



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COURSE CODE: INR 431

COURSE TITLE: International Relations of Francophone West Africa

**INR 431****International Relations of Francophone West Africa**

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Introduction

Welcome to INR 431: International Relations of Francophone West Africa. INR 431 is a two credit unit course for first semester. It is suitable for all students of International Relations. The course consists of five modules made up of sixteen units and a course guide. The course has been developed to explain in details the strategic phases and methods used by France to maintain and control her French speaking West Africa.

The course guide tells you briefly what the course is about, what course materials you will be using and to work your way through these materials. It suggests some general guidelines for the amount of time you are likely to spend on each study unit of the course. It also gives you some guidance on your Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA). You are advised to attend the tutorial classes to discuss the problem with tutorial facilitators at the study centre.

Course Aims

The aims of this course are to:

- i. examine the relationship between France and Francophone West Africa
- ii. explain the working of the policies of association and assimilation in French West Africa
- iii. analyse the impact of France's relations with French West Africa;
- iv. discuss the position of French West Africa in the economy of West Africa
- v. determine the role of French Commonwealth in the development of French West Africa.

Course Objectives

In order to properly examine the relationship between France and Francophone West Africa, it is necessary to take the concepts of imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism into consideration. French West Africa was a colonial enclave of France which has been a source of development to the latter. The relationship has been rarely equal. So we have to analyse the strategies and processes involved and identify the positions of the sub-continent vis-à-vis the position of France in the world economy. The study of the relations will assist in advancing our knowledge on the level of development in French West Africa.

Thus, the overall objectives of this course include are to:

- i. introduce the learner to the basis of International relations of French West Africa
- ii. examine the reasons for France's interest in West Africa

- iii. identify the impact of French activities on socio-political economy of French West Africa
- iv. analyse the post-colonial implication of French policies on development and cooperation among countries in West Africa
- v. discuss the extent to which the French Commonwealth could ensure cooperation in Africa

Working through the Course

To be successful in this course, you are advised to read and study the units, read recommended books, online sources and other materials provided by NOUN. Each unit contains self-assessment exercises, and you are required to submit assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of the course, there is a final examination.

Course Materials

- 1. Course guide
- 2. Study units
- 3. Textbooks
- 4. Assignment file
- 5. Presentation schedule.

Study Units

INR 431 contains sixteen study units, grouped in five modules and a study guide. The units are as follows:

Module 1 International Relations of French West Africa in the nineteenth century

- Unit 1 Assimilation and Association in French West Africa (FWA)
- Unit 2 France in West Africa in the nineteenth century
- Unit 3 Faidherbe's Second Governorship in French West Africa
- Unit 4 French Policy in Porto Novo

Module 2 Colonial International Relations of French West Africa I

- Unit 1 Colonial Economic Policy in French West Africa- The Cotton Example
- Unit 2 France and West Africa after World War II

Module 3 Colonial International Relations of French West Africa II

- Unit 1 French Capital and Political Economy of French West Africa
- Unit 2 Implication of Urbanisation and Education in French West Africa
- Unit 3 Development of Political Parties in French West Africa

Module 4 Post Independence International Relations of French West Africa I

- Unit 1 Security Issues in French West Africa
- Unit 2 Uranium Deal in Niger
- Unit 3 Formation of Regional Organisations in French West Africa
- Unit 4 Origin of CEAO and West African Economy
- Unit 5 Franc Zone and CEAO

Module 5 Post Independence International Relations of French West Africa II

- Unit 1 Origin of La Francophonie (French Commonwealth in West Africa)
- Unit 2 French Unionism in Francophone West Africa

The first module explains the evolution of France's interest in the relations of French West Africa in the nineteenth century. The second module analyses the interest of France in the political economy of French West Africa during the colonial period. The third module also gives you an insight into the circulation of French capital. The fourth module deals with the effect of the circulation of French capital and the fifth module exposes the neocolonial legacies of French rule and its impact on development and cooperation in West Africa.

Each module is preceded with a listing of the units contained in it, and a table of contents, an introduction, a list of objectives and the main content in turn precedes each unit, including Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs). At the end of each unit, you will find one or more Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA) which you are expected to work on and submit for marking.

Textbooks and References

At the end of each unit, you will find a list of relevant reference materials which you may yourself wish to consult as the need arises, even though I have made efforts to provide you with the most important information you need to pass this course. However, I would encourage you, as a fourth year student to cultivate the habit of consulting as many relevant materials as you are able to within the time available to you. In

particular, be sure to consult whatever material you are advised to consult before attempting any exercise.

Assessment

Two types of assessment are involved in the course: the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs), and the Tutor-Marked Assessment (TMA) questions. Your answers to the SAEs are not meant to be submitted, but they are also important since they give you an opportunity to assess your own understanding of course content. Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMA) on the other hand are to be carefully answered and kept in your assignment file for submission and marking. This will count for 30% of your total score in the course.

Tutor Marked Assignment

There is a tutor marked assignment at the end of every unit. You are required to attempt all the assignments. You will be assessed on all of them but the best four performances will be considered for assessment. Each of the four selected come from the areas covered in the course.

When you have completed each assignment, send it together with a tutor marked assignment form to your tutor. Make sure that each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline. If for any reason you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor before the assignment is due to discuss the possibility of an extension. Extension will not be granted after the due date unless under exceptional circumstances

Final Examination and Grading

The final examination for INR 431: International Relations of Francophone West Africa will take three hours and carry 70% of the total course grade. The examination questions will reflect the SAEs and TMAs that you have already worked on. I advise you to spend the time between your completion of the last unit and the examination revising the entire course. You will certainly find it helpful to also review both your SAEs and TMAs before the examination.

Course Marking Scheme

The following table sets out how the actual course marking is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Four assignments (the best four of all the assignments submitted for marking).	Four assignments, each marked out of 10%, but highest scoring three selected, thus totalling 30%
Final Examination	70% of overall course score.
Total	100% of course score.

Course Overview Presentation Scheme

Units	Title of Work	Week Activity	Assignment (End-of-Unit)
Course Guide			
Module 1	International Relations of French West Africa in the nineteenth century		
Unit 1	Assimilation and Association in French West Africa (FWA)	Week 1	Assignment 1
Unit 2	France in West Africa in the nineteenth century	Week 2	Assignment 1
Unit 3	Faidherbe's Second Governorship in French West Africa	Week 3	Assignment 1
Unit 4	French Policy in Porto Novo	Week 3	Assignment 1
Module 2	Colonial International Relations of French West Africa I		
Unit 1	Colonial Economic Policy in French West Africa- The Cotton Example	Week 4	Assignment 1
Unit 2	France and West Africa after World War II	Week 5	Assignment 1
Module 3	Colonial International Relations of French West Africa II		
Unit 1	French Capital and Political Economy of French West Africa	Week 6	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Implication of Urbanisation and Education in French West Africa	Week 7	Assignment 1
Unit 3	Development of Political Parties in French West Africa	Week 8	Assignment 1
Module 4	Post-Independence International Relations of French West Africa I		

Units	Title of Work	Week Activity	Assignment (End-of-Unit)
Unit 1	Security Issues in French West Africa	Week 9	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Uranium Deal in Niger	Week 10	Assignment 1
Unit 3	Formation of Regional Organisations in French West Africa	Week 11	Assignment 1
Unit 4	Origin of CEAO and West African Economy	Week 12	Assignment 1
Unit 5	Franc Zone and CEAO	Week 12	Assignment 1
Module 5	Post-Independence International Relations of French West Africa II		
Unit 1	Origin of La Francophonie (French Commonwealth in West Africa)	Week 13	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Trade Unionism in Francophone West Africa	Week 14	Assignment 1
	Revision	Week 15	
	Examination	Week 16	
	Total	16 Weeks	

How to Get the Most from this Course

In distance learning, the study units replace the lecturer. The advantage is that you can read and work through the study materials at your pace, and at a time and place that suits you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to a lecturer. Just as a lecturer might give you class exercise your study units provide exercises for you to do at appropriate times. Each of the study units follows the same format. The first item is introduction to the subject matter of the unit and how a particular unit is integrated with other units and the course as a whole. Next is a set of learning objectives. These objectives, let you know what you should be able to do, by the time you have completed the unit. You should use these objectives to guide your study. When you have finished the unit, you should go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If you make a habit of doing this, you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course.

Self-Assessment Exercises are interspersed throughout the units and answers are given at the end of objectives of the units and prepare you for the assignments and the examination. You should do each Self-Assessment Exercise as you come to it in the study units. Work through these when you have come to them.

Tutors and Tutorials

There are fifteen (15) hours of Tutorials provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of your tutor, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignment, keep a close watch on your progress. And on difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must send your tutor marked assignment well before the due date. They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible. Do not hesitate, to contact your tutor by telephone or e-mail if you need help. Contact your tutor if:

- i. You do not understand any part of the assigned readings
- ii. You have difficulty with the self-assessment exercise
- iii. You have a question or a problem with an assignment, with your tutor's comment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only way to have face to face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will gain a lot from participating actively.

Conclusion

This is a theory course but you will get the best out of it if you cultivate the habit of relating it to political issues in domestic and international arenas.

Summary

As a student of the International Relations Programme you can apply the benefits gained from this course in understanding your immediate context. As a Nigerian, you can appreciate this course because we are discussing French West Africa. In one way or the other, issues relating to the whole of West Africa will emerge. It will give you a thorough understanding of matters arising in the development and cooperation of the whole of West Africa. So also, you will have an added knowledge of how to determine if neocolonialism could be of help to salvage French West Africa from developmental crisis and indeed among other Third World countries. Indeed, the French policy is totally encompassing, while it is meant to ascertain development in France to compete within European countries, it is also exclusive to ensure that her former colonies especially French West Africa remain loyal.

I wish you success in the course.

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**MODULE 1 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF
FRENCH WEST AFRICA IN THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY**

- Unit 1 Assimilation and Association in French West Africa
(FWA)
- Unit 2 France in West Africa in the Nineteenth Century
- Unit 3 Faidherbe's Second Governorship in French West
Africa
- Unit 4 French Policy in Porto Novo

UNIT 1 ASSIMILATION AND ASSOCIATION IN FRENCH WEST AFRICA (FWA)

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Assimilation
 - 3.2 Assimilation in practice: Senegal example
 - 3.3 Association
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the study of International Relations of French West Africa, it is important to examine the position of colonial powers in FWA. France was the country responsible for colonialism in the sub-region. In this unit, we shall be examining the France's policy of assimilation and association which manifested in all spheres of its relations beyond West Africa. The policy was a form of security on the part of France to guarantee her influence and maintain her power amidst the other European countries. We shall discuss the definition and practice of assimilation and association in French West Africa.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, having examined the historical causes that brought about the assimilation and association policies, you should be able to:

- attempt the definition of assimilation and association;
- discuss the practice of assimilation in nineteenth century FWA; and
- identify the impact of assimilation and association on the traditional system in FWA

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Assimilation

Assimilation was a term used for French colonial policy. It started in the nineteenth century as an outreach programme of France. If you can recall, France and other countries in Europe before the nineteenth century wanted spheres of control to boost their status amongst each other in Europe. The assimilation implied that the

French imposed her language and culture on her areas of influence, which was quite different from that of the British.

The concept of assimilation emerged in France during the first French Empire, the French Revolution of 1789. It entailed that all men resident in the colonies irrespective of their colour or race were French citizens and they were bounded by the constitution. A careful examination of this rule should raise the question that; if residents in the colonies were to enjoy such privilege, why then the inequality that pervaded FWA in the 19th and 20th centuries. Following the emergence of Napoleon Bonaparte, the universal laws from which the policy of assimilation derived was amended in such a way that separate laws applied to the colonies while France operated with the universal law. The motive behind this was that if universal laws were to be applied continuously, there would be a time when the colonies might become powerful and challenge the existing order. Furthermore, it was perceived that the application of the universal laws would be a hindrance to the availability of cheap labour in the colonies. In practice, there was not much deviation from the universal laws of assimilation as the colony residents were accorded civil and political rights.

In the practice of assimilation, residents in FWA were considered French citizens. By implication they had the rights and duties of French citizens. By becoming French citizens, the culture and customs of France were adopted to the neglect of African values. Thus, the organisation of the society, economic development and other beliefs and perceptions were in line with French culture.

3.2 Assimilation in practice: Senegal example

Senegal was divided into four communes (*Quatre Communes*) namely – Rufisque, Dakar, Goree and St. Louis. The division of Senegal into communes was to experiment French rule of assimilation towards the end of nineteenth century. In each communes, apart from the political and economic ambitions of France to colonise, Africans were taught the French culture and language. In the process of assimilation, there was a kind of class distinction as the elite were treated in terms of education, culture and language while the rural masses were merely used for cheap labour. The elite became *originaires* as they were granted special status in the society. Example of such was Blaise Diagne-the first black deputy in the French assembly. Apart from culture and language, the practice of assimilation worked in the operation of the armies in FWA which France controlled.

3.3 Association

The policy of association was a colonial system that promoted the coexistence of preexisting political structures. The chiefs and the elite in Africa were recognized and some of their children were granted access to education in the colonial schools. The association model implied that French culture was classical for Africans to adapt. Hence, they were regarded as primitive, and the French political and economic ambitions were pursued vigorously. As a political programme, assimilation involved adoption of French culture, politics, social norms and beliefs by Africans. The FWA was seen as a medium for tutelage. More so, the mission of colonialism contained the assimilation model which in practice entailed cultural annihilation.

The policies of assimilation and association at one time or the other had enduring influence on France's activities in FWA till contemporary times. The African soldiers in FWA despite the incorporation of the profession in line with the French model suffered discrimination. The African military men were caught between two worlds which non seemed comfortable because they faced the problem of racial discrimination in their service for the protection of France and at the home front, the social structure of their society had been disrupted in such a way that they could not fit in. This problem was enormous in Mali and Senegal, despite the challenges, the soldiers participated in the reordering of FWA towards independence.

The Tirailleurs as the African soldiers were called in French faced the challenge of inequality especially in the conditions of service. It was only in 2001, after about six decades, that France admitted the fact that unequal pensions were paid to African soldiers when compared to French soldiers. This inequality was an extension of the assimilation and association models that, ultimately, valued the lives of French citizens than those of Africans.

La Francophonie

This was a concept used to organize French solidarity in the world. It was a concept binding together French speaking peoples in the world. The term was used as a neo-colonial concept to refer to the areas in the world where French civilization had been extended in terms of culture and language. Francophonie was perceived as an element of shared identity by which citizens of states with no indigenous national language could interact with each other. It was a way of demarcating French speaking areas from non-French speaking. *La francophonie* has become *Franete*, a term to project the French policy of assimilation in a modernized way.

The term emerged in the 1960s when Leopold Senghor of Senegal used it as a medium of outreach in FWA to seek assistance and cooperation after independence. The term was used to emphasize institutional and functional cooperation among French speaking West Africans. This was considering the fact that the newly acquired autonomy was given on the platform that FWA remain within the French community with limited self-government. Apart from Senghor, Hamani Diori of Niger among others saw *La Francophonie* as a source of development and a kind of north-south dialogue for the global community of French speaking countries. In contemporary times, it has become an international language movement led by governments and non-government agencies. The purpose was in line with the assimilation model to ensure continued usage and relevance of French language. The working of *La Francophonie* in West Africa was due to the initiative of Leopold Senghor who ascribed much importance to the use of French language as convenient for administration, education, thought and action.

Assimilation and Association in Practice

The plan that Africans would eventually be diverted from their culture to embrace of European culture was reflected in the French policy of assimilation. Thus, France saw West African colonies as business enterprises to be operated exclusively to the benefit of the French alone. However, assimilation policy reigned in FWA in the nineteenth century and eventually by 1905; the policy of association was adopted because of the growing British expansion in West Africa. The idea of absolute absorption in all spheres into the French mode of life was reduced to political and economic control. Assimilation was replaced with association, under the new policy; variations were applied to the administration of each territory. For instance, the variation reflected in the French use of traditional institutions in French North and West Africa. In the latter, traditional institutions were easily manipulated while it was not in the former because of the strong influence of religion on their institutions.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What do you understand by assimilation?

Reflection of Assimilation and Association Policies on Administration

Despite the changes in the use of either policies at one time or the other, FWA was organised as an absolutely centralised federation of territories. This was done in the twentieth century to maintain the monopoly of trade which they held, and it was also due to the

competition which they encountered from other European countries. This informed the need for aggressive penetration and consolidation of their presence to avert all forms of British interest. In 1898, an Anglo-French agreement was reached to ensure successful partition of areas of interest between Britain and France. This agreement on boundary demarcation brought about a centralised system on the part of France in West Africa. By the Anglo-French boundary agreement, Cote de Ivoire, Guinea and Dahomey were created as separate territories, while Sudan and Niger were placed under military control of France. Decisions were taken following French model in the colonies. Apart from the economic sector, there was concentration of political and military activities in Senegal. The military base was formed due to uprisings among Africans against French rule. A Governor-general was posted to Dakar which became the administrative base. The presence of the governor-general and French officials facilitated decisions on colonial government as stipulated from Paris.

The operation of the French National Assembly was also extended to Dakar. The governor-general was in charge of colonial legislations and decrees instructed from Paris. He was the only one charged with interpreting the decrees and maintained staff at Dakar that assisted in the management and coordination of the eight territories. There was a governor in each territory that acted in accordance with the instructions from Paris and Dakar. To assist the governor at each territorial level was the commandant de cercle (Resident Officer) and chef de sub-division (District Officer). These officials were also Frenchmen and they were strictly meant to oblige by the orders of the governor. The idea of the policy of assimilation was reduced in terms of absorption into the French culture while association was imbibed to tackle competitiveness from other European countries in order to maintain a strong hold on politics and economy.

The Traditional Chiefs and Local Government System

In practice, the elements in the policy of association were similar to those of the British indirect rule system, but due to France's African policy, it was difficult to absolutely apply association. Both policies were used depending on the issues and their repercussions. The use of centralised administration subjugated, to a large extent, the traditional institutions. For instance, the treaties signed towards the end of the nineteenth century in FWA had drastic effects on the institutions. An instance was King Toffa of Porto-Novo, who signed a treaty in 1883 to accept French protection in exchange for French control of custom duties on the export of palm-oil, import of alcohol, fire arms and textiles. By French protection, Toffa was guarded against rivals and threat from the Kingdom of Dahomey. The taxes

meant to be paid to Toffa in the local community were replaced with French taxes, courts superseded by French courts except on issues relating to minor customary affairs in other institutions within the traditional structure such as the prison and military garrison. The kingdom was divided into cantons (districts) headed by local chiefs who were directly responsible to French administration. By implication, the powers of Toffa were reduced by the content of the treaty. Eventually, the death of Toffa in 1908 was an advantage for French administration as his son – the successor was reduced to a superior chief rather than a king.

In other areas of Senegal, Sudan and Niger, due to the strong attachment, which the Islamic religion had with traditional institutions, French administration ignored the institutions and imposed commandants. The commandants mostly French supervised the affairs of the traditional chiefs. The chiefs merely served as the agents for the commandants. The chiefs helped in the collection of taxes and recruitment of labour. The chief was not allowed to function in the administration of local government; he was only allowed to be part of the council of chiefs. The council met once or twice annually to advise the commandant. The disadvantage this had specifically on the local communities was that the chiefs were strangers and were not necessarily indigenes of the communities. They selected chiefs perceived as loyal to serve them anywhere in FWA, once such a person could interpret. In the twentieth century, the loyal chiefs and other African elites were further exposed to French Lycees for education and to the colonial schools in Paris for University education.

The assimilation and association policies were interwoven but slightly different. Throughout the period of French rule in West Africa, this manifested in one way or the other. As Britain was only interested in the development of trade, that of FWA was all encompassing as it operated in such a way that it penetrated into the socio-cultural, political and economic framework in FWA till contemporary times. A manifestation of this was the idea of French Commonwealth (La Francophonie) that emerged from Africa.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The assimilation and association policies were interwoven but slightly different. Throughout the period of French rule in West Africa, this manifested in one way or the other. As Britain was only interested in the development of trade, that of FWA was all encompassing as it operated in such a way that it penetrated into the socio-cultural, political and economic framework in FWA till

contemporary times. A manifestation of this was the idea of French Commonwealth (La Francophonie) that emerged from Africa.

5.0 SUMMARY

The policy of assimilation absolutely disregarded the traditional political and economic systems. Initially, it was introduced into FWA as a principle that assumes that the French culture should be imposed and must be imbibed. Hence, French government in West Africa did not grant recognition to the traditional system. She believed in the use of force. However, the resistance displayed by Africans led to some temporary adjustments that relatively tended towards association policy. By the twentieth century, the policy of association was basically adopted and this subsequently manifested as France had always interested in the affairs of FWA even after decolonization.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Examine in details the assimilation and association policies in French West Africa.

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 2 FRANCE IN WEST AFRICA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The presence of French Personnel
 - 3.2 Senegal
 - 3.3 Faidherbe's Diplomacy
 - 3.4 Faidherbe's Second Governorship in French West Africa
 - 3.5 French Activities in Mellacourie 1865-1867
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the last unit, we studied the policies of assimilation and association in Senegal. This unit deals with the relationship between French personnel, French government and administrative practices adopted. It exposed the mode of French administration and the nature of legitimate commerce. Senegal became a focal point as it was nearer to the coast. It served as the base of French administration in FWA. Governor Faidherbe was in Senegal to protect the interest of France. The activities of Faidherbe are discussed in this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the reasons for the deputation of French personnel in FWA
- analyse the activities geared towards the protection of French interest
- identify the challenges faced by French personnel.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Presence of French Personnel

There was a general interest in Africa among the strong countries of the world in the bid to improve on their technological breakthroughs. To achieve the economic aims, there was the need for political

support. In the French settlements in Africa, the officers-in-charge were naval officers. So, the merchants from Africa and Paris who needed political support to achieve the economic aims went through the naval authorities. In the 1850s, the Governor in Senegal was the naval officer that carried out these responsibilities, serving as an intermediary for French government. Afterwards, these responsibilities were centrally placed at St. Louis under the supervision of the commander of the West African naval division.

The naval authorities were used to control the groundnuts producing areas between Senegal and Sierra-Leone. Groundnuts trade enhanced French administration as the Goree Island became a centre of authority to address difficulties associated with trade. The competition associated with this trade from the British and Germans enhanced the intensification of groundnuts plantation by French merchants. Areas extended to Futa Jallon and the upper Niger was developed as plantations.

3.2 Senegal

French activities in Senegal could be traced to the seventeenth century, but much of the activities became more emphasised in the nineteenth century. The intention of France at this period was to develop a colony with a population that would facilitate commercial agriculture. This aspiration was realised to a certain extent as there were infrastructures such as schools, hospitals and recreational facilities. These achievements rested on the gum trade. The gum was a raw material required for the development of printing industry.

The French government relied so much on the gum trade in Senegal. However, the extreme reliance could not be described as sustainable considering the fact that Egyptian gum was more classical and had better demand when compared to that of Senegal. The gum trade also declined because there were competing interests in the trading activities. In addition, the limit in the articles of trade did not provide opportunities for varieties. In exchange for gum, guinea cloths imported from India were sold to Africans. It is important to note that these trading activities were not carried out *per se* by French merchants. The merchandising cut across European merchants. The roles of the French government were just maintaining trade activities in such a way that there was a stronger revenue base. The position taken by French government to isolate itself from the real trade affected its revenue in decline. It was on this basis that French firms attempted to make use of African merchants from St. Louis to compete with European traders. This act aggravated the competition and it degenerated into conflicts.

Having realised this, successive French governments attempted to curb the increasing competition. Some of the French policies were stricter methods while others remained flexible. In the 1850s, an inter-departmental meeting was held in Paris consisting of the principal agents involved in African policy and a private merchant-Regis. The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate governmental controls on trade and eventually a decision was taken to maintain a free trade and relaxation of controls. Considering the fact that the competition could not enhance a sustainable economic policy, Governor Faidherbe emerged in 1854 with a new style of administration based on political development to properly tackle the competing traders.

Faidherbe's administration allocated the limited resources to some sectors. A new public works was established and investments were made on training interpreters and other French emissaries to enhance effective operation in the interior. French manpower was also given military training to add value to French prestige. The purpose of the recruitment of Senegalese battalion was due to the fact that French citizens lacked a good understanding of the language and probably, to reduce the cost of operation. These battalions were meant to protect Walo region, which had been under the influence of Moorish traders through inter-marriage. This act succeeded to an extent in asserting French authority in the interior.

However, some areas were not covered by this success especially in the left banks of Senegal. This was due to the growing merchandise and influence of an African – Al-Hajj Omar whose authority challenged the French army at Senoudebou. Being from Muslim background, he regarded the activities of the French as improper and colonial. He encouraged the local citizens to join in revolting against the unbelievers (that is the French).

3.3 Faidherbe's Diplomacy

The intent underlying French personnel development by Faidherbe's military policy was to forcefully take control of the territories within its jurisdiction. This formed the basis of the government policy in Senegal. However, the strong opposition displayed by Al-Hajj Omar required some diplomatic acts which were subsequently adopted to reach a truce. To Faidherbe, his views implied a total war, but in the light of the aims of French-African policy, the use of force did not appear as realistic. To achieve the aims in France's foreign policy, the sovereignty of Omar's territories was recognized in order to improve commercial relations. Eventually, by 1859, a truce for negotiation was reached with Omar in order to demarcate the spheres of influence of France in Senegal.

Beyond Al-Hajj Omar's authority and the challenge it posed for French government, Faidherbe moved southwards along the coast and inland towards the Niger. The aim was to take control of Goree and its dependencies, in order to support French traders at the rivers. The support was implemented by the establishment of forts at Joal in Sine and Kaolak in Saloum. In other regions, the government adopted the use of force to establish its control. Faidherbe's governorship ended in 1861 and the tenure ended by succeeding in demarcating and sketching out the possibilities for further expansion at the inland and the coast. Faidherbe's policy of maintaining a stronghold of the territories was due to the rivalries from the British. The reasons for British interest in the French controlled areas were the suspicion by the former that the latter was half-hearted and it's persistent in the practice of slave trade on land and sea. This issue was one of the bases of Anglo-French rivalry in West Africa.

3.4 Faidherbe's Second Governorship in French West Africa

Extension of French Influence in Niger

In the first unit, we have seen that Faidherbe was one of the French governors posted to West Africa to implement France's foreign policy in the nineteenth century. His second coming in 1863 lasted for about two years. In spite of the challenges of resistance among West Africans and the increasing competition from other European nations, he was convinced that there could be improved French political authority in West Africa.

The first action taken by Faidherbe was to co-opt Lieutenant Mage (one of the French naval officers) who already had experience in Senegal to lead a mission to Niger. The first instruction given to Mage was to follow Mungo Park's route to Bussa and emerge in the Bight of Benin. This instruction was given to research into the possibility of developing water borne trade along the River Niger. However, this initiative was challenged by Al-Hajj Omar and Tokolor Empire. By Mage's arrival to Tokolor Empire, it was discovered that Omar was dead and his son Ahmadu was the ruler. Ahmadu insisted on the promise from French for the provision of more weapons to prevent invasion of the empire. Ahmadu agreed to reach some compromise. Ahmadu insisted that French traders should pay import duty of ten percent. This was the condition which Mage had to take back to St. Louis in 1866 as a treaty of peace and commerce. These conditions were not impressive to the French government in St. Louis (Senegal). At this time, Faidherbe had left as the governor and replaced by Laprade. The plans of Faidherbe to extend French sphere of political influence to the Niger could not be

achieved as Laprade respected the sovereignty of Ahmadu in the Tokolor Empire.

3.5 French Activities in Mellacourie 1865-1867

Faidherbe's French policy in West Africa had much interest in River Nunez to ensure French protection of its traders. A military post was established and a political resident was stationed at Pongos. All these steps aided Faidherbe's second governorship. The fact that instructions to carry out such steps came late and the French government could not finance such except from local revenue did not make the steps materialise by the expiration of Faidherbe's second tenure. Pinet-Laprade (Faidherbe's successor) succeeded in signing treaties of protection with the traditional rulers in the two rivers. It was easy for French influence in the rivers, because there were less competition and British trade was insignificant. It was only few traders that reacted to French occupation of the River.

Mellacourie trade

The 1860s was a period of commercial growth with the activities caravans from Futa Jallon. This facilitated increased export of groundnuts. French traders were very much active in this area because there was less rivalry. The Gorce house of Gaspard Deves established factories under the supervision Felix Dalmos. The factories were affiliated to Bordeaux firm of Chaumel and Durin. To prevent encroachment, the French traders demand for a security system in the region. This idea was discouraged by Faidherbe to avoid the wrath of Sierra Leonean traders, because it implied political encroachment.

As trade in the region thrived, there came internal conflicts among the citizens that could not be solved by internal measures. The fact that French merchants carried some party in the conflicts further added to losses on the part of the merchants as there were looting of goods from the ships and shores. At this point, both French and British merchants sought for external intervention. Help was sought from the British colonial government in Britain through the acting governor Chamberlain, but the conditions of assistance implied more taxation on the traders and eventually led to a French vice-consul in Freetown and a naval officer intervened for French advantage to avoid British fiscal policy. The danger of British tariff was tackled as the intervention was diplomatically withdrawn.

France gradually asserted its authority and by February 1867, a military post was established with twenty-five men at the south bank of Mellacourie. To the government in France, the control of Mellacourie was not much esteemed. But, to Deves, Braouezec and

the naval officers it was an achievement which they revered. The French government less recognition of Mellacourie was due to the perception that it was less profitable. They preferred French control of Gambia and they desired for such change.

4.0 CONCLUSION

At a point in Faidherbe's first governorship tenure, the challenges faced by French administration led to the adoption of some of the principles of association. The main aim was to ensure the loyalty of African chiefs. But, it could not be achieved by force, especially in the Muslim dominated areas of FWA because; Europeans were regarded as infidels who should not be allowed to take control. The administration had easy access to Senegal but the attempt to penetrate into the hinterland was difficult. The whole purpose of scrambling and struggling to access the hinterland was the availability of groundnuts.

5.0 SUMMARY

We could hold the position that groundnuts trade and the need to maintain exclusivity was the main reason for France's deputation of personnel to FWA. Apart from that, the increasing influence of Britain in West Africa remained a threat to France. Governor Faidherbe's presence strongly maintained the exclusivity of France in its territories in West Africa. To Africans, there were series of challenges; from Africans especially resistance to French policies and from rival European countries especially Britain and Germany. The administration had to court French merchants and put them into consideration in policy making to ensure that other European countries were not allowed access.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Examine the challenges in Governor Faidherbe's Administration in French West Africa

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 3 FRENCH POLICY IN PORTO-NOVO IN THE 1860S

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 French Policy in Porto Novo
 - 3.2 Glover in Porto Novo
 - 3.3 The Second French presence in the 1880s
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Of the towns and communities in FWA, Porto Novo was a prominent centre of trade that attracted the businessmen and entrepreneurs. Apart from the advantage of being a coastal area, it linked to Lagos and Ijebu ode (in Nigeria). Before, French colonisation, a French merchant-Victor Regis had been engrossed with the opportunities of trade in the area. Hence, French government had to collaborate with these merchant groups to achieve her vision in FWA. The need to further assert French influence was aggravated by British expansion to Dahomey because of its proximity to Lagos. This will be discussed in this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the reasons for French interest in West Africa
- identity issues in the clash of British and French interest in West Africa
- analyse factors that enable French success in Porto Novo

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 French Policy in Porto-Novo in the 1860s

In the 1840s, Victor Regis, a prominent French merchant was already established around the Volta and Niger Rivers; they acted as direct agents of the Emperor, flying the French National Flag at the trading forts. The palm-oil in Dahomey was a major article of trade and interest. An annual payment of 15,000 Francs was paid to the king of Dahomey and similar amounts to the chiefs. This trading

process enriched Regis to the extent of establishing factories in small areas in the West of Whydah (Popo), Lagos, and Palma. That of Lagos was due to the collaboration with Kosoko at Epe who was envisaged to be relevant in getting access to the palm-oil trade in Ijebu-Ode. Since Kosoko already had conflicts with the British government, it was easy for Regis to seek his cooperation. However, there was lack of security as Britain also continued its aim of expansion in Ijebu-Ode.

Regis at the Centre of French Policy

The British expansion was regarded as a threat to French interest in Dahomey. To avert this, Regis suggested that French government should affirm her interest in Dahomey by appointing an honorary consular officer; and an agent to his company Marius Dauma. This implied that Regis would be officially recognised and subsequently to ensure absolute French control in Porto-Novo. The French aims which were implemented by Regis had an added advantage when Soji – the King of Dahomey sought assistance from France because he did not trust the British. Thus, Soji's alliance with France encouraged absolute French occupation.

Much as Regis assisted the French government in gaining absolute control of Porto-Novo, he had no establishments there, rather he partnered with Brazilian merchant – Carvalho. To authenticate the French policy, Marius Dauma (Consular office) sought the protection of Napoleon III in France to own some land. This afforded Regis the opportunities to open a factory for trade in palm-oil to pay him 1,600 pastries a year. To Soji, the agreement was to allow free passage of imports and exports. This success on the part of Regis in Porto-Novo was aimed at extending French control to Yorubaland. In spite of this success, there was difficulty of access to Porto-Novo from the sea. Vessels of about ten feet above water could route the town by way of Lagos Bar and this route was under British control. Not only the control, but there was subjection to high tariffs.

Both British and French vigorously pursued colonial interests around Porto-Novo, Ijebu and Lagos. Further British encroachment on French interests in these areas was obvious in the bombardment of Epe, and the Sierra Leonean community in the area sought British protectorate. It seemed that the agreement earlier made with Soji was no longer effective as Lagos tariffs were proclaimed and McCoskry (British) was heading for Porto-Novo in a steam boat. In other words, in spite of the success recorded by Regis and collaborating agents to absolutely control Porto-Novo, the absoluteness was not real as British protection in some surrounding areas was a threat,

more so that British had already conquered Ijebu and to some extent Epe. This was contrary to the aims of Regis to tactically control Yorubaland. French authority remained liable as no outlet to the sea was secured. It faced hostility from British control.

3.2 Glover in Porto-Novo

Following the death of Soji in 1864, France's problem in Porto-Novo worsened. Marius Dauma tried to protect French interest, but since Carvalho (Brazilian merchant) had his own interest, the succeeding King was convinced to disrespect the French. This act drastically reduced French power in Porto-Novo. The new king – Mepon was unwilling to ally with the French and this was an opportunity for Britain. Glover (British official in Lagos) found this act as desirable to Britain interest visited Porto-Novo in 1865 to seek the support of king Mepon. The intent of Glover was to appoint a British Resident in Porto-Novo, when the French power was already weak. Secondly, Glover ordered the blockade of Cotonou. It seemed at this point that the French government was less reactionary about Mepo's activities with Glover. However, the demand to appoint a British resident in Porto-Novo was rejected by Mepon because of the blockade of Cotonou.

Just as French was advised to remain passive, Glover was also advised to do so when he ordered bombardment of Porto-Novo. Therefore, Glover reluctantly sailed back to Lagos but requested for the extension of British control in Porto-Novo on the grounds that Mepon was incapable of maintaining peace and stability. Regis and other French agents vigorously made efforts to thwart the activities of Britain to gain political control, which French actually lacked. Regis maintained the economic power. The consular appointments were held on to by French to ensure the economic relations.

The conflicts between the French and West Africans in Cotonou were relatively solved as they renewed interests. The French Vice-consul in Cotonou – Binnaud signed a treaty with Yavogan of Whydah. This treaty made Cotonou to come directly under French control, but under Dahomean administration.

3.3 The Second French Presence in Porto-Novo in the 1880s

There was a continued threat to French West African trade on the Slave Coast, especially from the British. Due to the increased duties placed by Lagos, Baresté's tenure as the Consul adopted a plan to forestall the unequal trade relationships. When Baresté's visited Lagos in 1881, it was confirmed that Alfred Moloney (the acting administrator in Lagos) was concluding arrangements to collect £25,000 a per annum on duties at Keteneou. One hundred gallons of

French rum was exchanged for one hundred gallons of palm-oil.

Thus, Baresté's calculation revealed the imposition of Lagos duty increased the cost of buying oil at Porto-Novo by one third. To avert this, Baresté recommended a first attempt; the acceptance of the protectorate which the traditional ruler had offered d'Elteil (ex-consul) two years before. Secondly; with the military occupation of Cotonou, there was a more obvious physical problem which was that of landing goods at the port. There were no enduring facilities to accomplish this and the canoe men refused to work because of the danger of being attacked by Sharks. A holistic plan evolved by Baresté was to cut a navigation channel from the coast into the lagoon to enable motor-launches to ply directly to Porto Novo. Thus, the second plan was the military occupation of Cotonou was seen as a last resort; so as to remove British threat. It is important to emphasise that despite all the plans by French to ensure absolute control, it faced competition and threat from Britain. Britain was asserting its supremacy, which the French found it difficult to accede to. Much of the defense on the part of the French was fiscal in the sense that they guaranteed some forms of favouritism for the French merchants in the commercial relations with West Africans.

The final agreement was a Presidential decree which was drafted and signed in 1882 under the supervision of the Ministry of Marine. The basis of the treaty was that France should hold on to Porto-Novo town as its protectorate and area of influence to avoid conflicts with Britain. With the assistance of French naval officers, Dilecca hoisted the French flag as instructed. The flag was hoisted through several channels in Agege (a water route) which led to Cotonou without passing the British post at Ketenou.

French Authority in Porto Novo

The success of Dilecca in representing French interest in Porto Novo town made him feature at the centre of authority. Afterwards, there were challenges that ravaged the exercise of French authority. The first problem was the enforcement of French authority within Porto Novo. The basis of the problem was that the success of the authority depended on the collaboration of Tofa. French succeeded in persuading Tofa to sign a new treaty to regulate the organisation of their protectorate. To protect French interest, part of the treaty was that Tofa should not exercise authority of foreigners without the consent of French government. This position of the French government was due to the changes which Tofa made to the local-customs tariff on the arrival of German trading houses. In addition, Tofa was not pleased with French agreement of the British occupation of Ketenou, which he believed it had to stop. Thus, the

treaty was meant to pacify him on the aforementioned issues. To the French, it wanted to stop any form of aggression from Britain or other Europeans, in order to protect its economic control.

The Anglo-French rivalry was a second problem which persisted. Despite the fact that there were some agreements for demarcation which left French to control Porto Novo town and British to Ketenou, there were practical conflicts in the usage of the routes which belonged to French. Specifically in 1884, a French naval officer traveling with marines from Cotonou to Porto Novo was stopped by British Hausa troops at Agege. Since the French flag was on the water way, the troops perpetrated their acts by hauling French flag and hoisting British flag. This was another act of breach that could further aggravate conflicts. This act on the part of the British was meant to deny French access to the sea and the routes to Dahomey and Abeokuta. This act by British and French could be described as a real scramble for West Africa which also formed the basis of the Berlin Conference of 1884/85.

4.0 CONCLUSION

There was an obvious Anglo-French rivalry in Porto Novo. Britain really nursed the ambition to operate and own Porto Novo because of its proximity to Lagos, but each of the European nations that Britain and France thwarted each other's effort at a point in time. There were series of alliance and disengagement with the traditional authorities. It was really a politics of scramble.

5.0 SUMMARY

Both the first and second presence of France in Porto Novo was full of rivalry with British interest. It was difficult to ban each other as there was forced mutual acceptance of each other's interest. Africans were at the receiving end, as the traditional political institutions could not independently take decisions in terms of economic transactions. In spite of the rivalry with the Britain, France succeeded in engaging Tofa to sign a new treaty to govern the protectorate; this was done to prevent him from collaborating with other European firms. But the Anglo-French rivalry persisted and this was one of the causes for the 1884/1884 Berlin Conference.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

"The Anglo-French rivalry deterred the success of French policy in Porto Novo." Do you agree?

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**MODULE 2 COLONIAL INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS OF FRENCH WEST
AFRICA I**

Unit 1 Colonial Economic Policy in West Africa- The Cotton
Example

Unit 2 France and West Africa after World War II

UNIT 1 COLONIAL ECONOMIC POLICY IN WEST AFRICA – THE COTTON EXAMPLE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Colonial Economic Policy in FWA – The Cotton Example
 - 3.2 Impact of Colonial Cotton Trade
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the last module, we discussed the method used by France to entrench her own form of legitimate commerce in FWA. At the onset, it made use of the policy of assimilation which did not really work, until the policy of association was adopted. This module discusses the international relations of French West Africa as regards the colonial period in the twentieth century. During this period, there was absolute control of the political economy of FWA. The administration was more institutionalized to favour import and export exclusive to France. In this unit, we shall be discussing the colonial economic policy and administration using cotton as

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the reasons for colonial interest in French West Africa;
- discuss the policies and methods; and
- analyse the effects and consequences of the policies.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1. Colonial Economic Policy in FWA – The Cotton Example

Before the advent of Europeans in West Africa, there were indigenous forms of production and distribution. Of particular prominence was cotton production and handicraft textile industry.

With the emergence of Europeans, especially the French, European technology was imported to channel the industry for export. The first part of the influence was the introduction of new seedlings to improve agricultural output, practicing and demonstrating different agricultural techniques. To facilitate export was the construction of railway and cotton ginneries. All these were scientific technologies channeled towards export. Much of the French interest was on cotton production and ginning, the local handcraft textile industry was neglected.

In the late 1890s, Lt. Gov. Louis de Trentinian sponsored scientific and commercial missions to survey the economic opportunities abound in cotton cultivation. The outcome of the survey informed the decision to pass raw cotton to Senegal River to assist in the expansion of French textile industries. As the policy of developing cotton for export and importing finished goods increased, cotton business merchants at the threshold of the twentieth century met to form – Industrie Cotonniere Francais which transformed into another name – Association Cotonniere Coloniale (ACC) in 1903. The ACC received direct subventions from government, it was not allowed to market cotton, but it functioned to aid the use of seed and appropriate technology to maintain the ginneries, all to facilitate export. The first involvement of ACC was the distribution of 20,000 kilograms of imported cotton seeds to village chiefs in the cotton growing villages. A second step further which was collaboration on of ACC and Politique Cotonniere was the teaching and persuasion of cotton farmers to use modern methods to avoid inferior output. This was so because of the type of textile it was meant to produce in France. However, the results were not promising because it was during the dry season and termites and pests bombarded the cotton plantations. To avert the situation, more attention was drawn to careful seed selection and local varieties that could satisfy the spinners at the metropolis and at the same time adapt to African conditions. A second measure is to encourage peasant producers to produce more by paying higher prices for lower yields, to serve as compensation. The uncompromising peasants that were defiant to the second option were forces to grow cotton.

Another policy in the colonial cotton interest was the policy made by the senior colonial administration against the establishment of large concession companies. The colonial administration did this in FWA to avoid direct exploitation of the peasants growing the cotton. This was implemented by fixing prices of 30cm per kilogram to raise the price in such a way that it was useless for export marketing. In spite of the protection, which the colonial administration used to seek the loyalty of cotton growers that were Africans, the farmers preferred to

sell to the domestic market to encourage indigenous textile production. Contrary to the guideline given to the ACC, it deviated by distributing tons of American cotton seeds and established a cotton ginnery at Segu. Apart from ACC's involvement, it advocated large scale irrigation to assist the survival of American cotton seeds earlier distributed. Since the colonial government did not want direct involvement of French merchants, the ACC influence the market by buying cotton through a paper company. At this point, the colonial government advocated for a *free market* to ensure that producers had the freewill to sell to whoever they wanted. By 1915, the politics of cotton trade stopped as the ACC personnel were prepared for the First World War and they could not continue to make cotton purchases from Africans. These change affected the rate of importation of finished cloths from France, as all processes pertaining to production declined. The decline was added advantage for the indigenous textile industries as the cotton farmers diverted sales to indigenous manufacturers.

3.2 Impact of Colonial Cotton Trade in FWA

In 1918, Governor Charles Brunet of Western Sudan explained that the basic problem of Politique Cotonniere was the strong existence of the local handicraft textile industry. The cotton farmers were accused of selling their product for regional and local textile industries to produce cloth. Thus indigenous textile merchants were seen as rivals to European traders. Despite the rivalry, the effect of French technology had already reflected in the indigenous textile industry. The local manufacturers were faced with the challenge of inadequate manpower, as the slaves working to assist in factories left their masters and established themselves as entrepreneurs and craftsmen. At a point, an indigo-dyeing industry developed in Niger around 1906 and this was an opportunity for those who could not establish to work as an indigenous factory worker.

Another impact of Colonial cotton trade was the interest of women in preserving exotic cotton for indigenous use. Women preferred the output of the American cotton seeds and they hoarded it while spinning. This to the colonial government was not profitable. The president of ACC saw this act as part of the sabotage which contributed to the failure of French colonial government in managing cotton trade. Much as the ACC felt that the activities of Africans led to the failure, the fact that the manner of the trade appeared exploitative made Africans resort to a means of maximizing output for benefit because as labourers they work for the colonial government.

Both the French colonial government and ACC influenced the

supply of cotton for industrial uses in the metropolis. They influenced the type of cotton produced by introducing new varieties of cotton seeds, through hybridization with local cotton. In the processes of production, new technologies diffused were a sort of training for indigenous men as it was adapted to the operation of indigenous textile industries. On the other hand, the diffusion of European management and technology distorted the social relations of productions as they took interest in the allocation of labour. The interest in allocation of labour was due to the huge investment already made in providing infrastructure such as railways. But in the end, the institution of slavery which had been for centuries was itself a change which the colonial cotton trade intends to build upon. Therefore, indigenous men and women involved as labourers saw the colonial cotton trade as means to redefine socio-economic structure of inequality that ravaged FWA.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Association Cotonniere Coloniale (ACC) was purely an economic plan by the French government to ensure that cotton was regulated and channeled to France to serve as raw materials for production of garments. Since it was an industry that was cherished and widely practiced in FWA, it was secretly hoarded by Africans to serve indigenous textile industries. Apart from hoarding cotton, the imported technologies were adapted to improve indigenous production.

5.0 SUMMARY

In the pre-colonial period, the involvement of women in indigenous textile production was a disadvantage to the operation of the European economy. The French government was grossly involved in the administration of cotton planting to the stage of exportation. It prevented French firms from direct trade with the peasants. At a point in time, it was discovered by the ACC that lack of access to the peasants was hindering the terms of trade and supply. By direct relations with the peasants, the ACC took interest in influencing allocation of labour among other issues to ensure maximum output from the plantations, but in spite of the interventionists strategies, the involvement of indigenous labour particularly women diverted the exotic cotton to serve the indigenous textile industries.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

“The colonial economic policy on cotton production was a futile effort“. Comment.

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UNIT 2 FRANCE AND WEST AFRICA AFTER WORLD WAR II

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 France and West Africa after World War II
 - 3.2 Characteristics of France's African Policy
 - 3.3 France's Economic Relations with FWA
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

France's relations with West Africa were further consolidated by the usefulness of French Africa during the World Wars. After World War II, France held on to the belief that its colonies were meant to be treated as everlasting companion. New strategies and structures were planned to foster France's exclusivity in FWA. In this unit, we shall be examining the ensuing form of relations and cooperation, particularly France's economic relations with West Africa.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify France's African Policy;
- explain the forms of bilateral cooperation; and
- discuss issues of France's relations with West Africa

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 France and West Africa World War II

It dawned on France after the World War II that its territories in Africa needed independence, but the kind which it thought was different from that of other Europeans. France's intent was to end formal control and retain an informal control. Following the assumption of power of President Charles de Gaulle in the Fifth French Republic, there was the domestic policy of making a new France. He believed that African territories would be of immense help in this respect. Thus, he initiated the *communaute franco-africaine* which meant granting autonomy to African states and retain control over issues of defence, monetary, foreign affairs and

strategic mineral policies. The *communaute* programme was presented in the 1958 September Referendum and immediately independence was discouraged, but eventually, independence was granted. Most French West African states accepted the conditions for independence, except Guinea under the leadership of Sekou Toure. Guinea's exception was based on the fact that the people preferred 'poverty in liberty to wealth in slavery.'

Following the independence of West Africa states, there came bilateral agreements on issues relating to defence, security, foreign policy, and diplomatic consultation among others. The bilateral agreements were referred to as *Accord de cooperation* to serve as a model of the fifth Republic. It was used to institutionalize France in West Africa by predominating in all spheres. The *Accord de cooperation* was held on to and it was the watchword of France's African policy. Due to continued agitations, the accord was revised in the mid 1970s to contain some form of liberty. However, some African elites had already found solace in the operation of the previous accord before revision. The elites were already used to the protection offered by France and they found it less easy to adapt.

3.2 Characteristics of France's African Policy

France's African policy has the features of exclusivity, stability and continuity. French West Africa belonged to the French traditional sphere by virtue of historical linkage. France's relation with Africa has been exclusive in the sense that it guarded against the influence of other Europeans in FWA. After independence, under the guise of cooperation, France subjected its territories in West Africa to neocolonialism. It remained a way of ensuring continuity of France's interest. From the onset, the nature of French relations made the post-colonial relations appear as friendly and familial. Thus, there was a common perception of values which did not appear acceptable to other West African countries. This system reduced the rate of internal conflicts among West Africans and FWA appeared as an extension that has been integrated.

The implementation of French policy in Africa through the 1980s has been vested in the sustenance of formal and informal institutions. In the 1980s, President Mitterand of France who had a socialist orientation attempted to deviate from French neo-colonialism, but it was difficult because France had strategic dependence on West Africa for the supply of minerals. He had to adjust and manage the existing cooperation. Each President France maintains a close relationship with Head of states in FWA. The Head of states also visited France to consolidate the accords agreed upon at one time or the other.

In the process of implementing the accords, several ad-hoc conferences were held at the professional and diplomatic levels involving French and African ministers of various sectors. These meetings were to ensure that the domestic policies of FWA were monitored to prevent external influence and maintain French interest. The principle of non-alignment in the European continent made France a friend of the third world. This constituted a base in which France was able to build political and economic relations with countries outside her traditional jurisdiction. Till contemporary time, France has remained a powerful force in FWA and some other countries in Africa. This link is not common when compared to other European countries.

3.3 France's Economic Relations with French West Africa

France held on to Africa for cultural reasons to maintain the extension of its language and culture. It was argued that France really gained economically from its relations with Africa, but a point to note is that there was an established *strategic dependence*. France could not exist without African partnership because it needed regular supply of strategic minerals to maintain its power and influence in Europe. Apart from acquisition of strategic minerals and raw materials, Africa is a market for French manufactured goods, an outlet for capital investment and a prop to her currency.

Strategic Raw Materials

Immediately after independence was granted to African countries, the question of assured access to raw materials to ensure sustainability of the French economy became a bane to maintain the high technology industries. By 1980s, there was total dependence on Africa particularly, West Africa. France depended on Niger for Uranium, to the tune of about 100%. She depended on Guinea for Bauxite at about 90%, Phosphate in Togo at about 60%. The post-independence Accord de cooperation included defence agreement as to what France would offer to Africa while FWA would make sure there is exclusivity to France in the supply oil, natural gas, lithium, beryllium, thorium and helium. Apart from the exclusivity, France is largely involved in the provision of thermo nuclear energy to the world. To prevent FWA's diversification of supplies, France offered to provide security and defence to avoid threats from within and outside Africa.

Trade

France retained the trade system as it was under colonialism. The system remained as it were in the *Companie francaise de l' Afrique occidentale (CFAO)* and *Societe Commericale de l'ouest afriain (SCOA)*. In contemporary times, the nature of trading activities is in

line with the rules of the *economie de traite*. This rule implied that FWA is restricted to the function of producing commodities and France in the position of determining manufactured goods to be exported to Africa. The rules applied to only few countries in Africa because France wanted exclusivity and she preferred absolute non-competition from other European countries. The few countries in FWA are Cote de Ivoire, Niger and Senegal. As at 1992, these countries formed about 25% of France's imports from Africa and 26% of exports to the continent. To France, this kind of trade relations is in line with her foreign policy towards Africa as the nations of interest were exclusive to her.

Aid and Monetary Dependency

As part of the issues in the Accord de cooperation, the French official development Assistance (ODA) was set up to function for dissemination of aids in form of finances. Year by year, the quantity of aid is decreasing, as at 1991, the aid to Africa was FF18, 300 million and by 1995 it was FF 7,730 million. However, much as there are steady decreases, France tailored the aids in such a way that there is exclusivity in the technical and cultural cooperation. In other words, France made sure that in spite of the fact that it decreases aids, its culture, language and human capital development are still maintained in their neo-colonial FWA.

On the issue of monetary dependency, France has taken it as a responsibility to defend her interest by formulating and implementing monetary policies of FWA. France controls the money supply that is, the circulation of currencies, the monetary and financial regulations, the banking operations, credit allocation and the budgetary and economic policies. This position of France could be described to have subjugated the position of FWA, such that in cases of devaluation no consultations are made to African decision makers. Thus, the CFA franc has ever remained dependent on French Franc. The economies of FWA are absolutely determined since there is no monetary autonomy.

4.0 CONCLUSION

To maintain unrivalled position among European countries, France had to hold on to Africa particularly, FWA. This kind of renewed relationship could be likened to the policy of association. FWA became a strategic base to ensure continuity in the existence of France. Generally, Africa had indispensable raw materials such as mineral deposits. These and others informed the decision to grant independence that continued to entrench neo-colonialism. Hence, the kind of autonomy granted was only partly political; the renewed France's relation still controlled the economy. In subsequent units,

you will see how this unfolds.

5.0 SUMMARY

After World War II, France maintained its glory of colonial power to strategically depend on FWA. This reflected in the bilateral arrangement and cooperation. France depended on mineral resources to maintain her nuclear industry. In return, France promised to provide defence and security services. But the problem is to what extent have the cooperation assisted in the development of FWA. The Accord de cooperation provided the framework for this form of relations.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Analyse the reasons for France's strategic dependence on French West Africa.

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**MODULE 3 COLONIAL INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS OF FRENCH WEST
AFRICA II**

Unit 1 French Capital and Political Economy of French West
Africa

Unit 2 Implications of Urbanisation and Education in FWA

Unit 3 Development of Political Parties in FWA

UNIT 1 • FRENCH CAPITAL AND POLITICAL ECONOMY OF FRENCH WEST AFRICA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 French Content
 - 3.2 Repercussions of French Capital in FWA
 - 3.3 Federation in FWA
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This module is the second part of the last module. Its focus is to examine the relations in FWA in the second part of twentieth century especially after the World War II and the early post colonial period. We are to analyse the nature and role of French capital and how it determined the relations with France. Indirectly, after the colonial period, the French still practiced the policy of association in furtherance of maintaining her stability among European countries and exclusivity for supply of natural resources from its former colonies. This is a new form of neo-colonialism. Subsequently, we shall examine the influence of this on the development of political parties and other issues.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the effects of French capital in French West Africa
- analyse the effects of French capital on Federalism

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 French Capital and Political Economy of French West Africa

At this stage, you should have observed that there was general change in the Third World after the World War II. Most of the infrastructural developments were financed from capital accrued from the colonial powers. The finances came in through grants from France. From 1947 to 1956, such grants totaled 170 billion CFA francs. This financial relationship and dependence on the part of

French West Africa (FWA) has been so complex that even after independence in FWA, policies could hardly be made without reference to French government. Even among the governments in FWA, this dependence was inevitable in state expenditures, as ordinary expenses were drawn from French grants. This kind of relationship cannot but have its repercussions.

3.2 Repercussions of French Capital in FWA

This form of relationship created more class difference among Africans, as the few who had the opportunity to participate in governance were the only ones that benefited. The resultant effect of such representation was that Africans specifically the masses hardly participated in planning that could enhance meaningful development. Besides, the French firms and multinationals had made huge profits from such relationship. In other words, economic planning had been done without consultations with Africans. Much of the outcome of economic plans could hardly be of benefit to African masses as they were planned for the elites.

In French West Africa, to reduce the rate of expenditure on manpower, most of the economic policies favoured the importation of French labour to work in FWA. The local manpower was rarely utilized to avoid incurring cost on wage payments. French men were used in staffing the administrative sector and the professionals in the private sector of the economy. The rare opportunity given to Africans was to hold positions as junior clerks and unskilled workers that attracted meager salary.

A third repercussion was the effects on nationalism and self-government in West Africa. In other parts of Africa, especially in British West Africa, the post-World War II era was a global opportunity to intensify nationalist's activities for self-government. However, such agitations were absurd to the French government. There were open demands for self-government as the agitators remained passive. African political parties were not allowed to develop, hence FWA leaders who realized the need for self-government worked secretly for Africanisation. An added disadvantage was the structure of the Fourth Republic in France. The Republic favoured mass influx of Frenchmen into FWA. Ordinarily, the job positions left for Africans were ripped off to the French personnel who became important in decision making and ultimately, suppressed agitation for self-government. Invariably, FWA was extension of France which could not ensure participation of Africans.

Fourth, was the uneven development among FWA states. In the areas nearer to the coast, there was more infrastructural development

that made urbanisation very significant. The coastal states such as Guinea, Senegal, Cote de Ivoire and Dahomey witnessed significant growth. In spite of the concentrated growth, the fact that most Africans were rarely involved in development planning did not enable the evolution of a national economy. The likes of Senegal and Cote de Ivoire lacked indigenous economic decisions; such decisions were tied to the global market. Even among FWA countries there was no room for intra-group trade. In spite of the bottle necks, there evolved trade blocs in FWA. There was the Senegalese-Mauritania-Sudan bloc; Guinea alone; Cote de Ivoire and Upper Volt bloc; and Dahomey and Niger bloc. Sudan was the only opportune to trade across FWA, it related with Senegal and Cote de Ivoire. Apart from trade, there was a kind of labour relations in which Sudanese were sent to both countries to work.

The trade relations was basically between the interior and the coast, in which goods were moved from the ports to the interior and food commodities were moved from the interior to the coast. Each nation did not evolve an economy of its own. In other words, French control made FWA a global region. This regional global connection could be attributed to the way in which the rail networks were constructed. As it was done in Nigeria, which was limited to the country alone, that of FWA cut across all the countries in the region. The problem of transportation hindered the evolution of a national economy as each country possessed a kind of autarchic infrastructure in terms of factories. It would have been possible if each country had its development facilities but the operations of such facilities depended on French presence in FWA.

3.3 Federalism in FWA

As you know, Federalism is a system in which there is central and component government. The central government was powerful, while the component units were relatively weak. French colonial administration in West Africa forged together the nations in West Africa and operated it through a federal system. The federal system was operated to ensure administrative convenience. The purpose was to avoid incurring much cost on administrative coordination. Apart from the cost of operation, the government in France was an advocate of centralized government. Thus, this system on the part of French government was a way of spending less. This system was adopted before the twentieth century.

By the twentieth century, federalism in FWA practiced the principle of economic self-sufficiency that was adopted by France for the colonies. This principle applied that the colonies were to become self-reliant. This was done to relieve French Treasury in Paris. The

poorer colonies were subjugated to the richer ones. The poorer ones were those at the interior such as Niger and Sudan. The richer ones were Senegal and Cote de Ivoire. By 1905, the general budget of FWA was launched to centralize revenue and expenditure. The revenues that made up the general budget were taxes from exports and imports which were mainly sourced from Dahomey, Senegal and Cote de Ivoire. The contributions of these countries generated political tensions as there were uprisings against the use of revenues from the limited areas to service the whole of FWA. Specifically, Cote de Ivoire, experienced the worst situation of political tension as the activists advocated for the abolition of French Federalism. The unrest in Cote de Ivoire was based on economic grievances that characterised the federal structure. Federalism in Nigeria was absolutely different from that of FWA; the structure in FWA was part of issues that facilitated the agitation for independence.

However, only few of the FWA countries were initially interested in independence because they had already depended on French style of administration. Hence, there were hesitations in opting for self-government. To the poorer states of Guinea and Sudan, the independence was a disadvantage as there would be a cutback in sources of fund. Due to international pressure, France was ready to grant independence to FWA, but to FWA it was not so acceptable, even though there were African based political parties. The FWA did not bother on any sense of economic responsibility. The agitations of the political parties were based on the principles of equality in revenue allocation. Thus, in either the delay or in the eventual acceptance of independence by African leaders, economic factors were the basis for independence; FWA was still very much attached to its colonial roots.

4.0 CONCLUSION

As it was in British West Africa, the FWA was developed to foster continued French interest. The circulation of French capital had a systemic impact on the political economy. It had the repercussion of reducing the pace at which self-government became meaningful. Instead of reverting to the traditional political economy or making each nation retain absolute identity, the whole of FWA was administered and networked as a single nation. This also reduced absolute independence.

5.0 SUMMARY

There was a vivid financial dependence on FWA. This was basically due to the nature of French interest and governance in Africa right from the nineteenth century. Most of the economic plans were implemented without consultations with Africans and in fact the type of education system practiced did not make the

activities of the nationalists swift in challenging French influence on the political economy.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Analyse the effects of French capital on the political economy of French West Africa.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 2 • IMPLICATIONS OF URBANIZATION AND EDUCATION IN FWA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Implications of Urbanisation and Education in FWA
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The linking of coastal areas in FWA to the interior opened up another kind of civilization which the citizens opted for as the most viable alternative. There was massive movement from the rural to urban areas. In spite of the influx, there was inequality in the standard of living and access to education. It was only few Africans and French that had the better access. In this unit, we shall be examining effects of urbanization and education in FWA.

It is important to know that education as it was during the colonial period in FWA was not favourably planned for the masses, but towards the end of colonialism, the policy of association became manifest as African values were allowed to thrive with French education system.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the French education system at the initial stage
- discuss the implications of French education system
- analyse the impact of urbanization on FWA

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Implications of Urbanisation and Education in FWA

The provision of infrastructure such as railroads, industries and transport facilities accounted for the emergence of modern cities in FWA. After World War II, places like Dakar, Abidjan, Cotonou, Bamako, Niamey, Bobo Dioulasso and Ouagadougou had a geometric progression in their population. These towns were important to the commercial activities controlled by France.

There was movement into the cities from the rural areas. On the

other hand, people migrated to the cocoa plantations to provide cheap labour and to work for the development of colonial agriculture. The migration was due to the bid to gain from wage labour and it was an opportunity to escape from the authoritarian district officers and chiefs who had been empowered by French orders. Migration to the cities led to construction of temporary houses occupied by Africans, while Europeans (French) maintained rigidity as they officially segregated their resident from those of Africans.

There was a drastic impact on the culture and since there were diversity in culture and language, French urbanization affected people's way of life in the cities. Contact with Frenchmen changed tastes and habits from traditional oriented to French oriented. The religious practices, dressing and feeding mode were absolutely changed. The fall-outs of such changes were excessive drinking, prostitution and crime. Much as the infiltration of French culture encouraged social vices, the traditional groupings and associations were formed to ensure people got what they wanted in the cities. The urban associations led to retribalisation process as there were competition and scramble for facilities, opportunities and resources in the cities. The associations performed the role of providing services to people of the same tribe and served as saving clubs for acquiring loans when needed. A positive side to ethnic togetherness in the cities was that it facilitated political awareness as it was easy for workers' unions to interact and form solidarity groups for independence movements.

Education in FWA was meant to absorb Africans as total French citizens that would absolutely disown African culture. This was simply a major attribute of the policy of assimilation. Thus, Africans that received French education in the twentieth century tended to become French in their thoughts and interests. French government sponsored school started by Faidherbe in Senegal was part of efforts to seek the interest of the Muslim population. The school was initially meant for the sons of Chiefs and it was subsequently spread to new areas of French influence. The French government embarked on the school projects because the Roman Catholic and other Christian missions had established schools that were hostile to the interest of the majority Muslim population.

Education became an easy tool for the French policy of assimilation in West Africa when the Church was separated from the State in France. Hence, in the colonies, the French government unified the school system in 1903 in FWA to reduce the power of the mission schools. The schools trained manpower as recruits for subordinate posts in French administration and commerce. The best performed

students were sent to Ecole William Ponty at Dakar for teacher training to provide manpower for the schools. But the establishment of the teacher training college exposed Africans to the need for agitations for self-government. Most of the political leaders after World War II attended the college. The alumni from the school formed a network of ideas for independence.

The education system was meant to provide elite that would act as Frenchmen, which was in line with the policy of assimilation and at the same time provide manpower that was suitable for French administration and economic interest in West Africa. By providing manpower for French administration in West Africa, mass education system was adopted in which everyone was encouraged to attend primary schools and the only language of instruction was French. The elitism in French education was evident in the establishment of Lycee Faidherbe in the Old towns of Senegal where there was special education for French Universities. The opportunity of Lycee Faidherbe was limited as it was meant for few Africans. The curriculum of this school was similar to the curriculum in France. After qualification from this school, only the wealthy parents could send their children to France. Among the Africans that were able to weather the storm were the likes of Lamine Gueye and Leopold Sedar Senghor.

On the reverse of the goals of assimilation, the products from Universities in France were those who opposed the practice of assimilation in FWA. Leopard Senghor began to assert African values of negritude and culture. In support of Senghor, Ponty graduated from Cote de Ivoire (Ivory Coast) and Guinea began to express interest in the values of African history, theatre and dance.

At a point, the French government decided to adopt the policy of association in its education system. This was due to the failure at World War II and the competition for power among European countries. France was only left with Africa as a source of power; hence a way of maintaining stronghold was that the education policies were relaxed to accommodate more Africans. The educational facilities in Africa were expanded, more scholarships were provided to study in universities. At independence, the provision of scholarships increased the number of university graduates in FWA. Again, this increase facilitated the development of political parties.

The competition among cities in FWA was due to the manner in which infrastructures were provided. Being a coastal city, the institute of higher education in Dakar was upgraded to a university status similar to French university system in 1953. Similarly, a

university was established at Abidjan. The Universities were established due to the efforts of the likes of Senghor who debunked assimilation. But despite the establishment of these universities, some African elite preferred to attend French Universities. At the level of secondary education in the French system, there was a very rigorous training with emphasis on French language. This affected the thoughts of French Africans on the need for a French commonwealth because their modes of life had been shaped by French culture.

4.0 CONCLUSION

It is obvious that the education system brought at the initial stage was meant for the elite and mass education was for the masses to provide semi-skilled manpower in French administration and the curriculum was meant to absorb them as total French citizens. Despite the initial inequality, accessibility to education and availability of institutions later became widespread but it was slower than that of British West Africa.

5.0 SUMMARY

The introduction of French education totally absorbed Africans. As it created the practice of social vices related to French civilization, the entire African values was neglected. With the rural-urban migration, new consciousness of Africanism emerged as there were township or ethnic associations and other groups formed in the city. In spite of the new life in the cities, it affected the rate of involvement in agricultural production among other things.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Analyse the French education system, considering the factors that led to the emergence of Leopold Sedar Senghor, among others as nationalists in French West Africa.

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UNIT 3 • DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN FRENCH WEST AFRICA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Development of Political Parties in FWA
 - 3.2 The Struggle for Independence 1956-1960
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous unit sought to introduce you to the new institutionalism as an emerging approach in contemporary political analysis. In this unit, you will again be introduced to another interesting approach in contemporary political analysis: the political culture approach. This unit will begin with a typical definition of what is referred to as political culture. You will also be introduced to the basic assumptions of the approach and its weaknesses. As you will soon see, although culture has been used as an explanatory variable for as long as humans have been studying politics, the scientific field of “political culture” itself is relatively new and was not established under that name until the 1950s when it was introduced in the United States. Until that time, one common form of study, linking values and attitudes to behaviour, was the “national character” study, which was typically conducted by various forms of observation within a single country. These studies generally offered such crude and impressionistic blanket descriptions as Asians are “inscrutable,” German’s are “authoritarian,” Americans are “rugged individualists,” and Canadians are “peaceful, honest and boring” (Jackson and Jackson, 2000:115).

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- analyse the processes that accounted for the formation of political parties; and
- discuss the dynamics in the operation of the political parties

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Development of Political Parties in FWA

After World War II, political study groups and trade unions emerged in the cities of FWA. The groups emerged to challenge the existing order. The initiatives for such were spurred by French Communist and Socialist parties in France. The French Socialists provided political training for Africans who felt the need for change. The first training ground was the election into the Constituent Assemblies. It was an open opportunity for political activities in FWA. The members of the Constituent Assemblies acted as deputies in Paris. In other words, the idea of nationalism in FWA did not emerge from internal national consciousness, rather it was externally driven. The deputies in Paris were affiliated with French parties in the Constituent Assembly. At a point, during the second Constituent Assembly the African deputies issued manifesto to disengage the Conservative French colonial interests. A step in this direction was the call for an all- African political organization at Bamako to synthesise the efforts of Africans on the agitations for equality and autonomy.

The Bamako meeting brought together delegates from trade unions, study groups, elite associations and the newly formed territorial political parties in 1946. It was agreed upon that there should be unanimous support for the position taken by the African deputies in Paris. The position was geared towards the establishment of inter-territorial party – *Rassemblement Democratique Africaine (R.D.A.)*. The RDA was a combination of all political groups in FWA.

Operation of *Rassemblement Democratique Africaine (RDA)*

The RDA brought together political groups in FWA, most of those who constituted the RDA came from Guinea, Sudan and Dahomey with the exception of Senegal because of Leopard Sedar Senghor and Lamine Gueye who believed and affiliated to French socialism. The lack of interest in Senegal made Houphonet Boigny the leader of RDA. The crux of the RDA was to ensure that the Constituent Assembly really worked in favour of nationalist agitations. This aim was achieved at the November 1946 election to the National Assembly when seats were won in many territorial assemblies. In spite of the seats won, it was only in Cote de Ivoire that majority seats were won. It was quite obvious that the RDA could not exist in isolation, thus the RDA aligned with The French Communist party to pay attention to colonial reforms because it was the only party in Paris that supported reforms. Unfortunately, it was a time when the French Communist party was facing opposition due to the Cold War.

In spite of the opposition, the RDA operated the principles of French Communist party, which emphasized mass mobilization for popular support. The popular support was mobilised from different groups and categories such as cooperatives, labour unions, tribal unions, and women's organisations among others. This form of operation strengthened the base of RDA in FWA.

RDA was founded by African cocoa and coffee merchants. It was easy to gain the confidence of these people because it was a popular party. However, the RDA was not a party for the elite as there were oppositions from anticommunists French and African politicians as well as Colonial administrators. By 1949, the opposition was strong and tense, to the extent that Africans were brutally killed at Dimbokro and there was an attempted arrest of Houphouet Boigny and the RDA was banned from operation. These brutalities were due to the radical means which the RDA was exploring to achieve its objectives. Subsequently, the RDA adopted subtle means of achieving their objectives. The problem RDA had in FWA was its strong attachment to the French Communist Party, hence to reduce opposition, negotiations were made that the RDA should drop communists affiliation. But in spite of the negotiations, the RDA was loathed by the colonial administration and by 1951 only Houphouet Boigny and few others were re-elected into the National Assembly.

To avert the hostilities, the RDA resolved to rehabilitate RDA in such a way that there could be a policy of collaboration with the French politicians and colonial officials in order to persuade the government to address issues germane to the masses such as subsidization in the sale of coffee and cocoa in the French market. That was the operation of the RDA in Cote de Ivoire. In other areas such as Niger, the RDA leaders retained radicalism and communism in their agitation for independence. The RDA leaders in Guinea and Sudan opposed the policy of collaboration adopted by RDA leader Cote de Ivoire and Senegal. The RDA leaders in Guinea and Sudan used mass militancy to prove their strength and achieve some of their aims.

On the other hands, party activities from other groups existed but they were not as active as that of RDA. The other groups aligned with the socialist party in the French National Assembly so as to guarantee the consideration of their petitions and complaints. Lamine Gueye and Leopold Senghor were the leaders that adopted the new alignment by joining the non-RDA group known as Independents d'Outremer (IOM) referred to as Overseas Independents. The IOM was formed out of the lesson learnt from

the radical nature of RDA. The IOM was affiliated to a moderate party in France. The IOM received support from the French colonial government in Senegal but it was not as wide spread as RDA. The IOM collaboration enhanced its supporters to win elections into the National Assembly in 1951 and one of the leaders was given minor cabinet posts in several short lived French governments.

It is obvious that radicalism did not work for the operation of political parties. The relationships with the French government were ravaged with conflicts and at a point in time there was the need for compromise which came in the 1950s. Though there were no reforms *per se* before 1956; but the political parties and leaders established the path and they developed in such a way that future institutional changes could take place.

3.2 The Struggle for Independence 1956-1960

From the above explanations, it is obvious that there were two political parties that emerged, the RDA and IOM, both had different ideological leanings. In spite of the ideological leanings, both parties valued essential issues that was germane to self-government. Apart from agitations for self-government, they canvassed for equality in the social and political opportunities that the Frenchmen had access to. By January 1956, a new National Assembly was elected and the RDA was well recognised by occupying the available seats. With the opportunity given to Africans to occupy seats, an *Outline Law (Loi cadre)* was passed in the assembly by giving powers to the government to plan political reforms. *Loi cadre* was a series of decrees put forth by French government in 1957. It implied that a limited form of self-government was granted under which each territory could elect ministers into its assemblies and serve the governor as executive council.

The *Loi Cadre* system became effective after the March 1957 elections and the RDA controlled Guinea, Sudan and Cote de Ivoire. However, Guinea and Sudan wanted a more self-controlled government to ensure a more West African Federation that was devoid of colonial control. But RDA was not willing to achieve the demands of Guinea and Sudan. Within this context, IOM became more relevant and there was a kind of regrouping in which politicians and other groups joined the leadership of Senghor under the Party-Parti de Regroupement Africaine (PRA). In spite of the regroup, de Gaulle's assumption of power in France could not make it easy to achieve the objectives of independence. There was the option given in France that Africans should accept limited self-government under French community and enjoy all forms of assistance or accept independence and forfeit any form of assistance.

In the light of this, the political leaders accepted the former option, while Guinea alone went for the latter. As stipulated de Gaulle withdrew all forms of assistance and refused to accord diplomatic recognition. Within the French community, the party leaders advocated for new constitution within the parliamentary system that was suitable for independence.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The fact that formation of political parties in FWA had international influence created conflicts and clash of interests among Africans. If you look at the ideological leanings of RDA and IOM you will discover that there were a lot of intricacies on the consolidation towards independence. By the 1950s, despite the differences, there was a converging point aimed at self-government. However, France perpetrated the assimilation policy by imposing the *Loi cadre* which meant limitation to the grant of self-government in FWA.

5.0 SUMMARY

The path to attaining self-government in FWA was not easy. The differences in ideological leanings of RDA and FOM created some sort of disunity. Above all, the fact that France would not have allowed political parties in FWA aggravated the slow rate of attaining self-government. It appeared as if France was forced by international pressures and events to accept self-government. Hence, to maintain her strategic dependence on FWA, the *Loi cadre* was introduced to regulate the affairs of FWA.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

“The path to attaining self-government in French West Africa was rough.” Explain.

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**MODULE 4 POST INDEPENDENCE
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF
FRENCH WEST AFRICA I**

- Unit 1 Security Issues in French West Africa
- Unit 2 Uranium Deal in Niger
- Unit 3 Formation of Regional Organisations in French West Africa
- Unit 4 Origin of CEAO and West African Economy

UNIT 1 • SECURITY ISSUES IN FRENCH WEST AFRICA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Security Issues in French West Africa
 - 3.2 Purpose of Military Intervention during the Cold War
 - 3.3 Changes in Franco-West African Relations in the Post-Cold War Era
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In one of the units of the previous modules, we discussed the new trend in France's policy towards Africa. In this unit, we shall be examining security issues in French West Africa. How did France intervene? Why was France so interested in maintaining security and defence in FWA? Is it of utmost importance to the development of FWA? These are the issues we shall be considering in this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the reasons for France's interest
- analyse the forms of military intervention during the Cold War
- discuss the effects of such intervention
- explain changes in the Franco-West African relation in the post-Cold War era

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Security Issues in French West Africa

Before Charles de Gaulle's Fifth Republic, France has been using FWA as a focal point in the display of diplomacy in the world. Since France lost in the Franco-Prussian war, it held on to Africa to prove its power to other Europeans. In the light of this, Africa became germane to the defence and security interests of France. This started to reflect even before the World War II as France had strategised how to nurture strong military and naval facilities. Thus, Africa especially FWA became a major source of military manpower, a sort

of Franco-African military relations continued. The era of decolonisation was transformed to cooperation. The cooperation entailed that France's military presence was retained in FWA. The aim of the cooperation was to maintain privileged relations in spite of national sovereignties.

Two forms of cooperation were proposed by France – the first was Accord de defence which was bilateral in nature. It was aimed to provide a strong basis for French military intervention after independence. Some countries in FWA signed this defence pact. Cote de Ivoire, Senegal, Togo, Niger, Chad, Benin and Mauritania were a party to the defence pact. The second defence agreement, France offered military and technical assistance under the agreement-accords d' assistance militaire technique. The form of operation in this agreement involved organizing, equipping and training of national armies, as well as police forces.

3.2 Purpose of Military Intervention during the Cold War

French military presence in Africa since 1960s has maintained eight defence and twenty four military technical assistance agreements. Several troops were placed in various parts of FWA on permanent basis. By the 1990s, the rate of the presence reduced, however, to maintain the ties; another defence programme was initiated in 1993. *La Force d' action rapide* (FAR) composed of five units of about 44,500 men was reserved for Africa in France. The purpose of the reservation was to ensure quick intervention at short notice in the former French territories in Africa. The intervention was situated within the provisions of Accord de defense. But it is obvious that the accord was operated within the interest of France in Africa to maintain exclusivity and stability.

The offering of military technical assistance was part of the mission of exclusivity in which French civilization metamorphose and transform in the territories. In 1992, about thirty thousand African officers were trained in FWA as a product of the technical assistance. This enabled France to control the size and function of Francophone armies and subsequently, the defence systems. France's interest and military presence in FWA are based on the level of her economic interest. For instance, there is much military presence in Niger because France wanted to protect the source of Uranium supply. In Senegal, heavy French military was due to presence of French residents. Again, in Cote de Ivoire and Senegal, the cordiality in the relationship of France with the national elites also influenced French military presence.

The most obvious source of security provision in French West

Africa still depends on relations with France. Most of the states in French West Africa could hardly seek alliance with other countries in Europe directly without the involvement of France. For the fact that affect independence, a considerable number of French citizens still resided in Senegal and Cote de Ivoire influenced French participation in the internal and external affairs of these countries.

Since the 1960s, France has taken as part of its African policy to reserve military troops for deployment and defence in Africa. The provision of security on the part of France was seen as a commitment. But it was not a commitment in the real sense; it was a service on the part of France to ensure that its former colonial territories were not taken over by other Europeans. To other African countries, the services of France were meant to disrupt the plans for continental or sub-continental cooperation that could be inimical to French interest.

Much as France has been trying to protect its interest, the training of African-military personnel in France in the 1980s, was a largesse extended to ensure absolute loyalty from French West Africans. By 1985, about 6,800 French troops were stationed in Djibouti, Senegal and Cote de Ivoire. Their roles were mainly to prevent external threats and ensure that the defense agreements were not breached. In an attempt to maintain such agreements, there has been series of instability, especially the overthrown and removal of belligerent African leaders.

The provision of security has been a way of displaying French diplomacy as it was strategic to the French during the Cold War years. Specifically, the abundance of uranium in Niger till the 1980s, informed the need to provide security services during the Cold War. The *Accord de Defence* contained the agreement that France was bound to protect Niger at any time, and other countries in French West Africa but, France's return to Africa was to provide security irrespective of the conditionality of the relations.

3.3 Changes in Franco-West African Relations in the Post-Cold War Era

The 1989 Franco-African Summit held in La Baule (France) heralded a dramatic turn. In the post-Cold War era, French policies in Africa changed, arising from the unipolar system with the triumph of liberal capitalism over communism and the emergence of European Union. French interventionist and paternalistic views of Franco-phone Africa ended with the collapse of communism. In this way, Franco-African relations transformed from bilateralism to multilateralism. In the economic sector, multilateralism was witnessed through the intervention of Bretton Woods institutions, the

G8, USA and the European Union in the economic reforms and policies of Franco-phone Africa. The “Euro” also ended the parity between the French Franc and the CFA Franc.

By the mid-1990s, Nigeria and South Africa were the principal receivers of the French Foreign Direct Investment. While France developed new economic relations with the Anglophone and Lusophone states in Africa, Franco-phone Africa opened up relations with the Anglo-Saxon and Asian countries. Crucial decisions concerning the Francs Zone are taken in Brussels, Washington, and more importantly, during the G8 Summits. The gradual decline of French Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) in the CFA Zone has given way to the steady penetration of American economic interest. Other new actors in Franco-phone Africa include Japan, Germany, China, Canada and the Asian Tigers. In the military aspect, conflict resolution was no longer dominated by French but increasingly witnessed the intervention of the United Nations, African Union and the Economic Community of West African States.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We cannot really point out the positive impact of French intervention in the defence of French West Africa during the Cold War years. The whole situation about security issues revolves around the furtherance of France’s interest in Africa. The presence of mineral resources was the target for France’s volunteerism to secure FWA, possibility to avoid encroachment by other industrialized countries during the Cold War. For instance, the presence of Uranium in Niger was a big deal for France which it strives to ensure that absolute exploitation was always guaranteed. Meanwhile, France has diversified her investment into Anglophone and Lusophone countries while Francophone countries welcome new economic actors from USA, EU, China and the Asian Tigers. We shall be considering this issue in the next unit.

5.0 SUMMARY

Accord de defense was part of the Accord de Cooperation which France had advocated immediately after the World War II. The cooperation in defence was an agreement that French military presence would be retained in West Africa. It was a deal of continued military intervention that involved organizing, equipping and training Africans in the French way, especially during the Cold War years. All the military pacts are still within the enclave of the French assimilation and association policies. In the post-Cold War era, Franco-African relations shifted from bilateralism to multi-lateralism.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Examine the implications of French military presence on the issue of human rights in French West Africa.

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UNIT 2 • THE URANIUM DEAL IN NIGER

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Uranium Deal in Niger
 - 3.2 France's Uranium Policy in Niger
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the last unit, it would be observed that France's advance of Accord de cooperation was a 'give and take' programme meant for a strategic purpose. It is no other reason than the presence of mineral resources in French West Africa and other parts of Africa. Niger is our focus in this unit. We shall be discussing the processes in the exploitation of Uranium in Niger. We are also considering the nexus between France's need and Niger's ability to supply.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the importance of Uranium to France's economy
- identify the position of Niger in the Uranium deal

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Uranium Deal in Niger

After 1960, France continued to entrench its African policy on a variety of social, economic and political interests. It perpetrated neo-colonialism as it found it difficult to exist without strategic dependence on Africa for raw materials. Thus, France's African policy was to ensure free and strategic access to its former area of colonial control in Africa. This formed the basis of its relations with Africa after independence. Niger remained an area of strategy and dependence for France in West Africa. Uranium – a vital raw material for nuclear development was inevitable for France. From previous units, it could be recalled that France was successful in controlling some areas of Niger before the twentieth century. The control was a source for France even after independence to meet the demands for Uranium. Most of the Uranium requirements of France were imported from Africa.

Uranium is strategic to France because it is germane to the existence of high-technology industries in aeronautics, nuclear energy and defence. In the 1980s, France had the ambition to be one of the famous countries capable of nuclear research and development. During the Cold War, France became a significant supplier of nuclear power plants to countries such as Belgium, Spain, Switzerland and other newly industrializing countries. France has become the most relevant supplier of nuclear power plants; it needed a complementary supply to maintain such position. It is a global requirement that any manufacturer of advanced technological installations must also produce the fuel for its operation. It became imperative for France to maintain closer neo-colonial ties with her former territories, especially Niger for the supply of Uranium.

3.2 France's Uranium Policy in Niger

Niger could be described a neo-colonial territory of France. In 1961, an agreement pact referred to as Accord de Defence stipulated the requirement that Niger should supply France with Uranium and other minerals. This kind of agreement like those of the nineteenth century implied that France offered protection services to Niger and in return, Niger would be a regular supplier of Uranium. The benefit to Niger in the Uranium deal was military assistance. French military advisers were stationed in Niger. This form of exclusive bilateral trade existed beyond the 1980s. As a learner, who is conversant with contemporary issues of international relations, you should wonder why Niger is still relatively underdeveloped among countries in West Africa in spite of the Uranium trade.

The discovery of Uranium in the Arlit region in the mid 1950s by French government's Commissariat a l'energie atomique (C.E.A.) involved more nuclear research in France. Several research agencies were formed in this regard to facilitate the development. In 1968, Societe des mines de l'Air (SOMAIR) was formed to intensify nuclear research and development. Subsequently, an exploration programme was launched at the southwest of Arlit. Beyond the Arlit region, other areas in Niger had the deposits of Uranium by the 1970s. The widespread of Uranium in Arlit could not allow for economic independence of Niger. Several other research institutes were formed to facilitate these discoveries. According to the Accord de Defence, France had absolute right to operate exclusively on issues related to the exploration, and marketing of the minerals. In 1974, office national des ressources minieres (ONAREM) was created to serve as a collaborating state control over the foreign agencies working on the mines. The Niger government in the 1980s collected royalties of C.F.A 1,000 million per annum.

To Niger government, this form of deal was not sufficient to the extent at which France explored Uranium. In spite of the unequal commercial relationship, France bothered less, but rather intensified invitation of Western partners to collaborate in joint venture agreements. Italy, West Germany, Spain and Japan were co-opted in the joint-ventures. This invitation further reduced the influence of Niger in the agreements guiding the Uranium more equal deal from French government, but the Niger economy was emasculated in such a way that there was no significant response and since the economy depended on the trade there could be no meaningful resistance. At a point in time, there was the insistence that the agreements should be between the French government and Niger government and not between the French agencies and Niger government. Unfortunately, through the influence of the agencies and multinationals, there could not be any sort of compromise as the multinationals and agencies argued that the exploration costs was high compared to global market prices. It was on this basis that Niger hardly had a fair deal.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The research agencies meant to explore Uranium operated sophisticated technologies that are highly incomprehensible and not suitable for the development of Niger. There was no technology transfer to ensure that the citizenry understood the know-how to explore the minerals. The benefits of the exploitation of uranium were mainly the provision of military assistance which invariably contributed to instability in the whole of West Africa. There is the possibility that internal conflicts might have occurred in the forms of uprisings against the exploration of Uranium. A factor that accounted for such was the network which the French capital already had in the control of the political economy before the 1960s.

5.0 SUMMARY

Niger is a good example of neo-colonialism which France continued under the banner of maintaining security while exploring Uranium. Niger has remained underdeveloped because most of the structures put in place was operated by Europeans and the problem of neo-colonialism could not allow technology transfer.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the factors responsible for France's interest in Uranium.

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UNIT 3 FORMATION OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN FRENCH WEST AFRICA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Formation of Regional Organizations in FWA
 - 3.2 The operation of UDAO
 - 3.3 Cooperation and Management of Natural Resources
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Apart from entrenching neo-colonialism and establishing laws and institutions to support it, France preferred that its territories in West Africa exist as a large territory without regional relations. This was basically meant to prevent any form of antagonism within FWA or from other West African countries. In this unit, we shall be examining the dynamics that were associated with the formation of or belonging to regional organizations among countries in FWA.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the reasons for changes in the formation of organizations
- explain the role of France in the changes

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Formation of Regional Organizations in FWA

After World War II, French colonial reforms especially that of 1956 Loi-cadre, decentralized political activities of Africa to the territorial components of the Federation d’Afrique occidentale française (AOF) and the Federation d’Afrique équatoriale française (AEF), within the communauté franco-africaine, states in FWA were relatively autonomous. These organizations were set up due to the agitations of the trade unions that transformed into political parties and they were meant to ensure continuity of the ties between France and its former colonies. At independence, there was the need for continued benefits from France. Countries such as Mali, Niger and Chad needed guaranteed access to the sea while the poor states like Dahomey

preferred to replace budgetary transfers made possible through the federal system for development and administration. The economic ties were strengthened because the coastal states such as Senegal and Cote de Ivoire wanted continuity in the modes of operation of the colonial period. Politically, some states in West Africa wanted stronger ties with France. For instance, states like Togo preferred to belong to francophone because of the fear of annexation by Ghana.

In January 1959, the Heads of Government of Cote de Ivoire, Senegal, Niger, Dahomey, Mali and Mauritania signed an agreement in Paris which led to the formation of Union dovaniere des stats del' Afrique occidentale (UDAO). The formation of UDAO meant to ensure closer ties at regional level. This enabled extensive French involvement in the decision making process and it facilitated the infiltration of French influence in the administration of West African states.

3.2 The Operation of UDAO

The UDAO from the onset was ravaged with rivalries between Cote de Ivorie and Senegal. For the former, it was eager to develop her transit trade and industries while Senegal was anxious to maintain her economics might in French West Africa. This could not make a virile customs union agreement in FWA. The first article of the convention of UDAO stipulated that member states would not levy custom or fiscal duties on trade with each other. The second articles stated that receipts from import and export duties and taxes should be distributed and appropriately shared for each nation state. However, the UDAO could not perform the function of unification of FWA because there was no virile institutional framework that could ensure collective decision making. The customs union could not be organized multilaterally, except for bilateral arrangements which were against the essence of regional integration. The rivalry between Senegal and Cote de Ivorie could not ensure a meaningful cooperation.

The bid for internal development by Cote de Ivorie could not ensure a successful operation in UDAO as it was at the centre of trade in FWA. Cote de Ivorie made decision to tax all merchandise entering the country, not bothering whether it was contrary to the customs agreement. This made foreign exporters prefer Cote de Ivorie as it was used as the regional distribution centre at the expense of Dakar (Senegal). Furthermore, the existence of the UDAO was undermined as it created a new value-added tax on imported goods to reduce protection on Senegalese goods in the Ivorian market. It is very obvious that economic regionalism did not seem to work because of the unhealthy business rivalry and competition between Senegal and

Cote de Ivoire.

By the mid 1960s, the aims of the UDAO were rarely achievable. At the meeting held in Abidjan in 1966, it was agreed that the UDAO was not functioning in terms of customs agreement and thus, it should be replaced with Union douaniere des etats de l'Afrique de l'ouest (UDEAO). The UDEAO had looser economic function especially in customs union related matters. It had a secretariat in Ouagadougou and it consists of committee of experts and council of ministers in FWA. Since the UDEAO was a weak institution in economic matters, there were sub-regional economic groups that were more effective. For instance, fonds de solidarite was formed and later transformed in to *Fonds de' entraide et de garantie des emprunts*. Such organisations were formed to facilitate acquisition of loans for less developed states in FWA.

The end of UDAO and the economic weakness of UDEAO led to more favourable relations among states in FWA. Senegal and Mali reconciled in 1963 as they had not been according each other diplomatic recognition. Following the reconciliation there were other forms of understanding on the management of Senegal River Basin concerning navigation, irrigation and generation of electricity.

3.3 Cooperation Management of Natural Resources

An organization specially designated to the management of Senegal River states (OERS) was formed in 1968. The OERS was formed by Senegal, Guinea, Mali and Mauritania and was meant to tap the natural resources for the benefit of the four nation states in FWA. Development plans were harmonized under the OERS to enhance agriculture and animal husbandry, education, health, transportation, commerce and other issues. Much as the OERS really meant for development, it lasted for about four years because of the conflicts between Senegal and Guinea over the accusation that the former was condoning insurgents during Portuguese invasion of the latter. This divided the OERS as President Sekou Toure (Guinea) boycotted the meeting for OERS throughout 1971. To avoid the absence of Guinea, a new organization that was less politicized was formed to replace OERS. The Organisation for the Development of the Senegal River Valley (OMVS) replaced OERS and it was formed by Senegal, Mali and Mauritania.

Apart from the OERS that metamorphosed into OMVS, several collaborative research agencies were set up in areas where there were other natural resources. Some of these resources were not limited to French speaking West Africa alone. For instance, Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria formed Lake Chad Basin Commission which sponsored research related to the development of agriculture,

irrigation, fishing and transportation. In addition, was the Niger River which had a commission consisting of Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Dahomey, Togo, Guinea, Mali and Cote de Ivoire. The Niger River Commission was specially channeled for developmental activities. A modification was made to the Niger River Commission as Liptake Gaurma Integrated Development Authority emerged out of it. It emerged to capture real development for the inland nation states – Togo, Niger and Mali. It was agreed that there should be a joint exploitation of mineral resources and a virile transportation system. Apart from the aforementioned, there were other committees formed among the FWA nation states and their immediate neighbours.

At a point, relations of FWA with neighbouring states were inevitable because of the role of United Nations. The UN Economic Commission for Africa influenced the formation of West African Economic Community (WAEC) comprising fourteen states, but WAEC did not function as expected as there were inconclusive statements for its aims and purpose. Anglophone and Francophone speaking countries had differences in languages, monetary systems, tariffs and cultures. To countries in FWA, it appeared as unwise for them to form any regional association with Anglophone West Africa, because of the fear of domination. In order to avoid such domination and not to lose support from France, Houphouet Boigny came up with the idea of a strictly francophone West African regional economic integration referred to as *communaute economique de l'Afrique de l'ouest* (CEAO). Under the CEAO, it was quite easy for the sub-regional groups in FWA to present a common voice and conquer the fear of domination by Nigeria and Ghana. The non-cooperation of countries in FWA with Anglophone countries in FWA had some elements of neocolonialism. This was because they found it difficult to exist economically without the support of France in one way or the other.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The existence of these organizations was to maintain close ties between France and its territories in West Africa. These organisations were mainly to aid the flow of funds, movement of goods among others. From the operations of these organizations, it appeared as if countries in FWA preferred to remain as strictly francophone without relating with other non-francophone. But to what extent was this realistic. This is what we shall be discussing in the next unit.

5.0 SUMMARY

The metamorphosis from UDAO to UDEAO and subsequently to

other organizations was due to varying interests of each nation state in the operations of the existing ones. The clash between Senegal and Cote de Ivoire and their domineering status among FWA nation states brought disunity. Mostly, the causes of such conflicts were disagreements over the terms of trade. There was association based on common resources. For instance, the OERS and others were formed by nation states that harboured the Senegal River, and at times it went beyond nation states in FWA. Much as the nation states in FWA wanted exclusivity in organisational affiliations without non-francophone West Africa, the pressing nature and influence of Anglophone West Africa eventually brought both Anglophone and Francophone together under ECOWAS.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

There was no permanence in the existence of regional organisations in French West Africa. Explain.

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UNIT 4 ORIGIN OF CEAO AND WEST AFRICAN ECONOMY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Origin of CEAO and West African Economy
 - 3.2 Challenges in the operations of CEAO
 - 3.3 CEAO and ECOWAS Cooperation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Communauté économique de l'Afrique de l'ouest (CEAO) was formed to consolidate the economy of FWA without interference from Anglophone West Africa. France lent her support for this organisation, because, it wanted to reduce Nigeria's leading role in the whole of West Africa. So before a general West African organization was realized, the CEAO had already being formed. But the question is to what extent was the CEAO sustainable without conflicts among FWA nation states. Why was it eventually a subgroup under ECOWAS? These are the issues we shall be discussing in this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- analyse the nexus between the existence of CEAO and ECOWAS; and
- identify the paradoxes that could not make CEAO absolutely independent

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Origin of CEAO and West African Economy

In order to reduce the growing influence of Nigeria on the political economy of West Africa, the Communauté Economique de l'Afrique de l'ouest (C.E.A.O.) was formed by Cote de Ivoire, Senegal, Niger, Guinea, Mali and Mauritania. It was possibly formed through the support of France to counterbalance Nigerian influence in West Africa. Amidst the competition between La francophonie in West

Africa and the Anglophone countries in West Africa, the Abidjan treaty was signed by the La francophonie countries in West Africa to set up CEAO in 1973. The CEAO was a transformation of the Union douaniere des Estate de l'Afrique de l'ouest (U.D.E.A.O) a group formed in 1959. The function of UDEAO was to redistribute custom duties which the coastal states collected on transit trade with the landlocked members. In practice, the Union favoured the industrialized countries in FWA especially Senegal and Cote de Ivoire because their manufactured exports benefited from special tariff concessions. The CEAO was seen as an arrangement that would provide wider markets for the manufacturing sectors, thus it was carved out from UDEAO. This arrangement was supported by President Georges Pompidou of France. The president of France supported the CEAO to the extent of encouraging it to gain recognition and autonomy in order to reduce the influence of Nigeria in the economy of West Africa.

The CEAO was seen as a means of advancing French interests in the whole of West Africa. It thwarted the efforts of Nigeria in forming an organization bringing all states in West Africa together. Some of the activities and terms of reference in CEAO was rejected by the landlocked countries of Niger; Mali and Mauritania. The CEAO charter made compulsory the payment of custom duties for the transit of their imports through the harbours of the coastal states. This according to the landlocked countries was bringing inequality and instead of ignoring Nigeria's proposals for ECOWAS by the CEAO, there should be a roundtable discussion to solve the differences. Niger and Mali through their leaders explained that Nigeria would soon take over their economy because they seem to be a better alternative when compared to the compulsion on the payment of custom duties. Initially, the leading CEAO nation states – Cote de Ivoire and Senegal opposed the position of Niger and Mali but to preserve the unity of CEAO, an agreement was reached. To resist Nigerian influence in West Africa, the CEAO countries agreed to give considerations to each other.

3.2 Challenges in the operations of CEAO

Senegal and Cote de Ivoire had to concede to the demands of the landlocked countries in CEAO to avoid Nigerian influence, but in spite of the agreement and concession, there was a break in what could be described as smooth relation among them. This occurred when Benin Republic committed itself to Nigeria. The army officers in Benin preferred to relate with Nigeria and Togo. The reason for the change Benin's policy in CEAO was because the sources of revenue for its economy were basically channeled from Nigeria. The construction of the Save Sugar refinery, the Onigbolo cement plant

was possible with the support of Nigeria. The output from these companies was also meant to serve Nigerian and Togo markets. Apart from the aforementioned, the availability of oil in Nigeria was an added advantage for the importation of finished goods into Benin. Nigerian cocoa also accounted for 25 percent of Benin's export revenue in 1973. As Benin's dependence on Nigeria expanded, its attention to the CEAO reduced. Thus, Benin preferred to remain Conseil de l'entente (a technical organization) and refused to sign the CEAO charter, as well as non-acknowledgement of Abidjan's influence.

At the initial stage of CEAO, the first president – Hamani Diori of Niger took a diplomatic step by touring West Africa to explain that the CEAO was not meant as an instrument against Anglophone West Africa. Hamani Diori did this to protect his home economy that depended more on Nigeria. On the side of Nigeria's intent for ECOWAS, it actually wanted the existence of ECOWAS to reduce the dependence of FWA on France within the Franc zone. Nigeria was against FWA relations with France, because it wanted to stop competition with the foreign based companies in Cote de Ivoire and Senegal. But, to CEAO, Nigeria was insincere in its relations with European Economic Community, (EEC), much as it wanted CEAO to dissociate from France, Nigeria depended on EEC. Nigeria assumed a general leadership in West Africa as it called for a meeting of Trade ministers from the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries in Lagos. The break up in CEAO on affiliation to other West African states led to the adoption of Lome convention in February 1975. The Lome convention was a step towards the formation of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). It was meant to define the extra-African economic relations of the whole of West Africa. However, some nations in FWA saw the birth of ECOWAS as attaching their economic to Europe and not limited to France.

In spite of the discontent expressed by FWA towards ECOWAS, the integrity of CEAO was still to be preserved. The FWA insisted that for them to cooperate, the CEAO must be respected. It was at this stage that the CEAO nation states met in Ouagadougou in March 1974. Their request for integrity and respect was granted and on May 28, 1975, the ECOWAS treaty was signed in Lagos by 15 independent West African states. The request of CEAO was stated in Article 59 of the treaty that; 'they could belong to other regional or sub-regional associations, either with other member states or non-members states'. The provision was made on the condition that they do not deviate from the provision of ECOWAS.

3.3 CEAO and ECOWAS Cooperation

The CEAO had the intent of performing better than ECOWAS, much as they wanted to be better, the progress was planned to avoid policies imposed by ECOWAS. CEAO wanted to avoid this because of their possession of common currency, language, as well as financial and administrative structures. Relatively, the common stand CEAO took succeeded to the extent that by the late 1970s, the projected institutions functioned effectively. To CEAO, the compensation and harmonization was significant. By 1976, Taxe de cooperation (TCR) evolved tax to be paid by individual states on manufactured imports from other members of the community. The tax was planned in such a way that there could be circulation of products by simplifying customs formalities, reducing prices and applying different tax rates to similar products to favour poorer states in FWA. The TCR was taken as a step forward to ensure total abolition internal customs barriers in CEAO and the adoption of a common external tariff. By 1980, the TCR applied to about 400 items from CEAO especially from Senegal and cote de Ivoire the total volume of trade increased from about E.F.A. 4,000 million to CFA 17,200 million by 1980s. The funds from the revenues were channeled to Fonds communautaire de developement (FCD). The fund amounted to CFA 6,760 million, which two-thirds of the amount was distributed as compensation for the losses of revenues incurred by trade liberalization. The remaining was allocated to community development projects. There is no doubt that the CEAO functioned initially than ECOWAS because of the adoption of French Model. Several methods were used through fund raising to assist landlocked countries.

Despite CEAO exclusiveness as a sub-group in West Africa, there was still the need for cooperation, especially because of the increasing financial contributions which the CEAO needed. Cote de Ivoire and Senegal requested a delay in their contributions to FCD, which they owed about CFA 5,000 million. Based on the inability to meet up with financial responsibilities, Leopold Senghor for the first time requested or advocated for a consultation between the secretariats of CEAO and ECOWAS. The consultation was called in 1980, and since then there has been cooperation between the two communities. A protocol of mutual assistance was adopted and ECOWAS Defence treaty was discussed at the Freetown summit in 1981. The CEAO existed as a distinct sub-group under ECOWAS. This was done to avoid being usurped by Nigeria which is powerful in the region and again, the rigidity of CEAO was due to the colonial experience of exclusively which France practiced on them.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The dissension of Niger from the CEAO was a landmark that led to the CEAO compromise and ECOWAS existence. Ordinarily, the transformation of UDEAO to CEAO was uncalled for, because it was obvious that it was not working even for the economy of FWA nation states which it was meant for. Senegal and Cote de Ivoire that are mainly coastal states had a virile economy and enjoyed the terms of trade, while the likes of Niger, Guinea and Mali were relatively disadvantaged. Hence, Senegal and Cote de Ivoire appeared domineering and this continued to breed disunity and it eventually gave way for a wider cooperation of all nation states in West Africa, since the disadvantaged groups in FWA depended on non-Francophone states in West Africa.

5.0 SUMMARY

As discussed in the last unit, the UDEAO was formed and it was actually a toothless bull-dog as it was only the sub-organisation meant for specific purpose that could not work effectively. In spite of the lapses, the UDEAO was transformed to CEAO. Just as the UDEAO was almost inefficient, so it was for CEAO. The moves on the part of Nigeria and Ghana for a wider West African economic organization eventually succeeded and the CEAO became a sub-regional group that operated within the guidelines of ECOWAS.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Account for the reasons responsible for ineffectiveness in the existence of regional organizations in French West Africa.

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UNIT 5 • FRANC ZONE AND CEAO

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
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 - 3.2 Alternative Monetary Union from ECOWAS
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is true that the CEAO later accepted ECOWAS and gave it recognition, so it is important to understand the circumstances and context that led to such. It is not as if ECOWAS existed as a perfect regional organization nor was CEAO better, but the objective and scope of operation of CEAO and ECOWAS differs. Thus, in this unit, we shall be discussing the principles and operation of the Franc zone considering its impact on French West Africa and the resolution of CEAO member states in the face of the challenges from the Franc zone.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the role of the Franc zone in the economy of French West Africa
- discuss the reasons for change in CEAO's perception of ECOWAS

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Franc Zone and CEAO

The operation of Franc Zone is a monetary arrangement between France and its colonies to ensure economic cooperation. The issuing authority was the Banque Centrale, des Etats de l' Afrique de l'ouest (BCEAO). The states in West Africa were placed under the West African Monetary Union (WAMU). All the members of WAMU also belong to CEAO. All these were to complement each other. The intention of France was to maintain a stronghold of its colonies. The monetary arrangement was part of the Accords de cooperation which France had embarked on after World War II. The basic principles guiding the operation of the franc zone was that:

- i. there shall be fixed parity between the metropolitan franc and Cooperation Financiere Africaine Franc (CFA France), that is, 1 French Franc to 50 CFA francs;
- ii. the existence of common external reserve between FWA counties through the BCEAO to be lodged in an Operations Account with the French Public Treasury. Thus member states will draw from this account even if there is deficit;
- iii. free convertibility and unlimited monetary transfers within the franc zone; and
- iv. a common monetary policy between member states of the zone.

All these arrangements might be theoretically visible for development within the French enclave, but to what extent was it? To France, it was meant to ensure that there was no interference in the economy of its colonies from other European countries. The consequences of the implementation of the Franc zone were debts and devaluations that had affected the economy of the Franc zone states. The principles seemed not to be working. For instance, the fact that FWA is not producing oil affected it in the era of high price which was denominated in US dollars. Therefore, FWA states spent more money to meet their domestic fuel needs. This was because the French franc was weak when compared to dollar.

The implementation of the policies was that the Franc zone remained a problem as the nation states in FWA did not enjoy the opportunities that were envisaged. Besides, nation states in FWA were not given the freewill to opt out of this arrangement, as there were little or no consultations on the reforms made to the principles of the monetary union. What this implied was preponderance of underdevelopment as the monetary agreement was meant to increase the longevity of neo-colonialism. In spite of the bleak feature of continued attachment to the Franc zone, FWA still perceived the arrangement as a known devil which is better than unknown angel. They still prefer to familiarize with the arrangement. Even when the BCEAO could not grant medium and long term loans and other institutions under the arrangement such as the National Credit Committee (NCC) also could not successfully implement the role of monitoring and regulating the implementation of the principles.

3.2 Alternative Monetary Union from ECOWAS

In the previous units, we discovered that the CEAO was to co-exist on the basis that ECOWAS becomes the supreme economic body in West Africa. To CEAO however, the values of ECOWAS are still

less acceptable as they still preferred to operate within the Franc zone. In spite of the opposition of FWA states, the West African Clearing House (WACH) was established to enable payments, increase trading and ensure the realization of a full monetary union. This plan was accomplished with the establishment ECOBANK Transitional Incorporated. The bank was basically charged with the responsibility of consolidating the economy of West Africa.

Functions of WACH

The WACH was established to:

- promote development of trade;
- mobilise and promote investments;
- support facilities for project rehabilitation and services;
- provide technical assistance for development projects; and
- assist in the growth and development of indigenous banking and financial institutions in West Africa.

At a point, the CEAO member states began to support the cause of ECOWAS on its programme especially, the trade liberalization and the clearing house. The change in decisions of CEAO must have been due to the difficulties being encountered within the Franc zone and the obvious fact that their economy is absolutely dependent on France in spite of decolonisation. The existence of ECOWAS made the FWA nation states to begin to see self-reliance as realistic within African solidarity. Thus, the arrangement was seen as an alternative by the CEAO member states to free themselves from the dictates of France.

In another way, the growing influence of Nigeria and Ghana in West Africa was a point of concern for Senegal and Cote de Ivoire, as they were also the most favoured among the CEAO. Hence, there is the possibility that the CEAO especially Senegal and Cote de Ivoire regarded ECOWAS so that they could be relevant to the whole of West Africa. Much as the CEAO accepted the supremacy of ECOWAS, it refused to dissociate from French principles and this has been a bane to the operations of ECOWAS.

4.0 CONCLUSION

It is obvious that the Franc zone monetary arrangement was not favourable to the economy of West African states. But in spite of the unfavourable conditions, the states in FWA still preferred to remain within the French cover. It is important that you note; the monetary arrangement from France could still be described as part of French efforts to maintain the association policy with the ultimate

goal that all its former colonies should still remain exclusively loyal to her. But, the problem is, has there been considerable economic development. To reduce the dependence on France's economy, The CEAO looked onwards to the recognition and consideration of ECOWAS as an alternative. Therefore, the CEAO maintained dual loyalty.

5.0 SUMMARY

The Franc zone monetary arrangement had laudable programmes that would have worked for the development of CEAO within French cover, but in practice it did not work. The influence of world economic activities affected CEAO states negatively. In other words, they gained little from the arrangement. The ECOWAS plan was thus seen as an alternative by CEAO member states. And in contemporary times, these plans are gradually metamorphosing in the twenty first century.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the reasons for CEAO's dual loyalty to the Franc zone and ECOWAS.

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MODULE 5 FRENCH COMMON WEALTH

Unit 1 Origin of Francophone (French Commonwealth in West Africa)

Unit 2 Trade Unionism in French West Africa

UNIT 1 • ORIGIN OF FRANCOPHOINE (FRENCH COMMONWEALTH IN WEST AFRICA)

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Origin of Francophonie in West Africa
 - 3.2 Structure of French Commonwealth
 - 3.3 Impact of French Commonwealth in FWA
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units, we have seen that the relationship between France and her colonies at one time or the other assumed different dimensions. Before independence, the structures and patterns from France were imposed, but after, it was the other way round, whereby the former colonies solicited for a renewed form of relationship. Can we then uphold the fact that FWA can never exist without French influence? The origin and expansion of the French Commonwealth is what we shall be discussing in this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the international perspective to the operation of French Commonwealth
- explain Senghor's role in emphasizing French Commonwealth in FWA identify the impact in FWA

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Origin of Francophonie in West Africa

Francophonie emerged during the visit of President Bourguiba of Tunisia to Senegal in November 1965. To foster the relationship among the former French colonies in Africa with common political institutions they should constantly interact. President Senghor adopted the idea brought by the Tunisian President. Tunisian President came up with the idea of adopting French language because it was discovered that it had no nation to align with. It was not easy to align politically with Arab world, and it lacked

recognition in the UN and thus, relating with other African nations was regarded as an alternative. Specifically, Senghor of Senegal whose position at the French court was significant was accepted as an ally. Thus, Bourguiba came up with the idea and Senghor adopted and disseminated it to the world. According to Bourguiba, the aim of Francophonie was described as cultural and economic, and not political.

Initially, the coming together of French speaking countries was opposed by France, because it detested anything that would appear as imperialism and probably, to avoid international reactions. This position was taken by France because some of its former colonies in Africa regarded the idea of French Commonwealth as a new form of imperialism. In spite of French opposition, President Senghor continued to make consultations. In July 1966, the meeting of Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache (OCAM) was held in Niamey and a secret report of the francophonie was approved. Afterwards, President Senghor visited Canada, while President Diiori toured African states. By the end of the year, the final draft of the report was submitted to Charles de Gaulle in France.

The draft provided for three different groups under the organization. The first was an inner core, comprising France, the OCAM states, Tunisia, as well as Mali, Mauritania, Guinea, and Haiti. The inner core was responsible for organising a close network of multilateral cooperation in the area of culture progression especially a common education system, common economy, common currency and relation with international organisations especially United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The second group included Algeria, Morocco, former Indochinese colonies and Lebanon because of cultural and economic the links it had with the inner core. The third group included-Canada, Switzerland, Belgium and Luxemburg whose links were basically cultural.

The French Commonwealth was to function with regular conferences of Heads of States and Governments, Ministers of Education, Ministers of Finance and Economy. Then, there was an inter-parliamentary association. Although France initially rejected the idea, the official French response was non-committal; it was neither a true rejection nor an outright approval. In spite of the position taken by France, Senghor believed in the idea of French Commonwealth without France. However, by 1967, France accepted the idea of a Commonwealth. The acceptance came at a time when the United Nations budget commission invited the Secretary General to adopt and ensure a linguistic balance among secretariat personnel. Again, a seminar of francophone youth held in Paris was to study ways and means to organize an international

community of all French-speaking countries. All these accounted for France's approval of the commonwealth. The acceptance was on the basis of maintaining a common language not to give economic aid or assistance by compulsion but it was to be given at the will of France.

3.2 Structure of French Commonwealth

The French Commonwealth consists of 200 million individuals who use French as a means of communication in their daily activities. It is an inter-governmental organization comprising 56 nation states spread across five continents. These states signed the charter of La Francophonie since inception. The formation of La Francophonie has led to the existence of International Organization of La Francophonie (OIF). The organization acts as a liaison to other international agencies for French speaking countries.

The OIF is headed by a Secretary General and heads of state and government for a term of four years. Then, there is an official international representative of the French Commonwealth who functions to facilitate and execute the cooperation initiatives as well as to manage the administrative and financial affairs. As a political institution, the OIF campaigns to strengthen the practice of democracy and to uphold the rule of law. Its framework for operations as a multilateral liaison of French speaking countries revolves; fostering peace, democracy and human rights; supporting education, training, higher education and research; cooperation for sustainable development and solidarity and promoting the French language and cultural as well as linguistic diversity. The OIF is meant to secure and protect the interest of exclusivity of French speaking countries and advance their cause in international decisions. In other words, the OIF is meant to implement the foreign policy of French Commonwealth.

The French Commonwealth has other institutions such as the Direct Operators; Permanent conferences of ministers and some other agencies. There are four direct operators that are meant to support the implementation of tasks in specific fields. There is no doubt about the fact that the French Commonwealth originated from Africa, but the moment France took interest, it was internationalized. By internationalization, French Commonwealth became dominated by Canadian International Development Agency. (CIDA) funds three of the direct operators and this made the activities of the OIF directed towards Canada's development priorities. In Africa, the impact of the OIF is evident in the establishment of Senghor University in 1989, situated at Alexandria in Egypt. It was established following a meeting of Heads of States and Government

at Dakar summit. The University was established to honour Leopold Senghor and Habib Bourguiba that brought the idea of a French Commonwealth. The mandate of the University is to train senior managers from French speaking countries to function in key areas such as administration and management; environmental management; nutrition and health, and cultural heritage management.

3.3 Impact of French Commonwealth in FWA

In as much as the concept of La Francophonie has gained acceptance worldwide, it has an utmost cultural consequence on West Africa. African language has been sacrificed and suppressed in all forms. Most words are adopted or transformed for use in the French language. There has been a problem unresolved in the scholarly and academic recognition of indigenous African languages. The initial snag to this problem was the fact the French African Nationalists so to say established African literature in French. They refused to write in indigenous languages or adapt the indigenous language to writing African literature.

Apart from language in writing, most of the indigenous African culture was abandoned, as the language of French was used in the home, for public communication, official language in business and education. The commonwealth could be explained as an advancement of French association, which recognises the sovereignty of its former colonies but there is still a common bond that cannot be betrayed and thus can be classified as a form of neo-colonialism. From the operation of the OIF, it is obvious that the Canadian Development Agency (CIDA) is dominant in the activities of the Commonwealth, even though it originated from FWA. The fact that CIDA funds the four direct operators of the activities of OIF makes FWA dependent on the decisions taken whether it is in favour or otherwise.

4.0 CONCLUSION

By France's approval of the idea of commonwealth, as originated from French West Africa, its structure was placed under an international trust by the establishment of the OIF. It would have been better, if the leadership in French West Africa evolved the idea of internally driven development where there would be less dependence on France. It is obvious from all indications that the idea of French Commonwealth was a means of further subjugating, suppressing and subjecting FWA to external control after

independence. Based on this, can we say neocolonialism will not continue?

5.0 SUMMARY

With the evolution of French Commonwealth, the intention of Senghor and Bourguiba was to adopt the French language, remaining culturally and economically affiliated to France. Even though it was argued as not political, what could have economic impact without interference in politics? By France's approval of the idea, the operation of French Commonwealth was placed on an international trust because France wanted to avoid direct financial role. All these had impact on FWA right from the nineteenth century, even before Senghor conceptualized it.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

"It would have been better if the idea of French Commonwealth was not conceived from French West Africa." Discuss.

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UNIT 2 • TRADE UNIONISM IN FRENCH WEST AFRICA

Trade Unionism in French West Africa

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Similar to the formation of political parties, the formation of trade unions in West Africa was patterned after those existing in France, that is, the French model of operation of labour unions. The operation of the unions was in furtherance of French Commonwealth. Even though French Commonwealth was not in existence as at the 1940s, but the activities of the unions and political parties reflected the idea of French Commonwealth. Hence, in this unit we shall discuss trade unions in French West Africa.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the relationship between trade unionism and French commonwealth in French West Africa
- analyse the idea of French commonwealth in the developmental activities of French West Africa.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Assimilation, Association and French Commonwealth in FWA

From the reflection of assimilation and association, we found out that the traditional institutions; the politics, economy and the social

system were all disrupted to favour the central administration from France. All these were done by the imposition of peace as perceived by French, extension of new systems of communication, replacement of Chiefs with unwanted ones as local authorities, imposition of taxes, the use of forced labour, introduction of French currency, importation of manufactured goods, concentration in urban centres among others. A careful observation of these changes showed that they adopted a policy of assimilation by disregarding the traditional institutions and implanting French models and ideals.

It is the models and deals that developed into different patterns in the colonial period. In the economic sector, assimilation meant absolute loyalty to the interests of France. By implication, all economic and financial decisions were made in France within the framework of French interests. The interests were basically exploitation of resources for the development of France. In this sense, colonial markets were reserved for French merchants and manufacturers. At the initial stage, there was a colonial pact in which, no African state could engage in any foreign trade and all colonial products were sent to France by French transport, this was done to avoid any form of encroachment from other European countries. To promote monopoly and exclusivity, French manufactured products were brought to FWA. By 1904, when FWA was organized into a federation, the plan became financial self sufficiency. Local finances were to be generated to take care of development activities. However, the territories in FWA could not afford the expenses; hence they resorted to loans from FWA with the intention of using it to build ports, railways and so on. With the construction of railway, Dakar in Senegal and the Upper Niger River were linked, as well as other areas. Ports were located in Conakry (Guinea), Abidjan (Cote de Ivoire), and Cotonou (Dahomey) to open up areas to facilitate trade. Before the World War I, all the structures pertaining to ports and railways were already in place. The concentration on the ports and railways appeared deliberate because, the communication and transport system was neglected. The neglect of those two sectors had implications on political development as it failed to encourage integration and meaningful federation needed integration.

During the World War I, the assimilation model made FWA subjected to serve France financially in the war effort. They contributed funds which informed France of the propensity to prosperity in FWA. Thus, France made it a point of duty to provide infrastructures for economic development. At a point in time, the fact that FWA was able to provide funds made some canvass for economic autonomy, but French manufacturers perceived the autonomy as a threat to their protected markets. In spite of the opposition by French manufacturers, the French government in

FWA had to embark on programmes meant for rural economic development. At a stage, production of coffee, palm oil, groundnuts and cocoa reached a climax that rural development became inevitable to improve production. Such rural development entailed provision of some basic infrastructure, and obligation of district cooperatives to enforce saving for the improvement of local agriculture. All these efforts culminated to the idea of a French Commonwealth as it was difficult to exist without French aid and influence.

There was interplay in the application of the assimilation and association policies. Both reflected in the formation of trade unions as they were modeled in line with those operating in France. But both perpetrated French interests, the process isolated Africans from each other because it lacked integration. The neglect of transportation and communication systems created problems for political development. The interior areas were isolated from the coastal areas. The industries established were on a small scale and at preliminary stage in Dakar, few education and health facilities were established around the ports. The education and health facilities were mainly for the use of French citizens resident in the cities.

3.2 Trade Unionism in FWA

Before 1937, there was no evident of trade unionism in FWA, with the trend of French colonialism under the practice of assimilation, there were legal prohibitions against unions. In fact, unlike British West Africa, French West Africa had insignificant population of African workers. Apart from that, there were not enough educational institutions to teach people the French language. Since educational institutions were hardly in existence, Africans were not granted the right to join unions because they could not speak, read nor write in French. In spite of the hindrances, some African workers teamed up to form workers' union in Dakar – the office workers and railroad workers in 1905.

The effect of the World War I added values to the existence of the trade union when on August 7, 1944 a 'new deal' was resolved to decree that; educational and literary requirements would only apply to officers leading the unions and not a deterrent to membership. By this, membership was open to all workers irrespective of educational status. This concession made the existence and organisation of workers' union more meaningful. But one thing is the influence of France on the organization of these unions. There came official organisers and European workers that helped in the organisation of the unions. In the early 1950s, there were already about 65,000 union workers in FWA. Like labour unions in British West Africa,

strike was mainly the form of protest, the unskilled workers constitute the mass of the workers, and decisions were determined by the skilled workers and European officials.

The fact that the unions were organised officially by the French, made the outlook of trade unionism in FWA questionable. The structure and operation of the unions were related to the pattern of those in France. Much as they were related to those of France, the trade unions were related to International Trade Unions and they were communist in nature as they were radical in their speeches, but in practice they tend towards Marxists opinions, which were associated with socialism. The trade unions in FWA were affiliated to international trade unions; the confederation of Catholic Trade Unions was the most prominent in FWA with competent leadership while others were very few. The affiliate trade unions based in Paris lobby for better treatment of African workers, such as reform for higher wages, abolition of racial discrimination at work. They worked against colonialism and made sure there was equality.

These unions already had the tone of French Commonwealth even before the period of independence. There was a kind of attachment or a bond that made the social and political economy dependent on France both on the favourable and unfavourable terms. Therefore, it is obvious that the idea of decolonization emanated from France. It assisted in decolonization as it brought into limelight the nationalists that participated in the negotiations. It was these unions that developed into Reassemblent Democratique Africain (RDA). The use of strike actions and demonstrations were used by the party as a popular means to attain independence. At a point in time the RDA tried to free itself from French confederations.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this unit is to show to you that even before the idea of French Commonwealth was conceived, the tone of France's relations had already made it indispensable even after the colonial period. The establishment of workers unions, the political parties and other developmental activities are all structured and patterned in line with those of France. Thus, Leopold Senghor's idea of French Commonwealth was just a conception and attempt at contextualizing the fact that the former colonies of France could not exist in isolation. The idea of French Commonwealth was a way of renewing pledge towards continued support from France.

5.0 SUMMARY

The idea of this unit is to show that the implication of French Commonwealth as it evolved from Leopold Senghor of Senegal was already an idea which France had implanted indirectly through her colonial institutions and structures.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

“French Commonwealth was inevitable in French West Africa.”
Discuss.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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