

THE POLITICS AND SOCIAL-LEGAL INSTRUMENTS OF MERGER SCHEMES: NIGERIA AND THE ECOWAS EXPERIENCES

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Abstract

The politics and Social-legal instruments of regional merger schemes or world Government were aimed ultimately at achieving supra-nationalism (aka a complete political union) beyond that of the five tenets of economic integration by a group of acceding sovereign (independent) States within a contiguous geographical zone or geo-strategic zones. A typical example was found in the European Union (EU) which was aimed at providing a common national identity, external common defense and national security, securing of a larger inter-continental market for its agricultural products, consumer goods and industrial raw materials availability and affordability as vital factors input within the mega zone. Politically, the sole goal of a world Government was to actualize a balance of power and octopus super-power status hitherto unattainable by smaller states within the zone. Mergers represent a comity of nations by fusion with stronger bargaining power in global political equations and economic trade negotiations. This paper examined how achievable were these goals in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in this 21st century as other trading blocs across the globe grapple with the harmonization and challenges of social-legal instruments at each tenet stage of merger schemes, using Nigeria and the ECOWAS experiences as the probe-focus of analysis.

Key words: The Politics, Merger Schemes, Social-Legal Instruments, Treaty Clauses, Commitments and Regional Governments

INTRODUCTION

The formation of regional trading blocs by multilateral diplomacy begins with frequent mutual cooperation amongst states sharing common frontiers with metropolitan enlightenment and the exchange of culture, values, attitudes and languages, to the next 2nd tenet level of free-trade-area (FTA) formation,

involving the ECOWAS economic trade liberalization schemes (ETLS) and the administrative policies harmonization as the two main social-legal instruments. This allows for the free movement of persons as passengers-in-baggage or shed transit with their personal effects (PE) and dutiable household effects within the zone.

The third tenet stage entails the 'customs union' consisting of having a common external tariff (CET) against non-member states and the relaxation of quantitative restrictions with tariff reductions for trade creation within the zone as against trade diversion. The three other remaining tenet stages include the status of a 'common market' by the harmonization of all trade and commercial policies and the abolition of import and export taxes within the zone against third party states. The most advanced form of economic integration is the 'economic union' 5th tenet status which entails a 'common monetary union (CMU)' within the optimum currency area (OCA), involving the withdrawal of national currencies by member-states within the zone and the adoption of a single currency denomination as promissory notes and legal tender within the zone (e.g. Euro-unit for the European Union, EU and the envisaged Eco-currency for the ECOWAS region). The final act and sixth tenet stage is called supra-nationalism, supra-national organization, con-federation or a complete political union (expounds Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2010:367; Rourke 2009:203; et cetera)

World Government: In conceptualization of a world Government either as a regional or intercontinental Government by merger schemes refer to a socio-cultural, economic and political formation by a group of hitherto sovereign (independent) states, either by horizontal (similar) or vertical (different) levels of development, to gain a stronger common external defense and national security against an external aggression, enjoy a common market expansion, trade concessions and achieve an age of choice in consumerism, mass consumption and unquantifiable infra-structural benefits through institutional and constitutional reforms.

Justifications for the formation of merger schemes: Formation of a world regional or inter-continental Government as a political union were for mutual economic inter-dependencies, growth and expansion in zonal markets, elimination of marginal producers, growth in social infra-structure (ICT revolution, metro-lines, mass-transit buses, et al), products variety availability and affordability, inter-states or intra-state division of labor depending on the level of fusion, share in factors-endowment in manpower and natural resources, import substitution of industrial goods and services within the zone; entrepreneurial drive in full-employment of resources in men, money (capital) and (raw) materials, to contain artificial scarcity of goods and services and the supply of variety within the zone. This involves the mutual cooperation by the component sovereign states and a centralized management authority to coordinate all the political entities in that zone (expounds Kauppi 2008:199). In practice however, a world regional or inter-continental Government has never occurred historically and therefore considered by many observers and scholars of international relations and politics to be either an idealistic pipe-dream or a recipe for the balance of power against a potentially domineering authoritarian global Empire. By contrast, those canvassing for a world Government perceives it as a more effective means of managing regional conflicts, global balance of powers, elimination of inter-states war and dealing with the increasing complex-agenda of multi-lateral diplomacy at international forum, issues of resource control, power and influence (politics) not easily achieved by smaller Governments of sovereign States through bilateral diplomacy.

This paper is subdivided into seven sections with the *introductory* segment, *literature-review*, *theoretical* underpinnings of regional merger schemes, *challenges* faced by regional blocs in general, Nigeria and the ECOWAS in particular in attaining a world regional Government, non-trading blocs and other versions of merger formations with *no Treaty commitments* but loose arrangements, *conclusion* and recommendations.

Literature Review

The Structure of Merger Schemes Worldwide: Kauppi (2008) opines that the idea of a world Government was to replace anarchy inherent in international relations and politics amongst sovereign states. Though not a new concept, a historical example of a world Government that came closest to a complete political union was the Roman Empire era. But, it had geo-graphical limitations in scope and powers. This paper as a qualitative descriptive analysis shall attempt to identify various regional and inter-continental formations worldwide but discuss only a few notable entities, starting with some non-regional trading blocs, past and present.

The Politics of Regional Merger Schemes: The Roman Empire Era: The idea of a world Government was to replace war and lawlessness inherent in the international political system and politics amongst sovereign states in the international political economy. The Roman Empire era (between 510 BC and AD 530) was adjudged on historical account to be the closest to a complete world regional Government, though with geographical limitations in scope and powers when compared with contemporary merger schemes across the globe (expounds Chartur-vedi, 2006:48).

THE USSR: The 1917 Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) revolution started to expand in earnest with the Russian annexation of Baltic State in 1940s including the Ukraine. But in 1990/1991, there was a total collapse of communism as an ideology and the disintegration of the USSR into sixteen separatist states VIZ: Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Latvia; Laos; Lithuania; Armenia, Belarus; Estonia, Moldova and six core Moslem States of Azerbaijan; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Tajikistan; Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (expounds Rourke, 2009:117).

The balkanized conservative communist State of the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republic) may still regroup or regain a foothold for a sustainable economic and political cohesion and progress, by working its ways back into a world-class regional Government, mainly of the sixteen present States entity enjoying Afghanistan onomatopoeic names. Russia, landmass-wise, population size (160m), enormous resource –endowment in petroleum and liquefied natural gas (LNG) with military capabilities as a nuclear power, is still the most influential politically in this Asian zone, closely following China, India and Pakistan. Russia is the largest of the split USSR 16 States and also a member of the G8 and the APEC States. The Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty Talks (SALT 1, 11 & 111) is all about the USA and the Russian Federation reducing arms race and supplies across the globe (e.g. Anti-Ballistic Missiles, ABM and Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles, ICBM).

i. The Asian Trading blocs

The COMECON: The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) was established in 1949 and membership consist of eight (8) state-entities, including the former USSR and other East European former communist countries Viz: Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, Mongolia, Romania and Vietnam minus Albania and former Yugoslavia (expounds Hanson 1979:48). The

Association agreed in 1971 to create a joint convertible currency backed by gold within the then Soviet Union communist bloc.

The ASEAN: In the past, the East Asian and Pacific states pursuit and formation of world Government was typical of the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republic) leadership which unfortunately disintegrated into sixteen (16) smaller states in 1991 with the collapse of communist ideology of a centrally planned economy and non-profit maximization (as against the capitalist system), which frowned at the laissez –faire policy of private enterprises complementing national efforts. Be that as it may, today's notable exception of world regional Government aspirant from the Asian continent is the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) formed in 1967, originally by five states as: Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. The main aims of the Association were to promote regional political stability in common defense and regional security matters within the entire South East Asia, in addition to economic integration (aka mutual cooperation; free trade area, customs union, common market, and economic union). In 1993, five additional member –states joined as: Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar (former Burma) and the Vietnam, thus summing membership to a total of ten in the zone. In the same year, the ASEAN agreed to work to establish a free-trade area (FTA), eliminating most tariffs and import taxes on manufactured goods and services amongst member-states. Following its annual ministerial meetings every July (and extra-ordinary Summits in November), the Association (ASEAN) agreed in 2002 to consult with its 'Ten Dialogue Partners (TDP)' as: Australia, Canada, China, the European Union (EU) then of fifteen states (Viz: France, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Belgium and Luxembourg; Great Britain, Ireland and Denmark; Greece, Portugal and Spain; Austria, Sweden and Finland); India; Japan, South Korean Republic; New Zealand, Russia and the United States. The ASEAN focuses on economic integration and security matters as well as the modalities for coercive (or preventive) diplomacy in trade and investment issues of discord within the zone (expounds Hague 2001:5; Goldstein 2010:449). **The SPRTA:** The South Pacific Regional Trade Area (SPRTA) and economic cooperation Agreement was also on-going in the Asian continent amongst fourteen (14) Island states in the Pacific Hemisphere. This economic conference for Asia and Far East (e- CAFÉ) had taken root in the past and now being reinvigorated.

ii. Non-Regional Trading blocs

Political associations not essentially based on regional trading schemes include: the OAS (Organization of American States, 37); the AU (African Union, 54); the OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation, 62); the British Commonwealth of Nations (BCN, 54 less The Gambia and Zimbabwe by 2013); the United Nations (UN of 194 states with the entry of South Sudan in 2011 and UN as the successor to the League of Nations (LON, 1922); the League of Arab States (LAS, 1975 of 22 Arab states); The OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, 13 states); The G8 (Group of Eight wealthiest States GDP-wise worldwide); The WTO (World Trade Organization, of 194 UN member – States); et cetera.

iii. The European Trading Blocs

The EU: In today's world, the closest to a world inter-continental Government of twenty-seven states achieved by 2007 is the European Union (EU). This was accomplished in that the Union has gone through the five tenet stages of economic integration (Viz: Mutual cooperation, free-trade-area, customs union, common market and economic union) and remaining the political integration as supra-nationalism which is the ultimate and final sixth tenet stage to a world-class inter-continental Government began with the 2005 Treaty of Lisbon in Portugal (in the Continent of Europe). **Membership:** The EU twenty –seven (27) member-states are as follows: the 1951 six pioneer states of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands (former Holland). In 1973, Great

Britain, Denmark and Ireland joined the European Economic Community (as the EEC set up in March 25th 1957): Greece joined in 1981 and Spain and Portugal joined the EEC in 1986. Belgium was made the capital (state) by the Treaty of Maastricht (Germany) in 1992. In 1994, Austria, Finland and Sweden joined the EU and thus putting membership at fifteen (15) states. In 1997, the Treaty of Amsterdam (the Netherlands) agreed to extend the EU's role in justice and home affairs to address unemployment problems within the zone by increasing the authority of the European Parliament (EP) put-in-place. In 1999, the European Monetary Union (EMU) was launched irrevocably to link twelve (12) national currencies to the Euro-unit (€). In 2000, the Treaty of Nice (France) agreed on institutional reforms in the optimum currency area (OCA). In 2004, ten additional states joined the EU as: Poland, Latvia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Malta and Lithuania. In 2007, Bulgaria and Romania joined, thus making membership 27. An Islamic state, Turkey (72m population) wanted to join in 2002 and 2005 which proved abortive, due largely to the inconclusive human rights reform records on religion.

In 1994, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey membership were stopped, the first two by their citizens in a Plebiscite (aka referendum) and insufficient reforms on human rights law by Turkey demanded by the European Parliament. In 2005, the Treaty of Lisbon (Portugal) was initiated on constitutional reform and supra-nationalism drive, to involve one national identity (i.e. National Flag, National Anthem, Coat – of –Arms); et al. The EU (1951-2005) treaties may be summed up as: 1951 Treaty of Paris (France) on ECSC; 1957 Treaty of Rome (Italy) on EEC; 1965 Merge Treaty (on EUROATOM, ECSC and EEC); 1992 Treaty of Maastricht (Germany) on Belgium as EU capital; 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam (Netherlands) on EU Parliament; 1999 Treaty of Strasbourg (France) on EMU; 2000 Treaty of Nice (France) on institutional reforms; 2005 Treaty of Lisbon (Portugal) on constitutional reforms for a world inter-continental Government. The 27 EU states are: Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Britain, Denmark, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; Malta, Cyprus, Bulgaria and Romania (2005 World Bank data; Goldstein 2010: 367; et al)

The GAFTA: The Middle East 'Greater Arab free-trade-Area (GAFTA)' Agreement was signed by 14 states in 1996, at the Cairo (Egypt) Arab States Summit, comprising five North African states of: Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia; nine Middle East Arab states of: Bahrain; Iraq, Lebanon, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the UAE. With the Arab Awakening creating new trade and investment opportunities, four (4) additional states joined in 2005 as: Algeria, Jordan, Yemen and Palestine. In 2008, four (4) more African Arab states indicated interest to join this inter-regional trading bloc as: Mauritania, Comoros, Djibouti and Somalia (writes Nicholas & Javad, 2014:273). It is now evident that regional trading blocs provide strong economic ties to member-states as a win-win situation as contiguous states are always curious and eager to join the zone.

The OIC: The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is about the 3rd largest IGOs worldwide after the United Nations (194) and the ACP States (120) with about sixty-two member-States across the four (4) Continents of the universe, comprising of over 1.5bn Moslems worldwide, out of the 7bn world's population as at 2013 by the UNDP-data. Established in Rabat (Morocco) in September (25th) 1969, arising out of the criminal arson of Al Aqsa Mosque (in the Israeli occupied Jerusalem). The 1st Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) was held in Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) in 1970, but the Charter of OIC was adopted at the 11th Islamic Summit held in Dakar (Senegal) in March (13-14) 2008. From 30 founding members, the OIC (then as the Organization of Islamic Conference) has grown to sixty-two states in the past thirty-eight years, to protect the collective voice of Moslems worldwide and work for conflicts settlement amongst member-states.

The OIC **main aims** under the Charter (<http://www.oicun.org>) include: Consolidating the bonds of fraternity, safeguarding common legitimate interests and causes, by unifying efforts to tackle the challenges faced by the Islamic world in particular and the international community in general; to defend and combat the defamation of Islam; to establish an Islamic common market and economic well-being in member-States; to encourage dialogue amongst civilizations and religions; to promote research and cooperation amongst member-States and in principles, allow members to uphold the respect for national Sovereignty, good governance, democracy, human rights (law) protection, respect for the rule of law and the fundamental freedoms as stipulated in the 1945 UN Charter and the International law.

The OIC **three main bodies** include: The Islamic Summit (of kings and Heads of State and Governments); the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) and the General Secretariat. The 2008 11th Islamic Summit Conference held in Dakar (Senegal) elected the President of Senegal as the current chairman of the OIC. The OIC seven other main **subsidiary bodies** as specialized Institutions and Organs include: Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (RTC/IC); Islamic University of Technology (IUT); Islamic Development Bank (IDB); IS-ESCO (Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization); Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU), International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and the General Council for Islamic Banks and Financial Institutions (GC / IBFI). **Membership Size:** The OIC identifiable sixty-two member-states at the moment are as follows:

Afghanistan (1969); Algeria (1969); Chad (1969); Egypt (1969); Guinea (1969); Indonesia (1969); Jordan (1969); Iran (1969); Kuwait (1969); Lebanon (1969); Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (1969); Malaysia (1969); Mali (1969); Mauritania (1969); Morocco (1969); Niger (1969); Pakistan (1969); Palestine (1969); Somalia (1969); Saudi Arabia (1969); Senegal (1969); Sudan (1969); Yemen (1969); Turkey (1969); Tunisia (1969); Bahrain (1969); Syrian Arab Republic (1972); Sierra Leone (1972); Oman (1972); Qatar (1972); UAE (1972); Bangladeshi (1974); Burkina Faso (then Upper Volta, 1974); Gabon (1974); The Gambia (1974); Guinea-Bissau (1974); Cameroun (1974); Uganda (1974); Iraq (1975); Maldives (1976); The Comoros (1976); Djibouti (1978); Benin (1983); Brunei (1984); Nigeria (1986); Albania (1992); Tajikistan (1992); Azerbaijan (1992); Turkmenistan (1992); Kyrgyzstan (1992); Mozambique (1994); Kazakhstan (1995); Suriname (1996); Uzbekistan (1996); Central African Republic (1996); Togo (1997); Thailand (1998); Guyana (1998); Russian Federation (2005); sixty-two members, plus or minus Bosnia and Herzegovina (1994).

The LAS: League of Arab States (LAS, aka Arab League) is an Association of twenty-two Arab States in Africa and European Continents (Viz: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, minus Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi-Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria (suspended), Tunisia, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Yemen) with three associate member-states as Brazil, Eritrea and Venezuela that enjoy the observer-status. The Association agreed to harmonize and facilitate social, cultural, economic, scientific and political programs designed to promote collective national interest of its 25 member-states in the international system.

The EFTA: The European free trade Association (EFTA) comprises of six (6) member-states in the continent of Europe as: Austria, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland. Established in 1975, the benefits of economic internationalism was the goal of this association for reduction in tariffs protectionism, regional mutual cooperation, exchange of culture and metropolitan enlightenment, promotion of democracy and good governance, prosperity in the zone and reduction in violent street crimes, specialization within the zone, innovations through competition, promotion and the development of capital inflows between and amongst member-states.

iv. Other Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs)

The ACP-EU Partnership (1957): The African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states and the European Union (EU) partnership started in 1957 *Lome* (Togo) Convention between 77 ACP states (now 120 by September Summit in Tehran, Iran 2013) and the European Economic Community (15 EEC, now 27 EU states). This global partnership centered lopsidedly on agricultural produce by the ACP to the EU. The EU import buying interests were on raw materials such as raw cocoa, fresh bananas, sugar cane, et al to feed the confectionary factories in Western Europe engaged in the manufacturing of cookies, sweet, chocolate and other related finished goods. Nigeria and the African Union (AU) member-states belong to the ACP states with *Cotonou* (Benin Republic) partnership Agreement in 2001. There were other conventions as *Lome I, II and III* bilateral trade pact. The ACP states formed the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM, in 1956) during the cold war era and ideological dichotomy between capitalism and communism as social systems. Nonetheless, non-Alignment as a foreign policy orientation for objectivity and neutrality in the face of mounting tension between the West and the East then had no treaty obligations by NAM member-states (expounds Frankel 1973:78; Adeniran, 1983:191).

The United States President, Bill Clinton in 2001 floated the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), for African Union local textiles export to have access to the United States textile and other trade related markets. Today, this paper holds the position that trade should center on petroleum (owned by over 22 African states) and motor vehicle exchange from the EU states in comparative advantage terms, to negotiate the landing cost of expensive vehicles and auto-parts from the European Union in general and the G8 in particular. For instance, the landing cost for Hummer Jeep in Nigeria is about N14m and the import duty at 100% which puts the market value at N28m plus the importer's mark-up price. The EU and the G8 should reduce the prices of auto-models to the ACP states to achieve deserved value for Nigerian buyers' investment. In sum, the ACP-EU Partnership Agreements and trade bargaining Rounds (TBR) should centre on the ACP oil and gas, iron ore, cocoa, sugar cane, bananas and the EU motor vehicles, genuine auto-parts and electronics value reductions, not only on trade tariffs slash but also on non-trade barriers containment.

The G8: The Group of Eight (G8) began in 1975, like the ECOWAS in May 28, 1975, as the G7 of the most economically buoyant non-communist Western Europe and Asian states worldwide, to coordinate their economic and political policies. In 1997, Russia joined the Group of seven states as: Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan and the United States, with a change in acronym as the G8. This Group of eight states also represents the 'pinnacle of economic power' with its member-states generating over sixty-five (65%) percent of world's gross domestic product, GDP (writes Rourke, 2009:449). Russia was admitted due to her geo-strategic relevance in the Asian continent as a world trite nuclear power, also endowed with petroleum and number one in the production and export of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) with largest reserves followed by Nigeria worldwide. Since 2000, the leadership of non-member states was invited with the observer-status which began to attend the G8 September Annual Summit upon formal invitation by the Group and notably from the LDCs (e.g. Nigeria Head of State and Government in 2007). The G8 has a domineering influence and control over world oil drilling technology and automobile businesses.

The OPEC: The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a sellers' trade association like the G8 established in Baghdad (Iraq) on 8th September 1960 by five pioneer member-states consisting of four Middle East countries and one South Latin American State as: Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. Today, membership has grown to thirteen states almost across the five continents of the world minus Australasia and Oceania as: four African states of Angola, Algeria, Libya

and Nigeria; six Middle East states in Europe as: Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE, Dubai), one Asian state as Indonesia and two South Latin American states of: Ecuador and Venezuela. Nigeria joined the OPEC in 1971 shortly after the civil hostility (1966-69) and the OPEC is an oil cartel system, an oligopoly or a group of a few sellers' association guided by certain rules and procedure to avoid oil-glut globally as: price-fixing; market-share strategies; (reduction in competition, allocation of clients), production output quota, et al to ensure revenue certainty, annual budgets implementation and remaining in the oil price leadership list in the global oil market, not on the oil price followership list.

The APEC: Still on economic cooperation and development (ECDs) worldwide, the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is somehow like the G8, formed in 1989 by twenty-one (21) member-states as perhaps the only Inter-Government Organization (IGO) and trading group worldwide without binding commitments by Treaty clauses (expounds Goldstein, 2010: 449, Rourke 2009: 347; Viotti 2008:395; et al). The APEC consist notably of China (2bn); India (1bn); the United States (350m); Russia (160m); Singapore; Malaysia; Vietnam (Da Nang); Japan and thirteen other States (as Australia, Brunei, Indonesia, South Korea, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan/Hong Kong, Canada, Mexico, Chile, Peru). The decisions of the trade Association are made by consensus and mutual consent with **no treaty obligations** and the APEC accounts for over forty (40%) percent of the world's gross domestic product (GDP). The APEC secretariat is based in Singapore and the Association agreed at inception and in principle to remove all trade barriers' amongst member – states with free and open trade investment avenues by year 2020. The APEC meets regularly on economic consultations amongst its members with an Annual Summit meetings.

The G 20: In 2003, the least developing countries (LDCs) formed a loose trade alliance called the group of 20 states (G 20) led by 5 member states as Australia, Brazil, China, India, and South Africa, to strengthen their negotiating positions with developed countries (DCs). In same 2003, at the Cancun Round (Mexico), international trade negotiations were intensified as between DCs (North) and the LDCs (South) trade relations expounds Rourke (2009: 424). In November 2014, the Australia G 20 Summit was held at Brisbane (Australia) involving the EU (27 states) and direct participation by four EU states as: Germany, France, Italy and Great Britain; Russian Federation, Argentina, Canada, the United States, Mexico, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. The G 20 negotiations always center on issues discussed in Cancun Round 2003 (expounds Rourke, 2009:424; Goldstein, 2010:295).

The SAARC: The south Asian association for regional cooperation (SAARC) was established in 1985 by seven Asian states as Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri-Lanka and joined by Afghanistan in 2005. The Association was to support collective self-reliance, socio-cultural development and the promotion of local manufacturing in all the Asian member-states. The SAARC Secretariat is based at Kath-Mandu city (Nepal) and seven additional states joined as associate members with the observer-status as the EU (27 states), Australia, China, Iran, Japan, South Korea and the United States (En.Wikipedia.org/tradebloc) . The SAARC became a South Asian free trade area (SAFTA) in 2004 at the association's 12th Summit in Islamabad (Pakistan) and enjoys a market-size of 1.6 billion population with common market tenet envisaged in 2016.

The CERTA: The acronym is Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement (CERTA) formed in 1983 between Australia and New Zealand. **The AUSFTA:** It is Australia and United States free trade agreement (AUSFTA) entered into in 2003. **The APTA:** It is Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (aka Bangkok Agreement) established in 1975 by five states as Bangladesh, India, Laos, South Korea and Sri-Lanka; joined in 2001 by China and 2013 by Mongolia) in which members agreed in 2009 to

implement a trade facilitation framework agreement (TFFA) to streamline trade rules and procedure. The Asian Continent has a list of 49 sovereign States and 6 dependent territories including East Timor (expounds Eziakor, 1995:103).

v. The Intra- African Trading Blocs

The five key regional trading blocs in Africa are as follows: The ECOWAS, the EAC, the COMESA, the CEUCA and SACU. The ECOWAS consist of 16 states; the East African Community consist of 5 States; the 18 states of the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), with preferential Trade Area (PTA) for the Southern and Eastern African states; the Customs and Economic Union of Central Africa (CEUCA or UDEAC as *Union Donna-niere et Economique del'Afrique Centrale*) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), now the 10 states of Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU) leading to a common monetary area (CMA). The main aims of intra-African Trading Blocs are: to promote economic cooperation in Africa, strengthen regional solidarity, peace and security, regional balance of power by common defense to attain sustainable growth and development in the zone, market growth and expansion and create a common external tariff (CET) and reduce import taxes and non-tariff trade barriers within and across the zones in Africa.

The ECOWAS: The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) consist of sixteen member-states (VIZ: three *Lusa*-phone (Portuguese speaking) States as: Cape Verde; Guinea and Guinea Bissau; five *Anglo*-phone (English-speaking) States as: The Gambia, Ghana; Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra-Leone and eight *Franco*-phone (French-speaking) States as: Benin Republic; Burkina Faso; Cote d'Ivoire; Mali; minus Mauritania(2000); Niger; Senegal and Togo Republic. But, the ECOWAS is only at the 3rd stage of the five tenets of economic integration before achieving a political union as supra-nationalism (aka world regional Government). The harmonization of commercial policies and the abolition of import and export taxes make for a 'common market 4th tenet stage of economic integration for the ECOWAS. The ECOWAS members are afraid of trade diversion rather than trade creation within its zone. Again in 2012, the ECOWAS wanted to float a single currency (e.g. Eco-unit like Euro-unit) which fifteen states of EU accomplished by 1999 excluding Great Britain, Denmark and Ireland who retained their national currencies within the EU zone. Can the ECOWAS actualize this fifth tenet stage by jumping the 4th tenet stage of a common market? A comprehensive Treaty on commodity by commodity may be required to achieve a common market in ECOWAS since majority of member states rely on import revenue for national development.

The ECOWAS Institutions: The five main organs of the ECOWAS are as follows: the Authority (of Heads of State and Governments); the Council of Ministers (of Finance); the Executive Secretariat; The Tribunal (for conflict Resolutions) and five specialized technical Commission, notably on trade, industry, transport, social- cultural and the Fund (for loss in revenue compensation cooperation and development).

Obstacles to the ECOWAS Common Market (4th Stage): The common market tenet constraints with the ECOWAS zone include: Immigrants influx and jobs restriction between and amongst member-states; alien stateless persons as refugees and asylum-seekers from some states to the zone; import revenue loss and prevention by some states due to trade liberalization and duty concessions' resistance in withdrawal of national currencies for one adoptable currency as common denominator within the zone; inadequate basic infrastructure; the balance of payments (BOPs) liquidity crises; import prohibition preference by states on national security grounds against firearms and ammunition smuggling; national health grounds against second-hand clothing; imposition of anti-dumping law clauses to protect excise traders and

infant industries against foreign induced cut throat competition, demanded generally by the LDCs and Nigeria in particular; import substitution for imported non-durable and cheaper foreign manufactured fake close substitutes. For instance, in 2003 Cancun Round in Mexico on multilateral diplomacy under the WTO platform, a lot of unresolved economic issues were raised as between Developing Countries (DCs) and Least Developing Countries (LDCs).

The ECOWAS envisaged common market challenges include: drop in revenue by member -states from removed import and export taxes, jobs loss and jobs export, free relocation of factories and firms for cheap qualitative labor, capital flight as between states within the zone to take advantage of factors-input, *forex* arbitrage and its regulation, elimination of marginal producers of close substitutes, trade diversion and the collapse of some local factories in the zone, increase in trans-border crime rates, commodity by commodity negotiations by states on import and export prohibitions, the imperativeness of a trade treaty put in place, holistic national security by states on national health grounds for the ingress of items considered to be harmful goods (such as poultry, second-hand clothing, hot drinks to Muslim community etcetera). By the way Nigeria's foreign trade policy under s.19 (a-e) of 1999 Constitution centers on 'a just world economic order', settlement of international investment trade disputes by Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods where cost and time saving are required in place of a protracted court adjudication, respect for international law and treaty obligations (such as paying annual due as at when due), international cooperation, consolidation of universal peace (as demonstrated in the quick resolution of the Bakassi Island case with Cameroun), having mutual respect amongst all nations and the elimination of discrimination in trade matters with international best practices on foreign trade, focus on African intra-trade integration and unity as well as the protection, promotion and support for national interest in all bilateral trade pact and the WTO multi-lateral diplomacy. Diplomacy here entails taking a shrewd stand on trade bargaining rounds with finesse, politeness or great tact.

On the ECOWAS, there is too much stress on trade-related matters than achieving a world regional Government which centered on anti-dumping law clauses, reparation for revenue loss arising from merger schemes, trade deflection or diversion anxiety amongst member-states and looking up to other regional trading blocs to secure a stereo-type approach to a complete political union (aka supra-nationalism). Conflict of laws also subsists as between the municipal law of member –states and the international law provisions of trade treaties (e.g. The WTO General Agreements). There is also the absence of a progressive codification of the ECOWAS citizenship through treaties as done in the case of the European Union (EU) having no less than **eight treaty clauses** from 1951 to 2005. Residency permit and holding of visitor's Green Card as visa requirements still subsist within the ECOWAS zone which frowns at non-domicile ECOWAS citizen to live and work beyond national frontiers as immigrants within the zone. In essence, the term 'immigrants' not only still exist within the ECOWAS region but also makes undertakings of a common commercial policy nature cumbersome with industrial joint venture projects within the zone for accelerated development. In sum, the ECOWAS is yet to achieve a common market tenet attained by the EU in 1957 as the European Economic Community.

The EAC: The East-African Community (EAC) consists of five member-states of Africa, formed in 1967 by three (3) states as: Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. In 1964, Zanzibar and Tanganyika merged to become Tanzania. In 1991, Burundi and Rwanda joined the EAC to bring membership to five states within the zone. The EAC has a huge economic trade Agenda which includes petroleum and gas explorations in Kenya (carried out by Tullow oil Company in March 2012); in Uganda (by a French oil major, Total oil and China's state oil corporation, CHODC, in June 2006) and in Tanzania (by BG oil

Co in October 2010). The EAC has a master-plan for an optimum currency area (OCA) by adopting one currency within the zone; fifteen (15) metro-lines to link up the states' capital cities of Nairobi (Kenya); Kampala (Uganda); Dar el Salam (Tanzania); Kigali (Burundi) and Bujumbura (Rwanda). A population size and market area of about 100m people three more states may join the EAC as: Ethiopia; South Africa and South Sudan (2011) with on-shore oil explorations and the master –plan includes a common power pool; gas pipelines and tarred truck-A high ways across the zone.

The CACEU: The Central African Customs and Economic Union (CACEU aka UDEAC as *Union Dona-niere et Economic del' Afrique Centrale*) was established in 1959 and comprise of four (4) central states of Africa as: Cameroun, Central Africa Republic, Democratic Republic (Dr) of Congo and Gabon. It developed out of Equatorial Customs Union (writes Hanson 1979: 68). Today, the CACEU has developed up to common market (4th) tenet stage of economic integration and has two more steps to accomplish a world-class regional Government.

The AU: The African Union (AU 2001) was established as a successor to the OAU (Organization of African Unity, set up in 1963 at the Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as its present Headquarters) and the Executive Secretariat, rebuilt to a twenty-one (21) storey structure and donated to the Union by Chinese Republic in 2012. The Objects of the AU are however not economic but essentially political like the OAS to promote African unity and solidarity (aka *Pan Africanism*); to defend the Sovereignty of the fifty four (54) member –states; eradicate all forms of discrimination on account of place of birth; circumstances of birth, religion, gender, race or political ideology; to promote international cooperation and safeguard international human rights legal provisions as well as coordinate and harmonize all economic, diplomatic, educational, health, welfare, scientific and defense policies of the African continent as a whole.

The highest policy-making organ of the AU is an Annual Summit of the Assembly (of Heads of State and Governments) with extra-ordinary session provisions whenever the need arises. The African-Union (AU) Council of Ministers holds two sessions a year and given its diversity and often conflict of interest on many issues by its members, forging cooperation as applicable to the EU have been difficult and arduous a process on its many world Government issues. For instance, there is no African High Command as a Standing Army like the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) for the twenty – eight member-states of the EU, including Canada and the United States. The Libyan President, Muammar Gaddafi once (in 1995) canvassed for a United States of Africa (USA 2) in line with Kwame Nkrumah's *Pan Africanism* (in 1960s). The AU has similar organs like the United Nations (VIZ: UNGA; UNSC; the ICJ; the Secretariat; the Economic and Social Council, the ECOSOC; the Trusteeship Council, WBG, IMF, WTO and 17 other associated specialized Agencies) as the Assembly; Council of Ministers; Court of Justice; the Executive Secretariat; Pan African Parliament; the Commission for ADR means; seven specialized technical committee and three Financial Institutions (as the African Bank, AB; African Monetary Fund, AMF and the African Investment Bank, AIB). The five continents of the world may someday end up having five mega continental Government in addition to the United Nations as the most contemporary world Government aspirant in the international political system.

The UN: In line with the 1945 Charter (A.1-111), the structure of the United Nations (UN) consists of six major organs and over twenty (20) specialized associate agencies. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is the lawmaking body with resolutions, 194 member-states with the admission of South-Sudan in 2011, one vote per state with several other dependent entities enjoying an observer-status. Five states possess stay action veto power in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) while

189 other members do not wield such (reject others decision) vast powers. The UNSC is the law enforcement arm of the United Nations with 15 member-states in all (USA, UK, France, Russia and China), as five permanent members arising from the end of the World War 2 arrangement, whereas 10 other states serve on a rotational 2 yearly term. The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General for five-year tenure renewable for a second term (e.g. The Substantive Scribe, Ban Ki-Moon).

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has fifteen independent Judges as international public servants, paid once per annum as tax free income disbursed upfront and judges serve for a maximum of nine years term re-electable after 3 years as the ICJ statute (A.1-33) stipulated and the composition is a body of Jurists made up of elected independent fifteen judges where no 2 judges come from one state. National groups present nominees to fill the ICJ vacancy as membership is drawn from different nationalities. In law interpretations, recognized competence, nationality zone eligibility, high moral character, suitability and credentials were the essential considerations for election into the ICJ Bench. The IGOs five major voting formula includes veto power vote, equality of states vote, population-based vote, and wealth-based vote, majority voting and weighted voting. The Economic and Social (ECOSOC) Council comprise of fifty-four member-states, to serve for three years with one vote per member. The Trusteeship Council deals with the global issues of refugees though no longer actively performing as many entities across the globe have gotten independence.

The specialized agencies of the United Nations are many (including the WTO, WBG, IMF, WHO, WIPO, WMO, ILO, ITO, ICAO, IAEA, IMO, FAO, UNDP, UNEP, UNV, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, et cetera) expounds Eziakor (1995: 84). Thus the UN is a 'world Government' in international politics so personified though without a Standing Army, but it can mobilize peace-keeping and peace-enforcement missions at short notice amongst member-states across the globe. In sum and depending on the level of analysis, political science is essentially all about the study of social systems of Government and politics, whereas politics is about the use of powers and influence by state actors and non-state actors in the international system.

vi. The main Trading Blocs in the Americas

The President of the United States Mr. Nixon (in 1986) opines that geo-politics to the Americans was all about linking of the whole world to its national interest as self-interest. The Americas continent has about seven (7) major trading blocs identified as follows: The NAFTA (North Americas Free trade Area); The FTAA (Free trade Area of the Americas); The SCM (Southern Cone Common Market in Latin America, aka 'MERCOSUR') and the Andean Community of Nations (ACN); the LAFTA (Latin American Free-Trade –Association); the CARIFTA (Caribbean Free-Trade-Association) and the CACM (Central American Common Market). This paper shall ex-ray only a few of the associations.

The NAFTA: The North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) was established in 1994, by three (3) states of: Canada, the United States and Mexico. In trade volumes, this association stand out as the largest regional trading area (RTA) in the Western Hemisphere (expounds Rourke 2009:411; Goldstein 2010: 449; et al). In 2009, reduction in tariffs and non-tariff barriers on all products traded was achieved from some 20, 000 trade items and products category in 2004. Also allowed between the three member-states was uninterrupted cargo transportation access across borders and reduction on foreign investments to non-member states, with a standing commission to deal with trade and investment disputers that may come up under the NAFTA Agreement, by the representatives of the three member-states thereof of significance, many USA companies have 'relocated' their facilities to Mexico, to tap cheap labor and

resource –endowment like some manufacturing firms did re-locate to the ECOWAS zone from Nigeria in 2012 when Ghana achieved 24 hours uninterrupted power supply to industrial layouts.

The FTAA: The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) consist of the thirty-seven (37) states in the four (4) sub-zones of the Americas as: The North, the central, the South (Latin) American and the Caribbean Island, minus Cuba at the USA insistence at the inauguration of the summit in Miami, Florida State of the USA in 1994. The danger of increase labor migration and loss of jobs in the USA is causing panic to the policy-makers in the United States. **The SCM:** The Southern Common Market (SCM), also known as ‘MERCOSUR’ was formed in 1995 by four (4) South Latin American states as: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Venezuela later joined as a full-member, with five ‘associate’ members as: Bolivia, Chile; Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

The ACN: In 2004, Andean Community of Nations (ACN) was established, consisting of five (5) member-states as: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador Peru and Venezuela. The ACN was eager to merge in 2005 with the SCM to form a more robust union of South American Nations (USAN). The USAN was envisaged to emulated the European Union (EU) by aspiring to have own common currency, continental parliament, common passport and transit facilities next work of metro-lines amongst member-states. **The LAFTA:** The Latin American Free-Trade- Association (LAFTA) consist of 16 member-states in South America as follows: Argentina; Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, with an open ended membership from the zone. Free trade area had to do with trade liberalization and the harmonization of administrative policies as the second tenet stage of economic integration. **The CARIFTA:** The Caribbean free trade Association (CARIFTA) consists of seven (7) member-states as: Antigua; Barbados; Dominican Republic; Grenada; Guyana; Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. It is a free-trade-area for the zone.

The CACM: The Central American Common Market (CACM) constitutes a membership of five (5) states as: Costa Rica; El Salvador; Guatemala; Honduras and Nicaragua. It was established by Treaty of Central American Economic Integration in 1960, concluded in Managua (Nicaragua) and the Council meets every 3 months as a policy-making organ of the CACM composed of Economic Ministers of member-states. The Council elects a Secretary-General with 3 years tenure of office. The CACM agreed to introduce a uniform customs tariffs nomenclature done in 1965, to attract industrial capital and diversity their economies. The Treaty frowns at exports subsidy and authorized the free-movement of workers and capital amongst member-states with uniform tax incentives, rules and procedure on cargo road haulage contract and transit shipment. With the 1980s global economic recession, the CACM member-states GDP (Gross Domestic Product) began to decline, due to annual budget deficit and galloping inflation afflicting the region. The 1985 economic Agreement with the EEC (European Economic Community) however led to the formation of the central American Parliament (in 1986) as a consultative body to the EU, with the two Parliaments (EP and CAP) forming cooperative economic ties. Costa Rica is adjudged by observers in the zone to be the wealthiest CACM member, GDP-wise.

The CACM is one of the seven major regional trading blocs in the Western Hemisphere, besides the G3, the North American FTA; the Southern common market (SCM); the Andean pact and the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CCCM). The Central American Common Market (CACM) restructuring in the 1990s include the setting up of two financial institutions to coordinate monetary policy as the CA monetary council and the CA Bank for Economic Integration (CBEI) to finance private public development projects, stabilize the exchange rates, reduce national debt crises, implement a common external tariff (CET) and increase intra-regional exports within zone (expounds Lion Christopher, 2001; Irvin George 1987)

The OAS: The Organization of American States (OAS) consists 16 South Latin American States of: Antarctica, Argentina, Bolivia; Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Falkland Island (UK); French Guiana; Guyana; Paraguay; Peru; Suriname; Tristanda Cunha (UK); Uruguay and Venezuela. The ten (10) Caribbean Banana Islands as: Bahamas; Barbados; Cayman Island (UK); Caracas; Cuba; Dominican Republic; Haiti; Jamaica; Puerto Rico; Trinidad and Tobago. The seven (7) central American States as: Belize Costa Rica; El Salvador; Guatemala; Honduras; Nicaragua and Panama. The four (4) North American States as: Alaska, Canada, Mexico and the United States (USA). The OAS Role: Continental political Associations like the OAS and the AU, are to handle the issues of political insurgencies within their continents, counter-terrorism measures and combating religious extremism, handling of visa and e-passport procurement as broad policies matters; promotion, respect and exchange of culture and its diversity in the Continent; continental division of labor in critical skills, peculiarities and resource – endowment; trade and economic inter-dependencies and having a Standing Army (e.g. NATO Military alliance for Europe; ECOMOG for West Africa, et al).

The WTO: The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the successor of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) system, established in 1994 and became functional in 1995 in Geneva (Switzerland), headed by a Director-General. The WTO deals with trade-in-goods in addition to trade-in-services not inclusive under the GATT system (1947-93). The GATT system had seven past *trade bargaining rounds* from its inception as: 1947 *Geneva Round* (Switzerland); 1948 *Annecy Round* (France); 1951 *Torquay Round* (England); 1956 *Geneva Round* (Switzerland); 1960/61 *Dillion Round* (Geneva); 1964/67 *Kennedy Round* (Geneva); 1973/79 *Tokyo Round* (Geneva) and six World Trade Organization's ministerial conferences in 1986 *Punta Del Este Round* (Uruguay); 2001 *Doha Round* (Qatar); 2003 *Cancun Round* (Mexico); 2005 *Hong Kong Round* (China); 2007 *Doha Round* (Qatar) and 2008 *Washington Round* (USA).

For instance, the 2003 Cancun Round in Mexico as a multi-lateral diplomacy centered on tariffs reduction, permitting competition, promoting transparency and enforcing the intellectual property (IP) rights; limiting public procurement by Governments and curtailing investment restrictions on real estate in the host-states as canvassed by Developed countries (DCs) whereas the least developing countries (LDCs) championed by Brazil, China, India and South Africa canvassed for the removal of subsidies on agricultural businesses practiced by DCs with a united front in negotiations over barriers on agricultural imports and price fluctuation on primary produce created by the Developed countries over cocoa, sugarcane and textile African designs, et al to reduce the economic plight of the South (expounds Rourke 2009:411).

The WTO Role in Regional Trade: The role of the World Trade Organization (WTO) as contained in Article 3 of its sixteen articles document are as follows: To facilitate multi-lateral trade agreement (MTA) amongst the 194 member-states of the United Nations (UN) through trade bargaining rounds, including entities that enjoy the UN observer –status; to serve as a forum for trade negotiations amongst member-states; to enable states have respect for the intellectual property (IP) rights through trade-in-services; to adopt the rules of origin amongst regional trading blocs; to coordinate dispute settlement understanding (DSU) on rules and procedure governing investment and trade disputes; to achieve a greater coherence and cooperation in global economic policy-making notably with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (IBRD) and its affiliation (as the IDA, IFC; MIGA and ICSID); to encourage WTO Valuation Agreement (A.8) adoption in foreign trade with the replacement of the Brussels (Belgium) Definition of Value (BDV) considered too rigid and based on whichever duty is higher; to adopt trade related investment measures and the General Agreements on

subsidies and countervailing measures and to agree on the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures in foreign trade amongst States..

Theoretical Underpinnings of Regional Merger

Schemes: Economic Integration and Supra-nationalism

Merger schemes to a World Government refers to the five stages of economic integration and one major step to a political formation by a group of States as a confederation whether under horizontal or vertical level of development to gain trade concessions through mutual accommodation by constitutional reform, into a supra-national organization, supra-nationalism or a complete political union.

Regional Blocs: The primary aims of regional trading blocs are essentially to remove economic barriers to trade, mobilize the unemployed idle resources in men, money (capital) and (raw) materials within the zone for greater participation in world trade and world politics. Member-states sovereignty and national interests are harmonized into one-entity in the sixth formation stage of this world regional Government. On **Inter-Continental Trading Arrangements**, this version of merger scheme also exists in the forms of the OPEC, the G8, the APEC; the G8, the APEC, the ACP-EU partnership, et al to foster commercial interests or military alliances, such as the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization of 28 member-states, including Canada and the US)

Continental Political Associations: The identified third category as continental political associations (CPA) include the OAS; the AU, LAS, et al with the primary role of safeguarding the continents from political insurgencies, using counter-terrorism to combating religious extremism, unconstitutional change of Government by Military *coup d'état* and counter-coups; visa and e-passport procurement guidelines for the continent; promotion of exchange of cultural values and respect for its diversity; continental division of labor on critical skills sharing and resource-endowment sharing; economic prosperity and collaboration in mineral extractions, management of natural disasters, oil spill in host communities by oil MNCs, solving the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons; trade inter-dependencies and having a Standing Army or its mobilization at every emergency (e.g. NATO for Europe; ECOMOG for the West African zone).

The social legal instruments for merger schemes as integration schemes are conceptualized in terms of the stages in the harmonization of economic policies and political decisions of member-states. The social-legal instruments inherent in various types of merger schemes may be distinguished as follows: Mutual cooperation: Economic and cultural ties and cosmopolitan exchange of values, Free Trade Area (FTA) involves the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) and the harmonization of administrative policies, Customs Union involves having a Common External Tariff (CET) against 3rd party states and tariffs reduction within the zone, Common Market entails the abolition of import and export taxes and the harmonization of commercial policies in the zone, Economic Union involves having a common currency usage in the zone as a monetary union or an optimum currency area (OCA) status with one Apex bank, decentralization within the confederation and the withdrawal of national currencies by member-states within the zone. Supra-nationalism means a political union as the sixth stage with the loss of sovereignty, one constitution, one national identity (such as: National Flag, National anthem, Coat of arms; et al); common defense and security, one rotational presidency, as a supra-national organization.

Challenges for the ECOWAS Attainment of World Regional Government

Mutual Cooperation: This initial stage is all about cultural exchange which calls for a loose economic and cultural interaction amongst member-states within the zone, which may not be backed by Treaty, but by a multilateral pact (e.g. customs cooperation council, CCC in Brussels, Belgium as a typical non-men-clature). This mutual cooperation precludes the normal import and export duty rates chargeable by member-states on raw materials, essential goods and services and luxury items with higher import duty rates.

Free-Trade- Area: This second stage and tenet of economic integration entails the free movement of persons and personal effects (PE), minus free movement of goods. Hence, member-states are free to maintain quantitative commodity restrictions, such as import quota and customs duties imposition as major sources of revenue to a state to cover the cost of Government administration, policies harmonization, free movement of persons and personal household effects may be allowed entry and exit amongst member-states.

Customs Union: The social-legal instruments applicable under customs union are common external tariff (CET) and reduction in import/export taxes. In essence, the theory of customs union is essentially built around two other vital concepts of 'trade creation' within the zone by reduction in taxes, to avoid 'trade diversion' outside the zone. Trade creation occurs when domestic production replaced an imported close substitute which ordinarily may be cheaper and more durable, due to reduction in taxes amongst member-states. Trade diversion, on the other hand, occurs when import from a lower cost supplier from outside the Union is replaced by a higher cost supplier from within the zone. Welfare is reduced in aggregate terms.

Common Market: In conceptualized form, common market refers to a complete abolition of trans-border internal tariff within the zone and the harmonization of commercial policies, free movement of goods and passengers-in-baggage. This fourth stage is not achievable within ECOWAS at the moment because most member-states rely heavily on import-duty as revenue income source for national development plans. With the abolition of customs tariffs, the common rule would be fair competition and the free movement of the factors of production, notably labor and capital. The 1957 Treaty of Rome got the European Union (EU) into its four tenet of economic integration as the European Economic Community (EEC) with a common market in intra-community trade.

Economic Union: This fifth tenet entails a common currency, withdrawal of national currencies within the zone and a complete economic integration. This tenet is regarded as the most economically advanced stage in any merger scheme where common currency (e.g. Eco-currency) is involved with a rational national currencies mint-parity with the Euro-unit, in the case of European Union (EU) as a typical example in reality with an apex bank. The African Economic Community, a newly formed merger scheme wants to achieve this 5th stage by incorporating other stages at once, with multiple treaties. This is a tall order for the ECOWAS in particular.

World Regional Government: This sixth tenet is a complete political union also known as supra-nationalism by member-states conceding sovereignty. The collapse of national sovereignty and national interest, be it core, secondary, general, *conflictual* or competitive, into one-entity is a huge source of worry to politicians in Nigeria and political parties (expounds Ojo and Sesay, 2002:87).

A world regional Government entails the establishment of a supra-national authority and other constituted authorities from the old order, whose decision are building on hitherto member-states. Above all, the alternative approaches to a peaceful political unity, includes national self-determination,

partitioning of diverse identities into confederation or federating entities to make a world regional Government. Other challenges to the ECOWAS attainment of regional Government include solving the affiliation and dependence of members on past colonial mentors, such as Franco-phone member-states trade goods from France; the issue held down by aid-tying, foreign debt-rescheduling with compound interest and rising poverty that makes economic independence a tall-dream.

The need for 'debt forgiveness' from the creditor nations and colonial mentors was vital, so that members would operate on some horizontal level of development. Issues of smuggling occur because member-states rely on import and export taxes. With disparities in levels of development, it is difficult to allow for free-flow of goods and services of labor within the zone. There is also a wide gap in foreign exchange rates, making Nigerians engage in unwholesome consumption of banned frozen chicken from Benin Republic; cross-border crimes, absence of an effective Tribunal and legislative body on processes to review the ECOWAS Treaty of Lagos (1975). The issues of institutional reforms encompassing the right of residency by ECOWAS citizens within the zone; invigorating the ECOWAS Court of Justice (ECJ); inter-states road transit, right to business establishment, review of monetary cooperation adopted in 1987 for a single Eco-currency in the zone by 1994 moved to 2015. Cessation of intra-state regional warring factions, peace-monitoring, a Trust Fund establishment and an ECOWAS information policy are all on the front-burner for resolution. In sum, the ECOWAS needs regular platform for dialogue, if it is to achieve the Eco-currency status by 2020.

Conclusion

The ECOWAS zone was endowed with human and natural resources to exploit to the fullest potentialities by joint exploration as regional projects, transportation expansion with telecommunications and cooperation in travel and tourism. ECOWAS remained on customs union tenet from 2001 and have not strategized on common market tenet achieved by the European Union (EU) as far back as 1957 as European Economic Community (EEC). The politics of world regional Government had led to bi-national states and multi-ethnic states emergence in the past across the globe. Common defense and security, common foreign policy, common currency, common market and common political union platforms have been the major considerations, for such integrative merger mechanisms and Nigeria may be identified as a multi-national state, often commonly mistaken as a multi-ethnic entity described as a multi-tribal state. The position of this paper remained that Nigeria may have ethnic-nationalities but not tribal-nationalities. For diverse nationalities to stay together as a single entity, considerable efforts may be required to refine, modify, correct and legitimize their decentralized power-sharing and power dividing arrangements continually over time into a world regional Government. Political elites must be dedicated and committed to maintain the regional ECOWAS world Government system as opposed to exacerbating multi-nationality or multi-ethnicity tensions in the sub-region.

Recommendations

There should be institutional framework and legal instrumentalities for inter-regional cooperation across the globe. The ECOWAS stable exchange-rates (stabex) schemes with other regional bodies should be encouraged as practiced by the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) with 'ten dialogue partners which includes the EU of twenty-seven member-states. Special trade protocols was required with demand that certain agricultural products (cocoa, sugar cane, bananas, et al) should have fixed and guaranteed prices and market quota among various trading blocs like the EU, ASEAN and other ACP

states. There should be a guaranteed price per specific quantity with stable exchange schemes clause in a Treaty for price Stabilization on basic commodity, its export as raw materials supplied abroad for confectionary in Western Europe (such as sugar cane, rum, soya beans, banana, paste for ice cream, et cetera). The sugar trade protocol dated back to 1973 UK's membership of European Economic Community (EEC) and reflected her commitment to it then through the British Commonwealth of Nations supplies under the ACP-EEC *Lome*' Convention of 1975.

Though the sugar protocol permitted a renewal of this arrangement which allowed the EEC to legally back out by 1982 or make a renewal of the Trade Pact. Trade cooperation by global partnership should be encouraged for market growth, industrial growth and export prices stabilization, transfer of technology through industrial research and promotion of products diversification within the zones. The common market entails tax abolition and commercial policies streamlining. As Nigeria and the entire ECOWAS move into this 4th next tenet stage of a common market multilateral diplomacy, a commodity by commodity comprehensive Treaty should be initiated and in collaboration with the United Nations World Trade Organization. Some items on import prohibition list on health and national security grounds for Nigeria are not banned in Benin Republic from France (e.g. Processed Poultry; Firearms; jobs restriction; et al). Therefore, multilateral diplomacy was required. The ECOWAS and Nigeria's originating agricultural products taken to other trading blocs on global partnership should attract reasonable prices which include groundnuts, bananas, cocoa, coffee, cotton, cocoa-nuts, pine-apple, palm oil, its nuts and kernel, hides and skin, plywood, variety of fresh fruits, petroleum and liquefied natural gas, iron ore products, et cetera to the overall benefit of humanity.

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