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TWO

Informal Impediments to Achieving full Political Integration: Hegemony and Sovereignty in the Contexts of East African Community and Economic Commission of West African States

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Abstract

By applying a set of theories germane to the question of political integration we theorise and contextualise the factors and challenges that have acted against the eventual political integration of Africa into one huge market as envisioned by the African Union Agenda 2063. By comparing the EAC and ECOWAS as the building blocs of that political unity, this paper seeks to investigate the intra-regional challenges that bedevil the trajectory of political integration. Basing our research on the European Union (EU) as the basis of an ideal aspect of political federation, we engage theoretical concepts and historical analysis of the factors in the informal business environment that seems to hinder the eventual amalgamation of African states into full political federation. What are the historical barriers to full political integration in Africa? Despite the spirited efforts by the informal traders to interact and promote trade in West Africa, customs officials and bureaucratic government officers deliberately create non-tariff barriers to frustrate mobility across the borders of Nigeria, Benin and Togo. The same case applies in East African borders where customs officials use variety of measures to slow movement of people, labour, goods and services. To make matters worse, French structural and monetary colonial legacies in West Africa are a big drawback to having a single monetary union and currency. Recent resurgence of military governments in former

French colonies has exacerbated rather than ameliorated trade, acting as an anathema to full integration of ECOWAS and EAC partner states.

Keywords: *Impediment, Political Integegration, ECOWAS, EAC, Hegemony*

1.0: Introduction

Since time immemorial, the people of the East African Community (EAC) and ECOWAS have recognised that political integration can lead to long term economic and social gains through increased trade, factor mobility and cultural exchange. In his discussion of the concept of political integration Ernst Haas (1970) raises fundamental questions on whether the integration of regions is important or not. He calls for an analysis on whether regional peace keeping machinery (by ECOWAS) is more effective than United Nations procedures, as an important lesson for future modes of conflict resolution. He queries on the possibility of regional integration processes being merely a facade for the domineering hegemony of one big member state such as Kenya (in the EAC), Nigeria (in ECOWAS) or South Africa in SADCC. He suggests that there is need for more information about which elite learns from whom in the interactions triggered by regional processes, discover what is learned, and trace the use to which the new insight is put in support of political integration. This paper seeks to discover whether a political integration would promote industrialization and effective welfare policies and lead to equitable sharing of scarce resources-or if such political integration merely leads to more competition for such spoils (Haas, 1970, 608). In this paper the objetives of the study were to examine the types of trade barriers that frustrated mobility of people, goods and services, to discuss exixting infrastructural impediments to political integration, to assess how the interactive

markets and informal cross border traders have impacted on each member state and challenges to full political integration in the EAC and ECOWAS. The trade reform such as one stop border point (OSBP) in the EAC have been accompanied by identification of relevant regional infrastructure development priorities in order to support balanced development and increase intra-regional trade as we have examined in this paper.

Why Political Integration?

Francis Onditi (2020) laments that so many years after independence, the African continent remains only integrated at the trade levels and has not managed to achieve eventual political unity. The realization of this key objective has been made worse by the recent resurgence of military governments that threatens the hope of eventual political federation. Thus we need to establish what ails our move towards integration. Why do we need theories? Theories are a fundamental tool of analysis in any discourse, predicting the possibility of member states forging closer ties and reducing likelihood of conflict and war such as the on-going Russo-Ukraine war in the global system. Regional integration has been analysed through the prism of history of international relations. However there is need to interrogate it more away from the past theorization of regional studies using African own theories such as Nyerere's *Ujamaa* and South African *Ubuntu*, or Rwanda's *gacaca*, which have been completely marginalised. These African indigenous theories are relevant because they recognize communalism and humanism as the driving forces toward human existentialism. For instance, Pan Africanism as an ideology envisaged integration as a means of uniting all Africans across the world and overcoming the legacies of the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885. Du Bois demonstrated a belief in the centrality of the African peoples in world history, and the interdependency of the continent of Africa with the rest of the world (Moses, 2008). On the other hand, Garvey Marcus

Garvey pursued the ideals of racial separatism and empowerment of Africans by taking them back to Africa in the spirit of integrating one black nation. Many years later, African leaders came up with the Lagos Plan of Action of 1980 and Abuja Treaty of 1991 both of which set out to create one market, reduce fragmentations and guarantee security in the regions. But self-interest, poor governance and lack of transparency by individual presidents and ethnic nationalisms remain a big challenge to African integration (Moyo, 2010, Acemolgu and Robinson, 2013). Ernst Haas, (1970) theorized integration in terms of political actors, markets and strong institutions (Onditi, 2020: 79). As the leading Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the East African Community (EAC) and ECOWAS blocs are a continuation of the ideological tradition of one united Africa, emanating from the Pan-African movement and the desires of Nkrumah, Gadaffi, Nyerere of a one economic and political entity. Analyzing the economic integration policies and their challenges in the EAC, enables this project to grasp how citizens respond to the challenges of new relationships and emerging identities. For example, a comparative study of interactive markets within the EAC and ECOWAS provide an excellent window to interrogating existing theoretical assumptions such as the implication of RECS on the citizens, state-sovereignty, changing forms of identity in light of integration and what this means for traders across the borders of the partner states.

2.0: Brief Literature Review

In discussing the path towards eventual integration in East Africa and West Africa, it is germane to examine literature pertaining to the themes around historicity, processes and challenges of achieving such integration, the role of the political elite as well as the formal and informal barriers towards the achievement of a political integration. Such challenges include bureaucratic red

tape, language barriers, and political interests of the leaders and the reluctance to surrender sovereignty by those in power.

Nnandi Madiche (2002) writing on ECOWAS has submitted that political integration is only good when it leads to three things; firstly when it improves welfare of the citizens in the region, secondly if it protects the infant industries and finally the possibility that it promotes growth by expanding the volume of investible funds through private or public savings. To what extent, for instance, has regional integration through RECs improved welfare of the ordinary citizens in West Africa? Today in West Africa, just like East Africa there is increased mobility of labour and informal traders across the borders of member states. The youth are the major engines of such mobilities through music, sports and business. To support this opinion, Prof Enenwe argued that traditional economic integration theory rested on two hypotheses. One of the benefits is their effects on peoples' welfare and two, their impact in increasing the volume of trade. He quickly asserts that both the above gains were only possible with the relocation of production to locations with lower costs of production within the integrating states. For example of what benefit is the location of oil refinery in Ivory Coast instead of Lagos or Benin Republic. However, the main objective of integration was to remove any discrimination that may hinder trade and allow cordial economic relationships across the national boundaries of say Kenya and Tanzania, or Nigeria and Togo republic.

The main determinant of free mobility of people and resources is the unequivocal removal of all barriers, tariffs and non-tariff, and total elimination of infrastructural bottlenecks that may impact negatively on the transaction costs of production. Yet these basic requirements are also the yoke that point to the daunting challenge to political integration in Africa today. Neither can we ignore the selfish interest of other stakeholders such as the ruling

elites, the private sector and the extant legacy of colonial boundaries that continue to frustrate free movement of people, services and goods across nations. In the case of East Africa, the Ugandan strongman, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni has long been a pan-Africanist who regularly curses the "foolish arbitrariness" of Africa's borders and urges for the development of larger markets. He often attacks the idea of an Africa joined (or divided) in terms of the traditional linguistic Anglophone, Francophone, or Lusophone categorizations, and urges the creation of what he has described as a Bantu or Afrophone category (Oloka-Onyango: 2004, 13).

Writing on what the colonial state bequeathed Africans, an inevitable and veritable legacy inherited in both Eastern and West Africa, Berman and Lonsdale (1979) have eloquently pointed out that the state in Africa is the instrument of the dominant class. The state protects the interest of the ruling class and the existing social relations that marginalizes and stifles free flow of the informal cross border traders, who are the agents of full integration. It is at the borders where there we witness a conflict between the informal cross border traders at Isebania in Kenya/Uganda border between the police, the Multinational corporations [MNCs], custom officials over the desire to have freedom of mobility without the encumbrances of Visa and other custom obstacles to mobility, the essence of political integration (oral discussion with Ugandan Ambassador in Nairobi) (Qobo, 2007). Comparatively, across the border of Nigeria and Benin, there are Yoruba and Igbo traders, while Tanzania and Kenya both share the Luo and Kuria ethnic groups yet the custom officials won't allow them to interact freely (Qobo, 2007).

In the words of Mzukisi Qobo (2007) the most significant step and blueprint for Africa's development – the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos – was adopted almost three decades ago, and set out a vision of an integrated African market by the year

2000. It was given further impetus by the Abuja Treaty which was approved in 1991 and came into force in 1994. According to this Treaty, the Africa Economic Community (AEC) would be in place by 2028. But the challenges have been insurmountable as we shall see shortly. In the case of Southern Africa Development Cordination [SADC], they have established Non-Tariff Barriers (NTB) monitoring agency to harmonise trade tariffs and border controls. They have also created the SADC Integrated electronic settlement system (SIRESS) between Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho to harmonise the flow of trade. In East Africa they have established the One Stop Border Point (OSBP) to allow the faster clearance of goods from Mombasa to other countries in the region. Nevertheless, there is need to create borderless, visa-less border for the traders. The borders should not only be decolonized, but also de-militarised. In our oral discussion with Kayode at IADS, he recalls that we should have one ID card [passport] across the countries of West and East Africa. For instance in Burkina Faso, Nigerians are easily integrated and facilitated, but that is not the case in Ghana where there is latent fear of Nigerian hegemony and the fear of Nigerian trade dominance. On the other hand Togolese form the highest number of informal traders in both Lagos and Cotonou in Benin. Yet the government bureaucrats continue to frustrate cross-border migrations (IADS Seminar, University of Lagos, 2023).

Borsel and Risse (2009) have explained that the EU is often considered as the “gold standard” of regional integration. As a corollary, it tends to be treated as the conceptual universe. In practical politics, the EU has served as a major reference point in various attempts of regional building where it is often seen as an alternative to the model of economic regionalism, but ironically promoted by the US. The success of European economic integration triggered the creation of free trade areas in Africa, Asia, and the Americas as early as in the 1960s and 1970s. (Borsel and Risse, 2009, 6). With all these nuances, it is crucial to compare

the successes and challenges of the ECOWAS and the EAC to promote a learning process for Africa as far as regional integration is concerned.

In the eyes of the US [and Africa], the EU is largely viewed as a cornerstone of European stability and prosperity (Congressional Research Services (CRS), 2018). For much of the last decade, however, many EU countries have faced considerable economic difficulties. The 2018 CRS report further submits that despite an improved economic situation in the EU since 2017, economic pressures and societal changes have contributed to the rise of populist and antiestablishment political parties, at least some of which harbor anti-EU or "euroskeptic" sentiments. Such trends have complicated the EU's ability to deal with multiple internal and external challenges in Europe today such as the war in Ukraine and Brexit.

Amid these difficult issues, some are questioning the future shape and character of the EU. Supporters of the EU worry that certain aspects of EU integration could be stopped or reversed spelling doom to African own ambitions. Others contend that the multiple crises could produce some beneficial reforms and ultimately transform the EU into a more effective, cohesive entity from which the ECOWAS and EAC can learn.

Alexis Akwagyiram (2023) writing for *Semafor Africa*, an on-line news blog on 16th August 2023 submitted that the diplomatic deadlock in the wake of the coup in Niger and Gabon remains the most watched story on the continent. There were brief breakthroughs sandwiched between the military junta rebuffing officials from both West Africa's regional bloc (ECOWAS) and the United States and France efforts to restore the deposed president Mohammed Bizoum. In compliance with ECOWAS directive, Nigeria responded to coup by putting up sanctions and cutting electricity contrary to 1960 treaty between the 2 nations

on the reciprocal use of River Niger waters by both the Niger and Nigeria, who appeared to be fighting proxy wars on behalf of France and the USA respectively.

Many northern Nigerians depend on cross-border trade to earn a living or have relatives in Niger and Benin republics especially at Cotonou port. The economies of towns on both sides of the border rely on the movement of people and goods. It means economic sanctions imposed on Niger, including border closures and electricity cuts, have the potential of affecting the gains made by ECOWAS and negatively affecting the people even harder. With sanctions or military intervention, anger could spread across northern Nigeria and escalate *morewahala* or problems. It is against this realistic backdrop that the threat of military force by ECOWAS is deeply unpopular and divisive — particularly since Nigeria is the biggest benefactor of troops and funds to Ecowas. President Ahmed Bola Tinubu, as the regional bloc's chairman and Nigeria's president, was expected to be a key player in deciding the approach taken by ECOWAS, with support from NATO, France and the USA.

From the literature discussed above the main problems in attaining regional unity is bureaucratic delays and colonial legacies. We have learnt that there are several gaps in terms of the relevant theories for explaining political integration in EAC and ECOWAS regions. It is noted that while most discussions emphasise structural bottlenecks to political integration, Africa mainly faces the challenges of non-tariff barriers. Yet it is also agreeable that the informal cross border trade is the major driver to integration in Africa where formal structures are virtually contestable and scanty.

3.0: Theoretical Framework

One of the most relevant theories remains the Neo-functionalism, which according to Onditi, encourages plurality of

actors including powerful institution pillars (Onditi, 2020, 79). Proponents of the theory include Ernst Haas, Joseph Nye and Joseph Keohane, the latter two also being Neo-liberal/interdependence theory scholars, among others. It is a theory of regional integration that places major emphasis on the role of non-state actors – especially, the “secretariat” of the regional organization involved and those interest associations and social movements that form at the level of the region – in providing the dynamic for further integration. Member states remain important actors in the process. They set the terms of the initial agreement, but they do not exclusively determine the direction and extent of subsequent change. Rather, regional bureaucrats in league with a shifting set of self-organized interests and passions seek to exploit the inevitable “spill-overs” and “unintended consequences” That occurs when states agree to assign some degree of supra-national responsibility for accomplishing a limited task and then discover that satisfying that function has external effects upon other of their interdependent activities.

According to this theory, regional integration is an intrinsically sporadic and conflictual process, but one in which, under conditions of democracy and pluralistic representation, national governments will find themselves increasingly entangled in regional pressures and end up resolving their conflicts by conceding a wider scope and devolving more authority to the regional organizations they have created. Eventually, their citizens will begin shifting more and more of their expectations to the region and satisfying them will increase the likelihood that economic-social integration will “spill-over” into political integration. But Onditi (2020) has proposed a new theory to explain economic integration. The dominatarianism theory proposes to examine integration using a social force known as personneness and role of the personalities. For him “the process of regional integration should therefore be a combination of

people, institutions and geo-economy, as follows: Person + Economy + Institutions + Politics = An Integrated Regional Society" (Onditi, 2020: 85). How different this theory is different from others remains to be seen.

In his analysis (post WWII Europe) Haas argued that the decision to proceed with integration or oppose it depended on the expected gains or losses as perceived by the major groups within the units of integration (in the case of Europe this would lead to transformation of ECSC to EEC through the Rome Treaty, 1957; and eventually to EU under the Maastricht Treaty of 1993. In EAC the same could explain the revival of the regional body in 2002, after 25 years of the collapse of the first one, as well as its expansion from 3-member to 7-member body with potential of further expansion).

Grieco seems to conclude that one of the greatest barriers to state cooperative is the fear of others gaining at the expense of other states. Therefore, states fear that their partners will achieve relatively greater gains; that, as a result, the partners will surge ahead of them in relative capabilities; and, finally, that their increasingly powerful partners in the present could become all the more formidable foes at some point in the future (Grieco, 1988, 499).

Accordingly, state positionality, then, engenders a "relative gains problem" for co-operation and integration. That is, a state will decline to join, will leave, or will sharply limit its commitment to a cooperative arrangement if it believes that other partners are achieving, or are likely to achieve, relatively greater gains. It will eschew cooperation even though participation in the arrangement was providing it, or would have provided it, with large absolute gains. Moreover, a state concerned about relative gains may decline to cooperate even if it is confident that partners

will keep their commitments to a joint arrangement (Grieco, 1988, 499).

Integration, Haas points out, proceeds as a result of the efforts of relevant elites in the governmental and private sector who supports it for pragmatic reasons, e.g. removal of trade barriers to increase volume of trade, market and profits. Neo-functionalism theorists argue that actors' interests are best served by commitment to larger supra-national organizations, above the nation-state. Experts within government bureaucracies become the most effective carriers and protectors of integration. Besides these, official state leaders are expected to equally play crucial roles in integration.

Central to Haas work is the concept of "spillover"-in which he posits that integration in one area leads to integration in other areas. In EAC and ECOWAS, this can be explained in terms of levels of integration (e.g. customs union, common market, etc) as well as in terms of sectors (e.g. trade, currency, infrastructure, etc).

Nye on his part set forth a theoretical framework for analyzing the conditions for integration. He reconceptualizes and reformulates neofunctionalism theory with seven "process mechanisms" that include functional linkages, rising transactions, deliberate linkages and coalition formation, elite socialization, regional group formation, ideological and identities appeals, and involvement of external actor in the process. The theory is relevant in a comparative analysis of the barriers to integration in both EAC and ECOWAS. In his criticism of the theory, Philippe Schmitter (200) comes up with neo-neo functionalism, in which he provides two major shortcomings, one he doubts on the possibility of member states guaranteeing relative equity of perceived benefits once new distributive institutes are created and unleashed. Secondly he calls for sensitivity to comparative

performance by other partner states generated by higher transactions and available information as well as envy (Schmitter, 2002).

Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST)

In this study, Nigeria and Kenya are assumed as hegemons, or the big lions in their respective regions just like South Africa is a big brother in Southern Africa while India is in South East Asia. Robert Keohane, the political scientist who developed the HST, explains that to achieve the status of hegemon, a state must “have control over raw material, control over sources of capital, control over markets and competitive advantages in the production of highly valued goods”. (Keohane 1984, 34) Hegemonic stability theory suggests that the presence of a dominant state like Nigeria or South Africa, can create a sense of predictability and stability in the international system, as other states can rely on the dominant state to provide leadership and to address global challenges. This can lead to greater cooperation and collaboration among states, as well as a more orderly and stable international system.

However, hegemonic stability theory also acknowledges that the dominance of a single state can be controversial and can lead to resentment and resistance from other states. It can also be challenged by the rise of new powers or the decline of the dominant state. As a result, the stability of the international system may be dependent on the ability of the dominant state to maintain its leadership and to address the concerns of other states.

Demerits of hegemonic theory:

1. **Can lead to exploitation:** The hegemon may use its dominant power to exploit other states and further its own interests, rather than acting in the best interests of the international community.

2. **Can create resentment:** The dominance of a hegemon can create resentment among other states, which may lead to conflicts or challenges to the hegemon's power.
3. **May be unstable:** The dominance of a hegemon may be unstable, as other states may seek to challenge the hegemon's power and a new hegemon may emerge to take its place.

Mogenthau (1948) had long established that nation-states have their interests to pursue just like individual humans. Accordingly, the place of sovereignty is one of the major theories dealing with in promoting or hindering economic integration. Nugent (2003) felt that sovereignty is the main concept in inter-state systems whereby it entails three aspects, namely the right to legal existence and legitimacy being, to be located within a defined territorial space and the government as the ultimate power in decision making. (Nugent, 2003). Yet even as states have a right to exist, they must also work and associate with other states and this entails 'loss or giving up of sovereignty' to the bigger group of nations for the sake of integration. This means that though nations, possess the de-jure sovereignty, globalisation remains a major threat to that very separate existence. It is this anxiety that threatens the willingness of states to accept economic and political integration in Africa. This is because each nation in Africa was borne out of nationalist fervour that is jealously protected by the state. It is this reluctance to integrate that is the subject of this paper. Our major question is whether the fear to lose sovereignty is the cause of delayed political federation in the EAC and ECOWAS? Economic integration involves agreements between countries that usually include the elimination of trade barriers, aligning monetary and fiscal policies in order to eventually achieve a more inter-connected global economy (Balassa, 1961). In other words, the word integration refers to bringing together the parts into a whole unit. The desire to bring

together countries in the Eastern and West Africa has been there for almost 50 years but with very little achievement towards the eventual objective of forming one strong political and economic federation. What are the barriers to this? Integration is both a process and a state of affairs. It involves diplomacy and political good will, which both the leaders in the EAC and ECOWAS have not offered. Instead of having integration, which involves abolition of all forms of discrimination, we have co-operation which merely lessens or decreases discrimination (Qobo, 2007). In line with the reluctance to surrender sovereignty we had set out to investigate the social, economic and political obstacles for the failure or reluctance of the EAC and ECOWAS economic blocks to achieve their objectives. It is significant to take into account that the process of full integration is largely ongoing; target dates have shifted several times, but their ideal remains on the front-burner of regional politics. The relevant theories include the interrogation of neo-functionalism, hegemonic and intergovernmentalist theories on why the member states have not fully removed the artificial and colonial barriers that continue to frustrate free movement of goods and people across the borders. The weakness of inter-governmentalism is that it assumes that only national governments are key players in regional integration to maximise their national security and economic interest.

4.0: Methodological Approach

Using mixed research methods generated quantitative data which was interpreted and explained by qualitative presentation and narration. The research objectives necessitate the application of mixed method for the study by examining existing documents, carrying out online surveys and conducting oral interviews across the borders of Isebania, Busia and Malaba. This permitted the researchers to better understand the regulatory frameworks, legal, policies, treaties and agreements as well as documents from the member states while analyzing the processes of how

such documents are agreed upon. The study also examined member country legislation, statutes, reports regulations, records and other documents as well as treaties, protocols, regulations, policies and other documents issued by Secretariats of the EAC. In order to evaluate compliance with EAC regulations, we surveyed the opinions of officials at the EAC Secretariat in Arusha, Tanzania. We visited Trade and Industry Ministries, Embassies of member states in Kigali, Dar es Salaam and Nairobi, officials of trade and industry associations and trade Ministries and revenue bodies to get their views on how best to meet those challenges. In the case of ECOWAS we held discussions with officials from ECOWAS headquarters and also held seminars at the institute of African and diaspora studies at the university of Lagos during my fellowship.

5.0: Data Interpretation and Discussion (Findings on EOWAS and EAC)

In terms of achievements, considerable efforts have now been made in harmonizing macroeconomic policies and private sector promotion towards achieving economic integration for the people of West Africa. These efforts have given rise to some initiatives which include implementation of the roadmap for the ECOWAS single currency programme, monitoring and evaluation of performance and macroeconomic convergence, management of the ECOWAS Macroeconomic Database & Multilateral Surveillance System (ECOMAC) as well as co-operation with other regional and international institutions.

In one of our Zoom meetings in July, 2023 with the Director of ECOWAS Youth Programme Francis Chuks NJOAGUANI at the University of Lagos, a number of achievements were discussed by the presenter and the audience which included the following highlights.

There is a successful establishment of the Voluntary Service for young Professionals: Through this, ECOWAS has a policy of Voluntary Service known as youth Voluntary service. The Programme was initially supported by the UNDP, EU and USAID to Help violent and conflict prone areas like Liberia and Sierra Leone to receive doctors, engineers, teachers and scientist to offer services during the conflicts in the early 2000s.

Mobility and Borders: ID card has been created e.g. by Ghana to replace the passport thereby creating collaborations between nations across West Africa. In terms of sports, the Motor Rallies and cyclists and drivers drive from Lagos to Abidjan and Dakar without problems. Over the years the French speaking countries travelled across the borders without any barriers

The policy of “Not too Young to run” for political office, allowed many youths to be elected in 2023.

Youth Innovation: Of Youth Enterprises in Music Industry and movies contribute 2.3% of the GDP in the ECOWAS. Youth innovations and creativity supports implementation of SDGs. By 2025 many jobs will come from AI, Entertainment industry and IT hence the need to support them.

ECOWAS Barriers

Internal problems	Negative Ethnicity, religious feuds, discrimination against other ethnic groups, lack of crisis mgt track record
External forces	The French, American, Russian and British economic interests, call for holistic political leadership, solidarity and cohesion are the core to crisis response in the Sahel
Lacks of integration consciousness	Lack of civic education, ethnic loyalty and identity

Fear of Nigerian Hegemony	Fear of Nigeria's cultural economic and political dominance
Military coups d'état	Reactionary take overs in Gabon[August] Chad, Mali [May 2021], Guinea [Sept 2021], Burkina Faso [Jan 2022], Niger [July 2023], need for collective action and systematic preparation, lack of strong institutions on good governance.

SOURCE: Researcher

There was a lot of expectation of achieving complete economic integration by 2020: moving from an ECOWAS of states to an ECOWAS of people, a possible confederation or federation, but this was not achieved. Generally, integration must promote mobility of people, goods and services across the borders of EAC and ECOWAS.

6.0: Summary and Conclusion

In summary the paper takes the position that international institutions embody and reinforce norms and beliefs that are held in common among states and that facilitate and guide their cooperative endeavors.

In the case of EAC and ECOWAS discussion, it is imperative in arguing that cooperation can under some conditions develop on the basis of complementary interests, and that institutions, broadly defined, affect the patterns of cooperation that emerge. However one major challenge is the fear of selfish interest of the hegemonic states that their partners will achieve relatively greater gains; that, as a result, the partners will surge ahead of them in relative capabilities; and, finally, that their increasingly powerful partners in the present could become all the more formidable foes at some point in the future. In the case of EAC, Tanzania for past ideological differences with Kenya, has been a

bit reluctant for full political federation hoping that clear rules on-land ownership should be agreed on first. In the case of ECOWAS the major problem is the French colonial legacy based on one common language and financial regime based on the CFA system, contrary to the Anglophone nations which have their separate individual financial policies. Recently the question of democracy and coups d'état have become a challenge especially with the overthrowing of democratically elected governments in Burkina Faso, Mali and in July, Niger. The issue of protecting democratic principles led to different opinions in West Africa as some countries went against the ECOWAS and African Union plan of fighting to restore democracy in Niger after a seemingly popular coup had taken place there. In sum, the borders should not only be decolonized, but also de-militarised. We should have one ID card [passport] across the countries of West and East Africa. For instance in Burkina Faso, Nigerians are easily integrated and facilitated, but that is not the case in Ghana where there is latent fear of Nigerian hegemony and the fear of Nigerian trade dominance. On the other hand Togolese form the highest number of informal traders in both Lagos and Cotonou in Benin. Yet the government bureaucrats continue to frustrate cross-border migrations.

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