

Nigeria in Regional Capability Questions: Issues on Quality Ecowas Intervention

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Abstract: The apparent inability of Nigeria to competently secure her territorial integrity, detect and deter ravaging insurgents en route West Africa has come under severe sociopolitical questions in recent times. Greater issues of interoperability and regional capacity to command and control surging volatile security issues domestically and around the region largely question her overall capability to secure critical security issues defined in terms of economic, cultural, sociopolitical and religious warfare continually pillaging the people and nations. This is evident from the increasing zones of conflict, circle of deaths and axis of evil around West African sub region. Scientific content analysis of critical factors that trigger, foment and escalate insecurity and regional vulnerability to changing political climate within and around the region broadly shows a tri-dimensional security issue: 1) African regional in/security increasingly draws legitimacy from the increasing illegitimacy of regime politics; bad, bloated, corrupt governance and personal rule occasions blatant lack of political will of most African leaders, civil wars, national security militarism and continued presence of the military in political arena. 2) It evolves questions on indirect control patterns, neocolonialism, external influences and determinants, overarching trade patterns and crushing debt overhangs. 3) The threat of humanitarian catastrophe, poverty, starvation, diseases and natural disasters. Redefining capability in terms of sustainable, resilient economic and political development of the people and nations, the paper assessed critical factors that undermine Quality Capability on the ECOWAS sub region. Has Nigeria the resilience and sustainable politico-economic capability needed for such procedural quality management of regional affairs? The paper concludes that Nigeria does not currently have the political resilience, diligence and gigantic resources needed to inculcate and acculturate good governance and responsible citizenship nationally and regionally but could develop and harness such capacity in the future if it prioritizes its political and economic investment in critical sectors especially leadership and citizenship development.

Key words: Nigeria • Regional capability • Quality intervention • Resilience

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria's strategic intervention in Africa and around the world dates back to United Nations Operation in Congo (UNOC) in 1960 in the aftermath of her national independence where she participated actively in tactical operations with well trained military force and even commanded entire UNOC the UNOC. Such regional capability though guided by her afro-centric policy has since advanced intercontinental unity or what is referred to as the New Regionalism which transcends military cooperation and devolves into mutual interregional economic, political and socio-cultural cooperation across Africa, Americas, Australasia and Europe. This kind of

regionalism which is distinct from the nascent regionalism that precisely defines and coordinates relations between nation states is essentially transnational and multipolar in form. It goes far beyond free trade. The new regionalism is linked to globalization and cannot be understood from the point of view of a single state or region. Conceptually, it is understood in terms of the new world order since any process of regionalization in any part of the world systemically affects other regions, thus shaping the way and defining new thinking about the security of globalization.

The impact of Nigeria in West African regional security framework manifests Nigeria's struggle to strengthen and build an African response capacity to

intervene in Africa's problems despite its speedily waning strategic military capability to control and contain rising national insurgency profile. Such regional capacity-building is imbued on the conviction and resolute efforts to enhance the peace and stability of the region as the benchmark for speeded regional economic growth. The question: How rightly has such interventions benefited and/or strengthened regional democratization efforts? What factors continually undermine concerted efforts of stakeholders towards national-regional reconstruction and consolidation? What impact in building regional democratic citizenship as measure of good governance and resilient leadership? What challenges, what outcomes? Who takes the disadvantages of whom and at whose territorial rights?

Theoretical Framework: Theory is defined as “hypothetical set of facts, principles usually derived from the study of a body of knowledge relating to it. It is a scientifically acceptable general principle or body of assumptions offered to explain phenomena.” Ben Rosamond argues that “the process of theorizing is, to a very large extent, a mechanism for the generation and organization of disagreement.” [1] Gerry Stoker strongly argues that sound theoretical perspective “helps us to see the wood from the trees. Good theories select out certain factors as the most important....Without such a sifting process no effective observation can take place....Theories are of value precisely because they structure all observations.” [2] Rosamond therefore concludes that “...being theoretically conscious sharpens the sense in which analysts are aware of their own assumptions about the way in which the world works....” [3] Theoretical framework therefore structures all scientific discourse in terms and applications. A cursory analysis of the term regionalism will finely situate the import of Nigeria's regional capability in scientific perspective.

Regionalism Defined: [4] define regionalism in varied but constructive perspectives. They argue regionalism first, as a “*natural progress of regional convergence* through which economic, political, social interactions among states with specific features of geographical proximity is bound to bring about the effect of regional identity and of regional community; second, as a *driving force of regional coherence*, through which certain regional mechanisms further stimulate regional cooperation among regional countries, promote a common interest in the region, as well as guide the regional order.” [5] observed that “in the past few decades, the outgrowth of regional

cooperation and the subsequent formation of regionalism has become one of the landmarks by which we depict the changing world system.” He insists that the transforming nature of the world's regionalization is not only phenomenal but essential component of the new regionalism of borderless world. [6] perceives regionalism as the ‘cooperation among governments or non-government organizations in three or more geographically proximate and interdependent countries for the pursuit of mutual gain in one or more issue-areas.’ [7] defines the term simply as the “preferential trade agreements among a subset of nations.” For [8], it is ‘the expression of regional consciousness that develops from a sense of identity among states situated in geographical proximity.’ [9] argue that regionalism is ‘the disproportionate concentration of economic flows or the coordination of foreign economic policies among a group of countries in close geographic proximity to one another.’ [10] identifies five categories of the term as: the regionalization, the emergence of regional identity, regional interstate cooperation, state-promoted regional integration and regional cohesion or community building.

[11] defines regionalism based on West African experience as: “attempts by contiguous nation-states, reinforced by a sense of common purpose or predicament within a definite region or defined area, to foster economic or socio-political co-operation among them in order to lessen their dependence on others outside the region.” In sum, regionalism characteristically involves the following: First, a group of geographically proximate states; second, intense and higher regional cooperation and interaction among regional states; third, institutional coordination and enhancement of economic policies of regional states at regional level; fourth, firm and resolute commitment of regional states to regional cooperation and community building on such issues as economic, social, security, cultural issues.

In sub Saharan Africa, Regionalism is increasingly assuming centerpiece of many politico-economic, social and cultural relationships among state actors and non state actors. Although driven by weak political will, West African regionalism demonstrates the commitment of African leaders to salvage and protect Africa's economy, institutions, culture, geography, nations and peoples from decades of political, economic and cultural subjugation. African renaissance as championed by the pan-Africanists and contemporary African leaders in the emerging new regionalism is growing out of the conscious affirmation of Africanity based on shared values and regional cooperation. This resulted in

increased cross-border economic relations, development of multidimensional sub regional groupings and organizations dealing with diverse but coordinated issues of African unity. In new regionalism, African leaders and peoples express and define the ways and means by which the world should understand and relate to them; it is a conscious and concerted developmental plan to maximize and bridge the widening economic gulf between Africa and the rest of the world. This begins by uniting African nations to pursue and improve common market economy, enhance strategic regional, political and economic cooperation among African nations and minimize if not end protracted internecine violence, coups, territorial wars and international conflicts via arbitration, mediation, conflict resolutions, enforcement of moratoria on arms proliferation, peacekeeping, peace-building and peace enforcement since its only in an atmosphere of political stability that regional and national economies thrive. West African regionalism is therefore the key component of West African development. It underscores the fundamental developmental roles played by Nigeria in the region. As regional and continental hegemon, Nigeria has largest economy in the continent and the greatest strategic financier of African Peace Mission in both the region and the entire continent of Africa. It is tenable to state in the dispensation that what affects Nigeria directly affects continent of after with obvious reverberations around the world. Therefore questions of Africa's regional capability become direct concerns of Nigeria's overall political, social and economic capability. It is critical in the light of the above to distinguish and discursively examine primary issues that affect Africa's capability as major contribution to the growth and development of the region and Nigeria in the main.

Factors Affecting Nigeria-Ecowas Regional Capability:

The assessment of the impact of Nigeria regionalism in Africa and sub region of West Africa, in building regional security communities, defending, containing and controlling rising offensives among nations and regions and in implementing or expediting resolute actions of matters of national and regional security often reveals arrays of turbulent issues of national and/or international scope. This involves careful identification of basic factors- political, economic, social, ideological, religious, cultural, institutional and bureaucratic models that shape and influence (West) African societies and worldview. According to [12], several issue-areas emerge as particularly relevant to greater understanding of the limited or lagged progress in the continental unity of

African states and sub regionally. It is important to examine the capability of Nigeria in the light of the observed factors.

National Core Welfare - Poverty Profile: The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) of Nigeria examined Nigeria's poverty profile in term of Relative poverty which is measured by the living standards of majority of the people in a given society as poor and non-poor. NBS classifies "Households with expenditure greater than two-thirds of the Total Household Per Capita expenditure as NON-POOR whereas those below it are POOR. Further desegregation showed that households with less than one-third of total Household Per Capita expenditure are CORE-POOR (EXTREME POOR) while those Households greater than one-third of total expenditure but less than two-thirds of the total expenditure are MODERATE POOR."

The NBS Poverty Report on Nigeria poverty profile further stated progressive increase in the country relative poverty measurement in 2004 and 2010 as 54.4% in 2004 69% respectively. This indicates that more 50% of Nigerian population are poor in 2010 while highest incidence of poverty occurred in the North-West and North-East geo-political zones with 77.7% and 76.3% respectively and lowest incidence rate of 59.1% recorded in the South-West geo-political zone. In 2018 however, Nigeria's successive effort to exterminate extreme poverty in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal by 2030 cumulatively yielded insignificant result as The World Poverty Clock indicates that Nigeria in 2018 has the highest extreme poverty rate of 86.9% in the world despite Nigeria vast human and natural resources. This is against the UNDP Poverty index report on Nigeria which stands at 53.7% in 2016. The report highlighted highest prevalence rate of poverty incidence in Sokoto State with 89.9 per cent, followed by Jigawa State (86.1 per cent) while Rivers and Ebonyi States shared 58.9 per cent each while Osun State was adjudged to have the lowest prevalence with 17.5 per cent. The UNDP stressed that the intensity of poverty is more prevalent in the Northwest zone (45 percent) closely followed by Northeast with 44 percent while Southwest and South East have the lowest ratings at (38 percent). NBS assessing Nigeria poverty profile with the US\$1 poverty line technique critically noted that people are counted as poor when their measured standard of living falls below a minimum acceptable standard/threshold of US\$1 per day. The implication on Nigeria poverty profile is 51.6% of Nigerians were living below US\$1 per day in 2004, while in

2010 poverty line increased to 61.2%. The General Household Survey (GHS) of the Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics indicates that Nigeria per capita poverty rate is significantly lower than earlier estimates which records that only about 33.1% of the Nigeria population in 2012/2013 lived below the poverty line. The report states that the urban poverty reduction is quite stronger with 12.6% than in the rural areas with 44.9%. On Human Development Index (HDI) UNDP observed obvious discrepancy in Human Capital Development reporting that 39.6 per cent of Nigerian population had not completed five years of schooling while child school attendance is 23.8 per cent. It stated: "There were variations in the performances of the states; 34 states and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja recorded decline in the Education Index while two states namely; Borno and Jigawa had their Education Index improved." Overall, Nigeria life expectancy according to slightly improved from 48.44 in 2013 to 48.97 in 2016.

Corruption Index: Right from the 1960s corruption has pervasively constituted the strongest anti development index in Nigeria. The widespread consequences appear to have become an intergenerational bug gnawing and undercutting proactive and positive policy plans towards national development. Transparency International consistently over the years berated Nigeria's anti corruption agenda insisting that political corruption in Nigeria constituted the greatest bane of socioeconomic development in Nigeria and the region. It scores Nigeria 27/100 per cent while current rating is 144/180 countries examined [13].

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in collaboration with other security and intelligence agencies including the Judiciary are constitutionally charged with the war against all forms of corruption in Nigeria. The establishment Act enables them to respectively and intercollegially prosecute, adjudicate, investigate, detect and deter all forms of corruption and criminality in the private and public sectors across the country. Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, the founding Chairman of EFCC (2002-8) stated in his presentation to the United States Congressional House Committee on International Development that:

The history of corruption in Nigeria is strongly rooted in the over 29 years of military rule, out of 46 years of her statehood since 1960. Successive Military regimes subdued the Rule of law, facilitated the wanton looting of the public treasury,

decapitated public institutions and free speech and instituted a secret and opaque culture in the running of government business. The result was total insecurity, poor economic management, abuse of human rights, ethnic conflicts and capital flight. [14]

Ribadu vehemently argues that Nigeria's corruption in the past four decades of independence recorded over US\$400 billion or Euro 220 billion equivalent of Naira 65 trillion stolen or misused by Nigerian leaders and public officers which is equivalent to the total Western Aid to Africa in the last 40 years [15]. There is no doubt about the apparent intractable nature of corrupt practices in the Nigeria public space en route West Africa. Factors ingenious to corruption include rentierism, cronyism, kleptomanism, bribery, personal rule, godfatherism and unbridled political greed. These factors are endemically subversive and implosive. Farida Waziri of EFCC stresses that the key reasons why corruption thrives in Nigeria is due to weak enforcement of proactive mechanisms; and the fact that government does not subsume itself entirely under the rule of law and be subject to it. She argues that where these conditions are positively enabled "the law becomes the supreme arbiter of not only social conduct but also a social enabler for business and good governance" [16]. On the other hand, the Chairman of ICPC Hon. Justice Ayoola argues that corruption in Nigeria undermines democratic institutions, retards economic development, perverts the rule of law, contributes to government instability, negates efforts towards national security, destroys ethical and cultural values and creates bureaucratic quagmires whose only reason for existence is the soliciting of bribes.¹ He further argues that "corruption brought gains to a few people over a short time but impacted negatively on the vast majority of Nigerians who have been reduced to living deaths and beggars" [17]. Offu and Okechukwu argue strongly that "...despite the gains of the anti-graft campaign, there are serious challenges to combating corruption in Nigeria which include gross lack of political will, political impunity and plea bargain, national apathy, slow judicial system, circumvention of the criminal law, persistent lack of advanced technological systems to promptly detect and fight cyber crimes, lack of capacity and investigation tools, financial transactions software, the availability of safe havens for corrupt political officials to keep their loot abroad, ..." [18]. In fact, corruption in all its forms and vagaries is inimical to good governance, sustainable development and delivery of democratic goods. It substantially compromises and pulverizes national integrity, democrats and democratic goods giving

way to brigandry, internecine violence, insurgency, entrenchment of extreme poverty, bigotry and gross underdevelopment of the peoples.

National Security: The term national security is multivariate in definition and application. Conceptually, as a social phenomenon national security is substantially perceived from the point of view of insecurity, violence, crime and criminality; while other social scientist and criminology view the term as holistic and defined in terms of economic, political, social, religious and cultural factors. As such, "Security *in se* and as human good – nationally and globally is notionally multivariate and essentially fluidal." [19] argued that "security is therefore a powerful political tool in claiming attention for priority items in the competition for government attention". [20] perceives security beyond the preservation of the societal norms and values, rather the people and state are to be preserved and protected from what he refers to as "military and non-military threats". General Abdulrahman Dambazau of the Nigerian Army on the other and define security simply as "freedom from danger, fear or anxiety", he opines that security encompasses "threats that may impact on our physical body as individuals or groups; psychological thoughts or behaviour; our properties; means of livelihood; socio-economic needs (food, health, education, etcetera); the environment; freedoms or fundamental rights; and sovereignty or territorial integrity. We all share the consequences of these threats or the benefits of avoiding them, either as individuals, groups, state, region or even the world as a whole." On the whole, National security is the strategic plan of government which entirely reflects the "capability of a state to defend its territorial integrity, national interests and deter threats to national sovereignty including threats to economic, political, social, religious, cultural or other civic and fundamental rights of the people and state. It includes the capacity of a state to defend and deter, preserve and protect its people, culture and environment from internal and external aggression or any forms of threats thereto." It is argued in this discourse as the prioritization and protection of the supreme value of national interest. This implies that a threat against national interest is inevitably threat against national security.

Bureaucracy: Red tapism constitute one of the greatest obstacles to efficient delivery of public service in Nigeria and Africa in general. Within the ECOWAS bloc, there are outstanding variations in the delivery rate of resolute actions caused by clogged implementation procedures.

Specifically and among the issues examined, there are obvious delays in the execution of Community policies, acts, or regional decisions that demands national action; even in the ratification of covenants and protocols:

This protocol and all instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Executive Secretariat which shall transmit certified true copies to all Member States and notify them of the dates of deposit of instrument of ratification by the Member States and shall register it with the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), as well as the United Nations (UN) and any other Organisation as may be decided by the Council.

Processing and accessing information requests or official fixtures from relevant state governments yield minimal results and after long periodic schedules. Most times expedition of justice and diplomatic relations are often affected by protracted bureaucratic models.

Commitment to Regional Duties: Membership of regional organisation as ECOWAS demands commitment and compliance to set Principles and Obligations of the Charter of such organisation. Irregular, late or incomplete attendance/payment of dues of some of the State members of the Community affects the general implementation, performance or delivery rate of the outcomes of such Summits. Prompt and full participation of member states in regional contributions, functions, summits or projects is a characteristic commitment and loyalty to the Community and where this is repeatedly not assured, it could be subject to misinterpretation and misrepresentation and could cast aspersion on the Authority of such organisation. Importantly, there are often unnecessary delays in the execution of regional projects due to paucity of fund and lack of fulfillment of regional obligations. In most instances, though Nigeria is a regional hegemon, she lacks the capacity to compel obedience to set rules and agreement.

Regional Development Culture: Regionalism or what is otherwise defined as regional consciousness, development, integration and community-building is the strategic, progressive and positive instrument for advancing national economic average, promoting national sustainability benchmarks, macroeconomic convergence, mutual and sustainable investment climate leading to regional growth and stability. As such, meaningful and fruitful regionalism requires sustainable regional development culture which leverages member states national development cultures. For speeded Community development plan, an integral and popular development culture crafted within the government and general public

is sine qua non. Such would become a necessary part of the totality of the people lives and way thinking and doing things.

Political Issues: The Colonial West Africa was marked by the persistent and heroic struggles and ideologies of pan-Africanism that gave rise to various sums of nationalism and constitutionalism that culminated in the eventual demise and ousting of colonialism and the political independence of many states in the Africa of the West. Like the colonial era, the postcolonial era was also characterized by strong feelings of nationalism, protectionism and some sort of experimental constitutionalism. The postcolonial era was extremely politicized and torn apart at the cost and as means of finding and implementing the peopled democracy in national politics. Political sovereignties were challenged by ever emerging sorts of political philosophies and interpolated ideologies. Expectedly, sovereignties were at the behest of subnational loyalties and rise of rogue states and ‘unwanton’ aids fluctuations disguised in different vestige solutions- political, economic, social, cultural, ethnic and institutional. State and political actors were extremely guarded in sovereign protectionism intermixed with regime posturing. There was no real, planned and popular political culture in most states. West Africa produced weak nation-states ridden with politico-economic, even social crises. With somewhat ‘failure’ of nationalism in the beginnings of the twentieth century, the rise of regionalism stood a credible choice but with stiff unwillingness to compromise national sovereignties.

Today, that legacy of national sovereignty and the jealousy with which it is guarded have become obstacles to progress on the road to regional integration, which requires a certain sharing of sovereignty among members of the community. Exacerbating this tendency are other aspects of the colonial heritage that continue to influence national institutions and attitudes in the political as in other fields, including differences in legal and educational systems or administrative structures or the North-South orientation of national economic structures.

Another issue storming greater political attention is the fact of Nigeria rising regional capability- political and economic dominance in the region or what is widely referred to as the “big country” question. Nigeria overshadows every other country in the region several times over in terms of population, gross domestic product and huge natural resource endowment. The French tend to provoke and sustain this fear of domination, as they strive to maintain their sphere of influence in the region.

A strategic and concerted effort has been made to counterbalance this by placing ECOWAS member states on an equal footing in all things except their financial contributions to the Community (which are prorated), but the concern seems to persist. However, it is important to underline that some Community needs and arrangements have required special sacrifices from certain member states (regarding formulas for determining financial contributions, trade liberalization schedules, or compensation formulas for the loss of tariff revenue or even in strategic regional operations) and the acceptance and supply of these arrangements is a clear demonstration of solidarity and community spirit. Obviously there is real need for such leadership roles based on many bold and emergent initiatives and regional policy programmes that require unique capability to move the region forward. Nigeria among other member states has been quite directional and unreserved in meting some of these regional lead roles.

Additionally, the wave of political and economic reforms currently sweeping through the region in favour of political pluralism and economic liberalism are very important development efforts to resolve ideological divisions among state actors. Such development is in tandem with the mission and vision of African Renaissance.

Loss of Sovereignty: Recognizing the pitfalls of the 1975 ECOWAS Treaty, the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government called for the revision and ratification of the Treaty. The Abuja ratification of the revised Treaty in 1993 was a rising to such a monumental demand. This epochal development ascribes some degree of supranationality to ECOWAS towards the maintenance of regional peace and stability as well as good governance while at the same time ensuring the minimum of democratic and constitutional rule for member states of the ECOWAS.

The Economic Dimension: Economies of the sub-Saharan Africa have witnessed low FDIs in priority sectors since the 1980s. This led to severe economic recession which obliged member states to abandon all plans for long-term macroeconomic development in the pursuit of short-term economic stabilization via different Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). In the case of Nigeria the situations exacerbated with severe austerity measures and the oil doom of the 1980s. The economic crisis emptied government coffers. After the deep decline of the early 1980s, national economies are only now barely achieving a measure of stabilization and relative growth. The

establishment of a more stable economic environment, capable of encouraging long-term investment and development, should be the target of the ECOWAS Consultative Forum and the IGOs. The millennial economies of ECOWAS countries are experience comparative growth based on the resolute efforts of Heads of State and Government to meet the MDGs and fight against poverty in Africa.

Regional Security: The maintenance of adequate security arrangement in the ECOWAS subregion has ever been a daunting task. Defining security in terms of the African situation is all-encompassing- political, social, economic, religious, cultural, strategic (military), health, wealth, food, institutional, industrial, inter alia. In fact, the situation in the subregion could redefine the meaning of security to include part or all the above sectors. This led to the adoption of the 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression and the 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence. Security in critical sectors is all that is needed to meet organizational goals and development.

Despite the relative high cost of maintaining the peace and stability of ECOWAS subregion, efforts should be geared towards discovering the root causes of insecurity- the external or internal factors that profit and cause the continued escalation of the business of in/security including the disruption of regional integration programs by political tensions.

Lack of Adequate Economic Empowerment (Funding): There is no adequate economic capability to sufficiently control and minimize regional fragility. Most member states of the Community have very low GDP and lack the huge capital to pursue national priority programmes with little or nothing to contribute to regional economy. As such the economy of scale of ECOWAS is also considerably low in comparison with the expectation of an Economic Community.

Lack of economic security is big issue for the community, it breeds internal and external sabotage and could mandate state actors concede to policies they would not if they were economically capable. This is feasible in the IMF saga with many classified national economies in the region. Since regional stability is tied to member states economic capability what is needed, then, is some sort of common security arrangement that would safeguard, expand and guarantee the long-term or sustainable regional and ipso facto national economy of scale as security for the region and member states by ensuring strict implementation of targeted macroeconomic policies of states and region which will in turn guarantee

and enable investment environment that facilitates investors decisions and inflow of FDIs. Pivotal to these concerted initiatives is a resolute fight against and zero tolerance to corruption in all its multifaceted dimensions. This could begin with the formation, empowering and institutional restructuring of new and existing security communities and with definable roles. Since the security of the region is the security of the states, policy frameworks should be well crafted into national security plan to strengthen variable forms of security interoperabilities and promote stability and growth as procedural disincentives to unviable political decisions and poor leadership that have characterized regional past. Institutionally, Economic liberalization should also influence the character of regional politics. In the past, decision-making for regional economic development was carried out by heads of state, with business conducted on a strictly government-to-government basis. In the emerging liberalization process, governments are expected to encourage active participation of the private sector in moving state and ipso facto regional economies through the formation and implementation of private-sector led economic policies as is the case with other proven regional economies of the world like the EU and USA. Adequate support systems should be enhanced as synergies for economic growth and development. IGOs like the Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of West African Manufacturers Associations and the West African Banks' Association should be well knit into the ECOWAS decision-making process to promote greater economic integration among peoples and nations of the region.

External Intervention: Experience of external intervention as political and economic, even humanitarian in the region has been of mix feelings. There are irreparable consequences of inaction, failed promises with greater and intensified economic burden, undermining of political regimes, strategic deception in various vestiges of humanitarian interventions and neo-colonization and obviously laudable and fulfilled programme plans for economic interventions and support of regional stability rising from national external supports. These experiences have culminated the decisions and definable affirmative action of the African countries and peoples who *inter paries* reject vulnerability and undue exploitation while affirming teaming support for mutual and beneficial relations with other peoples, nations and regions in constructing positive bridges across national and interregional frontiers. This is contained in the adopted Second United Nations Development Decade in the 1970s,

the New African Initiative (NAI) later transformed and plummeted as the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD, 1990s), of the millennial continental organ of the African Union (2001). In these documents, African reaffirmed to the world that responsibility of African development lies with them but seek the mutual and constructive support from the rest of world in their effort to make Africa a better place.

The signing of the AEC Treaty in 1991 gave impetus to this trend and many international organizations are currently looking for ways to stimulate, promote and diversify economic activity in Africa. Donor cooperation with regard to Africa's development plans have improved greatly. These initiatives should be coordinated to ensure a more positive contribution to the continental integral economic development framework. However, failed promises and inadequate funding continue to plague strategic regional development efforts.

Revised ECOWAS Treaty: In 1991, the ECOWAS Summit of Heads of State recognized that the 1975 Treaty was in dire need of overhaul to enhance its utility and productivity. A Committee of Eminent Persons was created to study and identify amenable and counterproductive areas of the Treaty and making appropriate recommendations for suitable amendments. In carrying out its assignment, the Committee interpreted its mandate to include consideration of institutional matters, regional economic integration, political cooperation, regional peace and security and the financing of regional integration efforts [21]. The value propositions given by the Committee supported immediate amendment of certain priority areas while further examination continues in the vein of the ever changing international politics.

The revised Treaty was submitted to the Cotonou (Republic of Benin) Summit of Heads of State of July 1993 and was immediately adopted although securing the ratification was somewhat protracted. [22] The revised Treaty lays out some clear directions for progress on macroeconomic expansion and integration in West Africa. It further reaffirms in different ways the priority that should be given to regional integration by all sixteen West African countries [23].

Summarily, the Treaty highlights and stresses the following:

- It defines ECOWAS as ultimately the sole economic community in the region and clearly spells out the relationship between ECOWAS and all other West African IGOs.
- A certain change of orientation is evident in the supranational status accorded the Community and the undertaking to pool national sovereignties through measures that would strengthen community institutions and make community decisions directly enforceable in member states.
- The powers of the community institutions and the executive secretary are enhanced to reflect the greater priority being placed on economic development and regional integration. Instead of a community tribunal, the revised Treaty provides for a Court of Justice to underline the prerogative of the rule of law in championing the cause of regional development. A West African Parliament will be part of the political cooperation program to be developed. Similarly, the expected greater involvement of the professions and interest groups in general has led to the inclusion of an economic and social council in the revised Treaty.
- Sector ministers will be more involved in the decision-making process and the technical commissions have been reclassified to ensure better representation at meetings as well as a more efficient organization of the corresponding technical departments of the executive secretariat. Rationalization of IGOs is expected to lead to the creation of specialized agencies to handle specific sectoral programs.
- The institutions provided for in the two existing protocols on defence matters will be reassessed and made operational to handle the defence cooperation programmes and ensure regional peace and security.
- The revised Treaty proposes that the perennial problem of arrears in contributions should be overcome by instituting a system for generating an independent resource base. A community levy, representing a percentage of the value of total imports from third countries, would be imposed to generate sufficient funds for both the operational budget of the Community and the development assistance extended to member countries by the ECOWAS fund.
- In the field of economic integration, the objective is the achievement of a common market and a monetary union. Equal attention is given to all economic sectors and activities, including the service sector. The revised Treaty aims to ensure that not only market integration, but also production and physical integration are urgently achieved.

- Emphasis is placed on private-sector participation. The private sector is to be encouraged to participate actively in community decision-making and is assigned a bigger role in the implementation of community programs. The ECOWAS protocol on community enterprises is expected to be revised to reflect greater reliance on the private sector and a community investment code is proposed, to favour private-sector involvement in cross-border investments.
- Building on the 1975 ECOWAS Treaty, which recognized the need for regional cooperation in the social economic and cultural sectors, the revised Treaty spells out measures to be adopted in various fields. Important areas of cooperation, such as science and technology, information and defence, which did not feature in the 1975 Treaty but were included in the community work program are emphasized in the revised Treaty and the democratic principles contained in the Abuja Declaration of Political Principles form part of the general undertaking by member states in the preamble to the revised Treaty.
- Bloated, corrupt governance and personal rule generate blatant lack of political will of most African leaders, civil wars, national security militarism and continued presence of the military in political arena, widespread compromised democratic outcomes and surging political apathy.
- Nigeria and ECOWAS should consider critical questions on indirect control patterns, neocolonialism, external influences and determinants, overarching trade patterns and crushing debt overhang including threat of humanitarian catastrophe, poverty, starvation, diseases and natural disasters ravaging the people and sub continent.
- Therefore there is urgent need to redefine capability in terms of sustainable, quality leadership that is citizen-focused and resilient economic and political development of the people and nations and region.
- Relegation of the Rule of law over the enthronement of political and economic impunity is highly unacceptable, undemocratic and unpopular. There is therefore the urgent need for strengthening Judicial institutions and the execution of the rule of law across the region. Leaders should subject themselves to the ordinance of the rule of law in all circumstances and infraction judiciously meted. This is where Nigeria continued regional hegemony and leadership has begs the question. This is very critical indeed since Nigeria cannot claim and give the capability it does not have. The consequences and outcomes on the domestic and international fronts are grave as critically highlighted by Offu and Okechukwu:

CONCLUSION

There are so many vexed issues around the capability of ECOWAS and/or Nigeria to competently navigate the troubled and turbulent waters of the sub region. Several factors account for these seeming interoperational problems stemming from state actors and overall regional stakeholders. The fact that these factors still persist despite the quantum of resources already deployed calls for total reevaluation and reconsolidation of the ECOWAS Treaty as done in 1991.

On the part of Nigeria as a dynamic regional actor, there is the need to sufficiently also reevaluate the terms and trade of her foreign and regional policies to mitigate the burgeoning and overarching impact on her territoriality, peoples and steeping shrinking resources. Regional integration requires collegial and active participation of all Heads of State and government including other Non-governmental actors in the region. ECOWAS urgently needs to review and retool the entire regional leadership structure taking cognizance of the overbearing issue-areas:

- African regional in/security increasingly draws legitimacy from the increasing illegitimacy of political regimes.

...the historic irony of Nigeria hegemony is that while Nigeria is in the region fighting for peace, its home was embarrassingly conflictual and pillaged by insurgencies, insurrections and military mutinies and national rift; while it is consolidating nascent democracies and ousting unpopular regimes, the nation is ridden in despotism, political impunity, growing nationally and globally unpopular and undemocratic (1980s – 1990s – 2000s), while it engages in regional fund spree, its citizens ravaged in poverty, starvation, unemployment, restiveness and increasingly disenfranchised; while it is consolidating and growing regional economies, its economy is steeply and continually bugged by award of over-bloated contracts, rentierism, collapse of basic infrastructure, lopsided monolithic economy, acute power shortages; while still in the region mediating decades of

religious and political conflicts, its sovereignty was internally threatened by burning perennial, religious and political upheavals and separatist movements and currently rampaged by terrorism all around and at most, while it is regionally securing states and building bridges across political divides, its nations are at the verge of secession, total collapse, extremely insecure with declaration of state of emergency in some states and critical sectors - power, health, education inter alia [25].

On the whole, the study concludes that Nigeria does not currently have the political resilience, diligence and gigantic resources needed to inculcate and acculturate good governance and responsible citizenship nationally and regionally but could develop and harness such capacity in the future if it prioritizes political and economic investments in critical sectors especially leadership and citizenship development and total obedience to the rule of law [26].

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