG-summary-report.pdf>

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter the challenges and prospects of regional security cooperation have been interrogated. It is demonstrable that regional security cooperation offers prospects. However, the lack of implementation of key aspects of the 1999 Security Mechanism is likely to impact negatively on regional security cooperation. The dormancy of the early warning system, for example, would undermine the desire by ECOWAS to prevent conflict. In addition the perennial talk of the establishment of a standby force is yet to yield any result. The assessment of the 1999 Security Mechanism is summed up in the words of Major-General Francis Adu-Manfoh, who is of the view that:

Since its [1999 Security Mechanism] inception and implementation many of the conflict zones in West Africa have been stabilized and hence somehow are safer. However, there are still undercurrents in some countries of the sub-region and for which reason peacekeeping forces are still deployed (eg. Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire). Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Northern Nigeria have problems which still need to be comprehensively resolved . . . there is more room for improvement in the implementation of the provisions and procedures.⁷²

On governance and democracy, the Mo Ibrahim Index shows that member states of ECOWAS must improve on their governance record. This is important because good governance is intimately linked to conflict prevention in a sub-region that has been described as “vulnerable, prone to conflicts, some parts still volatile, and overall unstable”.⁷³ It is expected that the operational and institutional shortcomings of regional security cooperation would be addressed expeditiously. Some recommendations on how to improve the state of regional cooperation are outlined in the next chapter.

End Notes

¹Marcella, Gabriel, The Transformation of Security in Latin America: A Cause for Common Action”, Journal of International Affairs, Vo. 66, No. 2, Spring/Summer 2013, pp.67-82.

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³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Interview with Major-General Francis Adu-Amanfoh, a former Director General of Defence Intelligence of the Ghana Armed Forces and a former Ambassador to Liberia. Interview was conducted on 5/06/2014.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Adebajo, Adekeye., “Pax West Africana: Regional Security Mechanisms” in Adebajo, Adekeye., and Rashid, Ismail., (eds.), op. cit., p. 310.

¹⁰ Ibn Chambas, M., “Foreward”, in Adebayo, A, and Rashid, I, (eds.), op. cit., p. xiii.

¹¹ Gebe, B. Y. D., “In Pursuit of A Union of African States: The State System and Political Integration in Africa”, Legon Journal of International Affairs, Vol.3, No.2, 2006, p. 126.

¹²Schiffirin, Anya, “Power and Pressure: African Media and the Extractive Sector”, Journal of International Affairs, Vo. 62, No.2, 2009, p. 129.

¹³ Interview with Major-General Francis Adu-Amanfoh, a former Director General of Defence Intelligence of the Ghana Armed Forces and a former Ambassador to Liberia. Interview was conducted on 5/06/2014.

¹⁴ See “An Unholy Alliance: Tuareg Rebels and Al-Qaeda Unite to Create a Fierce New State in North”. The *Economist*, June 2nd 2012. Tuareg Rebels have consistently fought for an independent state known as ‘Azawad’ The recent upheavals in Mali is ominous as there is a real possibility that Northern Mali could soon become a cell for Al-Qaeda as they proselytize their fundamental and sometimes vitriolic strand of Islam.

¹⁵ Jusu-Sheriff, Yasmin., “Civil Society”, Adebajo, Adekeye., and Rashid, Ismail., (eds.), op. cit., p. 276.

¹⁶ Adebajo, Adekeye., “Pax West Africana: Regional Security Mechanisms” in Adebajo, Adekeye., and Rashid, Ismail., (eds.), op. cit., p. 311.

¹⁷ See Aminu, Augustine, “ECOWAS to Reimburse AFISMA Troop Contributing Countries”. Accessed at <http://www.dailytimes.com.ng/article/ecowas-reimburse-afisma-troop-contributing-countries>

¹⁸ See “ECOWAS approves creation of Peace Fund”. Accessed at <http://www.modernghana.com/news/46288/1/ecowas-approves-creation-of-peace-fund.html>, on 19/4/2014

¹⁹ “Nigeria withdraws troops from Mali”. Accessed at <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/07/nigeria-withdraws-troops-from-mali/>, 20/4/2014. The official reason stated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria was that additional boots were needed to deal with the Boko Haram threat.

²⁰See Annan, K., “Save West Africa from the Drug Barons”, <http://kofiannanfoundation.org/newsroom/news/2012/01/save-west-africa-from-drugs-barons>. Accessed on 10 February 2014.

²¹See Flock, Elizabeth, “Guinea-Bissau coup: Prime minister arrested for helping drug trade, military says”, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/blogpost/post/guinea-bissau-coup-prime-minister-arrested-for-helping-drug-trade-military-says/2012/04/13/gIQAmy3gFT_blog.html (Accessed 10 March 2014).

²² Ibid.

²³See “Illicit drug trade threatening peacebuilding efforts in Guinea-Bissau, UN warns”,<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=28457&Cr=Guinea-Bissau&Cr1=&Kw1=west+Africa> (Accessed 02 February 2014).

²⁴ Onuoha, F.C., “Illegal oil Bunkering: Nigerian Context and transnational Ramifications for the Gulf of Guinea”, Politeia, Vol 31, No. 2, 2012, pp. 5-27.

²⁵Adebajo, Adekeye., op cit, p. 308.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 309.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸See Nwangwu, Chido, “Why Ghana’s President said ‘No’ to U.S., France, Nigeria on military intervention in Ivory Coast”. Accessed at <http://www.usafricaonline.com/2011/01/07/why-ghana-president-mills-said-no-to-usa-n-france-on-military-intervention-in-ivory-coast-by-chido-nwangwu/>. See also “Pro-Gbagbo exile arrested, returned to Ivory Coast”. Accessed at by <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/05/us-ivorycoast-ghana-arrests-idUSBR E91417M 2013 0205>, 18/05/2014.

²⁹See “Call for Tougher Measures Against Ivory Coast Leader”. Accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/25/world/africa/25ivor y.htm 1?_r=0, on 19/04/2014.

³⁰ See” Security Council Demands End to Violence in Cote d’Ivoire, Imposing Sanctions against Former President and Urging Him to ‘Step Aside’, in Resolution 1975”. Accessed at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs /2011/sc1 0215.d oc.htm>, on 26/04/2014.

³¹ See Piccolino, G., “David against Goliath in Cote d’ Ivoire? Laurent Gbagbo’s War Against Global Governance”, *African Affairs*, Vol. 111, No. 442, 2012, p. 1-23; “Schumann, A., Songs of a new era: Popular Music and Political Expression in the Ivorian Crises”, *African Affairs*, Vol. 112, No. 448, 2013, pp. 440-459

³² See “Operation Unicorn: The Fairy Tale of French Neocolonialism in the Ivory Coast”. Accessed at <http://liverpoolstudentmedia.com /2011/04/o peration-unicorn-the-fairy-tale-of-french-neocolonialism-in-the-ivory-coast/>. On 23/04/2014. Supporters of Gbagbo have always been suspicious of the intentions of France as well as the UN, which maintained its presence on the ground since internal insurrection in 2002. Gbagbo and members of his administration were also keen to portray any western intervention in the electoral dispute as neo-colonialism.

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³⁵ Klay Kieh, George, and Kalu, Kelechi (eds.), *West Africa and the US War on Terror*. (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 131.

³⁶ Bach, Daniel, C., “The Dilemmas of Regionalization” in Adebajo, Adekeye., and Rashid, Ismail., (eds.), op. cit., p. 74.

³⁷ Interview with Major-General Francis Adu-Amanfoh, a former Director General of Defence Intelligence of the Ghana Armed Forces and a former Ambassador to Liberia. Interview was conducted on 5/06/2014.

³⁸ Klay Kieh, George, and Kalu, Kelechi (eds.), op.cit.

³⁹ See Wing, S., “Mali: Politics of Crisis”, *African Affairs*, Vol. 112, No. 448, pp. 476-485; Marchal, R., “Military (mis)adventures in Mali”, *African Affairs*, Vol. 112, No. 448, pp.486-497;

⁴⁰ See Basar Eray, “Report Update: Unsecured Libyan Weapons: Regional Impact and Possible Threats”. November, 2012.

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⁴² See <http://news.ecowas.int/presseshow.php?nb=013&lang=en&annee=2014>, accessed on 24/02/2014.

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⁴⁴ Adebajo, Adekeye., “Pax West Africana: Regional Security Mechanisms” in Adebajo, Adekeye., and Rashid, Ismail., (eds.), op. cit., p. 311.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 306.

⁴⁶ See UK’s Minster for International Security Strategy visits Ghana available at www.ghanaweb.com/ GhanaHome Page, Accessed on 30 March, 2014.

⁴⁷ Interview with Major-General Francis Adu-Amanfoh, a former Director General of Defence Intelligence of the Ghana Armed Forces and a former Ambassador to Liberia. Interview was conducted on 5/06/2014.

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⁴⁹ Berdal, Mats, and Malone, M. D., (eds). *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*.(Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), p. 1.

⁵⁰See ECOWAS, Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security.

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- ⁵³ Soderbaum, F., and Hettne, B., “Regional Security in a Global Perspective”, in Engel, U., and Gomes J. P., (eds.), Africa’s New Peace and Security Architecture: Promoting Norms, Institutionalizing Solutions. (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010), p. 19.
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- ⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 307.
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- ⁵⁹ Ghana: Four Decades of United Nations (UN) and Regional Peacekeeping, op. cit, p., iv.
- ⁶⁰ Adebajo, A., “Pax West Africana: Regional Security Mechanisms”, Adebajo, Adekeye., and Rashid, Ismail., (eds.), op. cit., p. 305.
- ⁶¹ Ibid.
- ⁶² Ibid., p. 313.
- ⁶³ Lyman Princeton, “The War on Terror in Africa”, in Harbeson, John, and Rothchild Donald (eds.), Africa in World Politics: Reforming Political Order, 4th (eds.). (Boulder: Westview Press, 2009), p. 277.
- ⁶⁴ Farouk, Chothia, “See Will Nigeria’s Abducted School Girls Ever be Found?”, accessed at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27293418>, 20th May, 2014
- ⁶⁵ Hurrell, Andrew., “Security in Latin America,” *International Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 3, 1998, pp. 529-546.
- ⁶⁶ Interview with Major-General Francis Adu-Amanfoh, a former Director General of Defence Intelligence of the Ghana Armed Forces and a former Ambassador to Liberia. Interview was conducted on 5/06/2014.
- ⁶⁷ See “West African States and Ambassadors endorse move to scale up the regional peace and security architecture”. Accessed at <http://reliefweb.int/report/mali/west-african-states-and-ambassadors-endorse-move-scale-regional-peace-and-security>, 17th February, 2014.
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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter summarizes key issues which have emerged out of the preceding chapters, draws conclusions based on these issues and outlines policy measures in the form of recommendations, expected to help resolve the security challenges of West African states through regional security cooperation.

4.2 Summary of Findings

This study has generated a number of findings worth noting. It is obvious from this study that the initial approach to regionalism in West Africa was mainly about economic cooperation. However, the post-Cold War era and its ramifications for intra-state conflicts, globalization of insecurity and the emergence of new regionalism precipitated and crystallized the idea of a security-oriented approach by West African states to regional cooperation. These have ensured that regional security remains on the policy space of West African states. To the credit of ECOWAS, however, it has to be acknowledged that the desire for a regional security cooperation, as explained in chapter two, dates back to the 1970s and 1980s as both the Non-Aggression Pact and Mutually Assured Defence pact were incepted.

Although these security mechanisms were not as effectual, their demise sprung a more concerted effort geared towards regional security cooperation. Even when the 1999 Security Mechanism had not been incepted, the hastily arranged intervention by ECOWAS through its ad-hoc force

reiterated the importance of regional security cooperation. ECOMOG's travails in Liberia, the drive for good governance and the importance of security to development, the need to ameliorate the weaknesses inherent in previous security establishments, among others, triggered a re-alignment of institutional objectives by ECOWAS. The inception of the Protocol on conflict management thus provides an improved institutional and operational framework for conflict prevention and resolution in West Africa, unlike prior security mechanisms including the Non-Aggression pact and MAD, which sought to not uphold the principle of non-interventionism, notwithstanding threats posed to security in the sub-region. What is novel about the 1999 Protocol is its emphasis on conflict prevention while seeking to institutionalize a permanent force, ECOMOG.

The emphasis on peace and security also underscores one of the key findings of this study: that security cooperation and economic integration are not mutually exclusive. It is ironical that for a regional organization that was established to broaden the frontiers of market integration, ECOWAS has had to make forays into resolving the peace and security issues among West African states. But it is also a stark reminder that without peace and security market integration propelled by trade liberalization cannot be achieved. This is commendable but threats still remain. Illicit trade in narcotics, incidences of military coups, the prevalence of rebel activities motivated by religious radicalism, among others, are still palpable. The much touted institutionalization of ECOMOG still remains unfulfilled and it is still not known if ECOWAS has any measures to resolve its perennial funding challenges. While ECOWAS has made giant strides towards security cooperation, much needs to be done to enable the sub-regional body adopt a hands-on approach to regional security cooperation.

4.3 Conclusions

The historical trajectory of West African states and the governance and development challenges it bequeathed to the sub-region cannot be gainsaid. The Cold War and its termination, and the “new” wars of the post-Cold War West Africa are well documented. As ECOWAS was established almost three decades after the Cold War, its overarching theme, then, was economic in order to expand the frontiers of regional trade. Removing barriers to trade and the attainment of the optimal stage of regional integration was considered as condition-precedent for regional development. Nevertheless ECOWAS has evolved and currently, there is no gainsaying that ECOWAS has, as one of its cardinal objectives, creating a platform for constructive engagement about the challenges bedeviling West African states. This reflects the paradigm shift in the discourse of regional integration, a paradigm shift that Daniel Bach, as noted in chapter two of this study, conceptualizes as “new” regionalism. ECOWAS has become a platform for safeguarding peace and security in the sub-region based on the premise that without peace and security, the quest for regional integration and development would prove elusive.

It is the interconnectedness between security and regional development goals including trade liberalization that nudged ECOWAS into security cooperation. Security cooperation is expected to halt the deteriorating state of security in West Africa and this would have spill-over effects on other facets of regional development. However the optimism behind regional security cooperation should not detract from the fact that ECOWAS is still confronted with challenges, such as lack of political commitment and implementation bottlenecks, which can derail any intended objectives of the 1999 Security Mechanism. In my view, the lack of political will or commitment and mal-governance present cardinal challenges to the realization of the objectives

of the 1999 Security Mechanism. If political leadership in the sub-region fails to focus on providing basic necessities of life including food and shelter, it would be daunting to safeguard peace and security in the sub-region.

The conflict management approach by ECOWAS in Cote d' Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, among others, shows that the mere conduct of multi-party elections is not the single most important factor in the calculus of peace and stability. In these countries, elections were held but it was apparent that the underlying causes of conflicts were simmering. The conduct of elections in post-conflict societies must be a process, not an event. Elections must be held only when protagonists in prior conflicts, with ECOWAS playing a constructive role, take practical steps, such as post-conflict peace-building, electoral reform, and indisputable commitment to peace and security, that would lead to genuine reconciliation and obviate mutual suspicions. This would inspire confidence and consolidate peace and security prior to elections and most importantly, prevent a relapse.

In other words, the single most potent bulwark against internal or external insurrection must be the institutionalization of good governance. The practice of good governance must place the individual at the core of national development. It is in this regard that the early warning system of the 1999 Protocol Security Mechanism is crucial. If effectual, the early warning system would alert the entire sub-region of possible indicators of conflicts before escalation. This would be a proactive approach to conflict management in the sub-region and, shield ECOWAS from investing resources and logistics to react to worsening conflict situations. This, however, requires a commitment on the part of political leadership in the sub-region. Without such commitments,

the promise of, for example, a permanent force, ECOMOG, will fade. In as much as the 1999 Protocol on conflict management is about confronting the present security challenges of West Africa, it is also about the success or otherwise of other prospective collaborative efforts. This is because success in confronting the security threats posed to West African states through a common security mechanism, would spur future cooperative arrangements in other areas of endeavour. By contrast, failed cooperation in regional security would reinforce the view that West African states are purveyors of laudable intentions on paper but lethargic at implementation.

In a nutshell, the fact that ECOWAS has chalked a considerable degree of success, relative to its lethargic approach to economic integration, reinforces the centrality of peace and security in regional integration or cooperation. For West Africa, its regional security complex characterization underscores the enormity of the task confronting ECOWAS. And it is only through regional security cooperation that West African states can adequately ameliorate their security perils. Without a common strategy, exemplified by the 1999 Security Mechanism, the sub-region would be devastated by conflicts.

4.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions gleaned from this work, the following recommendations are provided to galvanize efforts towards a sturdy regional peace and security and for that matter, regional security cooperation.

- **Building the blocks of Governance**

As alluded to in previous chapters of this study, the inception of conflict, to a significant degree, reflects the paucity of opportunities for a vast number of the citizenry. This exposes the deficiencies in the governance structure of most West African states and the frosty pace of democratization in the sub-region, notwithstanding some minimal progress. In this regard, therefore, a rigorous promotion of good governance and democratization constitutes one of the potent tools of conflict prevention. If political leadership in the sub-region would focus on building strong institutions, uphold the tenets of free and credible elections, promote media freedoms, multi-party democracy, avoid zero-sum political gains, create opportunities for the enhancement of the livelihood of the citizenry, among others, there would be limited grievances that could lead to conflicts in the sub-region. Good governance would minimize any possibility of the proliferation of rebel movements, which are always keen to use the paucity of development and the presence of squalor as basis to incite rebellions. As noted already, the promotion of good governance presents an opportunity to prevent conflicts. If state institutions such as the legislature and judiciary would serve as independent and objectives institutions when conflicts emerge, there would be no need for ECOWAS to be pre-occupied with managing conflicts across the sub-region.

- **Political Will and Implementation**

A perennial problem of regional integration in West Africa has been the poor record of states with regard to implementation. This can be traced to the lack of political will by leaders in the sub-region to honour their commitments as iterated in various protocols. For example, the 1999 Protocol on conflict management envisaged the establishment of a permanent force. However,

presently, there is no indication that member-states of ECOWAS are committed to incepting a permanent force. This was evident in recent bottlenecks over the mobilization of military, police and civilian personnel to undertake peacekeeping responsibilities in Mali in light of threats posed to Mali's territorial integrity as a result of a rebellion, inspired by Tuareg rebels in northern Mali. Indeed, the inability of ECOWAS to deploy troops in Mali has been attributed not only to lack of pecuniary resources but also strategic air assets to deploy troops and Contingent Owned Equipment (COE).

The United Kingdom's Air Force provided strategic airlift assets for Ghanaian troops and COE, whilst Benin was supported by Germany for lack of strategic air assets by both West African states. It is only through commitment backed by funding that ECOWAS can acquire the logistics and equipment for its activities, including peacekeeping. Political will and commitment will engender the desire to source for or allocate funds towards procuring logistics and equipment in support of the activities of ECOWAS. It took the French troops to intervene to prevent the Islamists from advancing towards the Malian capital, Bamako, Mali. Without demonstrable political commitment, the relevance of security mechanisms incepted by ECOWAS would wane.

- **Nigeria's Lead-Nation status is key to Security Cooperation**

The role of Nigeria in ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone came up for scrutiny following concerns over Nigeria's dominant role in terms of troop contribution as well as appointment of force commanders within ECOMOG. The scrutiny must be encouraged for purposes of resolving or improving regional security. However, discussions over Nigeria's role must not be used as a pretext to overly undermine Nigeria's standing in West Africa. The point

has to be made that in a region marked by tepid economic development and lack of political commitment, a country endowed with hegemonic attributes is imperative for the sustenance of any regional mechanism incepted for promoting regional cooperation, be it economic or security. In this instance, Nigeria has been willing to bear the cost of maintaining ECOWAS' security arrangements particularly in the realm of peacekeeping. The responsibility for stability of West Africa is a shared responsibility, but with its geopolitical endowments, such as vast size and population in addition to proven natural resource endowments, Nigeria has the wherewithal to play a leading role in regional security cooperation. Nigeria's role should not be perceived as a foreign policy overreach or a desire by the Anglophone bloc in West Africa to irk their Francophone counterparts. Nigeria's benevolence and lead-nation attribute must rather be conceived as a fulcrum around which West African states can resolve their common security threats.

- **Intelligence Sharing as key to War on Terror**

A key feature of the 1999 Protocol is its provisions on fighting the threats posed by terrorists across West Africa. It has become necessary for ECOWAS to provide an operational framework on counter-terrorism within the sub-region. This has been heightened in the wake of the intensification of activities by al-Qaeda-linked terrorist groups across West Africa, in addition to the canker of religious intolerance across the sub-region. Counter terrorism strategies must entail the intensification of intelligence gathering and sharing between West African states and that of developed countries such as the United States of America (USA), which has a security presence in Africa through its African Command (AFRICOM) and Office of Security Cooperation in most of their embassies. In addition, through the early warning mechanism of the

1999 Security Mechanism, ECOWAS states must collaborate with other regional organizations in Africa, with key lenses on the movements of rebel groups and the growth of terrorist cells in Africa. The aforementioned measures are necessary to ensure that West Africa does not become a safe haven for terrorists nor for rebels, inspired by religious fundamentalism.

- **Promoting Institutional Linkages**

Promoting institutional linkages must be done at three levels. First, in West Africa, the individual security agencies must have perennial engagements before and during intervention, to enable the auditing and standardization of equipment. This would help in the harmonization of efforts as well as logistics support when forces are deployed for peacekeeping, peace enforcement, among others. Second, ECOWAS must build institutional linkages particularly with other regional organizations in Africa. As noted in chapter two of this study, the peace and security architecture of the AU expects to synchronize the security mechanisms of all regional organizations across the globe. With ECOMOG's invaluable experiences in peacekeeping and peace enforcement, other sub-regional bodies in Africa as well as the AU can learn useful lessons. Also, there could be inter-regional deployment of troops, whereby other regional bodies could provide troops for peace and security operations outside their region. This promotes a notion of shared responsibility and institutional complementarity among the various sub-regional groups in Africa. Third, an interface must be created with external actors such as the UN and France to avoid duplication of efforts and resource. For France, such an interface can enhance constructive engagements with ECOWAS to douse mutual suspicions over France's role particularly in Francophone West Africa.

- **State Funding of Political Parties, Policing of Borders and Maritime Domains**

Although not new, security threats such as illicit drugs or narcotics trade as well as maritime insecurity undermine security in West Africa. This is because of the modus operandi of drug cartels: they weaken state institutions and officials in order to have unlimited access to markets in West Africa through bribery and corruption. And the considerable amount of money wielded by drug cartels means they have the ability to provide funding for political parties, most of which depend on anonymous donations for survival. To prevent the aforementioned challenges, state funding of political parties is an issue to be explored and encouraged in West Africa. This may prove daunting considering the lack of resources in West Africa. However, it is an issue worth considering in the long term. In addition, policing of borders must also be enhanced while conditions of service for border control agencies require attention to avoid susceptibility to bribery by drug cartels. With regard to protecting maritime domains of littoral states, the spiraling activities of pirates in the Gulf of Guinea threaten oil production and human security. To this end, littoral states in West Africa must invest in their naval infrastructure, coordinate the activities of such assets, and work progressively towards the establishment of a regional naval force.

- **Improving Communication**

One of the challenges of regional economic integration is language barrier among member-states of ECOWAS. In a region where the predominant language is mainly French, it is unfortunate that there is lack of a genuine desire by West African states to become proficient in other languages, whether French or English and to a lesser extent, Portuguese since there exists a Luxophone state of Guinea Bissau. The security agencies must be encouraged to undertake

language proficiency courses to facilitate communication during peacekeeping duties and other related activities. Apart from facilitating communication in the chain of command, language is important for purposes of bonding and integration not only among troops from different countries in West Africa but also among the bureaucrats.



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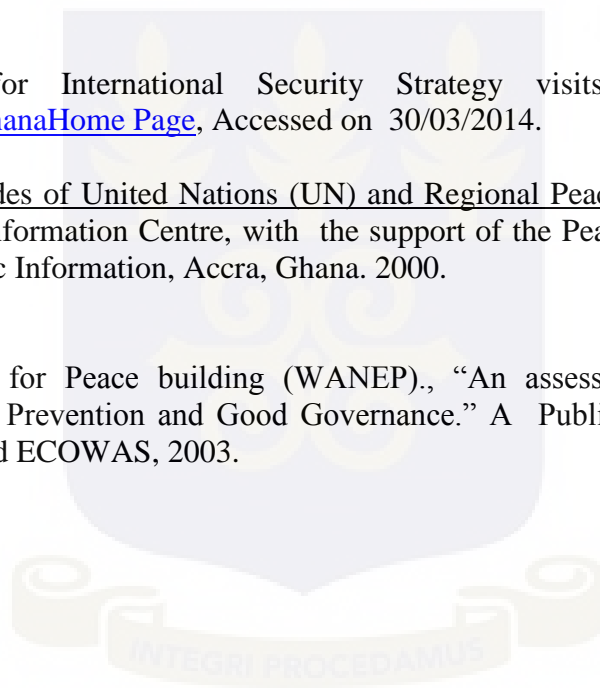
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**INTERVIEW WITH HIS EXCELLENCY, MAJOR-GENERAL (RTD.)
FRANCIS ADU-AMANFOH**

Q1. How would you assess the present state of peace and security in West Africa?

.....

Q2. Is West Africa safer since the inception of the 1999 Security Mechanism?

.....

Q3. What factors account for the inability/unwillingness of WA states to evolve a permanent force for the sub-region?

.....

Q4. How crucial is the ECOWAS warning system to conflict prevention in WA?

.....

Q5. How should WA states leverage the promotion of human security for purposes of conflict prevention?

.....

Q6. To what extent can natural resource governance ameliorate the underlying causes of conflicts in WA?

.....

Q7. How critical is the resolution of the Boko Haram insurgency to the whole of WA?

.....

Q8. Should ECOWAS play a central role in the global war against terror?

.....

Q9. Would political elites in the sub-region ever invest in the required political will in the implementation of sub-regional objectives, including that of peace and security?

.....