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## West African Labour Migrants and National Security in Nigeria

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The economic recession of the 1980s led to a decline in the overall demand for foreign labour in many of the migrant-receiving countries in West Africa. During this period, public opinion and government pronouncements became sensitive to the presence of undocumented migrants. Nigeria, arguably the main receiving country in West Africa with Côte d'Ivoire, embarked on anti-immigration measures which included intensified control on the influx of immigrants, expulsion of 'illegal aliens' and also border closures. The Immigration Act of 1963 and the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree of 1972 were used to 'explain' the expulsion of an estimated 1.3 million immigrants in 1983, including 700,000 Ghanaians (Afolayan 1988:21). The then Minister of Internal Affairs, Alhaji Ali Baba, explained that:

An insignificant number of aliens employed in the private sector possessed residence permits or were included in approved expatriate quota. The vast majority were in violation of section 8 (1) of the 1963 Immigration Act which prohibits private sector employment of non-Nigerians unless with the written consent of the director of immigration. This flagrant abuse of our laws can no longer be tolerated (*West Africa*, 7 February 1983, p. 245).

At that time, many other African countries had already become notorious for expulsion orders. To mention only a few well-known cases, Côte d'Ivoire in 1958 and 1964, Guinea in 1968, Sierra Leone in 1968 and 1982, Ghana in 1969, Equatorial Guinea in 1974, Chad in 1979, had all expelled various categories of immigrants prior to the Nigerian mass-expulsion of 1983 (Adepoju 2001).

The list of African countries embarking on expulsion orders has kept growing ever since.

African governments tend to justify anti-immigration measures just as other governments worldwide do. They advance economic reasons, such as the protection of local jobs and industries from foreign competition, as well as security motives. At least, some portions of the expelling societies usually agree with the expulsion orders issued by their governments. It does not seem to matter much if the expelled 'aliens' are African neighbours, nor even in West Africa, if they are ECOWAS citizens.<sup>1</sup>

The Nigerian government and some sections of Nigerian opinion were convinced of the appropriateness of the 1983 expulsion for law and order motives (Onwuka 1993:198). Between 1975 and 1982, Nigeria had received an estimated two to three million undocumented migrants, mainly from Ghana, Togo and Benin. Their stigmatisation was orchestrated by parts of the press, who entangled all categories of foreigners with drug trafficking or prostitution (Anarfi 1982:208). When the expulsion order was published, xenophobia degenerated into physical aggressions against foreigners who were then labelled as job stealers and criminals.

Against this background, the focus of our chapter is twofold. First, we aim to document the international migratory flow of labour in West Africa. Labour migration here implies a dimension of the larger subject of population movement or mobility across international boundaries, whereby the migrants are working people in the broadest sense, including workers, sharecroppers, traders etc. Secondly, we seek to assess the implications of migrant labour in West Africa for national security and political, social or economic 'disorder' in Nigeria.

The notion of disorder is used in the sense of 'partial or total obliteration of instituted order' (Ben Arrous 1996:1). The term 'security' simply refers to a condition of freedom from danger and threat. Threat is any form of interference with security in any of its spheres (economic, social, military, territorial, political, cultural, etc.). Threats to national security are ideally assessed in terms of the extent of risk they constitute to the pursuit of a country's national interests or any of its attributes — territory, population, government, and sovereignty. It is in this sense that the security of a country is seen as a function of its ability to initiate, accommodate and effectively respond to threats. The way the term security is routinely used by governments has, however, a narrower meaning. With security conceived 'in geopolitical terms as spatial exclusion of threats' (Dalby 1992:98), emphasis is mostly on military threats, maintenance of the instituted order, and regime security. The social counterpart of this conception of security is the human security embodied, for instance, in employment security (Fashoyin 1990:660). There is an important difference between national and human security:

States have always construed security as a top-down concept [because] security threats were assumed to originate from other states [...]. Human security, by contrast, is a bottom-up concept; what matters are the people and their well-being [...]. Human security is the security people should have in their daily lives, not only from the threat of war but also from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards (Boafo-Arthur 2002:7).

Our analysis takes cognizance of the growth and spread of migrant networks, usually woven around unofficial (or parallel) economic activities. These activities represent, in the words of A.I. Asiwaju (1985:12), 'an enormous movement of men and material across the boundaries'. They are intimately linked to the quest of human security by the migrants who challenge the official modes of West African integration. Migrant networks in West Africa contribute to the dynamism of a series of market centres, 'which normally attract business transactions from remarkably extensive areas without much regard for international boundaries' (Asiwaju 1992). These, to us, represent potent forms of geography from below. It is in the same regard that we note the growing cross-border spread of cultural, religious and linguistic solidarities in the sub-region. The question to ask therefore is in what ways are the activities of West African labour migrants contributing to insecurity and disorder in Nigeria, or to the erosion of any attribute of Nigerian statehood.

What aspects of labour migration threaten Nigeria? What is Nigeria's concept and practice of national security? What are the dominant forms of control of the influx of West African migrants available to Nigeria? Admittedly, the movement of labour and population across frontiers does have political, social and economic implications, but in most cases, host governments have used immigration as a cheap excuse to cover up their own failure to advance the well-being and human security of their citizens. To what extent is this true for Nigeria?

Four underlying assumptions are central to our analysis. First, modern migratory movements in West Africa are essentially conducted outside state-centric regulatory frameworks. Secondly, the occurrence of such population movements is indeed a challenge to statehood — but, thirdly, the claim of the Nigerian State that insecurity and 'disorderliness' are caused by migrants is a myth. And, fourthly, the existing regional schemes such as the ECOWAS programmes are rather too formal, showing little regard for the realities of cross-border interactions in the sub-region. These four assumptions will be outlined and developed successively, following a brief review of theoretical perspectives on labour migration.

### **Theoretical Perspectives on Labour Migration**

The distinction between the two dominant schools of thought on labour migration is not easily missed in the literature. The microeconomic perspective assumes that the labour market and economic conditions are the deciding causes of migration, while the historical-structuralist framework of analysis emphasizes the importance of broader transformations in a particular society.

#### ***The Microeconomic Perspective***

This first perspective, which includes many theoretical models (De Jong and Gardner 1981), is mainly a product of North American scholarship. Its basic argument is that 'the migrant labour system was historically a stimulus to economic growth, and that it represents an optimum allocation of resources under existing conditions' (Berg 1965:176). In the microeconomic perspective, both the factors of production (labour, capital, natural resources and land) and their unequal distribution are taken a priori. Labour is assumed to be moving in the direction where it gets the highest remuneration, thereby responding to imbalances in the spatial distribution of the factors. Equilibrium is to be achieved through the migrant labour system whereby the rational calculus of the individual migrant is presumed.

The thesis in the above framework is that by redistributing human capital from places of low productivity to places of high productivity, migration represents a system of labour utilization and a means of fostering development, correcting rural-urban, inter-urban and inter-regional imbalances in factors returns (Spengler and Myers 1976). Furthermore, the microeconomic perspective sees the remittance of migrant labour as the instrument for restoring a balance of payments, and for stimulating savings and investment at the place of origin. As will be seen later in this chapter, this is the basic framework of analysis behind ECOWAS policies on population movement.

Some classical studies on migration in Africa have used as their point of departure variants of the microeconomic perspective (Mabogunje 1972). According to John Arthur, a number of reasons justify such approaches to labour migration in West Africa. These reasons include: (i) that the microeconomic models emphasize the importance of labour market and economic conditions in migration decision-making; (ii) that they examine the role of family structure, kinship, and community organizations in the migratory process; (iii) that they are capable of explaining the major forms of migration (circular, stepwise, and chain migrations) without the need to rely on any particular assumptions about human behaviour; and (iv) that they explain migration as part of the general theory of economic development based upon a sectoral approach, which recognizes the transfer of labour from one economic sector to another (Arthur

1991:67-68). The conclusion that the displacement of labour is for the re-establishment of an 'equilibrium' between the different factors however leaves some questions unanswered. Samir Amin thus observed:

Capital is much more mobile than labour. Why does capital not go where labour would be cheaper? [...] The 'function of production' of the conventional theory has three factors (capital, labour and nature) and not just two and it is not possible to resolve the question of geographic disequilibrium in the distribution of the two mobile factors (labour and capital) without taking into consideration the third (Amin 1974:85).

The following questions are also relevant: why the choice of export-oriented economy (especially in the case of West Africa)? Why is capital available for certain types of economic activity, localized in certain regions and not others? Why is it labour that moves into areas where capital has decided to install itself? Contrary to the assumption of the microeconomic analysts, the displacement of labour is deep rooted in the overall strategy of development (Singer 1975), which historically has never been the result of pure economy rationality. Amin has further proved that the modern migration process in West Africa is essentially a product of the integration of the sub-region into the world economy and the pattern of accumulation and reproduction this entails.<sup>2</sup>

Economists like Michael Todaro or Elliott Berg have developed various models that focus on the individual who migrates for better income. Such models leave out the fundamental issues of *who* in the society of origin migrates, and why. The who and why questions can only be answered in relation to changes in the socio-economic organization, and this in turn calls for an understanding of the relationship between men organized in a structured society and involved in a struggle with nature (Amin 1974:91). Therefore, the motivations for migration must be analysed in relation to social transformation both at the source and at destination. It is in this way that the role and importance of the integration within the world economy system is revealed.

### ***The Historical-structuralist Perspective***

The historical-structuralist perspective is a response to the limitations of microeconomic analysis. It does not regard migration as a discrete dimension of social reality that could be subjected to separate investigation. Rather, it assumes that the study of population movement requires a historical analysis of the broader structural transformation underway in a particular social formation (Wood 1982:302). The central argument is that population movement, as a phenomenon, cannot be discussed in isolation from the socio-economic and political changes of which it is a part:

The causes of migration cannot be separated from their consequences, for migration is not just the consequence of unequal development due to 'natural'

causes (the natural potentialities of different regions). Migration is also an element of unequal development, reproducing the same conditions and contributing in this manner to their aggravation (Amin 1974:93).

Structuralists explain population movements in the context of the pressures and counter-pressures, both internal and external, on the national economy that lead to changes in the organization of production. Labour migration, they argue, is mainly a macrosocial rather than an individual process, because structural factors influence labour mobility through their impact on the degree and the spatial distribution of the demand for labour, labour recruitment and remuneration. The historical-structuralist perspective thus stresses the following: the emergence and expansion of the capitalist mode of production; the style of development that is pursued; a country's role in the international division of labour; the unequal development within and between countries; and the articulation of capitalist and non-capitalist formations as it affects the distribution of the maintenance and reproduction costs of labour (Wood 1982:303).

Microeconomic analysts, for their part, accuse the historical-structuralist school of paying scanty attention to socio-cultural factors that motivate individual actors (ibid.:307). The existence of an 'ethnic pull', whereby labour migrants tend to migrate to areas with high concentration of members of their ethnic origin is worth noting. However, this consideration has tended to elevate the cultural component into omnibus explanation.

The emphasis, then, is on cultural determinants, and social relations become restricted to small group settings, such as family, kinship, and household relationships, with little or no effort made to encompass the broader social structure. Yet, the mobilization and coming together of these groups constitute, in the main, strategies that are defined in relation to the economic and political problems of modern society. More often than not, they are invoked according to circumstance and demand of the strategies in question (Amin 1974:116). Therefore, to regard such relationships (family, kinship, household etc.) as the causes of labour migration is a major contradiction in theoretical terms.

### **Continuity and Change in the Geography of Labour**

This section confirms that changes in the general conditions for political and economic development in West Africa have implications for population shifts. Both the causes of labour migration and their far-reaching consequences have become increasingly differentiated over time. We distinguish below between the age-long mobility of specific professional groups, the migrations associated with colonial forced labour, and the geography of economic development in contemporary times, particularly the vicissitudes of the oil economy in Nigeria.

### ***Occupational Migrations and Mobility***

Across West Africa are many communities of traders and occupational groups of the same ethnic and cultural origin. Hausa, Dyula, Mandika, Ewe, Wolof, Mende and Yoruba traders, for instance, have a long experience of long-distance business relations. In Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, or in Accra and Tamale, both in Ghana, Yoruba migrants use their position in the retail and wholesale trade to provide firms like the Lever Brothers of Nigeria access to sub-regional markets. Some Yoruba women from Nigeria are prominent in this business area where success depends on social networks based on socio-cultural support systems.

Since the end of the Nigerian Civil War, Igbo networks have also joined in establishing trading posts along the West African coast, notably in Yamoussoukro and Abidjan which serve as western termini, while Cotonou in Benin and Lagos in Nigeria serve as mid-stations in a re-exportation business that has its unofficial 'headquarters' in Aba. This city in Eastern Nigeria serves as the point of distribution for many products for re-exportation that are in transit from other West African states, notably Benin.

Other occupational groups in the sub-region include fishermen communities such as the Bozo of Mali, the Fante of Ghana, the Ogu of Benin Coastal, the Itshakiri in the Niger Delta or the Efik and Ibibio. It is not likely that their activities in West African waters respect the state-centric notion of 'international' boundaries. The same can be said of Fulani cattle-herders, whose occupational engagements involve cross-border movements through Niger, Nigeria and Northern Cameroon.

Many patterns of population distribution and composition in present day West Africa attest to the historical importance of population movements. Prior to the modern state system, neighbours who shared cultural and religious values moved among themselves and across community boundaries with little or no restriction. Religious activities and the transfer of goods — slaves, gold, salt — were the motor of their activities. The trans-Saharan trade linked the Mediterranean Sea to West African cities such as Timbuktu, Jenne, Kano, Kintampo, Kumasi.

Most of these cities were located at the junction of ecological areas: desert, savannah and forest. Until now, the crossing of ecological areas remains a factor in determining the direction of labour migration within the sub-region. A structural movement from the Sahel in the north to the humid areas in the south can be observed. Migratory movements in contemporary times have in many respects followed these age-old patterns of mobility.

### ***Forced Labour Leading to Structural Imbalance***

The new political and economic order that European colonization introduced in the nineteenth century created the conditions for massive population movements in West Africa. The British, French and Portuguese colonialists needed soldiers

for their armies and manpower for their plantations. Where labour was needed but not locally available, they brought it in from distant areas. This was often done by force and with the connivance and assistance of local chiefs (Zachariah and Condé 1981:31). The largest migrations ever recorded in West Africa were in the early colonial period. At this stage, migration was not of people, but of labour (Amin 1974:66). The balance between richer and poorer areas was structurally altered in this process.

The early developments of a cash economy were based on forced labour, conscription and taxation. These were enforced with particular brutality in areas of labour surplus, which became source regions of out-migration to the colonial cities, mining areas or regions of cash crop agriculture where labour supply was deficient. In French West Africa, savannah areas such as Upper Volta provided migrant labour to the coastal towns and farms of Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire. Similarly, Northern Nigeria exported labour to Western Nigeria and the Gold Coast.

The colonial economic system resulted in the development of new administrative and economic centres, especially in the coastal areas. Colonization favoured the urban areas with the development of infrastructures that were meant to sustain an export-based economy. Railways were built to link Upper Volta to Côte d'Ivoire, French Sudan to Senegal, northern cities in Nigeria to Lagos and Port Harcourt. This precipitated the influx of migrants who came in search of 'European jobs' in the railway and port constructions as well as in the gold mines (Chukwurah 1984:489).

Unequal distribution of economic and industrial programmes led to the displacement of millions of people. Population movements usually took the form of internal migrations, which were facilitated by a common language administration and policy within each territory. Those long distance movements within such areas as French West Africa were considered inter-territorial movements that were not international in the strict sense, and not distinct from internal migration.

Aside from the above, migrations between different colonial blocs were spurred on by a series of inter-colonial agreements meant to balance supply of and demand for labour. The climax of these inter-colonial movements was in the 1940s and 1950s, with heavy flows of labour migration from French West Africa to the Gold Coast and from Eastern Nigeria to the Spanish Island Colony of Fernando Po.

There were also protest migrations during the colonial period. Politically discontented West Africans resorted to emigration, as protest against requisition and taxation (Asiwaju 1984:31-35). Those who were colonized by the French tended to escape from the French *travail forcé* (forced labour) and sought better



conditions in British colonies. Writing on the Niger-Nigeria boundary, David Collins notes that:

The masses [...] in their response to the relatively harsher policies of the French, often migrated in their thousands into the adjacent areas on the British side of the border, causing a higher population density there at the expense of the French side of the border. Such cross-border exodus spanned the whole of the colonial period up to the post-World War II reforms in French West African administration (Collins 1985:198).

While the flows of international labour migration have been much reduced in recent years, the spatial patterns that originated during the colonial period have continued to date with their attendant problems. Notably, the displacement of labour continues to be determined by the differences between countries of unequal economic weight, and by the rapidly varying success of their development strategies.

### ***The Changing Geography of Prosperity***

Ghana in 1957 was the first colonized African country to gain its independence. The former Gold Coast inherited the export-based economy, and for as long as it remained the world's leading producer of cocoa, the producing areas of Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo received migrant labour from Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo, Benin and Upper Volta. These countries were sources of cheap labour for Ghana's growing industrial, construction, and agricultural sectors. Immigrant labour was thus received for the Akosombo Dam project, especially from displaced populations which settled in the Volta basin area to take advantage of the employment opportunities offered by the aluminium processing plants. In the same way, the mining deposits at Obuasi and Konongo drew a migrant labour population from Liberia, Nigeria and Mali. This flow of immigrants was interrupted in the late 1960s, when the crisis in the economy of Ghana led to anti-immigration measures, culminating in massive expulsions after the Alien Compliance Order of November 1969.

The plantations in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal had also experienced labour immigration from Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Guinea in the 1960s. But by the mid-1970s, most of Africa had started sinking into the growing crisis of global capitalism, and its export-oriented economies directly experienced the volatility of commodity markets. Clandestine, illegal or undocumented migrations have since become rampant, and it has also assumed much significance on the policy agenda of most state authorities, as they acquired a new perception on the phenomenon.

It is during this period, however, that the exploitation of rich oil and natural gas resources began in Nigeria, and Nigeria took over from Ghana as a major destination of West African labour migrants. Ghana was deep in economic crisis

and migrants were easily attracted from Ghana to Nigeria for work in the oil fields and the construction industry. Many construction works in Nigeria took off around this time, notably the Kainji Dam and the new capital city of Abuja, which stimulated the West African flow of migrant labour. In addition to the primary sector industries, the economic recession in Ghana also facilitated the brain drain of Ghanaian teachers who became registered aliens in Nigeria under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of Education.

The presence of migrant labour in the formal sectors of the economy of receiving countries in West Africa has necessarily fluctuated with the intensity of economic crises since the 1980s. Meanwhile, informal transborder trade and regional business transactions and networks have flourished, most especially as aspects of border economy that have become consolidated as variants of 'free trade areas'.<sup>3</sup> Examples of such areas with links with Nigerian towns and cities include the Badagry-Porto Novo, Imeko-Ilara-Ketu and Chikanda-Tchicandou axes across Nigeria-Benin border, linking large market centres such as Lagos, Abeokuta and Ilorin on the Nigerian side, with Cotonou, Bohicon-Abomey and Parakou on the Beninese side. There are also the Katsina-Maradi and Illela-Birni Konni sector across Nigeria-Niger border and the Kamba (Nigeria)-Gaya (Niger)-Malanville (Benin) triangle around the tripartite point on the Niger River.

A.I. Asiwaju (1992) considers some of the currently vigorous networks of informal economic activities to be 'survival elements' of pre-colonial regional trade. This is illustrated, for instance, by the east-west trade route linking Benin City, capital of present Edo State of Nigeria, with Kumasi in present-day Ghana via Ketu in present-day Benin (*ibid.*). Another well-documented example is the city of Kano in northern Nigeria, an important centre for cross-border trade and the parallel currency market, which is still providing the link with northern West Africa, notably Niger, Chad and Benin.<sup>4</sup>

### ***Nigeria's Oil Boom and its Aftermath***

As already mentioned, Nigeria became a major receptionist of West African migrant labour in the early seventies. The buoyancy of its economy made the country attractive:

The Nigerian economy achieved a high rate of growth up to the end of the 1970s. During the period 1965-80, GDP grew at an average of 8 percent a year [...]. Whereas the extractive sector (primarily petroleum) accounted for 1.2 percent of total GDP in 1959, by 1971 its share had risen to 15.1 percent [...]. Oil revenue rose from 172 million naira in 1969 to N507 million in 1970, an increase of 194 percent in just one year, and since the 1970s has accounted for between 80 and 98 percent of total government revenue (Fashoyin 1990:650).

Nigeria was then recovering from the Biafra War (1967-1970). The government had decided on a policy of good neighbourliness in West Africa, in order to ward off any form of third level threat. The drought that affected the Sahel throughout the 1970s contributed to a steady flow of immigrants from Mali, Upper Volta and above all Niger. Oil prices were high. Migrant labour was needed, and it was welcome.

This period would last until the early 1980s, when the collapse of the oil market, in a context of worldwide surplus, triggered off a lasting crisis. The 'very high and ever growing import-dependence of local industry' was a hallmark of Nigeria's industrial and import-substitution strategies (Olukoshi 1995:163). Following the 1973 war in the Middle East, a decade of high oil prices had helped 'both to conceal and to fuel' this import-dependence and other contradictions in the pattern of accumulation, including the 'virtual non-existence' of the intermediate goods sectors and the channelling of 'massive amounts of money [...] into 'modern' agricultural production to the neglect of the small-holder farmer' (ibid.:161-63).

As foreign debt increased and the fiscal crisis deepened, the successive governments of Shehu Shagari (1979-1983), General Buhari (1983-1985) and General Babangida (1985-1992) sought various means to avoid devaluation of the naira, which the International Monetary Fund recommended insistently. The Economic Stabilization Act of 1982, the use of Special Drawing Rights from Nigeria's reserve with the IMF, the introduction of import restrictions, monetary controls and border closures, or, in 1985, the declaration of a state of national economic emergency, only deferred the adoption of a Structural Adjustment Programme. Companies were facing poor business results, and they too resorted to various types of 'solutions', including salary cuts, 'flexibility' in manpower utilisation, shorter leaves, shorter working hours, reduction in employee compensation, and delayed renewal of collective agreements (Fashoyin 1990:656). All this failed to prevent the introduction of a comprehensive SAP in 1986, with immediate currency devaluation.

The mass-expulsion of 1983 was just one of the early measures that were supposed to help economic recovery. The Shagari government officially targeted 'illegal aliens', meaning immigrants who had overstayed the permissible period of ninety days and in the majority of cases had taken up employment without the necessary papers (Aluko 1985; Fashoyin 1985). Most of them were unskilled labourers.<sup>5</sup> Some trade unions, complaining of cheap labour, welcomed the expulsion order. The National Union of Construction and Civil Engineers Workers (NUCCEW), for instance, was in the lead in rationalizing the action, adducing economic and security reasons (Gowon 1984:545).

The expulsion was internationally condemned, especially in West Africa where public opinion accused Nigeria of not being her 'brother's keeper'. In a face-

saving action, the Nigerian government made a donation of N600,000 to ECOWAS member states affected by the expulsion. The grant was to assist them in resettling the expelled people. Ghana rejected this grant, and the Lagos magazine *Newswatch* reported that most of the expelled Ghanaians wished that millions of Nigeria immigrants spread all over West Africa be so expelled (*Newswatch*, 27 May 1985, p. 16). A commentator from Nigeria, writing in *West Africa*, sarcastically criticized the expulsion order:

At last those illegal aliens are gone. Unemployment has become a thing of the past. Millionaires can now go to bed with their golden doors thrown wide open without the fear of a Ghanaian gun or a Chadian arrow; prostitutes are now gone and our country can bounce back to moral health. What's more since the invaders left, NEPA [National Electric Power Authority] hasn't suffered a single bout of epilepsy; uninterrupted water supply has greeted every home; no more gubernatorial acrimonies, no more inferno in public buildings; above all, Africa still remains the centre-piece of our foreign policy (*West Africa*, 7 March 1983, p.591).

The expulsion order made no noticeable impact on crime and disorder.<sup>6</sup> It did not stop nor diminish the unemployment crisis either. But resentment against foreigners remained. Considering the effect of smuggling on the economic crisis, the government closed Nigeria's borders in April 1984:

Some commentators claimed that up to 40 percent of cargo handled in Cotonou and Lome ports and a significant part of what passed through Douala in the Cameroon, were ultimately destined for Nigerian markets. The resentment was so great that it was not unusual to find claims that smuggling was the major contributory in the financial crisis that has affected the country from 1982 [...]. Nigerians were [also] complaining that they were paying the foreign exchange costs of a large number of goods consumed in the neighbouring countries without getting any foreign exchange back (*West Africa*, 3 September 1984, p. 1770).

The Nigerian government continued to carry out periodic expulsions, although with less publicity and much caution towards ECOWAS immigrants. Commenting on a new wave of expulsions in 1985, *Newswatch* magazine questioned the very capacity of the state to effectively control immigration. Wondering 'if the expulsion achieved any of its intended effects', the magazine commented:

No matter whether the borders are open or not, illegal immigrants would still come in droves, because the conditions which propel them towards the black world's biggest nation are still there. And there is no hope of effective policing of the vast borders (*Newswatch*, 27 May 1985, p. 16).

The analysis in *Newswatch* could not be faulted considering the effect of the 1983 expulsion exercise. Immigrants that were legally resident in Nigeria continued,

after the expulsion, to be far less than the 'illegal aliens', of which a substantial fraction were from the West African sub-region.

Two questions arise from the above. First, to what extent are Nigeria's perceptions of immigration and practices of immigration control consistent with her policy of good neighbourliness? Second, how can a regional 'giant' like Nigeria be or feel threatened by her neighbours? With an estimated 130 million inhabitants, when no other country in West Africa has a population above 25 million, Nigeria accounts for more than half of the total population of ECOWAS. Her size, natural resources, and maritime coastline have made the influence of Nigeria on her neighbours a favourite topic of West African international studies. No other country in the sub-region, and very few in Africa as a whole, can compare with Nigeria in terms of military capabilities. So, what does threaten Nigeria? Answers to these questions must of necessity be considered in relation to the host country's conception of national security.

### **Concerns for National Security in Nigeria**

Threat can be referred to as 'a feeling, whether real or imagined, by one country that another country, person or group of persons, has hostile intentions against it' (Imobighe 1979:634). The definition of what constitute threats to a country thus derives, at least to some extent, from both 'public opinion' and the psychological environment of the decision-making process, i.e. the own perception of the decision-makers.

### ***Perceptions of Immigration and Insecurity***

The insecurity of lives and property in Nigeria has gained much ground since the 1980s and it continues to deepen. Courtesy of media reports, all sorts of crimes are revealed even to a day visitor. Many people outside Nigeria would be astonished, however, at reading local reports that tend to blame this situation on immigrants from neighbouring countries. Such reports are indeed surprising if one considers the bad reputation of Nigerians themselves outside their borders. A long list of stereotypes, including fraudulent business transactions (otherwise known as 419), immigration frauds, and drug trafficking, is attached to Nigerians in a number of African countries and around the world. Many Nigerians rightly complain that such stereotypes are unjust and unacceptable. The notion that foreigners are responsible for Nigeria's high levels of crime and violence is just as stereotypical. Yet, without any recourse to crime statistics, some political leaders, law enforcement officials, and local media, especially government-owned media houses, have found easy scapegoats in West African migrants.

The three main areas in which West African migrants allegedly threaten the security of Nigeria are economic 'disorder', criminal violence, and religious sectarianism:

- Economic ‘disorder’, in the Nigerian context, revolves around everything that aggravates the unemployment crisis in the formal sectors of the economy. There is no doubt that the networks of parallel trade along Nigeria’s porous borders, the non-payment of taxes and tariffs, and illegal foreign exchange transactions, contribute to this crisis. Additionally, the illegal mining of solid materials has gained much ground in parts of Central Nigeria, notably Plateau, Nassarawa and Taraba States. Nationals of Guinea, Niger, Mali and Senegal were found to be involved in this latter activity. Foreigners are also reportedly involved in illegal mining in Oyo and Osun States in Western Nigeria.
- Violent crimes such as armed robbery, car theft and smuggling in northeastern border regions are allegedly linked with the presence of immigrants from neighbouring countries, especially Niger and Chad around the fringes of Lake Chad Basin and in cities like Jalingo, Jimeta-Yola, Gashua, Dikwa, Mubi, Gembu, Damaturu, Maiduguri etc. Local media are full of reports where assailants are said to speak languages unknown in Nigeria.
- The Kano, Maiduguri and Kaduna religious disturbances in the 1980s are usually cited as instances of lawless activities by immigrants. The leader of the Islamic movement that started the Kano disturbances in December 1980 was an illegal immigrant named Muhammadu Marwa (alias Maitatsine) from Cameroon. His followers rejected the authority of the state and demanded absolute obedience to Marwa. Thousands of death resulted, including that of Marwa. Over 1,000 persons were arrested, among which 224 foreigners. Amidst the break of ethno-religious crises in parts of Northern Nigeria in October 2001, officials of the Immigration Department again arrested some foreigners in Benue State capital with fake immigration documents. They were suspected of planning a religious crisis.

These many instances of ‘disorder’ reportedly caused by migrants from neighbouring West African countries warrant noting. Their enumeration is not sufficient, however, to justify generalizations. One does not know the proportion of foreigners who are actually engaged in reprehensible activities. Consequently, one does not know either how it would compare with the proportion of Nigerians engaged in similar activities. Only a systematic data gathering effort could allow the generation of credible statistics. To our knowledge, no such figures exist in Nigeria. In their absence, the overall stigmatisation of ‘illegal aliens’ is bound to rely on xenophobic stereotypes, which are, in essence, sponsored by segments of the press and state officials.

The researcher’s observations in six communities of northeastern Nigeria challenge some of these stereotypes. The six communities are Jimeta-Yola (Adamawa State), Toro (Bauchi), Gombe (Gombe), Jalingo (Taraba), and Damaturu (Yobe). About 500 persons were interviewed between January and

July 2001, including 278 Nigerians, 97 Cameroonians, 69 Chadians, 48 Nigeriens and 6 others not listed. The majority of interviewed Nigerians disagreed that immigrants represent a 'stumbling block to the realization of the lofty ideas of Nigeria's moral standards'. Such stereotype dated back to the presidency of Shehu Shagari, when all the evils were attributed to 'illegal aliens'. Although some of those interviewed felt that 'strangers' may have affected social values in their communities, the claim that migrants are responsible for moral decadence remained vague and could not be supported on the basis of facts.

On the claim that most migrant workers do not have the necessary immigration documents, a significant number of the people interviewed admitted that they did not have such papers. They explained that they were 'helped' by border post officers. Generally, these undocumented migrants did not see a reason why they should be subjected to official bureaucracy on their journey to Nigeria where some of their kith and kin live.

Only very few of the interviewed Nigerians — usually those residing in urban centres — felt that the presence of immigrants from neighbouring countries had aggravated the problem of unemployment. They claimed that the migrants, who are usually ready to settle for less adequate conditions of service, are competing with Nigerian citizens to secure jobs. However, the ECOWAS Treaty recognizes citizens of ECOWAS countries as Community citizens with certain rights and privileges, including the right of entry, residence and establishment. Thus, the competition for jobs in any ECOWAS country by Community citizens cannot be considered as a security threat in Nigeria.

Additionally, the inadequacy of Nigeria's law enforcement capabilities cannot be overlooked. Shortly before the Kano disturbances of 1980, Sam Oyovbaire observed that religious sectarianism had at different times challenged the secular nature of Nigeria,

to the point of dramatizing the fluidity of the country's colonial boundaries, the movement of [...] dangerous weaponry across the borders, the emptiness of our intelligence gathering and security networks, the ease with which external forces of destabilisation can penetrate and exploit our social and political structures and the poverty of Nigeria's civil defence system (Oyovbaire 1980:16-17).

Most of the above still remains valid in the mid 2000s. It is therefore likely that immigrants will continue playing a role in Nigeria's share of religious revivalism, for instance.

### ***Looking for a Security Policy***

Nigeria long lacked a blueprint on national security. In 1975-76 — that is, in times of economic boom — the Adedeji Panel, which reviewed foreign policy since independence did identify a series of values not relevant to security as

such, but to national interest. These values were: (i) the defence of the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Nigeria; (ii) the creation of the necessary conditions in Africa and the rest of the world which would facilitate the defence of Nigeria's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity; (iii) the creation of the necessary conditions in Africa and the rest of the world which would foster Nigeria's national self-reliance and economic development; (iv) the achievement of collective self-reliance in Africa and the rest of the world; (v) the promotion and defence of social justice and respect for human dignity.

When the economy of Nigeria started to decline in real terms in the 1980s and undocumented migrants became perceived as a problem, the government evolved a new perception of immigration and cross-border dynamics (Nwokedi 1985; Ukpabi 1987; Osieke et al. 1989). Just as interests and values overlap or conflict in international relations, the introduction of anti-immigration measures on various economic, health, security and political reasons, resulted in tensions with the neighbours at the expense of previous achievements in the fields of trade and security cooperation.

Since the inauguration of Olusegun Obasanjo's presidency in May 1999, the discourse on national security has again become more comprehensive. The Obasanjo administration, holding a Retreat on National Security in August 2001, came up with what it called a 'Grand Strategy for National Security'. On that occasion, President Obasanjo announced that:

the concept of National Security which will apply during [his] presidency shall be the aggregation of the security interests of the individuals, political entities, human associations and ethnic groups, which make up the nation [...]. The security interest includes safety of life and property, economic, physiological and mental well-being and the freedom to pursue the attainment of legitimate objectives without hindrance. [The primary objective of national security is] to strengthen the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to advance her interests and objectives, to contain instability, control crime, eliminate corruption, enhance genuine development, progress and growth, improve the welfare and well-being and quality of life of every citizen (Obasanjo 2001).

Interestingly, national security is here conceptualised within a framework where the question of migrants being essentially the trouble-makers has no place. The Obasanjo's Grand Strategy went further to elaborate on some core elements of national security, including foreign policy, defence, and economy. Referring to 'neighbouring West Africa', President Obasanjo thus added:

The magnitude of attention paid to national security may invariably be graduated in concentric circles of proximity, shared interest, and like-mindedness. I believe strongly in economic integration of the ECOWAS sub-region. This is why we are pursuing the Fast Track Integration of the Community with other members (*ibid.*).



The importance accorded to sub-regional integration in the Grand Strategy for National Security has historical antecedent in Nigeria's efforts at floating the ECOWAS in the 1970s. The ECOMOG (ECOWAS Monitoring Group) interventions in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau in the 1990s are not addressed in this chapter but they also illustrate the will to link the national security of Nigeria with sub-regional security. Actually, there should not be any contradiction between the vision of human security and national or sub-regional security, in so far as the plight of any West African citizen represents a virtual threat to the global security of ECOWAS and the national security of its member states.

### **ECOWAS on Population Movement**

Nigeria is a founding member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), an inter-governmental organisation meant to promote balanced development through market integration. Towards this aim, ECOWAS decided to remove all obstacles to the free movement of persons, services and capital. To what extent has this decision been respected? How consistent are ECOWAS rules and policies with the existing patterns of labour migration in West Africa?

#### ***A Microeconomic Vision***

ECOWAS was established in 1975 to promote cooperation and development in all fields of economic activity likely to raise the standard of living of West African peoples. The original Treaty establishing the ECOWAS was signed at Lagos in May 1975, and later revised at Cotonou in July 1993. Both the original and revised versions of the treaty recognize the need to maintain and encourage intra-regional migration as a way of rationalizing and optimizing resources used at the regional level, toward the liberalization of trade and improved competition. The central assumption of this microeconomic orientation can be summarized with the words of the then Nigerian president Yakubu Gowon:

Even more than the promotion of trade, the mobility of labour [...] was central to ECOWAS and exemplified what the community was about. The free movement of persons within the region was both a repudiation of colonial frontiers in so far as they impeded the economic development of the new States, and an affirmation of the spirit of cooperation and mutual assistance (Gowon 1984:536).

General Gowon, whose government took an active role in the floating of the ECOWAS, explained the rationale for West African integration in his Ph.D. thesis:

It was our intention in creating ECOWAS that free movement of labour, like trade liberalisation, would proceed gradually being accompanied by other measures to secure promotion of trade, the replacement of competitive by

complementary economies, an increase in industrial specialisation and agricultural differentiation, and a programme of industrial location specially designed to prevent excessive movement across frontiers. Our first concern was to give security to those already living and working abroad in the interests of stabilising production and increasing economic growth. The relaxation of control could also channel skills and labour to countries where they were in short supply and provide at least temporary relief for those states without adequate employment opportunities (ibid.:537).

The treaty establishing the ECOWAS in 1975 conferred the status of 'Community citizen' on the nationals of member states and it accordingly provided that obstacles to their free movement should, 'by stages', be abolished. Article 3.2.d.iii. of the revised treaty reaffirmed that:

The Community shall, by stages, ensure [...] the removal, between Member States, of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital, and to the right of residence and establishment.

However, removing the obstacles to labour migration has proved uneasy (Chukwurah 1983). Questions arising from the notion of 'removal' led to the signing of a protocol in 1979 and no less than three additional protocols in 1985, 1986 and 1990. The main idea in the ECOWAS Protocol relating to Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment was that, at the end of a maximum transitional period of fifteen years, any ECOWAS citizen would be free to enter, reside and establish in the territory of any member state. The transitional period was trilaterally phased:

Phase 1 — Right of entry and abolition of visa (1980-85)

Phase 2 — Right of residence (1985-90)

Phase 3 — Right of establishment (1990-95).

The transition from one phase to the next, according to Article 2 of the Protocol, had to be 'based upon the experience gained from the implementation of the first phase'. Ratification and to a larger extent implementation were to be a difficult and protracted exercise.

### **'ECOWAS Not Here!'**

The delays in ratifying the Protocol were certainly due to 'the concern with security and possible problems [...] rather than the administrative difficulties' cited by many states (Gowon 1984:542). Aboubakar Diaby Ouattara, the first Executive Secretary of ECOWAS had cause to complain of the 'unsatisfactory manner in which the Protocol is being implemented' (ECOWAS 1981:21). Dr Ouattara noted that 'the Protocol itself is not a problem. The question is how it is being implemented' (*West Africa*, 1 June 1981, p. 1209). He further explained:

We made sure that there were specific directives for member countries to follow, so that the Protocol, which is the first important measure to affect ECOWAS citizens, should not produce unexpected problems. But time is needed. We anticipated that there would be some free [undocumented] movement of people, but that is not the fault of the Protocol. The member countries have to find their feet in this new situation. It is the first real decision they have had to implement. It is the first that affects the ordinary citizen. There will be many more (Ibid.).

Implementation was evidently a serious problem. For example, whereas the Nigerian government welcomed the Protocol as ‘a great step forward’ and ordered immediate implementation (Obasanjo 1979), there were complaints that visas were still required by immigration officials for entry into Nigeria. The following story captures the issue well :

A Sierra Leonean arriving at Murtala Muhammed Airport without a visa tried to persuade the immigration man that under ECOWAS rules visas were no longer needed. He received the uncompromising reply: ‘ECOWAS for your President and my President. ECOWAS not here!’ (*West Africa*, 1 June 1981, p. 1209).

The Protocol provides that all Community citizens, excluding those defined by law as undesirable aliens, may enter without a visa and reside in any member state for a maximum of ninety (90) days. The only requirement for ECOWAS citizens is a valid travel document and an international yellow fever vaccination certificate. While the visa and entry permit requirement has been abolished in all ECOWAS member states, it was observed that ‘nearly all the States still maintain numerous check-points [where] ECOWAS citizens are subject to administrative harassment and extortion’ (ECOWAS 2000:15). Table 1 below shows how checkpoints dot the major West African highways.

**Table 1: Checkpoints along some West African highways**

	Distance	Centre	Checkpoints per 100 km
Lagos-Abidjan	992 km	69	7
Cotonou-Niamey	1036 km	34	3
Lome-Ouagadougou	989 km	34	4
Accra-Ouagadougou	972 km	15	2
Abidjan-Ouagadougou	1122 km	37	3
Niamey-Ouagadougou	529 km	20	4

**Source:** ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, December 2000.

Beyond the abolition of visa and entry permit requirement for Community citizens, the ECOWAS took several other decisions to facilitate population movement. Considering their low level of implementation (see Table 2.), however, these decisions appear to only beg the questions rather than address them.

The establishment of an ECOWAS travel certificate was meant to simplify the formalities for cross-border movement. So far, the travel certificate has entered into circulation in only seven countries, meaning that the eight other member states of ECOWAS are still to introduce this document. According to the Executive Secretariat of ECOWAS, 'high printing costs are a prohibiting factor for some Member States', and financial assistance is being sought from a number of donors for such countries (ECOWAS 2000:18).

Part of ECOWAS migration rules is that Community citizens travelling with their national passport or an ECOWAS travel certificate may have these documents stamped without filling out any immigration or emigration form. Only in 'exceptional cases' (ibid.), should they fill out harmonised immigration and emigration forms. Such forms were printed and widely distributed, but no member state has introduced them into use. There is also the ECOWAS Brown Card Motor Vehicle Insurance Scheme, which was introduced as both an accompanying measure to the other provisions on free movement of peoples and goods, and a useful tool to address the issue of road safety. Twelve countries currently apply the scheme. The problem is that two motor vehicle insurance systems coexist in the sub-region, namely the ECOWAS Brown Card and the CIMA code in 'francophone' countries,<sup>7</sup> and they are still to be harmonised. In this regard, one should mention that it is only in 2003 that Senegalese and Gambian insurance companies began talking about using the Brown Card scheme.

To monitor implementation of ECOWAS decisions and protocols on free movement of persons and vehicles, the Authority of Heads of State and Government adopted a decision requiring member states to establish national committees. Ten countries have set up their committees. However, 'given the numerous [remaining] obstacles to the free movement of persons and goods in Member States', the ECOWAS Secretariat opined in 2000 that 'the monitoring committees have failed in their set objectives' (ibid., p.21).

**Table 2: Implementation of ECOWAS Decisions Relevant to Population Movement**

	Abolition of visa and entry permit	ECOWAS travel certificate	Harmonised immigr./ emigr. forms	Motor vehicle insurance brown card	National committees
Benin	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Burkina Faso	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Cape Verde	Yes	No	No	N/A	No
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Gambia	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Ghana	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Guinea	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Guinea-Bissau	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Liberia	Yes	No	No	No	No
Mali	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Niger	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Nigeria	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Senegal	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Sierra Leone	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Togo	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Summary	Yes = 15 No = Nil	No = 7 Yes = 8	Yes = 0 No = 15	No = 12 Yes = 2	Yes = 10 No = 5

**Source:** ECOWAS Secretariat website, [www.sec.ecowas.int](http://www.sec.ecowas.int), latest update October 2002.

### Final Observations and Policy Recommendations

The migration of labour across West African borders will certainly continue for a long even amid the erection of restrictive state policies to curb it. One major feature of market globalization is skill exchange across the globe. It is unlikely that the majority of people in West Africa will be able to take advantage of the opportunities for skilled personnel to move relatively freely worldwide. This may be because of the cost of international travel, or even the ability to communicate with the other parts of the world. Of course there are other social and cultural factors to contend with. For indeed many reasons, the continuation of intra-regional migration is the likely option for the majority in West Africa who will not be lucky with globalization. This makes the need to review the policies and programmes on labour migration and population movements imperative.

Obstacles to labour migration are a key dimension of geography from above. The material well-being and economic security of West African labour migrants have not been effectively protected within the official framework of sub-regional integration programmes but through an endogenous migration culture. The responses of the latter to official neglect have often been criminalized and interpreted as causing 'disorder' in Nigeria and the sub-region.

In dealing with the question of labour migration in West Africa, a new conception is required — a conception that would bridge the human security of the migrants and the national security of receiving states. On the one hand, large numbers of migrant workers in a country place an inordinate burden on the state, adversely affecting its ability to promote human security for the people — whether national or migrants — and thus national security for the whole country. On the other hand, labour migrants do not really want to leave their countries of origin but feel compelled to because they find that the ‘push’ factors are so great that it leaves them with no option but to cross state borders.

The problems associated with international labour migration in West Africa are far too broad for a narrow strategy that cannot address the structural crisis of the sub-region, especially those conditions which propel labour to move from areas with low levels of socioeconomic development to areas with higher levels. Meanwhile, it is our observation that most of the time, domestic policies, national laws and political conditions run in conflict to the provisions of regional schemes like the ECOWAS. Reasons of ‘national security’ or protection for the domestic economy can indeed be advanced by any state, not only Nigeria, to restrict labour migration.

The competitive nature of the economies of the ECOWAS sub-region further compounds the problem. As Ralph Onwuka (1993:208) has rightly observed, ‘the conflict between national interests and community aspirations in the liberalization of movement of persons is generated by the competitive nature of the labour market’. Thus, while it is plausible to argue that most of the contemporary labour migration in West Africa remains outside the framework of the ECOWAS treaty and protocols, the continuous initiation and application of discriminating policies against non-citizens (including Community citizens) by the various ECOWAS countries, at best, ridicule the claims on the liberalization of population movement.

Research on the relationship between regional economic integration and intra-regional migration is still largely underdeveloped in Africa. But thoughts on the specific conditions of regional integration in West Africa in the 1970s viewed migration as a crucial aspect of the international division of labour. To the founders of ECOWAS, migration was the result of unfair distribution of income. Free movements of factors of production among integrating units were expected to optimize the utilization of resources, to accelerate economic growth and to foster development at the sub-regional level. The limitations of this microeconomic vision may explain, at least to some extent, why the actual implementation of the relevant ECOWAS provisions and protocols has dragged far behind the ideals.

In the microeconomic analysis, the ‘cost-benefit’ effects of migration are overemphasized, especially in the identification of the benefits expected to ac-

crue to both regions of emigration and immigration. Microeconomic analysts normally expect that the availability of cheap labour will lead to increased productivity in labour-importing countries, and that labour-exporting ones will benefit from sizeable remittance flows, increased domestic savings and/or investment, and lower unemployment. As was seen in this chapter, however, the absorptive capacity of export-oriented economies, their vulnerability in the face of trade-of-terms changes in a globalizing market, as well as changes in political situations, can seriously limit such expectations.

The ECOWAS treaty, migration rules and other related decisions leave out very fundamental issues that make the actualization of microeconomic prescriptions irrelevant to West Africa. Microeconomic analysts assume a state of 'perfection' of the labour market since the sellers of migrant labour are more than the buyers. But the latter have historically enjoyed state support — especially through contradictory immigration policies, which in every country tend to favour the national elites and employers who are the actual beneficiaries of the surplus value extracted from the labour migrants.

A rectification of the situation requires a broader understanding of the relationship between labour migration and regional integration in a less developed region. That this requirement should at the same time tame the rules of the market is no doubt an enormous task in West Africa, given the fact that recipient countries are those most permissive towards international capitalism, especially in the form of export-oriented economy whereby labour demands have to be initiated outside the ECOWAS sub-region.

The major migrant labour sending countries in West Africa are land-locked Sahelian countries with relatively low levels of economic and industrial production, higher levels of illiteracy and poor infrastructure. Worst still, their 'gift' of cheap labour has continued to ensure stagnation in their development, and their stagnation has in turn perpetuated the conditions for the reproduction of the pattern of unequal development in West Africa. In this way the inequality in the allocations of factors is produced and reproduced socially. Indeed, there is little or no hope for as long as the internal and external dynamics in West Africa are not disposed towards evolving appropriate means or mechanism for challenging and destroying the structure of dependency and underdevelopment in the sub-region.

Finally, we advocate an in-depth understanding of the effects of migration in terms of structural transformation. There is a need to examine the dynamics of dependence at both source-areas and destinations in West Africa to improve our theories, understanding, and integration policies. In other words, it is not enough to focus attention on regimes and institutional frameworks for migrant labour management and control without adequate consideration of other dimensions of the migratory phenomenon. Such dimensions include the specific

situations of migrant fishermen and pastoral workers, the difference and relationships between refugee flows and labour migration, the development and attitudes of public opinion, and the activities of corrupt security officials at the borders.

### Notes

1. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) officially recognizes a common West African citizenship for nationals of its member states. ECOWAS regulations and programmes on population movement are discussed in the last section of this chapter.
2. Senegal, where the foreign capital imposed a particular type of agriculture against all economic rationality, is a case in point. The selection of the groundnut-based option made the redistribution of population inevitable. Nevertheless, what was irrational from the point of view of the country's real development was perfectly rational from the point of view of the world market system (Amin 1974:87).
3. The use of the expression 'free trade areas' to refer to West African border economy is credited to John Igue of Université Nationale du Bénin (Cotonou) and Johnny Egg of the Department of Rural Economics at the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA, Montpellier, France).
4. Hashim and Meagher (1999:80-81) suggest 'a figure of about 110 billion FCFA in cross-border trade between northern Nigeria, Niger and Benin, and one could estimate as much as 150 billion FCFA, or US\$ 280 million, in 1995 for the whole of northern Nigeria's cross-border trading activities, including trade with Cameroon and Chad'.
5. An estimated 35,000 teachers, doctors, lawyers, accountants, engineers and other qualified personnel were actually exempted from expulsion (*West Africa*, 7 February 1983, p. 245).
6. According to available figures, reported crimes rose from 210,000 in 1981 to between 330,000 and 355,000 in 1985. See [www.carnelian-international.com/nigeria/Trends\\_in\\_Crime.htm](http://www.carnelian-international.com/nigeria/Trends_in_Crime.htm).
7. CIMA is the French acronym of the Inter-African Conference on Insurance Markets, which involves Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo in West Africa, as well as Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea.



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