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## **Political Leadership And Interstate Relations In Sub-Saharan Africa, 1960-2010**

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### **Abstract**

In this paper, we explored the hypothesis which states that incompetence on the part of political leadership account for the poor inter-state relation in sub-Saharan Africa. In attempt to do this, we examined the impact of political leadership on the interstate relations in SSA . We applied the failed state theory of politics in our analysis. We argued that any state that could not guarantee both economic and political security for her citizens and various groups within the state is a failed state and we observed that the SSA countries have not been able to secure both lives and property of her citizens and other groups various groups continue to settle difference by recourse to violence. In the face of human insecurity, poverty, ravaging anger and mutual suspicion, SSA countries further depend on the West for survival. We concludes that leadership failure is largely responsible for poor inter- state relation in sub-Saharan Africa in the period under study. We recommend a revolutionary change of the elitist attitude and massive value reorientation with the view of curbing greed and self among leaders and the led in SSA. Again, credible alliance by credible people is required to ensure the emergence of a larger civil society which is a prerequisite for a democratic political culture, peaceful coexistence and dialogue in the region.

**Keywords:** Political leadership, Interstate relations, Sub Saharan Africa, failed state, insecurity

### **Introduction**

Sub- Sahara Africa (SSA) countries have remained in lockstep with violence and instability since their independence from late 1950s to 1960s, mainly due to the failure of past and present leaders to effectively manage and/or reduce conflict drivers within the region. To surmount this problem and prevent the region from careening towards the vortex of failed state, scholars have advocated that leaders that are honest, sincere and committed to social justice, equity, rule of law and other democratic values that help to bond society and promote stability is unavoidably the answer.

About five decades after decolonization in Africa, many sub-Saharan Africa are still immersed in a seeming intractable leadership crisis. The fruits of peaceful co-existence and harmony which include stability and socio-economic development have remained largely illusive in the region. Echezona (1998:57) rightly observed that "...the crisis which bestride each and every African country... are at the same time ethnic, economic, social and environmental".

Truly, the period spanning from 1960 to the present christened the Post colonial/ neo-colonial era witnessed an upsurge of development failure in developing countries especially Africa. In Liberia, Samuel Doe, Prince Yormie Johnson, and Charles Taylor were the night mares of Liberian as they struggled for seizure of state power consecutively or simultaneously and thereby inflicted economic hardship on the people of Liberia and the sub-Saharan region at large (Echezona, 1993:99). This was not an exception as it was the case across Africa. In Sierra Leone, Paul Koroma, Ahmed Tejan kabbah, John Karafa Smart etc. were interlocked in intensive crisis for the capture of the state (Hassan, 2002). In Somalia, Hussen Mohammed Aideed, Hassan Mohammed Nur Shatigudud, Abdiaji Yusuf Ahmed and Sallad Hassan were rivals (Hassan, 2002). In Burundi, and Rwanda, the Tutsi and Hutu were engaged in a frontal blood bizarre. Conflict looks every part of Africa as political leaderships fail to manage economic production justly. These states in SSA therefore do not represent the bank of interest of the generality of the people. Crises in SSA drive away the few foreign investors in sub-Saharan Africa to more stable third world countries in Asia, Latin America, North and South Africa

Evidently, the impact of political leadership on economic development in sub-Saharan Africa is adverse as the full scope of the danger becomes clear. In Sub-Saharan Africa, what appeared as mere ethnic cleansing has turned into a long and brutal civil war in most cases. The consequences of violent conflict on the African continent have been devastating. Similarly, there appears an intensifying economic hardship in the region which seems to account for the declining legitimacy to make authoritative decision for the majority of the citizenry at all levels of governance. In the absence of peace and stability, government legitimacy, and economic growth and development, most states in the region under study are described as failed or failing states.

In this paper, we explored the hypothesis that incompetence of political leadership account for the poor inter-state relation in sub-Saharan Africa. We examined the impact of political leadership on the state relation in SSA states and the economic relations between countries of SSA. We applied the failed state theory of politics in our analysis. We also looked at the impact of policies inconsistency on interstate relations among SSA states; crises of South-South corporation and finally examined the lessons from EU for AU as continuity in change.

### **Theoretical perspective**

In this paper we appropriated the basic propositions emanating from failed state theory of politics for analysis. Failed state theory emerged in attempt to explain the various political insurgent in Africa. Chomsky (2006: 1) suggests that failed

states are states that abuse power and assault democracy. Meanwhile internal contradictions are an inherent character of states whether developed, developing or underdeveloped. What differentiates a state as failed, weak or strong is the ability of such state to manage internal weaknesses using core state mechanism-defence, government and ideology to prevent instability in the polity.

Elbadawi and Sambanis (2000: 244) observed that the high incidence of wars in Africa is not due to ethnic fragmentation rather they arise as a result of prevalence of failed political institutions, poverty and dependence on one or two natural resources for economic survival. Evidently, President Obama observed the weak institutions in Africa and warned during his first visit to Africa as US President that Africa does not need strong men to develop rather strong institutions. In SSA, the institutions of the state have failed as poverty level increases. The SSA countries depend only one mineral resources for survival. Nigeria for instance depends on oil revenue for the survival of the polity. Like most SSA countries, Nigeria was ranked 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> in 2005 and 2007 respectively in the failed state index. CBN annual report for both 2005 and 2006 exaggerated that about 54% of Nigeria population live below poverty line. Using the society as our laboratory, one observed that more than 75% of SSA people live below poverty line in the midst of plenty. Meanwhile, the most fundamental need of man is security both human and economic security. In fact it was in the quest for human security that man exchanged some of rights with the state. Security is therefore a function of the state. Hence any state that could not provide security for her citizens and various groups within the state is a failed state.

The SSA countries have not been able to secure both lives and property of her citizens and other groups. Various groups continue to settle difference by recourse to violence. The monnom expression of this is the rising incidences of war in Africa between 1967 and 1970. Specifically, between 1980 and 2009, more than 50 religious crises occurred in Nigeria with the consequent economic and sociological implications (Akaeze, 2009). Between 1976 and 2009 Nigeria lost 100,000 citizens to religious crises and property worth billion were destroyed (Abimboye, 2009:11). Despite that Nigeria is a post colonial state, it is also a failed state like most states in the SSA, though not all post colonial states are failed states (see Ghana and South Africa).

In the face of human insecurity, poverty, ravaging anger and mutual suspicion, interstate cooperation that was held to be the only potent avenue to reduce Africa's dependency on the West becomes an illusion. Failed states that are constantly warring against each other over border disputes are incapable of coordination interstates political and economic relation. Arguably, these interstate wars have been sustained largely by the various military leaders in Africa who conduct international wars to distract and discourage the people from active political participation. Since the demise of most military leaders in African politics, successive civilian leaders have equally been seen adopting similar distracting strategies to escape accountability and transparency. These leaders see interstate wars as the easiest means of retiring public fund.

### **Structure of Interstate Relations in Sub-Saharan Africa**

The SSA countries obviously were colonized by different European powers-Britain, France, Germany, Portugal etc. This has structural implications, for instance those SSA countries colonized by France avoid much economic relation with those colonized by Britain or other European power. This weak structure of inter SSA relations also serve the neo colonialists who explore this weakness for their economic gains. These SSA countries sometimes have stronger economic, political and cultural relation with their former colonizers more than the other SSA countries and other European powers hence emphasis on Francophone or Anglophone. This emphasis is more among francophone as France fear British encroachment in her former colonies. Free trade area in SSA becomes limited as francophone or Anglophone SSA countries reduce the trade barriers tariffs only within sub- groups (Jhingan 1997:291).

Empirical evidence shows that most SSA countries have liberalized their trade since 1960. Meanwhile, collective trade liberalization is not on the agenda of most SSA countries. Collectively, liberalization would have achieved uniform reduction of tariffs across board. Ackah and Morrissey (2005) observed that between 2000 and 2005 tariff reduction rate vary greatly within SSA countries. For instance Burkina Faso's average annual external tariff was 12%; Ghana was 14.6%; Mauritania was 10.9%; Nigeria was 30%; and Senegal was 12%. These different trends have always been maintained recently.

Incompetent political leadership is also implicated for this variation and this hampers the integration of sub-region into the global process which will enable the SSA countries to acquire the required credentials to compete effectively in the global economy. This explains why a WTO circle argues that the reason why Africa and the sub-Saharan Africa in particular have not been reaping the benefits of international trade is because they have not liberalized their trade as required. The point being made here is that trade liberalization within SSA countries would have had the benefit of making the region competitive in the globalizing world.

This has further undermined the efforts of other economic groups in the SSA towards economic cooperation among member states. Political leadership feared that removal of tariffs and other trade barriers among themselves could threaten their economic stake hence they frustrate in conjunction with external forces every march towards the formation of a customs union in SSA. For instance under the free trade area arrangement of ECOWAS, member countries retained freedom to maintain its own tariffs, trade restrictions and commercial policies with non-members. Notably SSA countries with low external tariffs encourage trade with the outside world, thereby indirectly encouraging international trade within the sub-region and further exposing infant SSA industries to acute competition with the MNCS.

Though the ECOWAS tariff arrangement is capable of translating to a strong economic bloc in SSA that can compete effectively in the international market but political leadership appears confused. This is because, if a common economic bloc succeeds in SSA, then a common political bloc might be negotiated and the current political leadership structure should be dispensed.

The full implementation of the Common External Tariff (CET) earlier stated for January 1, 2008 suffered severe setback because of internal wrangling and disagreements among the leaders of member states (Ademuyiwa, 2007:3). Once Nigeria suspended full implementation of the CET, because of a statement in negotiation between their Federal Government and ECOWAS on the Type B Exception List of the tariff which allows individual countries to fix their tariff at variance with CET. Type B Exception List include items such as steel, petroleum, rice, beer, pharmaceutical products, soft drinks and tobacco, among others. Every member state has an Exception List which consists of items whose duty rates are at variance with the ECOWAS CET, Nigeria has a total of 308 tariff lines in her list. Five tariff bands exist under the CET. They are category I under which goods attract zero percent; category 2 which attracts 5%; category 3 attracts 10%; category 4 attracts 20% and category 5 attracts 50%. Under category I, zero percent tariffs apply to basic necessities, social goods, medicament, industrial machinery and equipment. 5% tariff is recommended for raw materials under category 2. 10% tariff is recommended for intermediate goods under category 3; 20% tariff is recommended for finished goods under category 4, and 50% tariff is recommended for luxury goods under category 5 (Ademuyiwa, 2007:3).

Political leadership refused to compromise or sacrifice national interests for the benefit of other SSA became national interest also reflect their selfish economic and political interest. Nigeria for instance suspended implementation of the CET on this ground. Other countries in SSA are not also ready to make these sacrifices.

Again, there appears to be an internal rivalry between the Francophone and the SSA especially in West African. This is manifested in their different pursuits of economic policies despite the fact that they all belong to one sub-regional economic bloc-ECOWAS. With the exception of Guinea, all other francophone countries in West Africa are still tied to the *apron-strings* of their former colonial master-France. In fact, they have always done their things their own way in total disregard of the larger political economic interest of SSA countries. For instance, by the year 2000, the Francophone member countries of ECOWAS constituting the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) had established a free trade area themselves and had adopted a four line (10%, 5%, 10%, and 20%) rate CET applicable to all third world countries including non-UEMOA member states of ECOWAS, thus rendering UEMOA a customs union. It was on the basis of this UEMOA CET that ECOWAS took a decision in December 2000 to extend the CET to all member states by January 2008, which had already, failed as we noted above (Ademuyiwa, 2007:4).

These francophone countries also formed monetary union among themselves without recourse to the ECOWAS. They also adopted a common currency amongst themselves- CFA Franc. This spurred the remaining countries, that is the Anglophone West African countries; Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Sierra Leone and of course, Guinea, to form the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) with the intention of adopting a common currency too though with little success these division and antagonism within SSA are plots by political

leadership within SSA to hampers the efforts of common economic bloc in the region (Ademuyiwa, 2007:4-5).

Political leadership in SSA has ignored the argument and the truism that open regionalism promotes competitiveness, specialization, and thereby higher productivity on the domestic market to the obvious benefit of the consumers and of economic soundness in general. Open regional integration programs are part of an overall strategy of opening oneself to the world economy and hence complement the unilateral and multilateral programmes for liberalization of trade in the region (Iglesias, 1997:10). Leaderships in SSA are focused on inner directed regionalism instead of a kind of open regionalism. This restrains the region's international competitiveness. Iglesias (1997:10-11) articulated some benefits of open-regionalism. Firstly, bilateral and regional free-trade arrangements in tandem with open regionalism allow the participating countries to eliminate the barriers to trade among them faster than it would be in a multilateral context. Secondly, it usually meets less political resistance because it is concluded in a setting of "reciprocity" with legal guarantees of market access not available under a strategy of unilateral opening. Thirdly, it limits the short-term negative repercussions on fiscal revenues from the liberalization of foreign trade. Fourthly, more intense competition in a wider market compels local enterprise to become more productive, and so prepares them for a future programme of unilateral and multilateral liberalization. Fifthly, regional integration plans can help participating countries obtain larger volumes of foreign investment.

Nevertheless, the inner-directed form of regional integration adopted by most SSA leader retards the promotion of competitive economy hence undermines efforts at enhancing trade among member states. It is possible that regional integration programmes and regional cooperation will become effective instruments of economic growth and development in the SSA provided they are guided by the principle of open regionalism.

Comparing ECOWAS with EU, Janowski (2006:20-21) noted that it is widely agreed that the EU is the most developed form of regional integration that currently exists. European integration is qualified as a kind of "deep regionalism" that creates a certain contrast to other regionalism in the world. The EU regionalism is natural, geographic, regular, organized and capable for decision making spontaneously. This explains why EU negotiates her external trade relations unlike ECOWAS where respective member states negotiate external relation of ECOWAS. Again, leaders of respective SSA countries face legitimacy crises when we bear in mind the manner of their evolution as leaders hence they cannot evolve a legitimate structure of decision making. Thus SSA leaderships established system of decision making that is highly personalized, unlike in Europe where democratic legitimacy is provided mainly by the European Parliament as the representative of the European citizens.

When also compared with other regional blocs like the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN); the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA); European Free Trade Area (EFTA) etc, ECOWAS' competitiveness is put to question. Generally,

ECOWAS and other sub-Saharan Africa economic blocs like West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) comprising eight members of ECOWAS, West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) comprising five members of ECOWAS, and Mano River Union (MRU) with three members of ECOWAS when compared with the other regional blocs like ASEAN, APEC, and NAFTA are uncompetitive. This implicated the quality of political leadership in SSA as being responsible for poor inter-state relation in the region. This is because these leaders subscribe to regional blocs with conflicting economic interest like we noted above.

### **Economic Relations within SSA Countries**

Trade within and without SSA countries remain marginal. The low level of trade in SSA follows the general pattern of low level of trade in African. Iyoha (2005:6) observed that intra-African trade had remained low since 1960. Similarly, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) (2003:38) noted that:

Trade among sub-Saharan African countries (Africa-to-Africa trade) account for only 12% of sub-Saharan exports in 1989. Meanwhile the shares of Africa-to-Africa trade were either stagnant or declining between 1989 and 1993.

A study by ECA concluded that regional integration arrangement has failed to positively affect intra-regional trade. In fact, intra COMESA trade is not significantly different from its trade with non-member countries. This is the case for both imports and exports. Significantly, the shares of intra-regional exports are typically below 5% in African. The two exceptions to this phenomenon of low intra-regional trade are CFAO and the Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU) which, both have shares of intra-regional trade in excess of 10% of total trade. In 1990, CEAO's intra-regional trade amounted to 11.3% of total exports while in 1994, SACU's intra-regional exports was an impressive 20.3% of total exports (Iyoha, 2005:6). In sub-Saharan Africa inter economic relation is marginal. For instance Alaba (2006:9) observed that within ECOWAS export and import shows dismal performance. On the average trade among ECOWAS countries was only about 11% of trade with non- ECOWAS countries. For instance, in 2000, only about 6% of Nigeria's exports (mainly oil) were traded with ECOWAS members (mainly to Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire). This implies that apart from crude oil, Nigeria does not have anything to export to other SSA countries. On the import side, less than 2% of Nigeria's imports originated from ECOWAS states (mainly Benin, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire) (Alaba, 2006:9). Table 4.1 below shows the percentage of trade relations within ECOWAS countries from 1990-2004.

**Table 1: Trade Relations within ECOWAS Countries 1990-2006**

Year	Percentage	Million of Dollars
1990	8	1,532.30
1995	9	1,874.80
2000	7.6	2,714.90
2001	8.2	2,241.50
2002	10.8	3,135.70
2003	8.3	2,972.00
2004	8.2	3,910.30
2005	NA	NA
2006	NA	NA

NA= Not Available

Source: UNCTAD, 2007.

Since ECOWAS countries are classified as core part of SSA, the table above indicates that bulk of the trade relations are between the SSA countries and non-sub-Saharan African countries. In 1990 intra SSA trade constituted only 8% of their total trade, in 1995, it rose become 9%, dropped in 2000 to 7.6% and rose again in 2001 to 8.2%, in 2002, it rose further to 10.8%, but in subsequent years (2003 and 2004) it dropped again to 8.3% and 8.2% respectively and continued to drop as political leadership muzzle production activities through their lack of commitment and embezzlement of fund meant for development of infrastructure. This trend in SSA is not replicated in other parts of Africa with visionary leadership like South Africa.

**Table: Trade relations within SADC between 1990 and 2004**

		1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
SADC	Percentage	3.1	10.6	9.3	8.6	8.9	9.1	8.8
	Millions of Dollars	1,085.20	4124.10	4,279.90	3,768.60	4,081.60	4,966.60	6,006.70

Source: UNCTAD (2005).

Note SADC-Southern African Development Community

Tables 1 and 2 shows that apart from 1990 when the percentage and value of the trade relation within ECOWAS countries is high than trade relations within SADC, the percentage of trade within SADC more than doubled that within ECOWAS especially after the independence of South Africa in 1994. This further reveals the effect of committed stable leadership in intra regional trade.

This tendency in SSA could be gleaned from the inability of these countries to look beyond the production of primary products. Hence lack of variety in what is produced in SSA countries. They all produce the same kind of thing which they do not need. Therefore, they are always outward looking. Thus Iyoha (2005:6) agreed that the nature of products and low manufacturing capacity is the major contributing factor to low level of intra-regional trade in SSA. This production typing explains why political leadership looks towards

Europe; North America and other industrial countries of Asia for aid and trade relation.

Moreover, these SSA countries cannot manufacture without infrastructural base which political leadership is incapable of erecting. Since 1960 no improvement has been recorded in the manufacturing capacity of SSA countries. In 1980, Senegal's share of manufactured exports was 15.1%, in 1990 and 2003; it was 22.5% and 28.8% respectively. Togo was 10.6% in 1970. In 1990, it dropped to 9.1% but went up to almost 50% in 2003. In Nigeria, it was 0.3% in 1980 and 0.2 in 2003 like in Nigeria the export of manufactured exports is very low in SSA (ECA: 2004). Political leadership in some SSA countries depends critically on trade taxes as a source of government revenue. They have, therefore, been reluctant to eliminate trade without an assured compensatory source of revenue. The inability of the governments in the sub-region to explore veritable alternatives to tariff revenue has continued to impose serious constraints on intra-community flow of trade. More than one-third and a quarter of Gambia and Cape Verde's total revenue respectively accrue from import duties. Import duties share in total government revenue are 18%, and 17.8% for Benin and Senegal respectively. Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire have the least shares of 4.7 and 8.2% respectively (Iyoha, 2005:6). While more than 70% of the EU total trade happened within the community free trade arrangement, intra-community trade in SSA remains for less than 15% (Iyoha, 2005:4).

### **Political Leadership and Policy Inconsistency in SSA**

Regimes change or rash and frequenting impeachments and or resignation of political leaderships in SSA result into policy inconsistencies at the level of making implementation and evaluation. Illustrating with Nigeria Onuoha (2009) apparently survey's sub-Saharan Africa as these qualities of inconsistencies noted in Nigeria prevails in other parts of SSA.

Onuoha (2009:42) argued that Nigeria had been experiencing policy inconsistencies and hence the consequent inability to revamp the economy. On ideological grounds he observed that Nigeria had experimented with mixed economy in 1960's, Structural Adjustment in the 1970's and other such policies as economic diplomacy, debt rescheduling, debt cancellation, indigenization of foreign companies, commercialization, privatization, liberalization and deregulation and yet refused to smile to doctors of IMF and World Bank and instead relapses into comatose. As a consequence Nigeria had launched numerous visions and dream without success. It started firstly with Vision 2000 when it become clear that the vision had failed, Vision 2010 followed, after 2010, attention has shifted to 2015 under MDGs and 20:2020 under President Yar'adua's 7point Agenda.

According to Onuoha (2009:43) successive governments in Nigeria-Tafawa Blewa (1960-1966), Yakubu Gowon (1966-1975) Murtala Muhammad, Burhari, Ibrahim Babangide, Sani Abacha, Abdusalami Abubakar and democratic governments of Olusegun Obasanjo 1999-2007 and Musa Yar'adua from 2007 to 2009 (Goodluck Jonathan, 2009-present) (emphasis mine) are

captured by a captor or group of captors who determine(s) the policy line government should pursue.

Onuoha (2009:44) differentiated between two types of captor (nationalist and reformers) while the Nationalists are protectionist the reformers are liberals who facilitate economic reforms. The policies pursued by each of the leadership mentioned above is determined by the group that has captured the government. The struggle between these two groups therefore characterizes SSA and this struggle also accounts for the fragile government and leadership crises in most parts of Africa especially SSA.

Again, change of leadership in most states in Africa also brings about change of policies due to lack of institutional mechanisms for policy making, implementation and evaluation. Following these policy inconsistencies in SSA, the political leaders now face the extraordinary task, at a time of economic crisis of maintaining stability and progress, including growth, poverty reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Many countries are showing that determined leadership can bring about impressive results even in tough circumstances—for example, Rwanda, Mozambique, Malawi and Ghana. At a time when financial flows such as domestic revenues, investment and remittances are dropping, jobs, food security and health are all directly affected. Not just livelihoods but lives are at stake.

Calling for clear-sighted African leadership, McCullagh states that “primary responsibility for Africa’s progress rests with her political leaders”, and that priority needs to be given to job creation, integrating climate change into development strategies, and addressing food security noting that national capacities to tackle these challenges are still very limited in SSA (McCullagh, 2009:2).

### **Political Leadership and Crises of South-South Cooperation**

Political leadership in SSA defies efforts by other relatively developed countries in the Southern hemisphere through their rude political behaviour. This is largely expressed through frequent human rights abuse in particular and little commitment to democratization in general in the SSA. Geographically, the South refers to those countries located in the Southern hemisphere of the globe. These countries can be found in South America, Africa and Asia.

Coincidentally, most states in the South are poor relative to their northern counterpart of Europe, North America and Japan. Notably, differences exist between South countries. For instance the GDP of Brazil in 2007 is over \$1.3 trillion while that of Chad is about \$15 billion ([wiki/BrazilandwikiRedio.org/wiki/Chad](http://wiki/BrazilandwikiRedio.org/wiki/Chad)). By South-South cooperation in this context we mean the relation between Brazil as a relative super power and Chad of sub-Saharan Africa.

Ake (1981:20) observed that an economy that is dependent such that its position and relation to other economies in the global community is directed externally is incapable of auto-centric development. This is a substantial problem for South-South cooperation since most states in the south are dependent on the North for technology, funds and trade (Ubaka, 2008:108-109).

If political leadership in SSA cannot guarantee internal peaceful atmosphere for interaction then South-South cooperation cannot thrive. Most SSA countries are undemocratic and these tendencies undermine economic development. The records of human right abuse and seat tight or life presidency abound in SSA. This was apt in Zaire under Mobutu Sese Seko (Echezona, 1991), Liberia under Samuel Doe (Vogt 1992), Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe (Vogt, 1992). Mali under Mouse Tarore, Togo under Gnassingbe Eyadema, Benin under Mathew Kerekou, Longo under Dennis Sassu Nguesso, and Nigeria under Sani Abacha etc (Echezona 1993:118). The virtual governance of these regimes kills regional cooperation. Hence in the face of failed South-South cooperation, SSA becomes unprotected for the MNC and other global actors especially from the Northern hemisphere (Obianyo, 2009:1).

### **Reasons for Poor Integration of SSA Economies**

Simply and squarely the reason for this failure of integration is confused political leadership in SSA countries. After political independence, political leaders that emerged in Africa as a whole were exposed to new conflicts. Increasing competition and conflict among nationalities, ethnic groups and communal interest groups was reflected hence emphasis shifted to vertical solidarity. Weak national base of political leaders further reinforced the use of state power for accumulation of capital. This political environment is hostile to development.

As noted by (Ake 1996:18) political leaders in Africa never pushed any development agenda rather they were engaged in bitter political struggle for self economic survival. These leaders in SSA countries foisted the burden of development on other countries and hence became dependent development. It would have been difficult to avoid this type of development because of the nature of integration of African economies into metropolitan economies during colonialism. African countries came to independence without clear cut plan for development except for a few countries such as Botswana. State power remained arbitrary, often violent, and threatening.

The composed political leadership was busy, evolving one development plan after the other ranging from Kenyan development plan 1964 (Red plan), Kenyan Green Plan 1966 and Tanzanian Development Plan 1964. Between 1962 and 1990 Nigeria had more than five national development plans without implementation.

Conflicts abound between the Bretton Wood institutions and African governments over the approach to African development. Some of these approaches explored include Lagos Plan and Structural Adjustment (Ake 1996). Meanwhile, in the face of confused leadership in African, regional integration will not commence until the struggle for political power becomes subject to rule of law. From the preceding discussion, we therefore validate our second hypothesis that leadership crises in sub-Saharan Africa lead to poor integration of the regions economies into the global economy.

### **From Organization of African Unity to African Union: Lessons from European Union**

The early 21<sup>st</sup> century witnessed remarkable attempts by African political leadership to promote regional integration as a means of fostering economic growth; facilitating peace and security, consolidating democracy and promoting general welfare of Africans though without success. Hence the transition from Organization of African Unity (OAU) to African Union (AU) as well as the fostering of a new economic blueprint known as New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), combined with growing role of sub-regional economic communities in harmonizing political and economic issues of Africa (Mwangi, 2009:35).

Under OAU integration was pursued as exclusive responsibility of governments and political leaders whose practice of non-interference was not conducive for realizing the goal hence people were not involved.

AU effectively began on May 26<sup>th</sup> 2001 but it appears it largely retains those traits of OAU as integration remains the sole responsibility of Obasanjo, Mbeki, Kibaki, Wade hence individual leaders. The continent thus is further ravaged by poverty, hunger, wars, conflicts, HIV/AIDS pandemic, severe debt, and corruption especially in the SSA. The resurgence of these problems suggest that the AU objectives or blueprint has not been implemented or ill-implemented since 2001.

Political leadership criminalized the political economies of SSA and turn to seek the kind of integration pursued by EU for Economic progress. This fossilized into the formulation of NEPAD (Oyugi, 2001:101). Some of the objectives of NEPAD include:

- Economic growth and increased employment
- Reduction in poverty and inequality.
- Diversification of production
- Increased African integration (NEPAD, 2003).

These overlaps with AU constitutive act (See Article 3, Objective C, African Union Commission, 2002).

Despite that African leaders insist on modeling AU after EU, they have refused to surrender some authority over to the AU Commission to act on collective interest like member nations constituting EU did. Today EU have single market, four dimensional freedom-movement of person, goods, services and capital cooperate on agricultural and environmental matters, and in fiscal and monetary issues (European Union, 1992). So long as, AU constitutive members do not devolve power to the commission like EU members did, AU would remain but an inspirational union and an end-point rather than means to the end namely African economic development. (Inter African Group/Justice Africa, 2002). From the foregoing analysis we therefore validate our third hypothesis that incompetence on the part of political leadership account for the poor inter-state relation in sub-Saharan Africa.

### Summary And Conclusion

The study interrogated whether leadership failure is responsible for poor inter-state relation in sub-Saharan Africa between 1990 and 2009. This work was discussed under the perspective prism of failed state. We argued that struggle for control of national resources is a character of failed states and this explains the rising incidence of wars in SSA. Data for this study were collected mainly from secondary sources such as books; journals; UN, ECOWAS, AU, NIIA, World Bank and IMF publications; Seminar, Conference and Workshop papers; Magazines; Newspapers and internet for this study. **And finally**, descriptive and explanatory methods of analysis were adopted for this qualitative study to demonstrate the validity and reliability of findings of this study.

Leadership failure is responsible for poor inter-state relation in sub-Saharan Africa in the period under study. The cause of the woes of the African continent is squarely at the feet of his leadership. This implied that both past and present generations of African leaders have failed in their services to the people of Africa. However, this assertion merely extended Achebe's thesis on Nigeria to Africa. He wrote that, "the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership...." The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibilities and challenges of personal examples which are the hallmark of true leadership.

In SSA countries values and ethos have waned. We often look for rationalization of our criminal actions. Leaders in the region appear as the monster which Gandhi described as deadly. These monsters seek wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, commerce without morality, science without humanity, worship without sacrifice, politics without principles, rights without responsibility and knowledge without character.

Leadership in most SSA countries pursue dictatorial development without tolerance of opposition, centralized state, no legitimacy and maximum executive power between 1960 and 1970's; criminalization of popular participation in development and criminalization of opposition and patriots between 1980s and 1990s and reengagement and struggle for popular participation in development necessitated by failure of SAP and agitation for demoralization from 1993-present. Leaders of SSA countries however have joined external factors and forces to block development of the region for their economic interest. This explains why poverty persists after many decades of 'developmentization' attempts in SSA.

Continued leadership problem is a product of demobilization of masses first engendered by colonialism and reinforced by militarization in SSA. This culminates into monumental suppression, corruption and poverty. At the end of our investigations, we arrived at the following findings: Leadership failure is responsible for the poor inter-state relation in sub-Saharan Africa in the period under study.

Though many leaders of SSA countries have no regards for judiciary, this arm of government ensures political and economic stability in developed states and other developing Third world countries like South Africa, Egypt, Brazil, and the Asian Tigers. The judiciary should be strengthened for

independent and effective judicial services. This would help in no small measure to entrenching justice and fair play in SSA politics and thereby remove any obstacle that undermined development effort of such states and then enhance their strength in international organization.

Change of leadership in SSA countries had often attracted crises of different quantum as deadly struggles ensued between prospective leaders. This is warranted by the tendencies of leaders to cling tenaciously to state power. This situation had always created frictions, crises and even civil war in some cases. SSA countries should embark on urgent electoral reform process to arrest this ill situation of seat tight syndrome. An all round reform of the educational, health, judicial and electoral processes in SSA is inevitable and these form a vicious circle. A healthy person received sound education, participate in election and seek redress when he perceives unfairness. When these reforms are completed, corrupt practices will be easy to identify and tackle; religious jingoists will be fished out dealt with and unworthy economic policies abandoned.

Again, cooperation among SSA countries is extremely important in the region for peace, progress and advancement. This is because with such co-operations and integrations, then a secured community would emerge. When leaders are so diverse and unrecognized in opinion and ideas the effect would be crises and economic backwardness of the region. We have to do more on changing elitist attitude and massive value reorientation with the view of curbing greed and self among leaders and the led in SSA. Again, credible alliance by credible people is required to ensure the emergence of a larger civil society which is a prerequisite for a democratic political culture, peaceful coexistence and dialogue in the region.

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