

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF AFRICA: AN ANATOMY OF CENTRIPETAL AND CENTRIFUGAL FORCES

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Recibido: 25 Julio 2009 / Revisado: 5 Agosto 2009 / Aceptado: 10 Agosto 2009

INTRODUCTION

In an academic exercise of this nature, it is pertinent to establish the historical background. Thus, we shall first of all analyze the origin and the development of Africanism and Pan-African Movement as well as the reasons for the call for, and the actions taken towards the actualization of, African Economic Community. Thereafter, we shall examine the phenomenon of the envisioned African Economic Community by bringing to bare some of the centripetal and the centrifugal forces.

1. THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICANISM AND PAN-AFRICAN MOVEMENT, AND THE FORMATION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY

It is an irony of history that the sentiments and movement which culminated in the formation of the OAU, and later the adoption of the Treaty establishing African Economic Community originated from outside the African continent and from those E.A. Ayandele has described as “happy ridance”, banished for ever from Africa, and who “had been either war captives, or incorrigible criminals, or the scums of society, or slaves assessed as of little capital value” as opposed to “the slaves retained at home as inestimable assets”.¹ The facts

of this development have been documented by scholars. Particularly illuminating is Okon Edet Uya’s analysis. The historian notes that:

“One of the most persistent themes in the social and political thought of Afro-Americans has been their consciousness of Africa as a potentially revolutionary force in black liberation. Various labels such as ebony kinship, negritude, pan-negro nationalism, pan-Africanism and black brotherhood, this sentiment, articulated with varying degrees of sophistication, has been part of black political rhetoric since the seventeenth century. Afro-American thinking about Africa is as old as the beginning of the forced migration of blacks to the Western Hemisphere. Snatched away from his native land, put in the midst of a strange people, denied opportunities in the land that he labored so hard to build, the black man in the New World could not forget Africa. These twin forces... the cultural pull of Africa and the increasing oppression and victimization of the black man in the Western hemisphere... impelled him to identify with Africa.”²

The earliest articulation of this sentiment, the scholar maintains, was largely spiritual as evident in the spirituals such as “I am Hunting for a City” and “O Brothers Don’t be Weary”. “Conditions of

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¹ E.A. Ayandele, *The Educated Elite in the Nigerian Society* (University Lecture), Ibadan, Ibadan University Press, 1974, 9. For his assessment of slaves retained at home (Nigeria), see his article... “Observations on some Social and Economic aspects of Slavery in Pre-colonial Northern Nigeria”, *Nigeria Journal Economic and Social Studies*. vol. IX. 3, (1967), 239-338.

² Okon Edet Uya, “Conceptualizing Afro-American/African Relations: Implications for African Diaspora Studies”, Harris, Joseph E. (ed.) *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*. Washington, D.C., Howard University Press, 1982, 69-70.

freedom”, however circumscribed, presented “opportunities to conceptualize Africa in ways other than mere spiritual identification”. To those who accepted the image of Africa as the “dark continent” and blamed Africa for their degradation in America, Africa became an anathema. “The second response combined an acceptance of the image of the “dark continent” with a recognition of the challenge and the responsibilities of salvaging the ancestral homeland from presumed darkness “as exemplified by Alexander Crumwell and others of missionary emigrationism. “The third response tended to be a questioning of the popular image followed by several attempts to expose its inaccuracy” via exposition of the sophistication of the complexities of African life and customs as demonstrated by Edward Blyden. “By far the most sophisticated responses to the popular image of Africa in the New World are the Back-to-Africa movements, the Pan-African movements, and the new black nationalism”. In this regard, Uya further contends that:

“Whether it surfaced as emigrationism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Pan-African congress of the first half of this century or the new black nationalism of the 1960s and 1970s, this sentiment reflected a confidence in the capacity of the African to

create and control his reality, unfettered by European imperialism and neo-colonialism and the contaminating influence of European culture. In the five international conferences held between 1900 and 1945, Afro-Americans of the Pan-Africanist persuasion, for example, defended the honor and integrity of their ancestral brothers under colonial yoke. They thereby laid the ground work for the post-world war African independence movements and rightly earned for themselves the designation for the vanguard of modern African nationalism. Similar leadership continues to be provided today by a variety of organizations in the United States... Another currently popular version of black brotherhood is the triangle of black exploitation. In this view, blacks everywhere have been and continue to be oppressed and exploited. The exploitation of blacks in the Western Hemisphere under different versions of slavery, it is argued, has parallel in the exploitation of Africans under colonialism and continuing neo-colonialism. This exploitation imposes a brotherly responsibility. Blacks must act collectively. This version of black brotherhood was popularized by Marcus Garvey and Franz Fanon”.³

³ Okon Edet Uya, “Conceptualizing Afro-American..”, 74. For further discussion on the role of Africans in the Diaspora in influencing developments in the homeland, see... Paul Obiyo Mbanaso Njemanze, “A Century of African-American Experience in Nigeria, 1839-1939”, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria, October, 1992; Edwin Dorn and Walter C. Carrington, *Africa in the Minds and Deeds of Black American Leaders*, Washington, D.C., Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, Inc., 1991; Paul Obiyo Mbanaso Njemanze, “Africa in the Minds and Deeds of Her Children in the Caribbean”, Conference Paper, 4th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association for Caribbean Studies, the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, 8-10 February 2001, website: ; Jonathan Zimmerman, “Beyond Double Consciousness: Black Peace Corps Volunteers in Africa, 1961-1971”, *The Journal of American History*, December 1995, 999-1028; Juliet Bruce, “The Congressional Black Caucus: A Force for Change”, *Topic*, 205, 1994, 8-10; Niara Sudarkasa, “Success Speaks for itself: The Legacy and Promise of Historically Black Colleges and Universities”, *Vital Issues: The Journal of African American Speeches*, vol. 1, 2, Fall 1991; P. Olisanwuche Esedebe, “Pan-Africanism: Origins and Meaning”, *Tarikh*, vol. 6., 3, 1980; “The Growth of the Pan-African Movement, 1893-1927”, *Tarikh*, vol. 6., 3, 1980; Mazi Ray Ofoegbu, “African Personality, ‘African Socialism’, and ‘African Democracy’ as Pan-African Concepts”, *Tarikh*, vol. 6, 3, 1980; Adekunle Ajala, “The Rising Tide of Pan-Africanism, 1924-1963”, *Tarikh*, vol. 6, 3, 1980; Uma Oke Eleazu, “Pan-Africanism After 1958: The Traditionalization of a Radical Movement”, Richards, Henry J. (ed.) *Topics in Afro-American Studies*. New York: Black Academy Press, Inc., 1971; S. Okechukwu Mezu, “Black Renaissance and Negritude”, Richard, Henry J. (ed.), *Topics in Afro American Studies*. 1971; G.N. Uzoigwe, “Pan-Africanism and International Affairs” – A paper presented at the Department of History, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria, 3rd April 1986; Wilson J. Moses, “The Evolution of Black National-Social Thought: A Study of W.E.B. Dubois”, Richards, Henry J. (ed.) *Topics in Afro-American Studies*. 1971; St. Clair Drake, “Hide My Face? The Literary Renaissance”, *Black Brotherhood: Afro-Americans and Africa*, edited by Okon Edet Uya, Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath and company, 1971; Ali A. Mazrui, *Africa's International Relations: The Diplomacy of Dependency and Change*, London: Heinemann, 1977; Tony Martin, *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association*, West Port, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1976; A. Jacques Marcus, *Garvey and Garveyism*, Kingston 6, Jamaica: A. Jacques Marvey, 1962; and Hollis R. Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden: Pan-Negro Patriot 1832-1912*, London: Oxford University Press, 1967.

It is pertinent to note that, with the participation of Africans from the homeland in the 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress, the stage was set for the regionalization of the movement. Thus, at a meeting held in May 1963 at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, thirty-two independent African nations adopted a Charter institutionalizing the movement for African Unity. The OAU has as its aims the following:

1. to promote the unity and solidarity of the African States;
2. to coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa;
3. to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity, and independence;
4. to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa;
5. to promote international cooperation, having due regard to the charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.⁴

To give meaning to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and thus promote human progress, the OAU at the eighteenth conference of Heads of State and Government in June 1981 in Kenya, adopted the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. The Charter has 88 Articles covering rights and duties, establishment and organization of African Commission on Human and People's Rights, among others.⁵

2. AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

It is pertinent to note that "Nigeria's diplomatic initiatives ad support for the use of foreign relations between African countries to promote the rapid economic development and integration of the continent", Okon Uya asserts, "culminated in the 27th summit of the OAU Heads of State and

Government, concluded in Abuja, Nigeria's new capital, in June, 1991 which finally adopted the Treaty establishing an African Economic Community". The objectives of the community, the historian further observes, include:

1. promotion of economic, social and cultural development and integration of African economies in order to increase economic self-reliance and an endogenous and self-sustained development;
2. the establishment, on a continental scale, of a framework for the development, mobilization and utilization of the human and material resources of Africa in order to achieve a self-reliant development;
3. promotion of cooperation in all fields of human endeavor in order to raise the standard of living and maintain and enhance economic stability, foster close and peaceful relations among member states, and contribute to the progress, development and economic integration of Africa;
4. co-ordination and harmonization of policies among existing and future economic communities in order to foster the gradual establishment of the African Economic Community.⁶

Re-affirming her interest in the furtherance of the objectives of the African Economic Community, Nigeria enshrined in section 19(b) of the 1999 Constitution the "promotion of African integration and support for African unity" as one of the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy.⁷ Commenting on the adoption of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, Okon Edet Uya, Nigeria's former Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Argentina, asserts that:

"Without being immodest, the adoption of the treaty and its impending ratification by

⁴ Zdenek Cervenka, "The OUA and the Quest for African Unity, 1963-1967", *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, 3, 1980.

⁵ International Commission of Jurists, *Human and Peoples' Rights in Africa and the African Charter*, Geneva: ICJ., 1986. See also, Amnesty International, *A Guide to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*, London: Amnesty International Publications, 1991.

⁶ Okon Edet Uya, "The Economic Dimensions of Nigeria's Foreign Policy", Okon Edet Uya (ed.) *Contemporary Nigeria*. Buenos Aires, EDIPUBLIS S.A., 1992, 112.

⁷ Federal Government of Nigeria, *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, Promulgation 1999, 24, Lagos, Federal Government Press, 1999, A883.

member states mark a significant watershed in the search for economic integration of Africa. It is even significant when it is remembered that ex-colonial powers have tried every trick to maintain their pockets of influence, especially economic influence, in Africa and have often manipulated such influence to frustrate the African aspirations for unity and integration, despite the divisive linguistic and cultural legacies of colonialism. Despite obvious problems of implementation, the treaty can be regarded as the beginning of a new dawn in African economic co-operation and integration. In our present context, the treaty validates the correctness of the gradual, practical and concrete approach to African integration advocated by Nigeria since 1963. In this sense, it is a triumph for Nigeria diplomacy in Africa”.⁸

In the same vein, the importance of economics in foreign relations has drawn the attention of Adelele Jinadu. The scholar contends that, “while the political pursuit of her national interests through conventional diplomatic means continues to receive emphasis, Nigeria has in recent years placed perhaps more emphasis on “economic diplomacy”, in the belief that her political objectives must be pursued from a position of enhanced economic strength and improved terms of trade and balance of trade”.⁹ It is worthy to note that it was in furtherance of this that, after the inauguration of the present democratic rule in Nigeria on 29th May 1999, Mr. President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, created a ministerial-level portfolio and named a minister for Economic Co-operation and Integration in Africa. At this juncture, it is pertinent to examine the centripetal forces working towards the actualization of the African Economic Community.

3. CENTRIPETAL FORCES

Trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism.

In his analysis of the factor, Ali Mazrui has observed that:

“Trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism extends solidarity to those who share the African continent across the Sahara desert... the Arabs and Berbers of the North. Trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism insists on regarding the great desert as a symbolic bridge rather than a divide, a route for caravans rather than a death-trap... Trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism, by linking black Africa with the Arabs, may be laying the foundations of an Afro-Arab economic and industrial partnership in the future”.¹⁰

The strength of the Trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism lies in the geographical unity as a continent and shared experience of European colonialization of the continent. African found a common ground or point of convergence in the colonial exploitation of the continent and collectively worked towards the dismantling of the colonial structures. This collective action has in itself established another common experience... the experience of liberation fighters and decolonizers. This established a psychological tie among them and laid the foundation of the belief that Africans could work together in other spheres of human intercourse, including economic integration of Africa.

Membership of the Organization of African Unity.

The OAU has since its inception served as a rallying point for Africans. Under the umbrella of the organization, Africans did not just meet to discuss matters of common interest, but on many occasions, acted in concert in their bid to actualize the aims of the organization. In this portrait of “A New, Dynamic OAU working for Africa”, Charles W. Corey notes that:

“A new and dynamic Organization of African Unity (OAU) stressing accountability and responsibility can now be working energetically on Africa’s behalf.. In an address to the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, George Moose, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, told a packed room of diplomats, members of the press, and African specialists that, partic-

⁸ Okon Edet Uya, “The Economic Dimensions...” 113.

⁹ Adele Jinadu, “Nigeria and the World”, *Contemporary Nigeria*, edited by Okon Edet Uya, p.105.

¹⁰ Ali A. Mazrui, *Africa’s international Relations...*, 67, 74.

ularly over the past five years, the Organization of African Unity has been assuming a “more and more prominent and constructive role in African affairs” [...] Moose went on to cite examples of leadership and changes on the part of the OAU which demonstrates this “new sense of accountability and responsibility”:

1. The OAU decision to create a conflict resolution mechanism within the context of the organization..
2. The OAU’s recent successful involvement in the original Arusha agreement for Rwanda..
3. The OAU’s recent mediation efforts in the Congo, which have produced “a restoration of calm” in that country.
4. The deployment of Burundi of 47 OAU monitors, “whose presence has contributed significantly to the maintenance, up till now, of a state of calm in Burundi”.¹¹

Similarly, in his analysis of conflict management in Africa, Herman J. Cohen asserts that:

“At the level of the OAU, both Secretary General Salim A. Salim and the central organ have demonstrated considerable dynamism and initiative. In keeping with its original mandate, the OAU conflict-management mechanism is emphasizing activities designed to prevent violent conflict. For this reason, the OAU has become intensively engaged in observing democratic elections. The idea behind this activity is that successful transitions from dictatorship to democracy, of which free and fair elections are a significant element, will contribute to conflict prevention”.¹²

It is also remarkable to note that the membership of the OAU, with its resultant need to act in

concert in international forum, was also reflected in the 4th conference on women in Beijing, China. In the words of Joan Dunlop, Rachel Kyte, and Mia MacDonald:

“In Beijing, the pattern of diplomacy included the emergence of Africa as a coordinated region and the strong voices of Senegal, Namibia, and Zambia, as well as South Africa. This was essential in reaching consensus on the sections of health, poverty, the girl child, and human rights. This coordinated African voice had been strengthened through the process of regional preparations which included a preparatory conference, regional ministerial meetings, sub-regional meetings, and a meeting sponsored by the Organization of African Unity”.¹³

External Influences.

A number of external influences tend to reinforce the movement for African unity and economic co-operation. Of particular note, are the activities of the European Union and the Organization of American States. In respect to the former, *Deutschland* notes that:

“Renovating the European house proved more difficult than anticipated... but the work was successfully concluded at the Berlin summit.. Eventually after marathon talks that continued day and night during the special meeting of the European council in Berlin on March 24th and 25th (1999), the European Union’s 15 Heads of State and Government reached agreement on the Agenda 2000 reform package.. Agenda 2000 sketches out the EU’s financial framework for the next seven years. During this period, a total of up to 690 billion euros... just under 1.4 million marks...will be available for the common policy areas of EU partners.. Agenda 2000 also contains far-reaching decisions on the preparation and financing of the forthcoming

¹¹ Charles W. Core, “A New Dynamic OAU Working for Africa”, *Crossroads*. A Publication of the United States Information Service, Lagos, vol. 1, 8, July 1995, 3. See also... “Goals in Africa: Promoting Democracy, Peace, Economic Growth”, an interview with George E. Moose, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, *Crossroads*, vol. 2, 4, July 1996, 3; Vivian Lowery Derryck, “A Vision of Africa”, *Crossroads*, vol. 1, 6, May 1995, 3.

¹² Herman J. Cohe, “Conflict Management in Africa”, *CSIS Africa Notes*, a publication of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C. 181, February 1996, 2.

¹³ Joan Dunlop, Rachel Kyte, and Mia MacDonald, “Women Redrawing the Map: The World after Beijing and Cairo Conferences”, *SAIS Review*, Winter-Spring 1996, 160.

round of eastern enlargement. During the future financial period, the European Union will provide up to 22 billion euros in aid to prepare the candidate countries for accession ... more than double the previous support. Until the year 2006, a ground total of up to 58 billion euros will be earmarked for spending on behalf of new member countries following accession. The European Union's largest item of expenditure continues to be the common Agricultural policy, which provides European agriculture with extensive subsidies.. Arduous negotiations were also required to achieve a compromise in the European Union's second largest area of expenditure. Its targeted support for weak economic regions through the so-called structural and cohesion funds. One important outcome here is the concentration of support on the most needy regions so that the proportion of the EU's population covered by these funds will fall the current figure of approximately 50% to less than 40% in the year 2006".¹⁴

Another external factor which tends to project Africans as people with one destiny or fate and thus reinforces the feeling of oneness in Africans is the use of the word "African" as a qualifying adjective in describing phenomena and entities and the assigning of roles to Africans as members of an entity. Such reminders include the UN's Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), African Development Bank (ADB), Development Fund for Africa (DFA), and African Development Foundation (ADF). For further illustration of this fact, it is pertinent to cite a news item in the *Crossroads* captioned, "Possible African Seat on the UN Security Council Discussed". From the foregoing analysis, there is no doubt there are forces working in favour of the realization of the dream of African Economic Community.

4. CENTRIFUGAL FORCES

Globalization of the Economy.

The fact of our existence in a global village is well pronounced in the sphere of economics. In

this regard, the *Crossroads* 1995 report on the GATT is quite illuminating:

"After seven years of tough negotiations, a new General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was signed on April 15, 1994 by representatives from 125 countries who converged in Marrakesh, Morocco, resulting in an Agreement which, once ratified will extend reduction in trade barriers for the first time in areas of information and services, manufactured goods, and agricultural products. According to a study by the GATT Secretariat, the new agreement should add approximately \$500,000 million annually to the world economy, with \$116,000 of that going to the economies of developing countries and transitional economies. The new agreement will also create a World Trade Organization, WTO, to replace the General Agreement on Tariffs Trade. This new organization can work along with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to monitor trade and resolve disputes. Like the United Nations, the WTO will have unprecedented authority. It becomes the arena for which the old and new economic powers settle their differences on a broad range of issues. The new General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade marks a significant step towards more open markets that produce a global increase in standards of living and promote the development of the world's economies".¹⁵

The fact of the current mood and the reality of the emerging economic globalization was recently given a boost in Nigeria. The Foreign commercial service of the American embassy in Lagos held its annual Computers, Telecommunications, and Office Equipment seminar and exhibition in May 2000 with the theme... "E-Business laying the foundation of a Digital Economy". The seminar began with a keynote address by the USA commercial counselor, Miguel Pardo de Zela entitled "One World, One Market place... Understanding the Key Elements of Electronic Economy". Today, we talk about a borderless world. Economic globalization, however, is not without its opposers. At

¹⁴ "European Union Summit: Agreement on Agenda 2000", *Deutschland*, D20017F, 2/99, April/May E6.

¹⁵ "Gatt's Implications for Africa", *Crossroads*, vol. 1, 2, January 1995, 13.

the year 2000 meeting in Seattle, Washington, USA, the Cable News Network (CNN) showed pictures of violent demonstrations or anti-WTO demonstrations. On 26th September, 2000, the CNN showed picture of violent clashes between anti-globalization protesters and the law enforcement agents at annual meeting of the officials of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund at Prague, the capital city of the Czech Republic. The protesters vowed to disrupt the meeting, stating that “the institutions’ policies have worsened situation”, or that “the two institutions are responsible for worsening world poverty”. The 12.00 noon World News of the CNN of 27th September 2000, continued to reveal the discontent with the Bretton Woods Institutions by stating that statistics show that “half of the World’s population subsists on two dollars a day”, and that the NGOs said that something should be done about the World’s poor. The CNN World Report of 1.30 p.m. of 27th September 2000 revealed statistics of the perilous state of affairs. According to the report, 90,000 children die everyday because of poverty, and that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund must take responsibility for these deaths. There were calls by some people to the effect that these institutions be shut down”.¹⁶ The vitriolic attacks on globalization did not begin this year. Some years back, Nomtuse Mbere asserted that:

“The World Social Summit for Development in Copenhagen demonstrated the inevitable globalization of economic relations, particularly with the end of the cold war. Developing countries such as Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Ghana are now suffering the impact of structural adjustment programs (SAP) and the repercussions of the GATT and WTO agreements, which brought about globalization before most countries were ready. Since developing countries economies and markets are not very sophisticated, globalization has led to a consumer import culture not supported by stable and dynamic domestic economics. The results are further under-development,

lack of employment, and heavy debt burdens”.¹⁷

It is not the intention of the present writer to join in this paper the debate over the merits and demerits of globalization as it is not the thrust of this paper. It is the subject matter of the present writer’s on-going research... “Globalization: Misconceptions and Realities”. The point to note here is that globalization is working against the actualization of African Economic Community, as we are increasingly being drawn into a global economic community... a borderless world.

Sub-Saharan Pan-Africanism.

This is another force working against the economic integration of Africa as it limits itself to the unity of black people, or black countries south of the Sahara desert.

Pan-Negro Nationalism.

Racial consciousness and solidarity is another factor working against the economic integration of Africa. For Marcus Garvey and Chinweizu, black solidarity should be the primary goal of the Negro race. In the words of the latter:

“[...] the key items on the Black world’s reparation agenda are these:

1. To campaign for reparation payments for the holocaust and, through that very act, say “Never Again” to any part of the holocaust nightmare.
2. To re-educate the Black World about its correct history and its place in world.
3. To cultivate negrocentricity, with its spirit of Black World First, of paramount loyalty to the Black Race as a whole.
4. To build black megastates.
5. To industrialize the Black World.
6. To shift the preoccupation of Black world elites from the pursuit of personal prosperity to the quest for collective security for the entire Black Race.
7. To organize a Black World League of Nations, Communities and States that shall

¹⁶ Cable News Network, Atlanta, USA, 2000.

¹⁷ Nomtuse Mbere, “The Beijing Conference: A South African Perspective”, *SAIS Review*, Winter-Spring 16, 170.

build and supervise the Black World's collective security system".¹⁸

The Arab League.

The membership of the Arab league is working against the economic integration of Africa. This is because the Arab World, which includes African countries north of the Sahara desert, is united in the promotion of the interests of the Arabs worldwide. The interest of the Arab League do not always agree with that of African countries south of the Sahara.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

The existence of OPEC as a commodity cartel is working against the economic integration of Africa. This is because its membership, which includes non-African countries and excludes some African nations has polarized the continent into OPEC and non-OPEC members. As the allocation of production quotas by OPEC affects the price of crude oil in the world market and the high price of crude oil adversely affects the economies of non-OPEC African countries, the boat of economic integration of Africa is moving against the tide since the price of crude oil will remain a source of disharmony in relationship between the OPEC and the non-OPEC African countries.

Organization of Islamic Conference and the World Council of Churches.

The existence of these organizations is working against the unity of African countries as the activities of some members of the two councils, bordering on religious intolerance and persecution, had caused the deaths of thousands upon thousands of Africans. There is no reason to believe that their vowed objectives and actions will not continue to breed sectarian violence. The matter has not been helped by the fact that the two religions have their control towers and nerve centres outside Africa. As spiritual realm is not amenable to empirical analysis and solution, the divisive effect of religion cannot be underestimated. This is because it is a mental attitude. Ideas rule the world.

Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements between African and non-African Countries.

These twin forces are working against the economic integration of Africa. This is because concessions and technical assistance as well as foreign investments from non-African nations tend to weaken the bond of African regional unity and integration.

The Commonwealth and the erstwhile Colonial Communities.

The existence of the Commonwealth tends to weaken African regional unity because non-Commonwealth African countries have felt their exclusion and tended to maintain their ties with their former colonial masters. Franco-phone African nations have strong ties with France. The economies of independent African countries are so dominated by the former colonial masters that we now legitimately address them as neo-colonial states.

The United Nations.

The existence of the United Nations Organization and its operation through the General Assembly, the Security Council, the various organs and specialized agencies, tends to weaken the spirit of geographical exclusiveness and chauvinism. This is because its operation has established double loyalty. There is rivalry between regional loyalty and global commitment. In deed, it is not uncommon to hear expressions such as "human family" and "common humanity" emanating from the mouths of international actors.

National Interests.

As a country's foreign policy is an extension of her domestic policy, and as national interests do not always correspond, the quest for economic integration of Africa will continue to face forces of retardation as national interests clash.

European Union and other Regional Communities.

It is true that the existence of the European Union and other regional communities can have the effect of stimulating in Africans the need to come together and to act in concert. On the other

¹⁸ Chinweizu, "Recolonization or Reparation? An Examination of the New Threat to Recolonize the Black World", *International Committee for Reparations: Lecture series on Reparation*, 1, Lagos, 1994, 14-15.

hand, their existence can produce a destabilizing effect on the African countries. The fundamental features of a competitive world is tussle for supremacy. As victory and material well-being can only come with the weakening of rivals, it becomes expedient for EU to continue the use of her various weapons to ensure that the economic integration of Africa will never materialize. Other key international economic actors will continue to work towards the consolidation and sustenance of their positions in the world economy. Africa's position in the scheme of affairs in the world is weak. The process of actualization of African Economic

Community will continue to receive undermining influences from outside. This is because he who blows the piper dictates the tune.

CONCLUSION

In the final analysis, it is pertinent to state that, in spite of the efforts made towards the actualization of the African Economic Community and the evident centripetal forces, the boat of economic integration of Africa is moving against the tide.