

## **B.1 Primary Materials**

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### **B.1.1 Specific Peace Agreements with respect to Liberia**

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## **B.5 Newspapers and Journals**

African Recovery

African Research Bulletin

African Economy

Africa Confidential African Observer Africa Report

Amnesty International - diverse reports on Liberia contact: The Magazine of ECOWAS

Daily Graphic

Daily Champion

Daily Times

Financial Times

Free Press Guardian

Jeune Afrique

Journal of ECOWAS March'es Tropicaux New African

New Democrat

New Nigerian

National Concord

Nigerian Tribune

OAU Conflict Management Review THIS Day

The Grapevine

The Punch

The African Guardian (Nigeria)

The Peacemaker: The ECOMOG Magazine

The Economist

This Day

Tell Magazine

The Independent

United Nations - diverse documents on Liberia West Africa

Negotiation Processes Towards Formation of Security Regime and Resolution of the  
Liberian Conflict

## **B.6 List of Interviewed Persons quoted<sup>1</sup>**

General Abdulsalaami	Former Chief of Defence and later Nigerian Head of
Abubakar	State. Interviews/discussions: December 1997, Dodan Barracks Lagos; January and April 1999, Pretoria
Dr A.K. Arije	Head of Administration, ECOWAS. Interview/discussions: January 1998, Abuja
Abbas Bundu	Former Executive Secretary of ECOWAS. Interviews/discussions: April 1997, Abuja and January 1998, London
Chief Tom Ikimi	Former Nigerian Foreign Minister, 1995-1998. Interviews/discussions: July 1995 Lagos; September and December 1997 in Monrovia
Victor Malu	ECOMOG Commander 1995 to 1998. Interviews/discussions: December 1997 and April 1998
Yoweri Museveni	President of Uganda and former OAU Chairman. Interview/discussions: Presidential Guest House, Pretoria, 11 October 2001
Chief Hinga Norman	Leader of Kamajor Hunters. Interview/discussions: Sierra Leone, October 2001
General Ike Nwachukwu	Former Foreign Minister of Nigeria 1989-1993. Interviews/discussions: Lagos December 1997; 18 July and 23 August 1998

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<sup>1</sup>Interviews and discussions with the listed persons in B.6 were held on the basis of 'need to know' both as a member of the establishment and the Policy Planning Unit of the Foreign Office; having headed the West Africa Department and the Second United Nations Division at various times in the 1990s. The actors were free with information that helped me understand their thought-patterns and some processes; but then, I am bound, while still in service, by the Official Secrets Act of 1962 and the extant circulars for Top Management staff of the Foreign Office. The major fieldwork was between 1997 and 1999.

General Arnold Quainoo	ECOMOG's First Commander. Interview/discussions: Lagos in June 1997
Salim Ahmed Salim	Former Secretary-General of the OAU. Interviews/discussions: 1995-1998, variously in Lagos, Abuja and Addis Ababa
Amos Sawyer	Former President of Liberia, 1990-1994. Interview/discussions: December 1997 in Monrovia
Gani Joses Yoroms	Research Fellow, CPR. Interview/discussions: January 1998, Abuja

#### **B6.1 List of Persons Interviewed, though not directly quoted, but Enriched the Thesis**

Major John Adeboye	ADC to former President Amos Sawyer
Sam Bangura	Adviser to the V. Strasser Regime
Kwesi Botshway	Former Minister of Economic Planning and Finance, Ghana
Boubacar BA	Deputy Executive Secretary of ECOWAS (Political Affairs)
Ruth Ceasar	Woman Activist
Ibrahim Dagash	Head of Information, Official spokesperson of the OAU
Joe Felli	OAU Representative in Rwanda
Daniel Gbadoh	Deputy Minister under IGNU
Danieletta Glenn-Abanum	Deputy Chief of Mission, Liberian Embassy, Nigeria
Varney Jackson	Political Counsellor, Liberian Embassy, Nigeria
Prince Yormie Johnson	Head of INPFL. Interviews/discussions: 11 and 14 June 1998

Sheihk Kafumbah Konney	Imam of Liberia
Dr Roger Laloupo	Head, Legal Division, ECOWAS
Maj-General Ndiomu	Head of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolutions (CPCR)
Nwolise Osiroma	Head of Training, CPCR
Sunday Ocheche	Director of Research and Publication, CPCR
Nnamdi Obasi	Head of Publicity, Concord Newspapers, later PA to General Chris Garuba, Commandant, National War College, Abuja
Olushegun Olusanya	Nigeria's Ambassador to the OAU now Head of AREF
Frank Ofei	Director of Research (ECOWAS)
General John Shagaya	ECOMOG Field Commander
James Teah Tarpeh	IGNU Ambassador to Lagos 1991-1997, Negotiator
Charles Taylor	Head of NPFL, President of Liberia
A.K. Tureh	Presidential Advisor to Joseph Momoh
H.A. Walkani	Head, Library (ECOWAS)
Commanney Wesseh	Minister under IGNU
Zaya Yeebo	former Minister of Sports, Ghana
Mrs Zoe	Head of NAWOCO



## **B.7 Three Examples of Interview Responses**

### **Interview 1**

#### **Senior ECOWAS Secretariat Diplomat. 18 July 1998**

This was an unstructured interview.

*What role, if any, has ECOWAS's secretariat played in the renewed dynamism of the organisation?*

There is a belief that the centrality of a corpus of experts at the ECOWAS headquarters have been the primus motor for the transformation and dynamism which the organization is experiencing now. Two things must be emphasised.

1. Secretariat experts are not always the critical factor in explaining the renewed sense of ECOWAS spirit;
2. Foreign policy is a reflection of domestic dynamics.

To prove the extent to which point two is an important factor, as a presidential speech writer and staffer at the time of Ibrahim Babangida presidency, I included that section in his 1990 speech at the ECOWAS Banjul summit that suggested the establishment of the Standing Mediation Committee. This was in reality meant to tackle the simmering crisis between Senegal and Mauritania. There were discussions among presidential staffers concerning the word mediation. This was because the word mediation was meant literally, and that one could not mediate between parties in an internal conflict.

In our view, the essence of the standing mediation committee was, therefore, for the purposes of preventing external intervention. As a result when Nigeria wagered its bets on making ECOWAS include the two security related protocols, it was ostensibly meant to freeze out France from the sub-region and its potential ability to side with a section during a conflict.

Babangida, however, was of the view that the two security protocols could be extended to support Doe. I am not sure but there could be instances where the crisis could affect Nigeria, I cannot, however, expatiate in detail but the ulterior motives for extending this support is critical because the conflict could also affect the internal political situation in Nigeria. Babangida was concerned that civilians should not be encouraged to overthrow the military.

When the speech was drafted, I proposed the mediation option and was requested to bring forward specific suggestions and ideas. I did not know that it would be picked up, corrections made and would eventually impact on policy making and implementation. At the time the speech was drafted, there was no fighting on the ground. Nigeria's only preoccupation was preventing a recurrence of the fighting that had taken place among some of ECOWAS's member states and to prevent any future conflicts if and when they surfaced. Eventually, when ECOWAS accepted the SMC option, I did not originally agree with the form that it took.

My position was guided by the fact that different countries on the sub-region had different aims. For example Guinea had interests in Liberia because of the Mandingoes and, therefore, even with a mediation committee, there would be examples where neutral mediation could be difficult.

#### *How were the SMC countries selected?*

With respect to the formation of the SMC, the original idea was that its member states should contain states with a certain power and impact on the sub-region. These were to be permanent members of the SMC. They would, however, be suspended where they to be active participants in a conflict. The SMC was for inter and not intra-African conflicts and, therefore, it was expected that countries with the same interest were expected to come together for resolution of conflicts. Originally, the suggestion was that the five big states of the sub-region, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal to be members of the SMC. This suggestion was due to the fact that Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal control the Francophone states while Ghana and Nigeria do the same with the Anglophone states. Guinea was to be included because of its historically strong foreign policy of neutrality since the [Sekou] Toure days and has an anti la Francophonie policy.

When the SMC was established, it was meant to be a permanent structure and not an ad hoc mechanism. However, by May 1990, Babangida realized that the Liberian conflict had escalated to a point which had taken all by surprise. Nigeria had to find a strategy to assist Doe and, therefore, the SMC idea was initiated. Initially, Togo, Mali and Burkina Faso were interested in participating but backed out because they realized that what they had supported was not what was being implemented in reality.

The reality behind this strategic thinking was this: Nigeria and Niger could not fight primarily because the majority population in Niger are Hausa's while the whole of northern Nigeria are also Hausa's. Probably Chad, Cameroon and Benin is too small.

*What was the role of specific experts at ECOWAS in all this?*

Let me start with the leadership. Abbas Bundu, the then Executive Secretary, could not visualize how to move the community forward. He was thus stranded and not focused in his leadership. His major preoccupation was politics and not necessarily the sub-regional economic scheme and growth. An essentially ambitious man, he saw an opportunity in the Liberian crisis and the potential to boost his own ego and interests. ECOWAS's secretariat as a whole contributed to the discussion as to what the organisation's role should be and how we could push the sub-region in the direction that the expert body at the secretariat felt was proper. At Bundu's inception, the issue became where do we (ECOWAS) move from here: politics or economics. By 1989, Bundu determined that it was time for the implementation of the many resolutions which had been passed to move away from the debilitating effects on non-implementation. He concluded that the time had come to move away from just taken decisions to implementing them to give practical expression to the integration idea.

Bundu's political ideas for the sub-region were very fascinating, but realistically, there were other practical things which had to be looked at first. These did not explicitly affect ECOWAS. Rather, they had something to do with France. People talk about lack of political will. There is no question about a lack of political will. The whole issue is that if Nigeria can supplant France among Francophone West African states, ECOWAS will survive. It is a question of moving from the known to the unknown. That fear will not permit any Francophone state to supplant France with Nigeria except France itself, at a point weighs its domestic and European interests higher than the Francophone interests. Countries like Burkina Faso may be prepared to take the step against France, but Burkina Faso has no chance of resisting France. However, a perceptive change can be seen since the 1993 summit which was part of Bundu's reforms. There are increasing calls for focusing on implementation and not politics, especially in the speeches of Francophone countries during the summits.

*What future role do you anticipate for ECOMOG?*

ECOMOG might lead to more interventions as very few states have recorded any appreciable progress and therefore there are many potential areas for ECOMOG to take care off. ECOWAS was almost divided when it decided to intervene in the Liberian crisis. This, however, did not happen as there was a realisation that without stability, economic integration would be difficult to achieve.

*To what extent can supra nationality be achieved in ECOWAS?*

Politically, most of ECOWAS's member states are young nations and have not as yet reached the level of giving away sovereignty. The Political will for change and development is present. ECOWAS states really want to come together. What is preventing this unity is the lack of economic wherewithal to carry through political discussions. But this can also be explained by the lack of adequate institutional capacity. There are several instances when there has been a lack of coordination between the secretariat and Authority. A typical example being when Ghana was chairman of the ECOWAS Peace Process. The Executive Secretary was not met even once by the President of Ghana even though there were several meetings between the special representative of the ECOWAS chairman, Ambassador Victor Gbeho, and the Executive Secretary. This multiplicity of different levels of decision-making created problems.

Despite these problems, Bundu made a success of the intervention and the transformation of ECOWAS, and succeeded in getting the initiative from the politicians. The United States with support of the European Union pulled out of Somalia. ECOWAS did not. It mediated and stopped the fighting by disarming the combatants. This is the first major successful experiment by ECOWAS.

*What explains ECOWAS's transition from economic to political integration?*

The switch had to come one way or the other because the economic integration scheme had reached a much higher level than the political scheme. Unfortunately, people on the ground could not see or feel that they were part of an integration process. For the ECOWAS process to have meaning, it had to do something that its citizens could feel was essential for them. The Liberian crisis, tragic as it was, gave ECOWAS the imperative opportunity to demonstrate its efficacy.

## **Interview 2**

**An interview with prince Yormie Johnson, former President and Leader of the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) on 11 and 14 June, 1998. Prince Johnson is now a Reverend Preacher in Nigeria.**

The first interview took place at the Liberian Embassy, Lagos through the facilitation of Ralph Bahn, personal assistant to the Ambassador, Dr James Teah Tarpey.

The first interview which took place at the Liberian Embassy, Lagos was unstructured. It

took the form of a conversation between General Johnson, his two military assistants and myself. Here, General Johnson had the chance to espouse his ideas and interpretations of his role in the war and, his eventual voluntary exile to Nigeria. The interview took place in an atmosphere of camaraderie, and therefore, nothing was either taped or written down. To cross check the authenticity of my recollections of our discussions, General Johnson went over my notes and made corrections and additions where necessary. In some cases where he felt I had misunderstood them, he made written remarks.

I started the discussion by questioning him about his role and that of the INPFL in permitting the ECOMOG intervention into Liberia. He stated clearly that it was necessary with ECOWAS's help to end the carnage. That is precisely why it was him who met the ECOMOG forces on the high seas in a tug boat to bring General Iweze of Nigeria and others ashore. Johnson had high praise for the professional performance of the Ghanaian troops. For their exemplary performance, General Johnson commended the Ghanaian troops by giving them awards of a special ceremony presided over by him at his Barclay Training Centre, Caldwell base. However, the close relationship between the INPFL and the Ghanaian troops changed when Rawlings became ECOWAS's Chairman and took over the peace process.

*Why was this so?*

First was Rawlings' role in preventing Johnson from participating in the series of meetings held at Accra, Ghana. Added to this was the fact that Rawlings' role in the ECOMOG scheme had been found suspect by the INPFL. There was an increasing sub-regional feeling that Ghana sold her support to the highest bidder. There are several questions that inform the former, present and most especially the future role of the General in the Liberian peace and reconstruction processes. Why is a person who was instrumental (i) in facilitating ECOMOG troops to land in Liberia being side-lined? (ii) and willingly handed over the seals of office to IGNU being undermined? (iii) what informs Johnson's arrest and incarceration in Burkina Faso either prior to the departure to Libya or immediately after arrival from Libya?

*Can you talk about the Libyan experience?*

According to him, Tipoteh, Fahnbulleh and the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) group had sent several young Liberians to Libya for military training. However, there seem to have been a problem with some financial disbursements. Apparently, some MOJA members had absconded with the money that they had been given to them by Libya, leaving the Liberians undergoing guerrilla training stranded.

*What about Doe?*

The politics around the capture, the unwillingness of the major sub-regional players to take responsibility for the disgraced president and his eventual death, was confusing. None of ECOWAS's leaders was prepared to decide who should take the political responsibility for him. The decision was passed around until it landed on the desk of Dawda Jawara, who as Chairman of the Authority was forced to respond and taken charge. Eventually, it was that this was an internal Liberian matter and not one for ECOWAS or ECOMOG. After the execution of Doe, the INPFL felt that there was no need to continue fighting because the rationale for the war had been attained.

*Why did you take part in the war?*

Peace cannot come without real reconciliation. The situation now in Liberia, especially with respect to the elections are hampered by two issues: natural and human. Added to this is the fact that the diverse interests of the major sub-regional actors will have to be more closely checked.

In Guinea, the Mandingoes, [Sekou] Toure's family are arming across the border in Liberia. Closely related to this is the fact that large Liberian territories are being occupied by Guinea. Conte's interest therefore in the Liberian crisis is a mixture of both his regime and national security interests. According to Johnson, the original NPFL plan was to attack Guinea. Initially, Guinea sent troops to support Doe, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria have been extensively dealt with. Côte d'Ivoire is an interesting case. According to sources, the Krahn, Gio/Yakuba influences may have played a role in its initial support for the NPFL.

Prior to the assassination of Sankara, Taylor after his release from Ghana and settlement in Burkina Faso, went under the name..... it is very important, and travelled with a Burkinabe diplomatic passport. He was in fact the substantive head of Blaise Compaore's intelligence unit and was presumably in the known as to the plan to overthrow the Sankara government. Compaore is supposedly also in trouble in Burkina with his populace.

Charles Taylor's eventual ability to garner support on the sub-region is particularly interesting in view of the fact that he had earlier on been incarcerated in Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire.

According to Johnson, when he joined the NPFL remnants in Burkina Faso, Taylor had just been released from prison and Sankara assassinated two weeks earlier. Libya's interest

in the sub-regional should be looked at closely as it can affect sub-regional stability as a whole.

### **14 June 1998**

The second interview with General Johnson took place at same venue under the same relaxed circumstances. Here, I took notes of the discussions for cross-checking. Once more, General Johnson agreed to reread and make corrections and additions.

We began the interview by trying to understand the interrelations and interlocking gridlocks of ethnicity, personal interests. An interesting discussion on the importance of accountability and independence of legislative bodies as a means of controlling the spate of coup d'etats in Africa as a whole and West Africa specifically. Have it fully on tape. When the repatriates arrived on the shores of Liberia, only the Mahbahns at Mambha point were truly settled in Liberia. Then the Bassa, Gios, Yakuba's migrated from Sudan to Cote d'Ivoire. It is interesting that Prince Johnson returns to this issue comes back to the Yakuba's, why?

With the arrival of ECOWAS and ECOMOG and Amos Sawyer's eventual ascension to the presidency, the international community made efforts to manipulate and perpetuate Sawyer in power. The critical point here is that while Amos Sawyer enjoyed international support, he lacked the requisite backing in the country, most especially outside the environs of Monrovia.

*What was the role of Libya (i) in supporting the original insurgent group, and (ii) when the insurgency started?*

Reluctant to discuss the role of Libya in a direct manner. Through a deductive analysis of what was said, Libya's preoccupations and pursuits on the sub-region which had something to do with political, economic and religious interests explains the extension of support to the NPFL. According to Johnson, when sovereignty becomes a hostage to neocolonialists that one needs assistance to respond appropriately. My inference from this is that Johnson and Taylor were given support by the Libyan government.

On the mobilization and recruitment drives for the NPFL, Johnson claims that when they arrived in Libya, there were some 50 Liberians who had been sent there by Tipoteh, Fahnbulleh and the MOJA group. Their leader was JOE WYLIE, who participated in the failed November 1985 coup d'etat as student leader. He managed to escape to Sweden

where he had obtained asylum. He was among the group of students sent to Ethiopia under the educational and a literary cooperation scheme signed between the Doe and Mengistu governments when Fahbulleh was a Minister of Education in Doe's Government. In reality, these were to be trained in guerilla tactics. These Liberians were at the Wheeler Base in Tajura, Libya. The NPFL troops and other formed a core group of 1560 when they got to Tajura.

Most of these people who were involved in the NPFL's recruitment drive were Nimbaians. These had been confronted by the oppressiveness of the Doe regime and, for them, it did not matter any more who led them to overthrow Doe. Concerning the split between Charles Taylor and Johnson, it was because of Taylor's character. But, first the NPFL was national in character as Quiwonkpa had insisted it should be. Wyillie was crue, and of the original group of 35 who invaded Liberia from Sierra Leone with Qwuiwonkpa, only three were Gio's and others from different parts of the nation. To him, this was the embodiment of the nation state, and those who escaped from the November 1985 coup, lived to fight again in 1989.

The strategy was to seize power and hold elections and as the war approached Monrovia, it became clear that a core clique which had formed around Taylor had intentions which were contrary to the original ideas of the NPFL which had made democracy a central theme in its struggle. It became more and more obvious that the NPFL was hell bent on replacing one dictator with the other. To prove this point.

*Why should Taylor be the leader?*

Charles Taylor was not part of the 1985 struggle. He managed to become the leader primarily because those who were in exile had no international and financial contacts to realize the hopes and aspirations of the group. There was, as a result, the urgent need to get a person to lead the organisation who had the means to provide the necessary incentives. It is significant to remember that during these discussions, Liberia, its populace, and their response to the NPFL, expectations were in not in any way discussed. It was presupposed that the NPFL would lead the suffering masses. This was a bargain between a minority group (150-200 people) and an individual, while the majority were kept out of this deal. With this agreement, Taylor became the leader and the majority people would under no circumstances have accepted this bargain. However, not all who participated in the discussion were happy. For example, General Cooper Miller and Augustine Wright were jailed in Burkina Faso for opposing Charles Taylor's takeover of the NPFL, and amidst allegations that they wanted to kill Charles Taylor with a grenade. Eventually, Charles Taylor had Cooper Miller assassinated.



I was in exile from December 1985, early 1986, because of the persecution of my country by Doe. We got together because the information concerning Quiwonkpa's weapons acquisition was not known to anyone. Fahnbulleh recruited people to Libya, though they later abandoned the fighters. Thus, when the NPFL group there, the feeling was that there was no need for the existence of two rival groups fighting to overthrow the same person. Based on this rationalization, the groups decided to form a single organisation.

When we invaded Liberia, the NPFL was able to make rapid movement. This was because when a government is unpopular and tyrannical, and when those democratic ingredients and principles are no longer there and people become slaves, popularity is lost and incursions are supported. Secrets from the Executive mansion were leaked to the opponents. If people are with and for you then they are of course prepared to die for you. Personal aggrandizement does not help.

I am not a coupist, and do not believe in the inherent ability of coup d'etats to resolve the problems of societies. But these do happen when a president is incompetent. That is why I got involved in both the November 1985 invasion and the NPFL insurgency to overthrow Doe.

#### *On the role of women*

Women participated in different aspects of the struggle: in the medical field, as journalists and as fighters. Under the NPFL, there were 750 women fighters who formed a special Women Auxiliary corps. Among these 750, 50 were selected for special duties which included acting as bodyguards for Johnson and performing other sensitive duties. Their ranks ranged from private to Brigadier.

It is interesting to know that after the publication of *Guns That Liberate Should Not Rule*, Blaise Compaore through his ambassador in Lagos, Y. Milligo, sent a handwritten note to Johnson indicating that he wanted him to visit in Burkina Faso, and all his travel plans would be arranged. It is intriguing that in the note, Johnson is advised not to call personally but use a common middleman "Traqore". I am suspicious of these circumstances because this is coming almost three years after my withdrawal from the Liberian and sub-regional political scene.

### Interview 3

**An interview with Maj-Gen. Ike Nwachukwu, former Minister of External Affairs on December 1997, 18 July and 23 August 1998 at his residence, in Victoria Island, Lagos.**

This was a mixture of structured and semi-structured interviews and discussions with the General. During the interviews on the various dates, on account of the General's busy schedule, answers led to new questions and there were other digressions to the questions posed.

*Q: What was so special about the Liberian crisis that ECOWAS had to intervene?*

A: For us in West Africa, and Africans as a whole, Liberia represents one of the oldest independent countries on the continent and sub-region. We in West Africa had always revered and cherished the freedom and democracy that were eminent in Liberia. We always saw Liberia as the beacon of freedom, and independence in Black Africa. It became the responsibility of all Africans, particularly black Africans to see to the sustenance of the country.

This is not to say, however, that the type of democracy and leadership practised in Liberia at that time was the best but it had certainly provided hope for our fight for independence and freedom. For anything to destroy the essence of that freedom and independence would be tantamount to irresponsibility and connivance on the part of other non-Liberian Africans to undermine their own countries freedom and independence from the colonialists. Liberia must not be allowed to disintegrate as a matter of course.

Therefore, when that country was to be pulled apart and the very essence for which we all had fought for the freedom we now enjoy was going to be destroyed, the leaders in the sub-region found it fit and proper to intervene to avoid the total collapse of Liberia and her democratic institutions, and in the hope that we could avoid the damage in the country and also ensure sustenance of the beacon that is Liberia.

*Q: What accounts for Nigeria's role?*

A: Nigeria's role in Liberia can be inferred from the following perspectives:

1. That Liberia was and remains the beacon for our fight for independence in Nigeria;
2. From the fact that any destabilization in Liberia, and for that matter in any of the countries in the sub-region is bound to affect Nigeria. It is said that for every fifth African, one is Nigerian, and sixth Blackman, one is Nigerian, while on the sub-region, every third is a Nigerian. There are Nigerians living in every West African country, as of course there are other citizens of the sub-region living in Nigeria. The intimate relations between us all, among our different and diverse peoples of West Africa made it apparent that when one West African country is destabilized, we all get affected, affected in different ways, economically, culturally, militarily, refugees, et al.

It has been asserted that because the present international system in use and the regulations governing it were not written with the participation of Africans and, is basically Eurocentric, it does not comprehend the African concept of solidarity, of seeing each other as one's keeper. This non-reflection of African perspectives of conceptualizing security, assistance in all forms, in no small measure contributes to the different standpoints between Africans and Eurocentric.

Nigeria, has generally had an influx of people from neighbouring states whenever there were threats to their lives and property or whenever they fled political persecution. This was the reason Nigeria along with other West African countries stepped forward to contain the crisis looming in Liberia at the time.

Nigeria had never in my view wished nor attempted to lord anything over her neighbours. Only a fool would attempt to lord over her own kith and kin; if anything, our domestic and foreign policies have always recognised our regional and Africa's pertinence to our survival. We in fact believe that we complement one another, that is why we put the interest of sub-region and Africa first.

The whole Liberian-ECOWAS/ECOMOG process was a question of ensuring the stability of the sub-region. One must commend the leadership role played by the five member countries of the SMC for the initiative, and I want to further state that it was informed by the simple fact that charity begins at home. We appreciated that the world was experiencing similar crises for which there had been endless debates as to whether the UN should intervene or not. Meanwhile the affected areas experienced untold suffering and disaster to the peoples of those areas. But for even if the UN got the mandate to intervene, in our case in West Africa and Liberia, we thought it was in our bounded interest and a duty to begin to save ourselves from utmost disaster while seeking the support of the UN or other organisations that may feel 'humanitarian' enough to come to our aid. For a very long time, ECOWAS bore the brunt of salvaging Liberia single handed and the rest of us

from that impending disaster.

*Q: On the schism in ECOWAS based along languages lines*

A: ECOWAS is a laudable organisation, but again in time of crisis those who are prepared to take the bull by the horns would take the initiative while encouraging others to join in holding the bull down. It would be erroneous to suggest that the initiative taken by five countries was an attempt by the English-speaking countries in sub-region to suggest superiority over the French-speaking countries. After all, Guinea, a member-state of the SMC is French-speaking. It should be remembered that Nigeria and Togo founded the ECOWAS. Each from the two dominant <foreign' language groups. At no time in my experience as Foreign Minister was there any attempt either by any of the language groups to derail the objectives of ECOWAS. Instead, forces outside West Africa have attempted sometimes to stall the implementation of decisions made by ECOWAS countries by effectively suggesting otherwise to some member-states what they thought was in ECOWAS's best interest!

*Q: On the Relationship between the Council of Ministers and Executive Secretariat*

A: The relationship between the Council of Ministers (CM) and the ECOWAS Secretariat is cordial. Again in my experience both bodies work towards the development of peoples of ECOWAS. The secretariat produces draft documents which the Council of Ministers tinkers with to produce agreed positions that are subsequently presented to the Authority made up of all Heads of States and Government in ECOWAS. Decisions are made by the Authority for the secretariat to implement.

This is not to say that the Executive Secretariat merely services the various committees, Councils and Authority. It also produces independent papers detailing her own positions and thoughts on matters affecting the community. There is little room for conflict between the secretariat and the Council of Ministers under these circumstances. At no time did I notice the Executive Secretariat lord over the CM or vice versa. Both of them formally work towards producing working documents acceptable to all for the benefit of the Authority which is made up of all the HSG in ECOWAS. Clearly before the CM meets, papers or position papers are prepared by the Technical Committee (TC) made up of officials drawn from each of the 16 ECW states. It is the outcome of the deliberations of the TC which is serviced by the ES but is presented to the CM for deliberation and decisions. Here too, the CM is also serviced by the ES, and the results of their deliberations are eventually gets tabled before the Authority of the ECW, made up of the HSG or their representatives. So at no point really would there be room for conflict of

officials the CM.

ECOWAS's major problem, however, is with the economy. Most of the ECOWAS states cannot be said to be truly economically independent or can fend for themselves and this affects the internal workings of the ECOWAS and also stalls our pace of development as a sub-region.

Not until we, the members of ECOWAS states accept that our destiny can only be directed and achieved by us would we have the problems we have today with our sub-region. Whereas countries like Nigeria can stand her ground for her beliefs and state this without any fear. One cannot say this of most others in the sub-region. This situation, therefore, makes it difficult for us in our sub-region to venture forward as strongly and quickly as we ought to. Anytime that in my view we begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel some extraneous influences from without ECOWAS hold the curtain down and that flicker of light disappears.

Situations like these, in my view are responsible for the stop-go syndrome that we find in our sub-region. When you speak to individual West Africans on matters affecting the sub-region, you would find that we all share the same resolve, the same vision for a better society. When we agree at different fora on how to improve relationships between us on the sub-region, it becomes difficult to implement those decisions the moment we return to our countries because some unseen persons advise otherwise and things slow down with the result that our development is stalled and those upon whom some of our states in West Africa depend on economically.

The ECOMOG idea, I believe has come to stay in our sub-region. Member-states of ECOWAS, I think are now better disposed to contribute troops to deal with situations as in Liberia whenever the Heads of State and Government decide. But I do not believe that we are likely to have a standing force that will be called the ECOWAS troops. What I think is likely to happen is having seen how successful the ECOMOG operation had been in Liberia, ECOWAS's Heads of State and Government is likely to agree to earmark a certain number of troops within the various country military forces as a Rapid Deployment Force should there be need for that in our sub-region.

When ECOWAS went into Liberia, there were lots of scepticism. Babangida should be acknowledged and given full marks for the leadership role in ECOWAS and Liberia. The Nigerian armed forces should also be acclaimed for their heroism in going to Liberia when they did. Praises should especially, go to, Ghana and other SMC members for the tremendous courage and sacrifices made.

As a soldier, no soldier goes into a battle unconvinced that the act to be performed will be detrimental to the public good and do so with courage. These troops of ECOMOG and their commanders must be complimented for holding out in the face of odds to bring Liberia to where it is today and I would also like to commend the Liberian people for standing up for what they believe in. The various factions in Liberia and their leaders went into the struggle for a purpose and that purpose is to win freedom and democracy for the people of Liberia.

Today, we have seen that through negotiation and the use of force, all factions, including ECOMOG and the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government have been able to stop the carnage in the country. The resolution of the conflict prepared the people of Liberia for the elections which led to the realization of the objectives set by the various leaders of the factions in Liberia for freedom and true democracy. Whereas we could not have done this without the support of the larger international community who stepped in a bit late in the process, we cannot but beat our chests in West Africa and say that we have done a very good job for which every West African must feel proud.

Generally, but for Rawlings, Conte, Jawara, Compaore, Momoh and Eyadema, the ECOMOG scheme would not have been taken off because when we stepped into it very few states wanted to support us. These leaders, were in my experience those who really rallied round ECOMOG to shore it up, that the exercise was not in vain. Again efforts of other HSG in West Africa who contributed in no small measure to the overall performance of ECOMOG.

### *Lessons*

1. The most important concern is that no country in West Africa is an island unto itself because the security and economic development of us all members of West Africa states can only be complimentary to one another. A break down in security in one country will affect our neighbours and eventually the rest of us in West Africa, as well as economic boom in one state is likely to aid some in neighbouring states.
2. There is no substitute for democracy and elected government.
3. No place for anyone who decides to shoot himself into power in our sub-region.
4. We are our brothers' keepers by tradition.
5. Military training must be encouraged among ECOWAS states.

6. Our educational processes and institutions must be geared towards enhancing and equipping our people for economic and social development for us all and, therefore, there is the need for exchange programs. The study of the different languages that divide the sub-region should be encouraged.
7. ECOWAS must be strengthened to become the prime mover in the sub-region.