

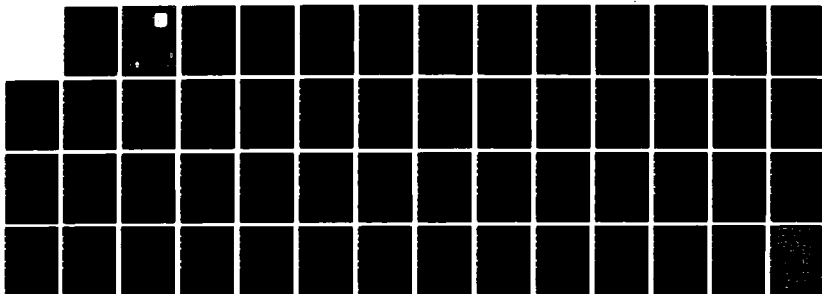
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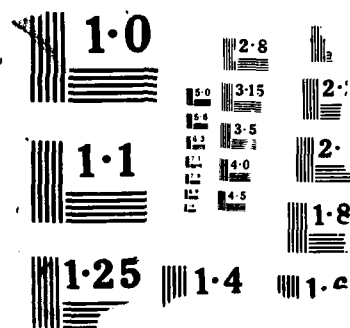
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WEST AFRICA'S QUEST FOR PEACE

BY

COLONEL JOSEPH K. KONAKPO

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However, peace disturbances in West Africa pointed out the precariousness of the new nations and the weaknesses of the new institutions. Grounded in this perception and drawing on lessons learned from the early disputes and wars, the 16 nations of West Africa joined together and created structures designed to preserve peace.

This study seeks to analyze the fundamentals of West Africa's quest for peace and to highlight the ways and means implemented to keep and maintain peace. This study will also assess the effectiveness of such a strategy and eventually make recommendations for future progress.

USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

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WEST AFRICA'S QUEST FOR PEACE

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

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U.S. Army War College
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ABSTRACT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.	11
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.	1
II. WEST AFRICA'S SETTING	4
III. BACKGROUND.	10
IV. GOALS AND THREATS	13
V. WAYS AND MEANS FOR PEACE.	24
VI. ASSESSMENT OF THE STRATEGY.	33
VII. RECOMMENDATIONS	38
VIII. CONCLUSIONS	46
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	47

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WEST AFRICA'S QUEST FOR PEACE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

West African nations, like all developing countries, are facing challenges to their growth. Their future depends upon the responses they provide to meet the challenges of development and change.

They have to protect their independence in a shrinking and interdependent world in which the risk of losing one's identity and freedom is high.

Having gained independence, they are concerned about the creation of nations and national unities, a task made more demanding by the uniqueness of the numerous different societies in each nation. The challenges are many and to fully satisfy the needs of each society and link them together into a nation is a truly complex task.

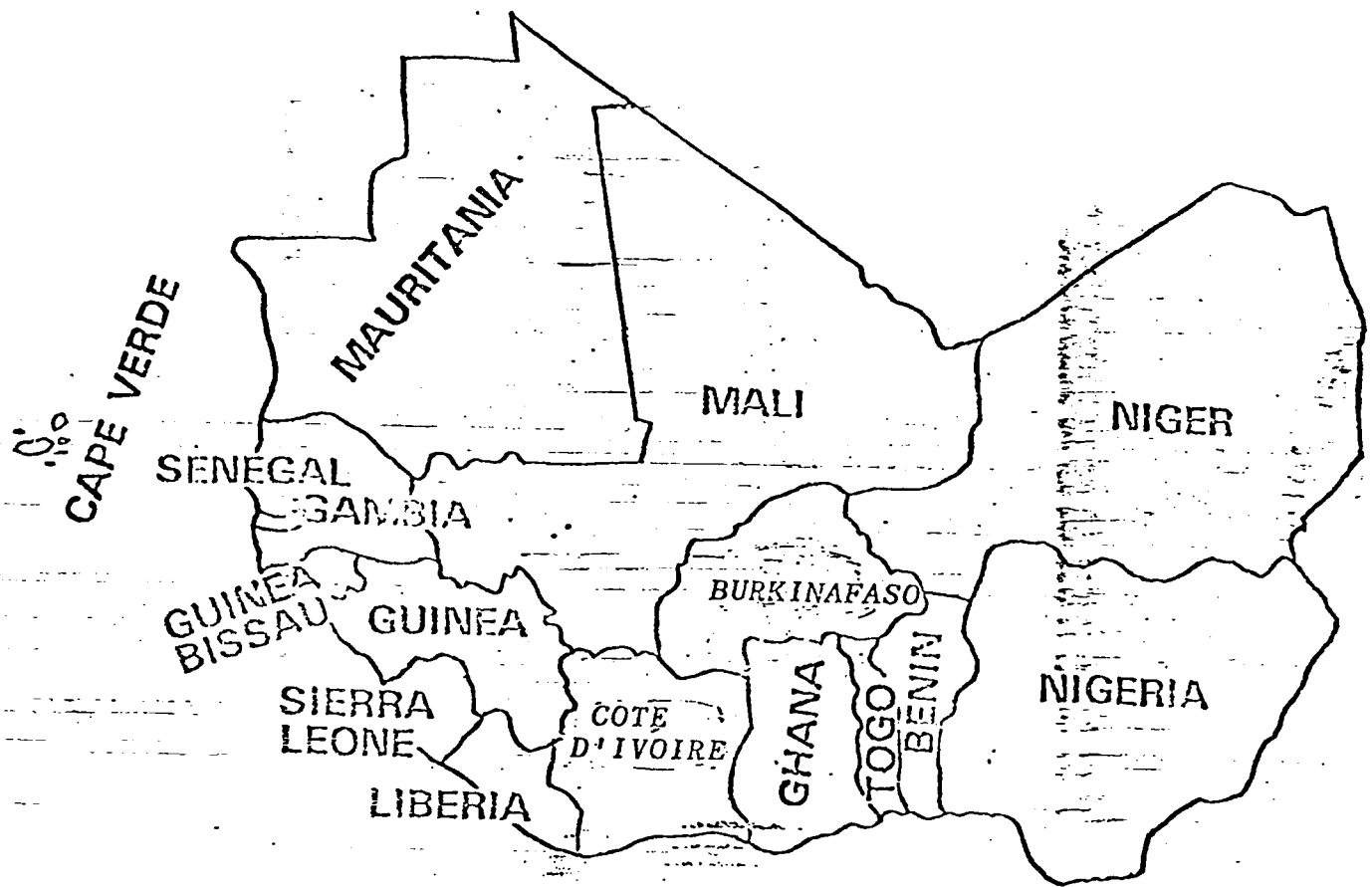
They are willing to focus on economic development. The affordability of this task depends on intrinsic and external factors:

- o The international economic crisis the world is witnessing undermines states' strategies for development.
- o Their broadly based agricultural economies cannot resist rebound easily from unfavorable climatic conditions such as drought. Under these circumstances of an insufficient food supply, their struggle for growth becomes questionable and migration seems to be some people's response to that economic ordeal.
- o Dropping prices of commodities and raw materials on fluctuating international markets are not incentives for extensive agriculture and do not favor economic growth that would trigger economic expansion.
- o A Malthusian crisis that evolves out of control negatively gainsays development plans and constitutes a hindrance to food self-sufficiency.

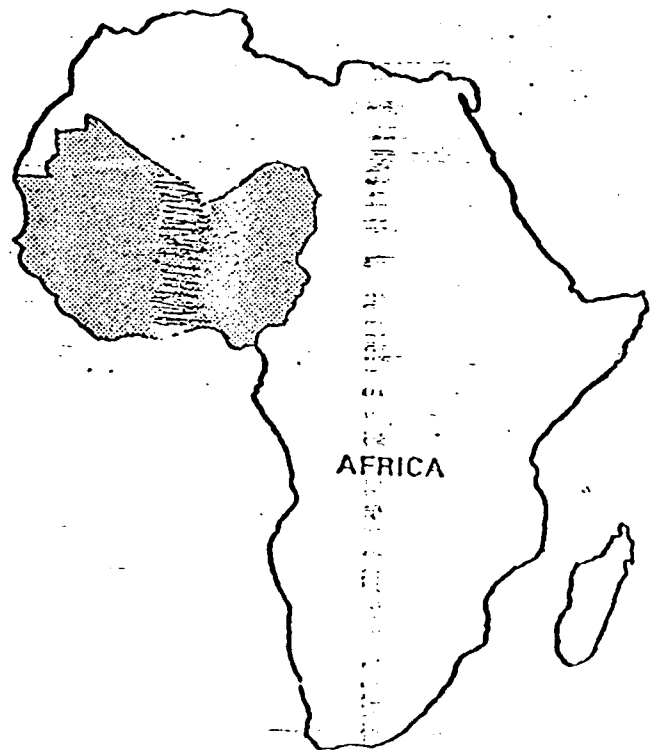
o Internal attack against states by opponents increases the requirements for military manpower mobilization and limits the manpower available to compensate for the lack of technology, and negatively impacts on further national unity.

o Competition between external powers results in rivalries that jeopardize the stability of states. Condition-tied aid shrinks the sovereignty of states and often is not responsive to the states' real needs.

This study portrays the setting of West Africa, gives a glimpse of its background in order to detail the fundamentals of its desire for peace. It identifies the region's goals and the threats to its interests. It then highlights the ways and means which have been devised to maintain peace, assesses that strategy and finally makes recommendations regarding the implementation of the strength.



ECOWAS



CHAPTER II

WEST AFRICA'S SETTING

West Africa is an area of Africa separated from North Africa by desert and from Central Africa by Nigeria's eastern boundary. From west to east, it extends from Nigeria to Mauritania. The Atlantic Ocean washes its coasts.

It covers over 6.2 millions square kms with a population of over 150 million. Its area is a little bigger than 85 percent of United States. It encompasses 16 nations, namely: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Bissau Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

Historically, the West African countries came into being as sovereign nations in the late 1950's, the 1960's and the mid 1970's. The exception to this is Liberia which has been a free nation since 1847.

Politically, they all are democracies moving in the wake of the western world, formerly they had status as French, or British, or Portuguese colonies, or in the case of Liberia, U.S. descendancy. The presence of the Soviets or their surrogates in the region expresses these nations' pledge to nonalignment rather than a commitment to colorful revolution.

Geographically, West Africa presents a vivid contrast between the south the north and the interior.

The south is covered with forests and is characterized by rainfall that is evenly distributed throughout the year. As a consequence, the south has a long growing season and agriculture flourishes in this area.

By contrast, the north is made up of drier areas covered with savannah. Rainfall decreases as one heads north and drought prevails in areas bordering the desert. Shorter growing seasons here are not favorable to extensive

agriculture. Cereals, cotton and peanuts are the main crops here and nomads keep cattle more for subsistence and prestige than for sale.

From an economic standpoint a relatively rich and populated south opposes a poor and underpopulated north.

The ports on the Atlantic Ocean have a flourishing commerce due to the availability of goods through these entry ports and thriving industries resulting from accessibility to the outside world, these factors testify to the economic power of southern regions and account for the bourgeoning of population growth in urban centers in this area.

As a consequence of the factors mentioned above, the 16 countries of West Africa differ from one another in respect to their size, economic power and population.

Some like Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger are landlocked and depend on Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and Benin for their imports.

In Cote d'Ivoire, GDP per capita is \$772 while it is \$170 in Burkina. Nigeria's GDP is \$520 contrasting in magnitude with Niger's which is approximately \$180. These figures add up to a standard of living which is higher in the southern countries. West Africa encompasses some states ranked among the least developed in the world.

With regard to their size, the countries again differ significantly. Niger is 22 times larger than Togo but has a population only twice as large. Its area equals 1.3 times that of Nigeria but its population is 15 times smaller than Nigeria's population.

West Africa produces a wide variety of resources. Some are used in rare local industries. However, a great deal of raw materials, including strategic ones, are exported.

The countries are mostly agrarian. The region produces cocoa for which Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana are first and second in production. It produces coffee for which Cote d'Ivoire is the third producer after Brazil and Columbia. The other agricultural products of the region include pineapples, bananas, cotton, timber, rubber, palm oil and peanuts.

The coastal zone contains important sources of energy. Oil, coal and hydroelectric power are available. Throughout the region there are substantial mineral deposits, including uranium, bauxite, chromium, silica, phosphates, diamonds, gold, manganese, tin, iron ore and copper.

Nigeria, one of the world's ten largest oil producers, provides nearly a fifth of U.S. crude petroleum imports and ranks first before Saudi Arabia.

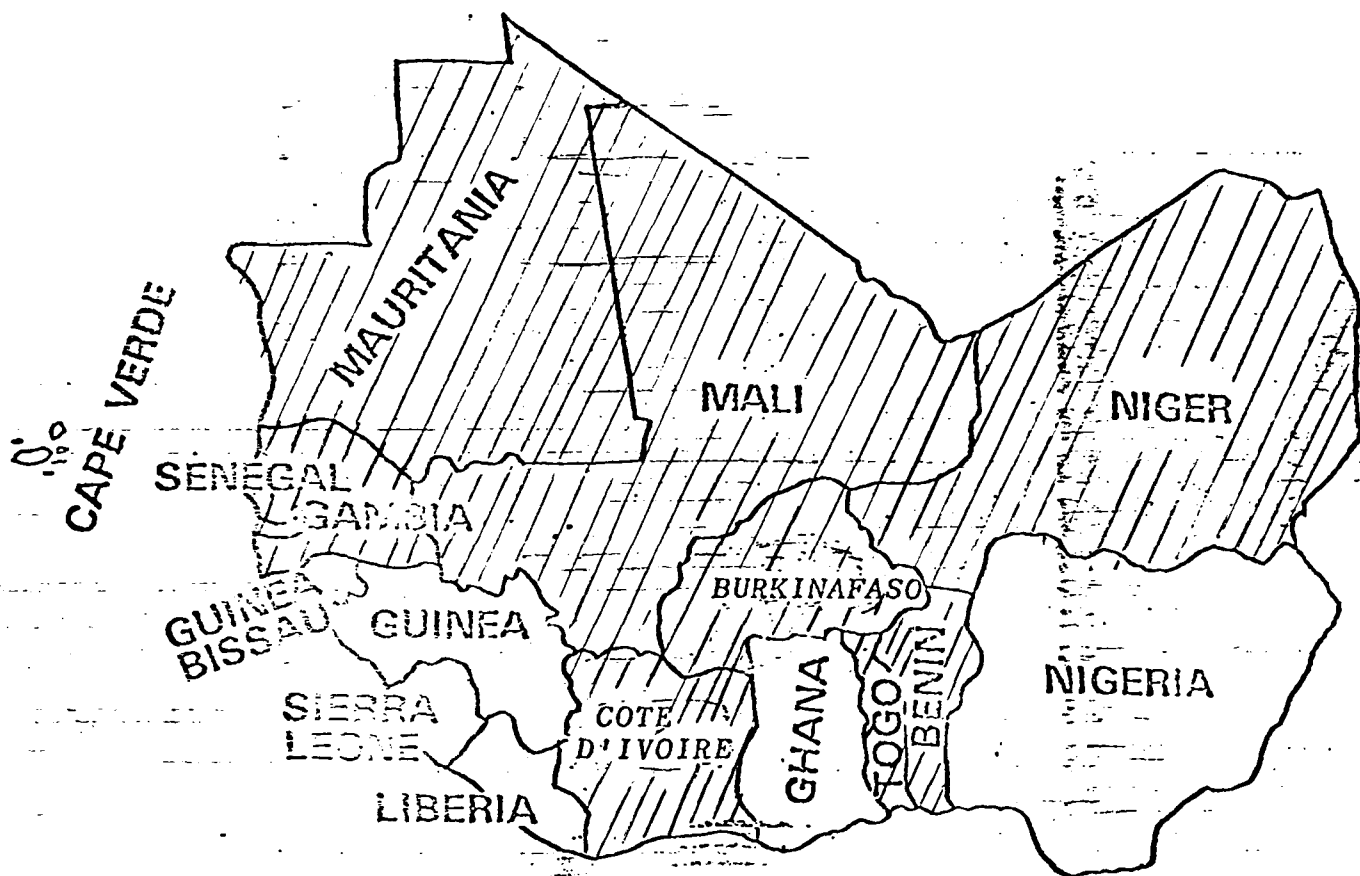
Explorations underway in the region have generated projections that by 1990, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana could be producing at rates from 15 thousand barrels to 360 thousand barrels a day. There is no reason to doubt that the entire coastal zone which extends as far as from the distance San Francisco to New York, contains oil reserves.

On a geopolitical ground, well-ruled and structured organizations keep together all or a part of the 16 states. The most important grouping, in terms of size and or activities are:

- o The Council of the Entente: an older regional grouping made up after independence that encompasses: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Togo.

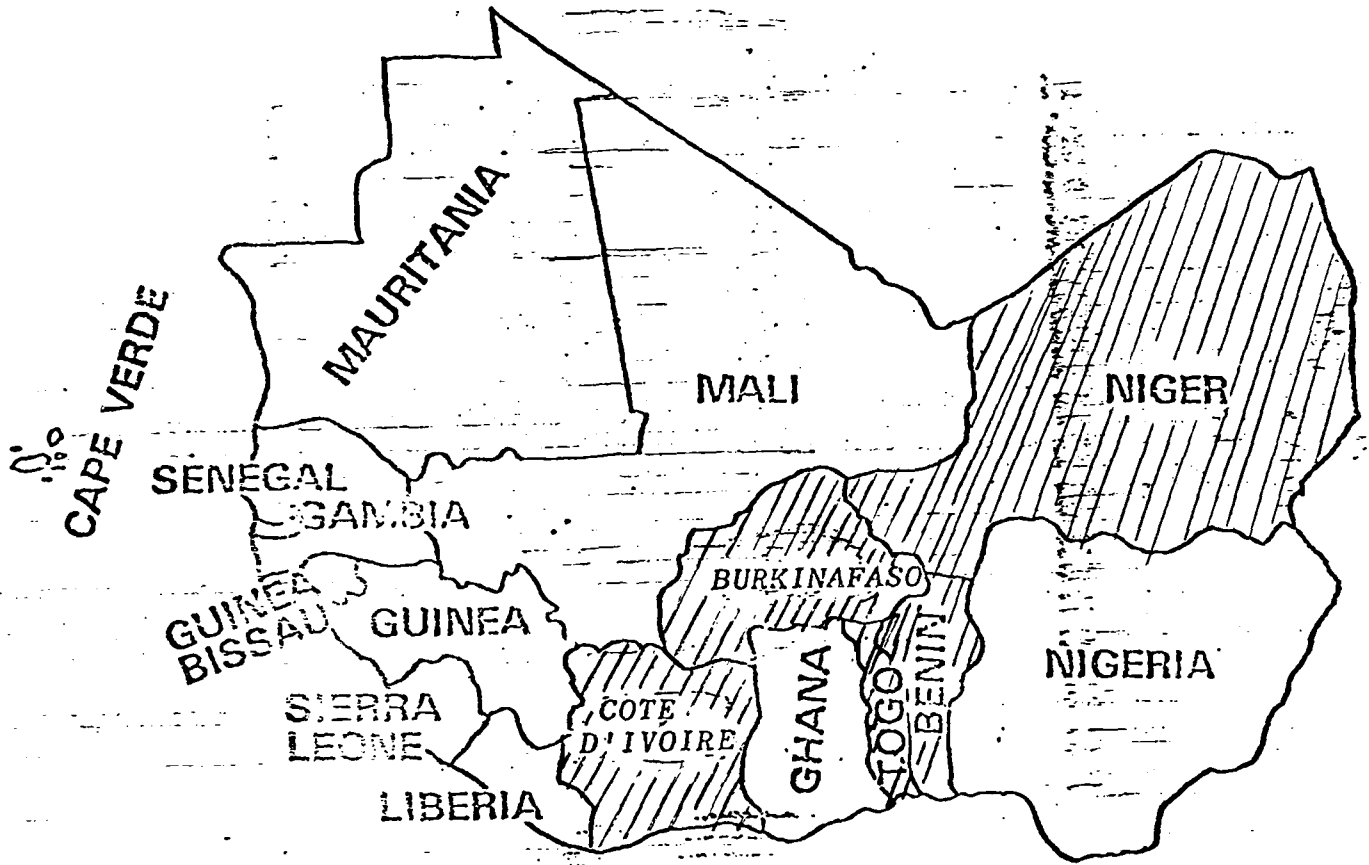
- o The CEAO or ECOWA: economic community of West Africa, made up of the following French speaking countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

- o The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS): an organization which embodies all the nations geographically located in West



Africa. The ECOWAS is the most important regional grouping on the African continent. Its 16 nations form a voting block which gives West Africa political weight and allows it to play a decisive role in multilateral meetings and international organizations.

- o All the 16 nations are members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).



COUNCIL OF THE ENTENTE

CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND

West Africa's desire for peace is dual-rooted. First, in our interdependent world innumerable threats endanger the sovereignty of new nations. Given West Africa's concern for finding a way out of underdevelopment, a desire for peace is a strategic response to the challenges that put the region's security and its development in jeopardy.

Second, the desire for peace also stems from the African way of life with its roots firmly embedded in the past. This tradition advises the use of peaceful means for the settlement of disputes and conflicts of all kind.

West Africa has witnessed some wars that were quickly finished. They were limited wars in regards to their scope, duration and objective.

On a strategic note, the people did not have available means to wage large scale wars. From a philosophical standpoint, war was contrary to their cosmogony which taught that friendly and harmonious relationships should exist among different peoples.

Their perception of war was different from Clausewitz. In fact, earlier West African people did not look upon war as the "continuation of politics by other means." Nor as the canon, "ultima ratio regis" (the last reason for things). The Logos, that is to say the verb, was the primary means to settle disputes. When war broke out, either dialogue between the two opponents or a third party's intervention were the outstanding tools utilized to impose a cease-fire.

The virtue of that bilateral or multilateral process in the settlement of disputes has been passed on from generation to generation. It continues to inspire leaders of West Africa who have been given a basic, Africantraditional education that focuses on forgiveness, negotiation and dialogue.

This spirit which praises understanding among peoples, accounts for the warm welcome that cheered the birth of the Organization of African Unity. This continental organization came into being in 1963 in Ethiopia pledged to pursue the following purposes:

- o Economic, diplomatic, political cooperation,
- o Cooperation for defense, security and cultural cooperation moving toward decolonization,
- o International cooperation,
- o Health and nutritional cooperation.

In pursuit of those purposes the member states defined principles including:

- o Noninterference in the internal affairs of states,
- o Peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration.

So the OAU was a valuable tool that strengthened the hope for developing the new nations in security and peace. The enthusiasm that accompanied its birth fell apart as the organization was quickly entrapped by its discrepancies. It failed to settle disputes that opposed some member countries throughout Africa.

In West Africa, three crises highlighted the continental organization's weaknesses:

- o It failed to settle the disputes between Ghana and its neighbors, namely Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Burkina Faso the then Upper Volta in 1965. Cote d'Ivoire complained that Ghana was supporting political refugees hostile to its interests. Burkina Faso was concerned about opposition activity in Ghana, instigated by citizens of Burkina. Niger complained of incursions into its country by citizens of Niger, trained and armed in Ghana.

o Twice, it did not manage to settle the dispute nor to prevent war between Burkina Faso and Mali over Agacher, a rich strip of land between the two countries. The last war between the two countries in 1985 was settled by the ECOWA.

o It was inhibited from taking sides in the dispute between Morocco and Mauritania over the former Spanish Sahara in 1976. When later, it granted that territory--known as the Republic of Sarahoui--the status of member state, Morocco voiced its protest by withdrawing from the organization.

The OAU was shaken to its foundations. Member states were not willing to surrender their sovereignty in favor of the organization. The weight of external manipulation and political differences crippled the machine. The continental apparatus had not coercive means to impose its decisions upon member states who, therefore, did not feel bound to carry them out. Had it coercive measures, it ran the risk of falling apart. The organization realistically recognized its limitations. As a result, it recommended that regional organizations attempt to mediate disputes, prior to calling for OAU involvement.

Such recommendations recognized de facto the existence and usefulness of the Council of the Entente created in 1959. In compliance with the recommendation, French speaking countries in the sub area founded the ECOWA in 1974. One year later the ECOWAS, including all independent states in West Africa, came into being.

CHAPTER IV

GOALS AND THREATS

Peace and war are two facets of the same reality. They depict the relationships among a country's citizens or between two or more countries.

The former expresses the capacity of countries, in the pursuit of their goals, to overcome without violence threats to their interests. The latter befalls countries when their attempts to cope with threats requires the exercise of violence.

They both are the outcome of the dialectics between the pursued goals and the threats that inhibit the fulfillment of these goals. Therefore, prior to addressing the strategy for peace and assessing its effectiveness, it seems relevant to highlight the 16 countries' goals and the threats to their interests.

As developing countries, most of them came into being in the concert of free nations, over three decades ago. West African nations pursued the following goals:

- o To defend their sovereignty, their independence and their territorial integrity. At the founding of the Organization of African Unity, the reluctance of most African countries to surrender their sovereignty in favor of a continental grouping expressed their primary concern for freedom. Sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity are looked upon in West Africa as nonnegotiable values to cherish. Countries are the more jealous of them because colonization confiscated them for a long while. These new independent nations are not willing to lose them again. Their defense requires West African countries to cope with internal and external attacks.

- o To build modern nations. This noble and demanding objective requires the countries to focus on:

oo The building of national unity. The importance of that objective lies in the fact that the mobilization of human resources is vital to the development of this region which is characterized by the scarcity of resources, the lack of technology, and a mosaic of social fabric.

oo The enhancement of newly born institutions designed to give the countries the status of modern nations and to shape and foster citizenship. States are aware that only an authoritative state can impose its decisions on citizens whose interests sometimes conflict with the commonwealths. Dependable institutions can guarantee the primacy of the states and subdue the will to power expressed by some segments of the population.

oo The development of an economy that seeks to attain food self-sufficiency in the short run in order to overcome starvation, and in the long run, to generate and maintain economic growth.

oo The provision for a better life for their people with respect to the quality of life which results in the fulfillment of ego needs.

oo The development of industrialization and modernization, the imperatives that must undergird a continuous development.

oo Education which promises a way out of underdevelopment and a mastery of technological and professional skills.

o To promote international cooperation that does not jeopardize nations' sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inalienable right to an independent existence.

o To promote policies of nonalignment with regard to all blocs.

The attainment of the noble and grandiose goals stated above, depends upon the nations' ability to respond to the challenges. For three decades or so, West African countries have enjoyed a relatively peaceful period. Disputes and wars that have erupted have been settled. However, the tree must

not hide the forest. A constellation of possible sources of conflict threatens the region. Indeed, despite the peaceful environment that prevails, West Africa is a pot boiling.

The frontiers constitute incendiary causes for conflicts. They are scars of history, which were devised at the European bargaining table of the Berlin Conference. Colonial powers carved up West Africa and Africa, without taking into account geographic and demographic factors.

Today, as a result of that arbitrary boundary drawing, frontiers separate homogenous societies and link together antagonistic ones. So citizens of a given country may have their interests across the borders. Their farms, families, religious leaders or paterfamilias and so forth are divided by these boundaries.

Some cases picked from among a myriad illustrate and exemplify the magnitude of the threat, the imbroglio and the stalemate that characterizes this situation:

- o The people of Sanwi live astride the border between Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. A dispute arose between the two countries when the Sanwi people in Cote d'Ivoire expressed their desire to become Ghanian.

- o The border between Niger and Nigeria separates the Hausa people. Kinship that ties together these two communities, founded on nomadic life is stronger than their allegiance towards their official homelands.

- o The EWE people in Ghana and Togo dream of establishing an EWE independent country. As a result of this ambiguous situation, the two countries accuse each other of providing support to their EWE citizens against the other.

o Agacher is a strip of land located between Burkina Faso and Mali, and contains mineral deposits. The two countries have waged two wars over this rich strip of land.

Each West African country has to cope with frontier issues. Members of populations astride the borders often have two identity cards and thereby enjoy two citizenships. According to their interests, they claim one or the other citizenship. Marriages among the two communities, families here and there, farms on the borders are variables of the equation the countries have to solve. A dispute that arises between the two communities constitutes a causus belli that compels their countries to take sides. People who feel ill-treated or frustrated by their official country, may call for the support of the neighboring country looked upon as their homeland prior to colonization. Reciprocally, a nation may claim a territory populated by people sharing the same customs and language so as to rewrite history and thereby rehabilitate its kinsmen.

In addition to threats at its border, each country has to cope with a human issue inside its boundaries. Each nation is a mosaic of people linked together by history but having different ways of life or conflicting interests. Some nations encompass 60 or more ethnic groups. To the extent these communities express their will to power, the struggle between them inhibits national unity and is a source of social disorder.

Different standards of life due to regional disparities in a given country enhance the tension between poor and rich. In fact, the states' strategy for development, prioritizes development resting on the use of local natural assets, in order to minimize the cost of development. It goes without saying that regions endowed with few or no assets feel overlooked and abandoned. Such a policy is viewed as a discriminatory measure by segments of

the population who don't take advantage of it. The states are rightly or wrongly accused of practicing favoritism. As a result of this climate of suspicion, the equation of the nation-state versus ethnic-state portrays the relationship between the state and some strata of the populations who may refuse to execute sound state decisions deemed contrary to their interests. With such an intolerable situation, when a real stand off undermines the institutions, the state plays its role by taking tough, disciplinary and political measures capable of bringing order but which are subject to triggering uprisings, riots, etc.

Dissatisfaction towards the state, economic disparities between West African nations, different standards in the level of life between citizens of the same country and entailed rivalry, the appeal of wealthier countries and regions, along with political reasons and misery, are the impetus of and incentive for migration.

As long as the phenomenon consists of the movement of people from one area to another area of the same country, the state has the coercive or persuasive measures to master and control it. Often it is rural exodus that pushes people from the poorest regions of the Sahel or savannah towards rain forest regions where the level of living is higher.

But when the phenomenon consists of a move of people across the borders, it has another dimension. Migration in West Africa is a current phenomenon that carries the germs of conflict.

Workers from landlocked and drought stricken countries, who are looking forward to quenching their desire for a better life, move into neighboring or nearby states. In a sub area such as West Africa where unemployment is a current "commodity," jobless nationals accuse alien workers of being

responsible for job scarcity. A strong tension exists between nationals and alien workers and often results in strikes, uprisings and social disorder.

Furthermore, some West African countries share the burden of harboring refugees created by war and policy turmoil in nearby states. So refugees from Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger pour into Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, and Togo. The reduced "hospitality-capability" of host societies tends to militate against harmonious coexistence.

Political exiles are the most controversial migrants. Compelled to move by forces beyond their control, they constitute a special segment of migrants whose presence is a real source of tension and dispute. Their homeland accuses the host country of providing support to its opponents.

For instance, the relations between Ghana and Togo, have been dominated by the exiles issue. Ghana harbors Togolese exiles and Togo accommodates Ghanaian exiles. In October 1977, Togo was alerted to a coup that was reportedly being planned by Togolese exiles living in Ghana. In 1985, a bomb exploded in the Togolese capital. In 1986 Togo faced the most serious attempt to overthrow its government. A commando of 50 people, supported by Ghana and Burkina launched a coup attempt from Ghana.

Generally speaking, migrants are categorized into two groups:

- o On the one hand, alien workers and refugees who are regular migrants in the sense that they have no trouble in their homeland. Their troubles may come from the host country. In fact, they are scapegoats of economic setbacks and unemployment; as such they undergo frustration, provocation, humiliation and hardships of all kinds. This treatment impacts on and undermines the relations between their homeland and the host country. Moreover, they are expelled when the latter cannot afford to accommodate them given its economic difficulties or their insecurity. In the early 1970's Ghana expelled alien

workers and jobless people. In 1985, Nigeria expelled alien workers and refugees.

- o On the other hand, political exiles who cannot return home are the cause of a continuous tension between their homeland and the host country. Often they act in a clandestine manner against the former who deems it worthwhile to counter their action. So the state of no war, no peace may escalate into armed conflict.

If states hold coercion measures ranging from intimidation to massive expulsion to have migrants under control or to get rid of them, they feel almost impotent to respond to the internal attack launched by those who are commonly referred to as intellectuals, opposing those who did not get the opportunity to take advantage of education.

The group of intellectuals includes:

- o Bureaucrats and graduates whose skills and university acquired knowledge back up economic development.
- o School and university graduates whose diplomas don't meet employment requirements.
- o School fall-outs without any qualification who are the target of indoctrination.

The two latter categories, along with jobless workers, form an "army" of idle people ready to voice their dissatisfaction and to rebel in large cities.

Educated in local universities and schools or abroad, elites who have taken foreign values are willing to dictate an economic model to their country, their preference going to the Soviet or Chinese model. The attractiveness of Red China's model of development rests on the fact that this country of the third world has become a nuclear power within a few years, capable of providing assistance to developing countries. Its model has

become the symbol of the leap forward and seems to contain the drive for rapid development.

To the extent that most of West African countries, given their former colonial status, are pro western democracies, the intellectuals economic choices are not welcomed. Their model is based upon values subversive to the established order. Their failure to impose their development viewpoint disappoints them all the more as they are eager to see their countries attain social equality, abolition of mass poverty, total democratization, and to provide for the basic needs of the people. As a result of their dissatisfaction, they pledge to criticize the government or take over. They run trade unions and opposition parties, are in prison or are political exiles. Wherever they are, they don't remain inactive. The threat they represent is the more detrimental to peace as they rely on their ethnic group's sponsorship, the support of some nations in Africa, on the Arab world or on countries in the developed world.

The Arab world's interests in West Africa consists of imposing or spreading the islamic religion. Arab radical regimes are in quest for friends in order to strengthen the front against their enemies.

Libya is endeavoring to set-up proxy states in the region. It has strong footholds in Benin, Burkina Faso, and Ghana. It recruits young men throughout the West African states, sends them to Libya where they are trained and given means to destabilize their countries. It sponsored the attempted coup in Gambia in 1982. The attack against Togolese capital was launched by Libyan supported rebels.

West Africa holds assets that justify and advocate the developed powers' willingness to have influence and to invest in the region. What are their interests which are at stake?

They have economic and geopolitical interests. Western powers economic interests include:

- o Retaining access to mineral and energy resources. Being resource dependent, they are concerned about minerals categorized as critical to defense related industry, and oil.

- o Defending their investments, West Africa is a major recipient of western private sector assistance.

- o Having access to the wide variety of raw materials and agricultural products.

- o Guaranteeing continuous access to the expanding market of 150 million consumers, in which projected American and European industrial and finished goods may dominate.

On geopolitical grounds, West Africa is strategically located. It has good airfields, deep water ports and its coasts are a waterway to commercial vessels and oil suppliers. The Western world's geopolitical interests consist of:

- o Deterring or countering hegemonic intrusion by the Soviets and their surrogates into West African countries. Stability in West Africa can be helpful to the settlement of apartheid through peaceful means, whereas Soviet influence in Eastern Africa and in the "Front line countries" recommends a bloody and radical approach.

- o Having access to ports and facilities supportive of a global Western World military outreach.

- o Counting on West Africa's political weight in the international arena. The region makes up the largest organized voting block in Africa, leaning towards Western countries, and thereby playing a significant and decisive role in multinational meetings and international organizations.

Like in the overall third world, the Soviet foreign policy towards West Africa complies with the Brezhnev Doctrine which proclaims that, "Once a country adopts a communist system of government, it can count on the Soviet Union to provide whatever support is necessary to insure that the system is not overthrown by either internal or external means."

The Soviets' interests in West Africa consist of:

- o Penetrating by all means in the sub area in which their influence is still lacking and undesirable. Such a foothold will permit them to fight on two fronts, apartheid and Western policy in South Africa.

- o Supporting at all cost the West African countries that fall under their control and keeping them away from "Western imperialistic influence."

- o Advising a local policy based upon a "strategy of mineral denial to the West."

- o Having access to West African coasts. In the area of lines of communications they are mainly interested in the Red Sea where Somalia permitted their penetration, and in the Indian Ocean which is an important waterway to their merchant shipping and fisheries.

Moscow portrays great powers' competition in West Africa as an East-West confrontation. A victory over the West "serves to weaken the imperialistic forces and consolidates the position of the world socialist system."

The perception that, as a Soviet official put it, "international politics are bipolar and zero sum," undergirds their foreign policy towards the third world in general and towards West Africa in particular. "Any weakening on one side immediately makes itself felt in the dynamics of the correlation of forces." Such a zero sum perception does not advocate an equilibrium of forces or a compromise; whatever one side gains, the other necessarily loses.

Given the attractiveness of interests at stake in West Africa, great powers pledge to counter each other mercilessly. On the one hand, Western countries comfortably established in the region, are defending their acquired positions. They must provide for a policy of containment of communism or disappear in a communist tide in West Africa. On the other hand, the Soviets and their surrogates, who are the attackers, are willing to conquer the held positions. Insofar as the essence of the attack compels them to take the initiative, they are eager and ready to exploit favorable opportunities.

Great power rivalries put in jeopardy West Africa's impetus for peace and its concern for nonalignment. East-West confrontation has impacted on some West African countries' stability and foreign policy for many years.

In the mid-1960's a task force allegedly supported by Portugal made up of Guineans, other Africans and Portuguese, launched an attack against Conakry, the capital of Guinea, in order to overthrow the government they deemed bloodthirsty, dictatorial and opposed to European multinationals' interests.

In 1977, a commando made up of Beninese, Europeans and other Africans, known as the "bad guys," attempted a coup to the detriment of Benin which they deemed pro-Soviet in interest. In 1988, ten years later, the "bad guys" are being prosecuted by the French government. This underlines the fact that groups of people representing some interests may take the initiative to topple West African governments.

In 1965, Cote d'Ivoire broke its diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union as the latter was attempting to sponsor student's uprisings and to indoctrinate the peasantry. Both countries resumed relations 20 years later.

CHAPTER V

WAYS AND MEANS FOR PEACE

It seems platitudinous to assert that peace maintenance and peacekeeping rest on the mastery of and victory over the threats that threaten peace. However, this reality is true in the quest for peace. The pay-off in politics consists in turning obstacles into assets and advantages or at least in minimizing their effects. For instance, due to the politicians' ability, if an ethnic group astride a border turns into a bridge between neighboring states instead of an object of disputes, so much the better.

How can West Africa cope with the cluster of threats depicted above, that undermine the fulfillment of its goals, particularly its drive for peace? How do states settle disputes that arise between them?

The risk of conflict that characterizes relations between countries of the region imposes on them two courses of action as possible responses to the challenge.

The first one recommends that concerned nations be prepared for war, in compliance with the Latin saying that advises, "Si vis pacem, para bellum" (if you like peace, be prepared for war). This course of action puts states' existence and integrity in jeopardy. It is risky. Furthermore, armament expenditures and the logistical support that the preparation for war and the conduct of war imply, make the recommendation costly for contending sides. West African nations, including some ranked among the least developed in the world, who are all focusing on their development cannot afford war and are not willing to stockpile and wage war.

Moreover, it should be stressed here that if the Latin saying had been proven true and effective in ancient times, in which, as Hobbes observed, "Homo, homini lupus" (man is a wolf to man), today's interdependent and

planetary world would have witnessed and realized the vanity of war which is no longer the preferred avenue of approach to politics.

Grounded on this perception, West African countries have agreed to advocate and implement the second course of action that recommends the peaceful settlement of disputes and urges the promotion of peace, as a strategic response.

As emphasized in the follow-up chapter, colonial boundaries that cut across ethnic group lines, were artificial obstacles and barriers designed to keep colonies apart and to prevent colonies from getting closer and becoming acquainted. French and Portuguese colonies ignored everything about English colonies and vice versa. At the onset of independence, ignorance of each other turned into enmity as states became responsible for their own sovereignty and master of their destiny in a challenging environment.

Based on the observation that peace is a state of mind, a behavior embodied in the way of life, and war the fruit of misunderstanding, fear and the will to power, West African nations have taken the initiative to pull down the war of incomprehension among each other and to establish an era of better comprehension and relationships between their peoples. With that objective in mind, as the first step to peace, they founded sub regional and regional organizations, namely the Council of the Entente in May 1959, the ECOWA in 1974, the ECOWAS in 1975.

Basically, these three groups have the same structures and similar organs. They all include a body containing the heads of state which is the main authority for the organization, an executive secretariat and a council of ministers. Geographically they differ in their size with respect to the number of member states. They pursue the same objective which is, "to help raise living standards and build towards a better future."

They play an outstanding role in the process of peace maintenance and peacekeeping:

- o They express a political will for peace.
- o They develop and recommend structures for peace.
- o They provide a means for the peaceful settlement of disputes and wars.

These organizations are a political will for peace in West Africa which has the politicians and decisionmakers' war leary. Officials in their speeches praise and lay emphasis on the righteousness, the justice, and the pay-off of peace, and urge their peoples to live in and promote peace inside and outside national borders.

Opportunities to enhance the spirit of peace are multiplied. They range from presidential visits to the meetings of academics around a research table or the exchange of students who are tomorrow's leaders. Youth competition in sports tournaments or peasant competitions organized to reward the best producer in their countries are propagation vectors that carry peace messages throughout the region. Mass media is mobilized to cover main events that single out and further peace.

The structures of the organizations are devised to foster and back-up the spirit of peace. Convinced that the path to peace passes through cooperation and victory on underdevelopment, and that people linked by cooperation who pursue and share common interests, are likely bound to live in peace, the founders of the three organizations have prioritized cooperation and pledged to overcome poverty.

Programs in various fields seek to attain a harmonious development and to minimize subregional disparities. As starvation is a sensitive and incendiary source of conflict and social turbulence, focus is being placed on agriculture and animal production in order to attain food self-sufficiency by

the year 2000. Each organization has a fund that guarantees the loans of and provides assistance to needy states. For instance, the Council of the Entente and ECOWA voted a budget five years ago to sustain drought stricken states in their efforts to provide care to decimated cattle.

In West Africa, as previously pointed out, it should be remembered that a third party's intervention plays an outstanding role in the settlement of disputes between individuals, people, societies. Forgiveness is a cardinal virtue that characterizes relationships in day to day life. Consequently, the three organizations, in their desire for peace, have taken into account such an asset and have placed an emphasis on the improvement of the telecommunications system. At the onset of independence, a telephone call from an English-speaking country to a French-speaking country was possible only by way of a switchboard in Paris or London. Today, telephone, telex and telegraph link most of the countries.

Peace between countries means freedom of movement. Therefore, protocol authorizes free movement of people and goods throughout the region. They abolish "tourist visa requirements, right of residence and right of establishment." To carry out this policy, emphasis is laid on transportation. Many projects devised by ECOWAS, some of which are underway, are designed to improve or construct roads and highways.

It has to be remembered that one of the organizations' main objectives is to create an integrated regional economy. As the integration process implies customs union, ECOWAS, which is a bridge between French-speaking, English-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries, in its third summit in 1978, decided that "after May 1979, all customs tariffs would be frozen and that no member state would be permitted to raise any tariffs on goods exported to or imported from another member country."

An extensive economic program, including 250 schemes financed by ECOWAS and international donors at an estimated cost of 950 million dollars, aims at fighting the crisis throughout the region.

The decisions set forth above are economic, psychological and diplomatic means designed to foster and consolidate the spirit of peace in the region. The organizations go further and are more concrete. In compliance with the OAU charter, they embody principles that seek to minimize and anticipate the occurrence of disputes and wars.

In respect to the territorial integrity issue, the organizations favor the principle of "uti possidetis" that recommends the acceptance of "existing de facto boundaries," between countries as the frontiers drawn by colonial powers. In any form war, as a means to settle boundary disputes, is condemned.

The migrant issue, which is of great concern, is addressed as the right of residence and the right of establishment. States are requested to provide basic rights and security to migrants. The migrants, in turn, must pledge not to practice political and hostile activities against their mother countries or other countries of the region. Member states are cautioned to avoid massive deportation and unjust practices against alien people. The use of the latter by host country against a member state is condemned.

"Political assassination, and subversive activities" by a state against neighboring states are condemned in all their forms.

The principle of "non-interference in states' internal affairs" helps to guarantee peaceful relations between member states.

The Council of Entente, the ECOWA and the ECOWAS uphold the principle of "equality of the member states" which seeks to minimize the geographical, demographical and economic imbalances that characterize West Africa.

The principle of the "respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state, and for its inalienable right to an independent existence," asserts the members' intent to deny the desire of some expansion and their claims over some territories.

The principle of "nonalignment" seeks to prevent external, negative involvement in the settlement of regional disputes. This principle asks as an impediment to external manipulation. Each state has the right to establish relations with all other nations provided that it complies with the principle of nonalignment. Under such circumstances, it is free to adopt the system of government that best fits its people, but it must not lose sight of West Africa's overall interests. Nor must it sacrifice the region for its own political sake and become aligned with external powers claiming the sponsorship of that particular political system. West Africa encompasses countries that have in the past or are currently governed by socialist or revolutionary governments, namely Benin, Guinea Mali and to a certain extent, Burkina Faso. Their choices do not impact significantly on their membership in regional organizations and they still remain in the wake of the Western world.

While the organizations make useful recommendations that guide their members in the establishment of relations with external powers and thereby warn them against external threats, they don't address the issue of internal threats to a member state as they are concerned about complying with the principle of noninterference in a state's affairs. It behooves each state to respond to that internal challenge according to its own internal policies and realities.

"No prophet is accepted in his hometown," and most of the 16 states experience and witness that harsh biblical reality. They feel impotent to

cope with the threat coming from elites opposed to ongoing regimes. In fact, intellectuals have triggered riots, uprisings and revolts that have toppled governments in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali and Benin. To handle that threat, states provide for internal policies that depend upon their leaders' temperament, local pressures and local realities. As a whole, responses range from sound coercive measures designed to safeguard national unity, to the nonrespect of human rights. From its independence in 1958 up to the establishment of the second republic, a period of over 25 years, Guinea had been a bloodthirsty dictatorship that muzzled the intelligentsia, jailing and executing some of them, while Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal, its neighboring countries, were democracies concerned about the promotion of human rights.

Despite steps taken to promote and maintain peace, disputes now and then arise between member states. The organizations have anticipated means to handle cases of conflict. Commissions to settle disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration exist.

Negotiation is the traditional means of settlement. The two parties agree to use it and discuss the settlement of their disputes without a third party's intervention. One of the advantages of this method lies in the fact that it often leads to a lasting and positive conclusion as both parties feel satisfied with the outcome. However, it is rarely resorted to when the dispute reaches its paroxysm. But as a means to prevent disputes from occurring or developing, it is an effective tool. Through negotiation Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana agreed to redraw boundaries in areas both states were claiming. Negotiations are still underway and a bilateral team of experts has provided partially satisfactory results.

Mediation is the approach by which a third party is called in as a mediator to reconcile the views of opposing parties. This means is the one

most utilized in West Africa. In fact, states desiring peace in the region always accept the intervention of a mediator who is, in theory, neutral. Often one or many heads of states play the mediator's role. They have successfully settled disputes in the sub-area by mediation.

In the early 1960's the heads of states of the Council of the Entente, succeeded in resolving the frontier dispute between Niger and Dahomey, now named Benin. Both countries were members of the organization.

In 1966, the president of Mali settled the dispute between Ghana and its French speaking neighbors, Burkina Faso (then Upper Volta), Cote d'Ivoire, Niger and Togo. These countries complained that Ghana was granting political asylum and support to opposition groups who were initiating subversive activities from abroad against their home countries.

In 1967, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea were engaged in a dispute and each detained citizens of the other nation. This problem was mediated by the president of Liberia at the instigation of the United Nations.

In 1985 the heads of states of ECOWA obtained a cease-fire between Burkina Faso and Mali. The dispute between these neighboring countries over the Agacher strip flared into an armed conflict while Burkina Faso was carrying out a census in the controverted area. After the successful mediation by the heads of state, a force made up of military observers from other countries of the organization intervened to control and to assure the cease fire stood. It should be noted that it was the first time an international peacekeeping force intervened on the battlefield in West Africa. Due to obvious economic considerations ECOWA has no forces at its disposal, But member states are linked by a Non-Aggression and Defense Accord (NADA) in which each state agrees to release forces necessary to keep the peace, if need be.

A conciliation commission's role consists in clarifying the issue in a dispute. Its conclusions are proposals that do not bind disputing parties who are free not to comply. Contending parties seldom resort to conciliation to the extent they don't participate in the decisionmaking process which leads to proposals. This means of dispute settlement has never been implemented in West Africa.

An arbitration commission is a legal body entrusted with the mission of settling a dispute. Disputing parties agree to accept the decision of that tribunal.

After the cease fire that terminated the Burkina-Mali War, both states called on the arbitration of the International Court of Justice and pledged to agree with this tribunal's decision. Effectively, they complied with its decision that resulted in the partition of the Agacher strip in favor of both countries.

Sun Tzu observed that the greatest victory consists in gaining victory without fighting. He advocated peace without fighting.

Peacekeeping usually implies and requires military forces deployed between contending troops. West Africa does not raise forces due to economic considerations previously emphasized. But in compliance with Sun Tzu's wisdom, its ambition is to gain peace without war. How effective is that strategy?

CHAPTER VI

ASSESSMENT OF THE STRATEGY

Basically the objectives the three organizations pursue are the same. Their fields of responsibility often overlap. Grounded on these similarities, some member states of the ECOWAS and critics contend that the COUNCIL of the ENTENTE, the ECOWA, and smaller organizations are out-of-date and constitute a threat "sui generis" to the larger regional grouping.

Charters the organizations have devised to preserve and keep peace are dependable tools in theory. Reality is not idealistic, it is harsh and when it challenges states they become reluctant to comply with principles, norms, protocols and programs they drafted. National interests constitute an impediment to organizations' decisions.

Being groupings of sovereign states, without a central power, organizations don't hold coercive measures to bind states to accept their decisions which ultimately turn out to be recommendations.

Commissions of dispute settlement, made up primarily of head's of states--in the case of mediation which is the means most commonly used--manage to halt war or to prevent disputes from escalating into armed conflict. Like a doctor who makes the diagnosis but can only alleviate his patient's suffering, because he runs out of or has not appropriate medication, those organizations just maintain or reestablish the status quo, but don't work out a final solution. The cyclic occurrence of the same disputes indicates that they often displace problems without solving them. Actually, most of the mediatory efforts result in a "no peace no war" situation or in a peace that cannot be durable as it rests on leaders' temperament and good will towards their peers, while the threat still remains at the borders.

The means devised to respond to the challenge of frontier issues count too much on disputing states' initiative to find a flexible solution. For instance, the principle that recommends the acceptance of "de facto existing boundaries" at the time of independences is applicable in areas where frontiers exist. But there are a multitude of no-man's-lands where boundaries are not drawn. For those cases, the organizations do not take their responsibility and vaguely advise states to resort to "peaceful means." Few states are willing to bargain for a strip of territory they look upon as their legitimate property. When the disputed area is a rich one, irridentism remains an eruptive force and, at that level, weapons become the "ultima ratio regis" and the unique way to continue politics by violent means, to use Clausewitzan language.

The principle of "non-interference in states' internal affairs" cripples the organizations. They are impotent to cope with the violation of human rights by some member states. In respect to the migrants' issue, they recommend host countries guarantee the former's rights. When a member state deports aliens, other states can only voice a verbal protest. Under these circumstances, the way out of such a conspiracy of silence is not political, but economic.

The curtailment of human rights by member states at the expense of national opponents is beyond the organizations' intervention. The respect for states' sovereignty prevents regional groupings from handling the issue of internal attack and human rights violation to the detriment of national interest.

The real reason behind the deepening gap between ongoing regimes and their intellectual opponents lies in the different perspective each group has on how to address the problem of underdevelopment. The regimes, who fear

being overthrown or having their efforts for development sabotaged by opponents, look upon the intellectuals as the scapegoats for all their setbacks. Under these circumstances a verbal dialogue between deaf people portrays the relationship existing between both sides, a relationship which renders cooperation impossible in countries that should be focusing on the mobilization of manpower. For instance, resistance to policy directives can be interpreted as the impartial advice of a technician or the obstinacy of a political opponent. Only economic development can minimize or put an end to this opposition which bears the germs of internal disorder.

In the interdependence of the world, the need of West African states for capital, technology, and assistance are compelling reasons that advocate for cooperation with external great powers. The latter are resource dependent and are competing to secure their interests in the sub-area. Nonalignment expresses the "aid-receivers" concern regarding the threat deriving from that competition. Some states break this principle when they think their interests are at stake. A few attempts at a socialist style of government have been initiated.

The threat that stems from the adoption of a socialist system of government is that the latter entails the establishment of revolution. In essence communist revolutionary movement is expansionist. When it has a foothold in a country, it must spill over to neighboring countries by means of weapons.

The manipulation of some West African states by some developed countries is possible because the latter are much too needy. As long as they are economically underdeveloped they won't be able to apply the principle of nonalignment and consequently, the threat due to the external powers' competition and the spreading of revolution will persist.

So economic development is the final response to many of the challenges West Africa is facing. Unfortunately, customs unions devised to speed up the process of integration in the region are put in jeopardy by the states' reluctance to comply with its requirements. The infrastructures that economic integration implies are missing. States' needs based on the exports of primary products and the import of manufactured goods cannot be met by other member states. This situation compels states to trade with developed countries at the expense of the regional trading area. For instance, the lack of a transport network compels countries to ship their goods towards developed countries rather than to neighboring states.

Some noneconomic reasons undermine interstate trade:

- o A hindrance to the integration process lies in the fact that anarchy often characterizes the development policy implementation in states who disregard the development plans devised by their neighbors. These discrepancies proceed from the misconception and misunderstanding of self-sufficiency and from the inflexible desire for becoming developed at any cost. For instance, aid from aid givers, which is provided randomly cannot be planned, or must be used in a specific field in compliance with the donors' guidance or conditions. So it sometimes constrains the integration process despite it's aim of being helpful to target states.

- o The fear that disputes may arise between a country and its neighbors becomes an impediment to the integration processes as each state is unwilling to depend too heavily on the economies of countries looked upon as potential threats.

- o Political and ideological cleavages, along with incompatibility of leadership, break the impetus and drive for integration. Unilateral and frequent closings of customs barriers to prevent or in anticipation of

subversive attacks from outside, or following deportation of alien people or as a response to a dispute, do not encourage the establishment of the large market the states are endeavoring to build.

The economic growth which the states are struggling for as a way out of underdevelopment and as a method to counter the challenges facing them will not be attained as long as micro markets undergird interstate trade.

CHAPTER VII

RECOMMENDATIONS

The existence of several economic groupings should not be deemed as a threat to the ECOWAS. It expresses some countries' concern for more intensive cooperation that takes into account specific and geographic factors. Furthermore it gives more flexibility to countries' quest for peace to the extent it increases the opportunities to promote peace.

For instance the groupings of states bordering a river or bringing together drought stricken countries, is an outstanding asset that creates regional interests as well as being a step towards peace and helping to cope with calamities.

A microscopic and indepth look at the overall threat to the promotion and maintenance of peace and at the weaknesses of the strategy implemented to cope with these challenges, points out that disputes, wars, instability and all disturbances of the peace stem from three main causes:

- o The frontier issue.
- o Underdevelopment.
- o Internal and international political considerations.

Therefore, the desire for a durable peace requires the achievement of the following goals:

- o Implementation of a wise, realistic and pragmatic policy designed to solve once and for all the frontier issue.
- o Focus on economic development at both national and regional levels.
- o Provision for an internal policy that promotes human rights.
- o Provision by developed western countries of a real and dynamic policy of aid, and refusal of religious conditions tied to aid.

The first objective's attainment depends upon West African countries only, provided that they are sincerely willing to find a way out of that puzzle. However, some preconditions must be fulfilled:

- o States and leaders must accept the evidence that history does not repeat itself. Therefore, nobody can undo or rewrite it.

- o Times when stronger and more powerful nations made empires at the expense of weaker nations, are gone. Ongoing alliances and the interdependence of the world cannot afford expansionist policies.

With these considerations in mind the 16 nations can solve the puzzle of frontiers.

- o First, in areas where frontiers exist, they should comply with the principle of "uti possidetis".

- o Using negotiation and available documentation boundaries should be delineated in "no-man's-land" areas by bilateral or multilateral teams of experts as Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana have pledged to do.

- o If delineation fails in rich areas and states are not willing to relinquish their claims, a common exploitation of resources can become a fruitful response in the long run.

- o The use of the International Court of Justice as Burkina and Mali agreed to do, is a legal way to settle frontier disputes.

Economic development is the best and surest response to most of West Africa's problems:

- o At the national level, regional disparities and different standards of living among the segments of societies breed dissatisfactions that bear the germs of disorder. Those differences and disparities derive from the centralization of trade and industries in the capitals at the onset of independence. States should provide for a policy of decentralization designed

to create new regional interests so that the gains of the countries spread nationwide to all the people.

Programs of aid to the peasantry which are the cornerstone of a broadly based agricultural development will seek to attain food self-sufficiency and alleviate starvation. In this respect, Cote d'Ivoire has set a valuable example that can inspire others:

- o This country guarantees the prices of commodities whatever the fluctuation of international prices on world markets, thanks to a "stabilization fund."

- o On a free-of-charge basis, peasants are granted basic means and agricultural ingredients such as fertilizers.

- o Emphasis is placed on the construction of transport networks to link production areas to trade areas, and of dams that compensate for the harshness of the climate in drought-stricken regions.

- o Rural institutions created nationwide to disseminate information give peasants responsive assistance and help them organize into cooperatives that manage production.

States should bear in mind that education must keep up with the requirements of labor markets so as to avoid unemployment due to the discrepancies that exist between graduates' skills and employers' demands. Furthermore, efforts to train students to master agricultural technology will respond to the peasants' need for assistance and the nations' concern for providing food for all.

Many programs of industrialization launched with the hope that they were the best tool against underdevelopment have not attained their goals. It is time therefore to draw upon the lessons of those failures and to focus on industries that transform local resources, particularly agriculture products.

Such an avenue is the best response to the policy of low purchase prices practiced in the world markets of commodities. It will also minimize financial hemorrhage and stress the importance of finished goods made out of West African commodities.

At a regional level, states must be aware that a self-reliant policy of development that implies the South-south cooperation is one of the conditions to be met if West Africa is willing to become developed. Therefore, economic integration is the "deus ex machina" of regional development, and states must achieve it or remain in economic stagnation. The obstacles that arise because the integration system benefits industrialized states more than poorest states, can be overcome. The study and implementation of appropriate and compensatory mechanisms in favor of the latter will give needed impetus to the integration process.

Some rich state's reluctance regarding the customs, derives from their fear of seeing their economic role and interests drop because of the competition which development of the poorest states implies. They should advocate compensatory measures to help less industrialized countries: First, the obvious economic reasons must be considered and the second reason lies in the fact that harmonious regional development which provides jobs and a better life helps to retain potential migrants in their countries. If the integrative system does not work, migration will sweep away the rich states' economies.

Social injustices and the violation of human rights are the political oppositions' Trojan Horse. The surest way to cope with that threat is not the dictatorships that some regimes are inclined to impose. States should provide for internal policies that seek to attain people's freedom and well-being.

Frantz Fanon, the author of "The Wretched of the Earth," wrote: "what counts today, the question which is looming on the horizon, is the need for a redistribution of wealth. Humanity must reply to this question or be shaken to pieces by it." What he expressed at a worldwide scale is also true at the national level. Revolutions and peace disturbances in a country are bred by poverty and injustices which catalyze them. States must provide for policies of equitable redistribution of incomes and thereby avoid the dichotomization of populations into "haves" and "have nots."

The making of a nation goes along with the requirements for human rights. Freedom of expression in colonial times or in 1960 did not cover the same scope as in 1988. When the level of education and the purchase power of an individual increase, his thirst for more rights increases too. Therefore, states should keep up with social changes and safeguard human rights.

New generations are more and more willing to participate in the decisionmaking process which affects their lives, the livelihood of the people, and the nation. Democratization of power remains the unique response to their participative impetus. This step will constitute a drive for manpower mobilization, national unity, and will likely put an end to the establishment of the West African "brain trust" abroad. The developing countries need the university and high level school graduates' expertise to get developed.

So respect for human rights and democratic regimes pays off and states should take that reality into consideration. In this respect, Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal have set the example in the sub-area. As Amnesty International acknowledges it, they guarantee human rights and their pledge for free elections allows candidates who feel capable, to run for political and

administrative functions. The stability that characterizes those countries testifies to the effectiveness of their choices.

An internal policy, as depicted above, that keeps people together, whatever the social fabric or their background, a policy that is concerned with people's freedoms and desire for basic needs and essential rights is the best response to the challenges of external manipulation and various political indoctrinations.

On a philosophical and mystic ground, and due to their cosmogony, the African people cannot accept or tolerate the communist ideology. Regimes that have attempted to impose it on their peoples, mistook it for African solidarity. Divorce between those regimes, such as Guinea and the Soviet Union, is the evidence that socialist systems of government do not fit West Africa. States of the sub-area head east when they can't count on the west. Developed western countries have to play an important role in West Africa's economic development. Compelling reasons thrust this policy on them:

- o Stability in West Africa protects the interests of the west.
- o Given its strong ties to the western world, West Africa deserves to be helped. If, due to the turmoil and peace disturbances poverty can cause West Africa to fall prey to communism, the Soviet Union will exert control over all sub-Saharan Africa.
- o Experience shows us that communism seldom develops in areas characterized by economic growth. The first step for the western countries' to make in containing communism is to provide appropriate economic aid and thereby create conditions hostile to communist expansion.

Given West Africa's political weight and influence in the OAU's decisionmaking process and in the international arena, the Soviet Union is seeking the opportunity to penetrate deep into the region where it does not

have a firm foothold. The reluctance or unwillingness of western countries to provide aid to West Africa will impact on the success or the failure of the Soviets' attempt.

- o Moreover aid by Western countries minimizes the cooperation between West Africa and revolutionary regimes whose aid threatens target countries' interests and stability.

To summarize the recommendations, it should be noted that peace in West Africa depends upon four essentials:

- o A states' political will to find a way out of the frontier puzzle must be carried out by concrete acts. Peaceful means to settle this issue, embodied in a devised judicial setting have proven effective when states agreed to resort to them. The sooner they solve the issue, the better. Otherwise, disputes over a strip of land, may catalyze or set fire to more sensitive issues. Underdevelopment requires that more attention be devoted to economic issues as well. States can solve the frontier issues provided they resort to their maturity, realism and pragmatism.

- o Emphasis on economic development must be placed on the three pillars upon which the economies can rest:

- oo A self-reliant policy of development that establishes a South-south cooperation between member states.

- oo Focus on the mobilization of manpower and the making of national unity by providing internal policies that seek to promote human rights and guarantee people's basic needs.

- oo Aid by western countries, similar to the Marshall Plan which assisted the European economy in the aftermath of World War II.

o In its quest for peace, West Africa should discourage aid from revolutionary regimes which require its political and diplomatic support to their adventurism against their enemies.

West African states should draw on lessons from the Chado-Lybian War that traces its roots back to the moment when Lybia alienated the Chadian Government by providing a substantial package of budget to the latter.

o A new international economic order favoring the third world in general, can help West Africa develop. The region's impetus to become developed cannot keep up with the disastrous consequences that result from the international economic crisis, a Malthusian crisis beyond control in rural areas and the hostile climatic factors that annihilates the states' struggle for food self-sufficiency.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

General Marshall observed: "Wars are bred by poverty and oppression; continuous peace is possible only in a relatively free and prosperous world."

The leading causes of disputes in West Africa confirm his perception. The chance to promote and maintain peace in the sub-area lies in the victory over underdevelopment. This implies the implementation of an economic integrative system that is the unique structure subject to trigger the economic development which national micro markets cannot afford.

The desire for peace requires the states to turn boundaries into meeting places rather than dividing lines, to struggle for people's basic needs and freedom rather than for weapons to fight an endless revolution. This reminds Western countries that containment is enough, but freedom is better, and urges them, in their own interests, to be willing to help West Africa overcome poverty.

If, and only if the steps set forth above are implemented will West Africa become a beacon of freedom, an oasis of prosperity and a standard setter. Then a sun of liberty will rise and shine away the darkness of the communist night that gradually spreads its ominous coat over the cradle of mankind.

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