# From "eco-pessimism" to "eco-optimism" — ECOMOG and The West African Integration Process

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## Introduction

Enduring international cooperation is increasingly becoming crucial in tackling many transnational crises, not least security-related issues.[1] The concept of security and putting it into operation with respect to Africa has been in flux, most especially in the post-cold war period. Under the previous bi-polar system, Africa's security dilemmas and predicaments and their resolution were closely linked to the nature of the international system. As a result, "local" security issues and conflicts were usually projected onto the international scene. However, since 1990 perceptible changes have occurred with the marginalisation of the African continent. In spite of this, the constraints which hitherto hindered African organisations from defining and resolving regional security problems have to a large extent been removed and a renewed sense of dynamism is being experienced. A typical case is the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS)[2] intervention in Liberia in 1989 and the resolution of its crisis in 1997.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse what I see as the transformation of ECOWAS from an economic integration scheme to include a security dimension; as a change from the debilitating effects of "eco-pessimism" to one of "eco-optimism". This analysis will be undertaken within the context of ECOWAS's intervention in and resolution of the Liberian crisis. To do this, the paper uses the following five fold holistic and integrated approach (i) conceptual clarification of security regimes; (ii) ECOWAS's security regime and its institutional design; (iii) regime response to and regulatory mechanisms in Liberia; (iv) the determinants of regime action effectiveness; and finally (v) the constraints and prospects for ECOWAS's security regime for the integration process.

## Security Regimes: Concepts and Clarification

There are doctrinal squabbles concerning the effectiveness of international insti-
tutions in resolving security dilemmas.[3] Neo-realism, for example has challenged
the importance of international institutions or regimes in restraining state conduct.
According to neo-realists, multilateral institutions are either paper tigers, or
"scraps of paper"[4] or symbolic epiphenomena of the activities of a hegemonic
state,[5] that it is not able to extend beyond the alliance system dictated by the
"anarchy" of the international system. However, in this paper, I apply a modified
neo-liberal institutionalist approach to demonstrate that institutions do matter. The
assertion is that ECOWAS's security regime should be seen as institutionalist
because of the role played by transnational actors. Its common institutions are
indispensable and the core body of experts at its secretariat are important players.
Finally, it seeks the promotion of collective action to engender welfare.[6]

A regime is a set of "principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures
around which actor interests converge in a given issue area".[7] Principles and norms
impart an expectation of reciprocity and are the defining features of regimes. Such
rules and procedures may alter over time as conditions change, but they must
remain consistent with the norms underpinning the regime. While retaining the
Krasnerian notion as the basic conceptual framework, I argue that there is the need
to reduce the spectre of fuzziness to which regime analysis is vulnerable. In
becoming narrowed to tackle specific issue areas, regimes become differentiated
from other international structures in the sense that they become "social institu-
tions governing the actions of those interested in specifiable activities".[8]

Uncertainties abound concerning the extent to which regime theory is appli-
cable to security. This controversy arose primarily because of its earlier narrow
application to the "Concert of Europe" that became a paradigm for security
regimes.[9] However, I argue that the theory can be fruitfully applied to security if
restricted to sub-areas of security policy where significant potential for cooperative
behaviour is present. For instance, Müller has recently applied regimes to several
sub-areas of the security issue where systems of principles, norms, rules, and
*procedures regulate certain aspects of security relationships between states.*[10]

The determining factors for identifying the existence of regimes are the
presence of all four elements. The incentives inherent in the establishment of
security regimes and the obstacles involved in so doing are particularly enhanced
in the security discussion because of the security dilemma. These occur when
states, in seeking power and security for themselves, threaten the power and
security aspirations of others. Although effective security regimes are difficult to
attain, their value lies in their ability to regulate individual state action by limiting
the cost of hostilities and the degree of suspicion. These arise from the pure realist
state-centric world in which expansionist states will seek to gain resources through
opportunistic behaviour at the expense of their neighbours. Under security

regimes, such individualistic state actions are not only dangerous but also costly. They can however be curtailed through improved *bindingness*.[11] This will normally be associated with a reduction in sovereignty in exchange for greater institutionalisation since it would be dangerous and costly in credibility and security for cheaters and deserters to find a substitute for a structurally advanced security mechanism.[12]

Other difficulties of achieving a functional security regime can be explained within the context of the in-built fears and suspicions in the state system. That one state can or will violate the common understanding is a potent motivator for each state to undertake individualistic policies although each would otherwise prefer regime action. Thus, what is critical here is the extent to which *state compliance* with *regime requirements* can be reconciled; that is how mechanisms that secure compliance are instituted. It is important that in discussing such issues, one looks for situations in which states would have behaved differently had they not been part of regimes. It can be argued that it is only when compliance is considered inconvenient – that is when regime rules either conflict with or are incompatible with states' perceptions of what their self-interest would be were there no such institutions – that the impact of a regime is tested. During instances of such inconvenient commitments one would expect that, if regimes were unimportant their rules would be violated, and that in so far as rules are complied with it is then possible to deduce that regimes have had an impact. Analysing ECOWAS's security regime involves examining the processes of decision making and the effect of regime principles, norms, and rules on the manner in which decision-makers frame regime action. As a prerequisite to examining cases of state compliance with security regime decisions, there had to be *controversy* about whether regime compliance was in the best interest of individual states.

Two sets of questions should be asked to distinguish between (i) security regime formation in West Africa, and (ii) the characterisation of regime strength in terms of compliance. First, what conditions are conducive to the formation and mainte-nance of ECOWAS's security regime? To what extent can one argue that it is when major actors prefer status quo maintenance it can be deduced that a condition for the formation and maintenance of a security regime is present? Secondly, what processes and procedures are established to elicit compliance? In relating these questions to the empirical study, the extent to which status quo advancement was the primary reason for the establishment of this regime is not clear. Some importance must however, be placed on the role played by individual state perception of security against that identified by the regime as its prevalent security problem. It is the divergent perception of regime interest compared with individual state perception of what its interests and security would be that created the "controversy" about state compliance with ECOWAS's Liberia policies. Contro-versies concerning state compliance with regime policy are important, since

eliciting such compliance become a real test for regime effectiveness and strength. In contrast to its "post-Concert of Europe" application by Jervis, and Müller's more recent Eurocentric application, this article applies security regimes, not only to an African context, but also to one with special challenges: namely responding to the challenge posed by sub-state level factions or groups.

## Establishing ECOWAS's Security Regime

Of relevance to this paper are the key questions *why, when* and *how* are security regimes established?[13] What factors contribute to security regime formation? Is it the relations and patterns of military and economic power among states that determine security regime formation? For the purposes of this paper, ECOWAS's security framework is a regime with agreed upon principles, norms, procedures and programmes that regulate activities and mould the expectations of actors in a specific issue area. This has evolved within a framework in which the use of force by individual member states is constrained by a balance of power or mutual deterrence.

At ECOWAS's establishment, the representatives of 15 member states affirmed their commitment to "create a homogenous society, leading to the unity of the countries of West Africa".[14] The Authority, theoretically controls decision making, but in reality decides in concert with experts and consultants at the secretariat whose decisions, reports and recommendations on technical issues constitute important inputs into decision making. According to Okolo, these "enjoy significant latitude ... and above all, serves as the *engine room* of the community".[15] Under this treaty no precise security arrangements were provided for. Despite these deficiencies, subsequent ECOWAS summits increasingly focused on security issues and the need for evolving a collective defence strategy. At the third summit in Lagos, Nigeria in 1978, a Protocol on Non-Aggression was adopted. This sought to create "an atmosphere, free of any fear of attack or aggression of one state by another".[16] Julius Okolo, interpreted this protocol as "represent[ing] a valuable statement of intent and a demonstration of the good will that exists among the national leaders of the West African region ... [and] signifies the willingness and commitment by member states to restrict their sovereignty in a new era".[17]

Innovative as the non-aggression treaty was, the signatory states overlooked two important security issues that were relevant to West Africa, namely: (i) the incidence of external aggression, and (ii) externally subsidized domestic insurrection and revolt within the community. Due to worsening politico-military situations, two independent unsolicited proposals were presented by Togo and Senegal in 1979.[18] These proposals requested the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and the Executive Secretary to "convene a meeting of the technical commission of ministers to consider the said documents and submit a harmonized draft defence pact to the next summit.[19] Subsequently, an eight-nation ministerial committee was

established to examine and present a revised version of this document in May 1980. The Council failed to reach a unanimous consensus whereupon the matter was referred to the Authority at its meeting in Lomé, Togo. Here, Senegal argued against the exclusion of those countries which did not wish to join a defence pact. Togo argued that a mutual defence protocol was a "logical follow-up to the signing of the non-aggression protocol".[20] In 1981, therefore, the omissions from the 1978 protocol were presumably dealt with by the ratification of the Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defence (PMAD). This protocol, which took effect in 1986, merely sketched the outlines for tackling "internal armed conflict within any member state engineered and supported actively from outside likely to endanger the security and peace in the entire community".[21] Radio Nigeria evaluated the PMAD " as a first step towards an attempt for a collective defence system for the West African sub-region".[22]

A combination of these two protocols and their constitutive principles sought to establish a security framework and to provide specific blueprints and limitations for state action. The main hypothesis for applying *security* and *regime* concepts to ECOWAS is that ECOWAS forms a subsystem with a tacit aim of ensuring and securing sub-regional stability. It comprises a regime with rules, norms and principles that member states should adhere to. Non-compliance with regime rules, norms and principles or perceived threats to accepted rules, norms and principles by either member states or other external forces can lead to either coercive or diplomatic response by other regime members. The regime's constitutive principles and rules are encompassed in the Protocols of 1978 and 1981 and the revised Treaty of 1993.[23] ECOWAS provides the formal organisational framework through which its security regime finds institutional expression. The rules and decision-making procedures consist of the bi-annual intergovernmental meetings introduced since September 1997. In certain instances, extraordinary and *ad hoc* meetings can be summoned. At these meetings, the secretariat's administration and the regime's leadership attempts to strategise and enforce legislation are reviewed.

This paper's focus, therefore, is not only on ECOWAS's institutionalization of collective defence promotion and the implicit indication to signatory states of support in periods of crisis, but also on the factual extension of such expected support. The argument is that the Defence Protocols represent a subsystem with a view to enhancing sub-regional stability. They constitute a regime with rules, norms, principles and decision-making processes which member states and their leaders should adhere to. Although it is distinct in its functional scope, geographical domain, membership and organisational structure, ECOWAS's security regime provides a framework of cooperation among its member states in order to accomplish a distinctive set of policy goals governed by African norms and values. Non-compliance with regime rules or perceived threats to conventional precepts often lead to coercive or diplomatic responses by the regime or individual regime

members[24] as a clear demonstration of change from one of "eco-pessimissm" to "eco-optimism". Apart from providing rules and procedures for state behaviour, ECOWAS's security regime seeks to:

- distinguish and concentrate on specific problems;
- engender and advance reliable exchange of information and knowledge;
- intensify confidence and security building measures and understanding among states;
- facilitate negotiation and issue linkage among states; and
- enforce, monitor and verify rules and guidelines underpinning cooperative ventures.

Despite the generally perceived hegemonic tendencies exhibited by Nigeria, the security regime in West Africa has not been imposed from above.[25] This paper argues that ECOWAS's security regime exists because of a convergence of interests shared by most ECOWAS member states in pursuing common interests and in avoiding certain common outcomes relative to ECOWAS's specific security preoccupations.

## Institutional Design and Decision-making Processes.

Diverse institutional mechanisms and administrative arrangements were established to become operative in times of crisis. Under the PMAD, divisions from the armies of ECOWAS member states constitute an Allied Armed Force of the Community [AAFC] under a Community commander. Ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs of member states constitute a Defence Council under the current Chairmanship of the Authority and the Chiefs of Staff of member states form the Defence Commission. Provision was also made for a Deputy Executive Secretary to be responsible for Military Affairs.[26]

Procedures were established that dealt with (i) how an assaulted state should contact the defence structure; and (ii) what types of conflict were envisaged by the two Protocols as warranting community intervention. Three types of antagonistic military gesture were broadly agreed upon: (i) aggression from non-member states; (ii) conflict between member states and finally (iii) internal conflict in a member state. Attached to these three relatively well-defined areas were procedural and administrative arrangements for communication with the Secretariat for subsequent decision by the Authority. Under point one, upon receiving a request for assistance from a member state, the Authority meets to decide the expediency of military action and entrust subsequent enforcement to the force commander.[27] With the second point, the Authority would meet urgently to act accordingly for mediation in the form of deploying the AAFC as a peacekeeping force.[28] Finally, point three states that when a conflict is actively maintained and sustained from outside, the Authority will take action as with point one. Significantly however, in situations where the conflict remained purely internal, there would be no commu-

nity action.[29] The PMAD provided for the establishment of a Defence Council[30] and a Defence Commission.[31] The Defence Council, Commission, and Authority would assist the force commander during interventions.[32] The Authority, Defence Ministers and Chiefs of Staff formed a triumvirate that would decide whether to intervene or not. It also provided for a Deputy Executive Secretary for Defence.[33] Based on these points, it can be argued that the procedural aspects of the PMAD were overlooked which undermined the institutional capacity of ECOWAS to function optimally.

How did these institutions react in times of real crisis? What *ad hoc* new institutions, if any, were established during an actual conflict situation? If so, what was the nature of coordination between the old and new institutional structures? For analytical purposes several issues arise. First, by August 1990 none of these institutions were in existence. Since they were designed as integral parts of the PMAD's decision-making structure dealing with questions of intervention in any security situation, the Council and Authority could not have taken any decision. Secondly, the PMAD does not make for an alternative institutional set-up for the independent performance of the Defence Commission if the Defence Council (i) is not functional or (ii) has not been established. Thirdly, the decision to intervene undermines the principle of unanimity that governs decision-making in the ECOWAS. The PMAD never established voting procedures for the working of the Authority that was expected to reach decisions concerning the community either through a consensus or outright majority. This last point was resolved at the Bamako extraordinary summit held in November 1990, and ensured consensus on the Authority for ECOWAS's Peace Plan.[34] The situation in Liberia, both before and after, the intervention reflected the performance of ad hoc institutions (see Figure 1 on p 151). It resulted not only in a certain level of disjointed action, but also in dysfunctional parallelism about the decision making processes.

My basic argument is that for an effective security regime to exist, cooperation must take place according to the rules and principles that have been formally accepted by the parties concerned. Agreed mechanisms are required for maintaining the behaviour of parties and their compliance with agreements. In ECOWAS's case, several factors accounted for the non-establishment of the PMAD's institutional framework. First, this related to the latent distrust and doubts about Nigeria's intentions among its community partners, and the sub-regional hegemon's own domestic and international difficulties. Second, the institutional and financial weakness of the Executive Secretariat prevented it from performing beyond the narrow confines within which its formal structure defined its existence and performance until 1988. Thus, by the time of ECOWAS's intervention, the PMAD was nothing more than an instrument of declaratory policy.[35]

## Regime Response to State Collapse

This section deals with the response of the ECOWAS security regime to the Liberian crisis, and discusses the effectiveness of the institutional arrangements set up by ECOWAS. The Liberian crisis started with an uprising by Charles Taylor's forces – National Patriotic Front of Liberia [NPFL] – on 24 December 1989. By April 1990 the NPFL claimed to effectively control over 90% of Liberian territory with the exception of Monrovia and its environs. Charles Taylor's expectation of support from Nimba county did not materialise, leading to serious setbacks for the NPFL.[36] This opinion contrasts sharply with Max Sesay's assertion of "popular euphoria" for Taylor's invasion of Liberia from neighbouring countries in 1989.[37] However, this changed when Liberia's incumbent President, Samuel Doe, mounted a massive but ineffective counter-insurgency campaign supported by US and Israeli counter-insurgency officers.[38] Rather quickly, the insurgency degenerated into ethnic killings and aggravated an already severe insecurity situation.[39] By May 1990, the tidal waves of refugees forced across Liberia's contiguous borders into Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Sierra Leone[40] had reached crisis proportions. Through continuing internal disturbances, gross human rights abuses and demands for democratization, the "situation in Liberia ha[d] gone beyond the boundaries of the country and cease[d] to be an exclusive Liberian question".[41] Liberia was totally incapable of sustaining itself as a member of the international community and its collapse not only imperilled its own citizens but threatened sub-regional stability. Liberia by mid-1990 was a "risky" and failed state.[42]

It is against this background that ECOWAS's Thirteenth Summit of the Heads of State and Government meeting in Banjul, The Gambia in May 1990 discussed the Liberian crisis.[43] Nigeria's Ibrahim Babangida argued for the establishment of a Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) to "intervene in timely fashion, whenever ... disputes arise".[44] In agreeing to establish a parallel institutional framework, the Authority affirmed that regional security and stability, as well as peace and concord, were necessary conditions for effective sub-regional cooperation and integration.[45]

Comprising five member states, The Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Togo, SMC membership was to be reviewed every three years. Structurally, a state under attack had to inform the Executive Secretary in writing of its intention to refer the matter to the SMC for settlement. Based on the procedural and organizational measures instituted under the SMC, Samuel Doe addressed a letter to the SMC. Here, Doe requested "assist[ance] in finding a constitutional and reasonable resolution" to the crisis engulfing Liberia. Crucially, Doe advanced his own proposals for resolving the conflict. The Liberian leader argued that, "it would seem most expedient at this time to introduce an ECOWAS Peace-keeping force into Liberia to forestall increasing terror and tension".[46] The contents of Doe's letter contradict Ofuatey-Kodjoe's assertion that "Doe made an appeal to

Nigeria and Togo for help to quell the insurrection. This led to the ECOWAS intervention".[47]

## Political and Military Agenda

ECOWAS intervened on four major grounds, namely: (i) military-humanitarian considerations; (ii) the provisions under the two Defence Protocols; (iii) the peace and security of the region; and (v) that it was responding to the invitation of the *"de jure"* government in Liberia. The SMC's first strategy consisted of a set of interrelated policies based on mediation and negotiation that sought to find a political solution to the engulfing crisis.[48] This resulted in an appeal for a cease-fire in Liberia, a proposal for the establishment of an interim government and establishment of an ECOWAS cease-fire monitoring group [ECOMOG].[49] From May to mid-August 1990, the SMC supported by the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Abbas Bundu, presented diverse diplomatic strategies for finding a political conclusion to Liberia's crisis.[50] NPFL intransigence led to the breakdown of the diplomatic process which otherwise had the support of remnants of the Armed Forces of Liberia [AFL], and Prince Yeduo Johnson's Independent National Liberation Front of Liberia [INPFL]. A complex convergence of related incidents internal to Liberia, the region and internationally, however, made the SMC change tactic. It now implemented a multi-track scheme characterized by the simultaneous pursuance of peace through diplomacy and the initiation of its historic *"Operation Liberty"* peace-keeping process by sending in ECOMOG troops. Without obtaining consent from the major faction, and with no peace to keep, the supposed peace-keeping activities were hurriedly suspended.

Within weeks of launching *"Operation Liberty"*, the strategy was modified to enforcement measures as a response to severe NPFL resistance. Under the new twin trajectories of diplomacy and enforcement measures, a series of peace accords and agreements were signed.[51] These agreements encompassed most of the various initiatives towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict by ECOWAS. The first tactic involved negotiations followed by mediation efforts which became the basis for the peace plan of November 1990. Strategies for eliciting compliance from faction groups consisted of (i) a Peace Plan; (ii) encampment and disarmament of warring factions under the supervision of an expanded ECOMOG; and (iii) the establishment of transitional institutions to conduct elections. To facilitate the achievement of these objectives, a general embargo was placed on all weapons and military equipment entering Liberia except those intended for ECOMOG forces.[52] Irrespective of the intentions behind the diverse components of these Accords, ECOMOG was unable to see to their implementation.[53]

To attain peace in Liberia, ECOWAS's peace agreements emphasized a continuum of action from cease-fire through disarmament and demobilization to the holding of elections. Components of these agreements could be divided into

two: political and military. At the militarily level, the agreements provided for a cease-fire and outlined steps for the encampment, disarmament and demobilization of military units. To prevent violations of the cease-fire agreements a Joint Cease-Fire Monitoring Committee [JCMC][54] was established, and a United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) to monitor and verify the progress of the demilitarisation components of the agreements, which had no precedent in peacekeeping history, was deployed.[55] Politically, there was agreement on the establishment of a Liberian Transitional National Government (LNTG),[56] and on the modalities for presidential and general elections to be supervised by a reconstituted Electoral Commission. Based on the Cotonou Agreement of 1993 and, in consultation with ECOMOG, ten e ιcampment sites were identified and proportionally distributed among the factions, two for the AFL, four for the NPFL/ NPRAG and four for a new group, the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia [ULIMO]. The parties agreed to the simultaneous disarmament of their forces, and the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life.

Although different accords were signed, aimed at restoring peace and security in Liberia, I have chosen to emphasise the special features of the Abuja II Accord for several reasons.[57] First, Abuja II suceeded in improving the adversarial relationship between Charles Taylor and Nigeria. Secondly, it widened and deepened consensus among West African states on Liberia. Finally, it introduced the direct involvement of factional leaders in implementing the accord. This agreement also marked a major departure from previous strategies on the disarmament question. After seven years of non-compliance, Abuja II strategically shifted responsibility for the success of the disarmament process entirely to the faction leaders. For the first time, faction leaders, were personally held responsible for the non-compliance of their combatants. Abuja II also stipulated deadlines and imposed penalties for non-compliance. Finally, introducing this pro-active approach signalled to the factional leaders the introduction of a more interventionist and robust role for ECOMOG and UNOMIL in guaranteeing the disarmament component of Abuja II.

Abuja II also changed implementation delays by introducing a stringent sanctions regime, and regulatory mechanisms. These included: travel and residence restrictions; freezing of business activities and assets of leading faction leaders in ECOWAS states; exclusion from participation in the electoral process; restrictions on the use of ECOWAS airspace and territorial waters; expulsion of faction leaders and members of their families from ECOWAS states; request to the United Nations Security Council to impose visa and import restrictions and finally invoking the OAU summit resolution, which calls for the establishment of a war crimes tribunal to judge all human rights offences.[58] According to T.M. Shelpedi, Abuja II contributed in a "large extent [to] successful [disarmament] in the Liberian peace process".[59]

## Determinants of Effectiveness

How does one determine *security regime action effectiveness*? Effectiveness is a contested nation. Variations in potential definitions and evaluation of regime effectiveness rely on the nature of the standard used. In this paper, I am interested in the notion of effectiveness in terms of whether ECOWAS resolved the security problems it was devised to address. In discussing regime actions in Liberia, an essential question is: how does ECOWAS's regime advance compliance and behaviourial changes in line with its rules, regulations and norms? There are two clusters of issues here. The first is the matter of state compliance with regime norms; and the second is with respect to compliance by Liberia's armed factions. As I have argued elsewhere,[60] even though the Liberian crisis involved a coterie of external actors, all discussion of *compliance* and *behaviourial change* should encompass the two groups above. To assess *security regime action effectiveness*, the analytical framework proposed by Noami Weinberger[61] will be adopted. This encompasses five variables which are divided into Contextual and Operational factors. Contextual variables comprise two components: (i) consent of parties; (ii) and degree of progress in peace-making. Operational factors, on the other hand, encompass: (i) mandate definition; (ii) coordination; and finally (iii) capabilities.[62]

Since the prospects for achieving behaviourial change which regimes seek to promote, depend substantially on factors that are *external* to the international institution itself they will depend partly on the concerns of the actors involved. The nature of the issue area is also important. The complexity of the Liberian crisis which ECOWAS/ECOMOG succeeded in resolving arose from the number and diversity of the actors involved. Furthermore, international distress to "do something about the problem" can be intensified by a worsening situation [escalation of violence, increased outflow of refugees, worsening economic situation, contagion effects of crisis].

Closely related to institutional design and effectiveness are the concepts of *monitorability and verification*. By these I mean the ability to supervise and authenticate either the functioning of dominant actors [i.e. factional groups] or mechanisms [referring to political/military aspects of the peace process, i.e. cease-fire, encampment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration] or the fulfilment of latent obligations. The ability to achieve stated strategies is based on several factors. Among them are monitoring and data collection infrastructures, and not least the political characteristics of the societies, states or factional groups involved. Perceptions of regime ability to verify agreements are crucial in influencing the consent of actors either to bargain, sign agreements or most decisively to fulfil agreements. Thus, to succeed, a regime must make a difference. Its institutions, rules and procedures must transform processes either directly or indirectly through their effects on the patterns of power, interest or influence. The key issue, therefore, is to examine institutional plans or external factors not in isolation, but

rather in the context of *how* they interact. Some of the factors which are critical to ascertaining the effectiveness of ECOWAS's security regime are:
a)  character and frame of rules;
b)  manner in which political and legally binding provisions are combined;
c)  the mechanisms by which rules are revised;
d)  the structure and role of secretariat; and
e)  processes for resource relocation among participants which can decisively influence patterns of interests and capacity.

Thus, the effectiveness of a regime hinges on the extent to which a combination of these institutional attributes and mechanisms are developed in such a manner as to *motivate* and *associate* actors in a way that encourages preferred modification in conduct.

The implementing processes for the regime's commitments were based on three interrelated factors: (i) degree of concern about the problem; (ii) the formation and support of commitments; and (iii) the ability to execute obligations. An effective regime is one whose institutions, and not least rules and procedures adjust to external determinants and processes in order that the conduct of pertinent actors is altered in line with its objectives. The argument here is that these factors were specific both to the situation in question and to the issue area implicated. A key characteristic of ECOWAS's effectiveness was its flexibility and the capacity to adapt its institutions, rules and procedures in a timely manner in the light of its experience with implementation and as patterns of power, interest, influence, knowledge, capacity and concern changed. The developmental process which ECOWAS has undergone from the initial discussions concerning the inclusion of security related protocols, to the eventual ratification of the PMAD, has in a manner demonstrated not only ECOWAS's flexibility, but a realistic awareness of the real sources of regional insecurity.

## Conclusions

What has the application of regime theory to ECOWAS's security policies revealed? The major conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that security-related problems in the ECOWAS might continue, but multilateral efforts and the strengthening of institutional frameworks will be significant elements in tackling such problems. This warrants confidence building measures, and more effective verification systems. Also, cooperation among states within security regimes may continue to intensify by sustaining the norm of stability and making the rules and decision making procedures more transparent and effective. There is a critical need to enhance the present verification system by initiating a wide range of confidence building measures. This might lessen the security dilemma and advance less sub-regional tensions. So far, the general characteristics defining ECOWAS's security regime are:

(i)    restraint in state behaviour in the hope of reciprocity;
(ii)   ambitious arms procurement and contingency planning usually might continue;
(iii)  absence of war may be due to short term determinants and reflections;
(iv)   increasing shared conception of actor acceptance of the benefits of mutual security and cooperation; and that
(v)    realization that individual pursuit of security and war are costly, and that hostility in the military sector can easily spill over into other sectors.

The regime and its secretariat lack the requisite structural and institutional capability to deal with a crisis of the magnitude of Liberia's. For a start, while under the defence protocols, arrangements for communication, administration and decision-making were supposed to have been established, the reality of the situation was different. Thus, at the height of the crisis, several ad hoc by-products, or committees on the decision to intervene (SMC, ECOMOG) were established which had neither definite nor precise roles; neither did they have the competence nor administrative structures to facilitate decision making and implementation. These diverse structures did not have a single body which administered or coordinated their operations. The end result of this explicit flaw in well established processes and institutional structures both stymied and succeeded in hampering the peace process.

Despite the establishment of these diverse ad hoc committees, there were no bureaucrats at the political level to administer the peace process and keep the momentum. This can be explained by the shortage of qualified staff at the ECOWAS secretariat,[63] which weakened the political component of the peace process. Attempts at implementing the cease-fire, encampment and demobilization strategies have been compounded by financial constraints despite the imprimatur of regional and international legitimization.

Part of the success of regime activities in Liberia has been the introduction of new actors who managed to influence national behaviour and contributed to the development, sustainability and convergence of policy making in ECOWAS. How then can ECOWAS/ECOMOG design strategies, probably in concert with other more experienced international organizations for improving its monitoring, data collection and information exchange mechanisms, data analysis and the supervision and implementation of regulations, and generally building the capacity of ECOMOG now and in the future to manage crises and to ensure against violation? Despite the limited success of ECOWAS actions in Liberia, it is obvious that international cooperation and institutionalisation have been central elements in containing and limiting crises.

## Notes

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1.  It must be emphasised that (i) states cooperate on their free-will, (ii) that the attainment of specified common goals guide their actions, and (iii) cooperation usually involve long-term engagement.

2.  Economic Community of West African States.

3.  For a detailed synthesis of the major debates in regime theory, see Hansenclever, Andreas, Peter Mayer and Volker Rittberger. 1996. "Interests, Power, Knowledge: The Study of International Regimes", *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 40, supplement 2, October, pp. 177 - 228.

4.  Mersheimer, J.J. 1994. "The False promise of International Institutions", *International Security*, 19.3. Keohane, R. O. *et al* 1995. *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe 1989-1991.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press. pp. 2-7.

5.  Gilpin, R. 1989. "The Theory of Hegemonic War" in RI Rothberg and T.K. Robb, eds., *The Origins and Prevention of Major Wars.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

6.  For a more detailed exposition of these ideas, see Aning, Emmanuel Kwesi. 1998. *Security in the West African sub-region: An Analysis of ECOWAS's Policies in Liberia.* unpublished Ph.D dissertation, Institute of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, especially pp. 32-53 and 212-224.

7 . Krasner, S. 1983. "Structural causes and regime consequences: regimes and intervening variables" in Krasner, S. (ed.), *International Regimes*, London: CUP. p. 185

8.  Young, O.R. 1980 "International Regimes: Problems of Concept and Formation", *World Politics*, 32. p. 332. These ideas are emphasised in a latter article where it is emphasised that regimes should be understood as social structures.

9.  Jervis, Robert. 1978. "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma", *World Politics*, January, No. 2, and "Security Regimes", *International Organisation*, 36, 2, spring.

10. Müller, Harald. 1997. "The Internationalisation of Principles, Norms and Rules by Governments: The Case of Security Regimes", in V. Rittberger and P. Mayer, (eds.) *Regime Theory and International Relations.* Oxford: Clarendon Press. p. 361, my emphasis).

11. *Bindingness* as I have used it here refers to the scale of structural commitment allies agree to make under a security regime. A better appreciation of the dynamics of *bindingness* under any security regime will, however, require an analysis of the distinctive institutional features of security arrangements. This will permit an evaluation of how such allies are bound to reducing their discretionary powers.

12. According to Ghana's Foreign Minister, Obed Asamoah, "ultimately, ECOWAS is going to be a supranational organization, and one must begin to see this kind of action [the ECOWAS intervention in Liberia] in those terms. It is laying the foundation for common ECOWAS action *over and above petty national interests* ... [I]t will lead to greater cohesion ... (T)his (is) a pioneering role with very wide implications for the efficacy of ECOWAS". (my emphasis) Asamoah, Obed. 1991 "The Making of Ghanaian Foreign Policy", *LECIA Bulletin, 1, (1)*, pp. 34-36; Novicki, Margaret. 1990. "Obed Asamoah: A New Role for ECOWAS", *Africa Report*, November-December, pp.17-20; *West Africa*, 10-16 January 1994: 37-38.

13. Diverse explanations can be presented to explain embedded cooperation among states. The three most influential explanations are (i) hegemonic stability, (ii) institutionalism and (iii) knowledge and learning.

14. Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States, Art. 2 (hereafter ECOWAS Treaty).

15. Okolo, *op cit.* For the role of epistemic communities during negotiations, see Haas, P.M. 1989. "Do Regimes matter? Epistemic Communities and Mediterranean Pollution Control", *International Organization,* 43, pp. 377-404.

16. *West Africa*, 3 November 1986, p. 2333. A necessity for the establishment of such a regime can be better appreciated when an analysis of the sources of sub-regional conflict are tabulated. The most prevalent ones are border disputes involving state/citizen clashes, support for coup plotters, refugees and environmental crises.

17. Okolo, *op cit.*

18. Probably, an understanding of the Togolese/Senegalese presentation of the security proposals can be appreciated by the fact that these states were members of the exclusively Francophone group which had appended a security protocol to their economic endeavours.

19. See ECOWAS Document ECW/HSG/11.7 Rev. 1 in *Journal of ECOWAS*, 1 (1979) p. 13.

20. *African Research Bulletin*, 17 February, 1980, p. 5664. For a more detailed discussion, see Okolo, Julius Emeka 1983. "Securing West Africa: The ECOWAS Defence Pact", *The World Today*, May. Volume 39, Number 5, pp. 180-181.

21. Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defence (PMAD), A/SP3/5/81, Chapter 11 Art. 4(b).

22. *African Research Bulletin*, June 1-30, 1981, p. 6072.

23. see Article 58 of the revised Treaty.

24. Sesay, A. 1985. "The OAU and Regime Recognition: Politics of Discord and Collaboration in Africa", *Scandinavian Journal of Development Alternatives,* No. 3, pp. 26-28. Agyeman-Duah, Baffour & Olatunde B.J. Ojo. 1991 "Interstate

Conflicts in West Africa: The Reference Group Theory Perspective",
*Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 3, October, pp. 304-306.

25. Interview with Ike Nwachukwu, Nigeria's former Foreign Minister, Lagos, 18 August 1997.

26. The functions included devising plans for troop movements and logistics, launching collective military manoeuvres, formulating and administering the military budget of the secretariat, and reviewing and recommending proposals to the Executive Secretary, about issues relating to personnel and equipment PMAD.

27. PMAD, 1981Articles 6(3) & 16.

28. *Ibid.*, PMADArticle 17.

29. *Ibid.*, PMAD Article 19.

30. *Ibid.*, PMAD Article 7(i).

31. *Ibid.*, PMAD Article 11(i).

32. *Ibid.*, PMAD Article 9.

33. *Ibid.*, PMAD Article 12(1).

34. Interview with Abbas Bundu, former Executive Secretary of ECOWAS in London, 9 January 1998).

35. Yoroms, Gani Yoses & Emmanuel Kwesi Aning, 1997. "From Economic to Political Integration: Towards An Analysis of ECOWAS's Transformation", *Africa Peace Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 40.

36. See *African Research Bulletin*, [ARB] 15 February, 1990, p. 9557. According to ARB, "the rebels had apparently assumed that the people of Nimba ... would rally to their side. But when Charles Taylor, ..., proclaimed himself leader of the NPFL, whatever local support the rebels enjoyed largely evaporated".

37. See Sesay, Max A. 1996 "Civil War and Collective Intervention in Liberia", *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 67, p. 37. H. Boima Fahnbulleh, Jr 1993. "Liberia: Struggle for Democracy", *West Africa*, 22-28 March, pp. 462-463.

38. The material on this section is extensive. See among others "Views from Abidjan", *West Africa*, 22-28 January, 1990, p. 93; "US Military Advisers", *West Africa*, 12-18 February 1990, p. 246; "Call for US withdrawal *"West Africa*, 19-25 February, 1990, p. 294; "Gadafi Pledges Peace", *West Africa*, 3-9 December 1990, p. 2964.

39. Job, Brian L. ed., "The Insecurity Dilemma: National, Regime, and State Securities in the Third World" in *The Insecurity Dilemma*, Boulder: Lynne Reinner. pp. 17-19.

40. For an analysis of the influence of refugees on international politics, see Loescher, Gil 1989. "Refugee Issues in International Relations", pp. 2-3 in G. Loeschler and Laila Monhan, ed., 1989 *Refugees and International Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. "Liberia: The Cycle of Abuse –

Human Rights Violations since the November Cease-fire", *Africa Watch*, 1991, p. 13.

41. Erskine, Emmanuel. 1991. "Peacekeeping", *Africa Forum*, 1,1, p. 26.

42. Helman, G. B. and Steven R. Ratner. 1992/93 "Saving Failed States", *Foreign Policy*, No. 89, Winter, p. 5. Ayoob, M. 1995. *The Third World Security Predicament: State-making, Regional Conflict and the International System* (Boulder: Lynne Reinner) pp. 81, 86, 173. Schneider, G. and Patricia A. Weitsman. 1995. "Eliciting Cooperation from "Risky States": The Limits of Conventional Multilateralism in Security Affairs". Paper presented at the 2nd Pan-European Conference on International Relations, Paris, September 13-16, p. 3.

43. There is controversy about this point. Abbas Bundu asserts that it was his pressure on both Blaise Compaore and Dawda Jawara that made Liberia an agenda issue. Interview, London, 11 January 1998.

44. Quoted in Akabogu, Chike, 1992. "ECOWAS Takes The Initiative", p. 79 in Margaret Vogt, ed.,*The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt At Regional Peace Keeping* Lagos: Gabumo Pub. Co. Ltd.

45. ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, Decision A/Dec.9/5/90, Relating to the Establishment of the Standing Mediation Committee, Banjul, Gambia, 30 May 1990.

46. Letter addressed by President Samuel K. Doe to the Chairman and Members of the Ministerial Meeting of the ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee, 14 July 1990. See also Weller, M. (ed.), 1994. *Regional Peace-Keeping and International Enforcement: The Liberian Crisis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 60-61.

47. Ofuatey-Kodjoe, W. 1994. "Regional Organisations and the Resolution of Internal Conflict: The ECOWAS Intervention in Liberia", *International Peace-keeping*, Vol. 1, No. 3, Autumn, p. 262.

48. See Decision A/Dec.1/8/90, Decision A/ Dec.2/8/90, Decision A/Dec.3/8/90, Decision A/Dec.4/8/90, also Weller. *op cit.*, pp. 67-72.

49. The character and strategy of ECOMOG was mandated as, maintaining, enforcing and monitoring the cease-fire, protecting life and property, maintaining essential services, providing security to the LNTG, observe elections, conduct policing duties, see Vogt, "The Problems and Challenges of Peace-making: From Peace-keeping to Peace Enforcement", p. 159, in Vogt, *op cit.*,

50. ECOWAS: *A Stable and Peaceful Environment – Pre-requisite for accelerated ECOWAS Development and Integration.* Interim Report of the Executive Secretary to the 28th Session of the Council of Ministers. Abuja, 12-14 October 1990.

51. These are the Yamoussoukoro IV Accords of October 1991, Cotonou Accords of 1993, Accra/Akosombo Agreements of September/December 1994 and finally the Abuja Agreement of August 1995/6. The controversies among

community partners were solved by shifting emphasis from the SMC to the Committee of Five, at a critical stage during the peace process (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal and Togo). Subsequently, the Committee of Five and the SMC were merged to form the Committee of Nine (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo) to create a monitoring group with the aim of maintaining strict implementation of the cease-fire agreements. Final Communiqué of the 1st Joint Summit of the ECOWAS SMC and the Committee of Five, see also ECOWAS, First Meeting of the Committee of Nine on the Liberian Crisis, Final Communiqué, Abuja, Nigeria, 7 November 1992. See Weller, *op cit.*, pp. 230-232.

52. ECOWAS: Decision A/DEC.8/7/92 Relating to Sanctions Against Taylor and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, see also ECOWAS: Decision HSGC9-2/8/96 Relating to the Implementation of Arms Embargo in Liberia.

53. These agreements have been discussed in detail in a forthcoming paper, "From War to Peace: The Dilemmas of Multilateral Agency Interventions in Civil Wars", 1998.

54. The United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) is the first United Nations peace-keeping mission undertaken in co-operation with a peace-keeping operation already set up by another organisation. Established in September 1993, UNOMIL's mandate under Security Council resolution 866 (1993) includes in addition to military aspects, assistance in the co-ordination of humanitarian activities, observation and verification of elections, and to monitor the implementation procedures in order to verify their impartial application. UNOMIL and ECOMOG have separate chains of command, but the missions consult formally through the established committees, as well as informally on matters affecting them both. UNOMIL strength is 345 military observers, 20 military medical personnel and 45 military engineers.

55. ECOWAS: Resolution A/RES.6/7/95 calling on the United Nations to Maintain its Presence and support to Liberia.

56. This point is particularly important as it represented a major concession from Charles Taylor's NPFL which had established a quasi-state, Greater Liberia, under a National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly Government [NPRAG] based at Gbarnga.

57. See especially ECOWAS: Final report of the Thirty-Ninth session of the Council of Ministers, Abuja, 22-25 July 1996, ECW/CM/XXXIX/18/ Rev.1 and ECOWAS: Final communique of the Nineteenth session of the Authority of Heads of State and Governments, Abuja, 26-27 July 1996, ECW/ HSG/XIX.

58. ECOWAS: Final report Thirty-Eight meeting of Council of Ministers, 22-25 July 1996: 26; *New Nigerian*, 19 August, 1997:12, ECOWAS: Fourth session of Heads of State and Government of the Committee of Nine on Liberia,

Decision HSGC9-1/8/96 Relating to Sanctions Against Persons who Violate the ECOWAS Peace Plan for Liberia, Abuja 17 August 1996.

59. Shelpedi, T.M. 1998. "Transition from War to Peace: Consolidation of Achievement", paper presented at ECOWAS Forum on *Conflict Management and Resolution* at Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 7-11 July 1998. p. 9.

60. Aning, Emmanuel Kwesi 1996 "Ghana, ECOWAS and ECOMOG: An Analysis of Ghana's Role in Liberia", *Liberian Studies Journal*, Vol. XXI, No. 2 December 1996,

61. For a more detailed analysis, see Wienberger, Naomï 1995. "How Peace Keeping Becomes Intervention: Lessons from the Lebanese Experience" pp. 154-170 in Esman, Milton J. and Shibley Telhami eds., *International Organisations and Ethnic Conflict*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

62. These variables have been tested in a comparative analysis in the paper Aning, E.K. 1997. Multilateral Organisation Responses to State Collapse in Africa: Lessons from the Liberia and Somali Experiences", Revised version of paper presented at a conference on "The Perspectives on ECOMOG in the Future of African Regional Security", at The University of Abuja, Nigeria, between 3-7 March 1997.

63. Tarr, Byron 1993. "The ECOMOG Initiative in Liberia: A Liberian Perspective", *ISSUE: A Journal of Opinion*, Vol. XXI/1-2, p. 79. Jonah, was confident of the competence of the Executive Secretary": a political rather than an economic expert [with] long experience as a member of the commonwealth secretariat, [it was] inevitable that he would give a political thrust to ECOWAS, ... [T]here is no doubt that the forceful personality, political acumen and wide-ranging experience ... helped galvanise action by ECOWAS in dealing with the Liberian crises" see Jonah, J. 1993 "ECOMOG: A Successful Example of Peace-keeping by a Regional Organisation in the Third World", in W. Kühne, (ed.), *Internationales Umfeld Sicherheitsinteressen und Nationale Planning der Bundesrepublik: Stifung Wissenschaft und Politik*, p. 197.