



**ECOWAS within African Regional Economic
Communities- RECs: Development Agenda from Regional,
Continental and Global Perspectives**

Keynote Address by:

N'Dri Thérèse Assié-Lumumba

Professor, Cornell University, Africana Studies & Research Center

Ithaca, New York 14850, USA

**President, the World Council of Comparative
Education Societies (WCCES)**

**13th International Conference on Public Administration & 2nd
International Symposium on West African Studies**

University of Electronic Science and Technology of China

Chengdu, Sichuan, P.R. China

December 1, 2018





Acknowledgements to President Zeng and other members of the authorities of UESTC

Leadership of various institutions, of and Academic Units, UESTC, Center for West African Studies, Distinguished Participants, Prof. Muna Ndulo, Director of the Institute for African Development (IAD) at Cornell University who was first invited and asked me to attend instead

Also at Cornell, AAfricana Studies and Research Center, Cornell Institute for Public Affairs (CIPA) my affiliations

President of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) that will hold a Congress of "the Future of Education" in Cancún and World Academy of Art and Science "Social consequence of research"

First time but I feel at home intellectually and practically





ECOWAS-STRUCTURE

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is very multifaceted and comprises of three arms of governance, namely, the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary.

1-The Executive-comprises of a Chairman who is the current Head of State and Government, appointed by other Heads of State and Government to oversee the affairs for a period of one year.

- The Minister in charge of ECOWAS affairs in the country of the Chairman of the Authority becomes the Chairman of Council of Ministers.
- That country presides over all other ECOWAS statutory meetings for the of ECOWAS Commission appointed by the Authority for a non-renewable period of four years. He is assisted by a Vice President and 13 Commissioners.





ECOWAS

2-The Legislative arm of the Community:

- Is headed by the Speaker of the Parliament.
- The administrative functions of the Parliament are directed by the Secretary General of the Parliament.
- Parliamentarians are seconded by national Parliaments to the Community Parliament for a period of four years.

3-The Judicial arm of the Community is:

- Court of Justice,
- Headed by the President.

<http://www.ecowas.int/about-ecowas/governance-structure/>





AFRICAN REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES, RECs

- Post-Independence Continental Politics and Redefinition
Regional Economic Communities: Between the Grand idea of:
- OAU → AU and the Nations States.
- Economic and Political Integration; Transcending colonial border (membership is African and geographic Affinity: countries of different former colonial past, regardless of colonial language come together (although some follow colonial heritage: Conseil de l'Entente in West Africa
- Geography important as other former French colonies outside of West Africa not members).
- Currently, there are 8 major RECs recognized by the AU, each established under a separate regional treaty.





EIGHT KEY AFRICAN REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES, RECs

1. Arab Maghreb Union (UMA)

- Began with Morocco and Tunisia's Independence in 1956 now includes also Algeria, Libya and Mauritania: Ongoing issue of Western Sahara.

2. Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

- Nine of the member states formed a Free trade area in 2000 (Djibouti, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Sudan, Zambia, and Zimbabwe), with Rwanda and Burundi joining the FTA in 2004, the Comoros and Libya in 2006, Seychelles in 2009 and Tunisia and Somalia in 2018.

3. Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) 1998

- Founding members: Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Libya, Chad and Ethiopia: Joined later by many others Morocco, Tunisia, and all West African states.





EIGHT KEY AFRICAN REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES, RECs, *continued*

4. East African Community (EAC).

- Started in the colonial era (Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda- 3 Former British colonies).
- Currently joined by Burundi, Rwanda, and South Sudan

5. Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

- Economic Community of Great Lakes States (DRC, Burundi, Rwanda) + CEMAC (Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa)
- Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Republic of Congo, and Gabon. Equatorial Guinea, Angola Sao Tome and Principe.





EIGHT KEY AFRICAN REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES, RECs, *continued*

6. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

- The largest and most advanced on the political front.
- 17 members (British, French, Portuguese past colonial experience and the special case of Liberia) and a new member from Morocco (N.A).

7. Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

- Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia (Horn of Africa), Sudan, South Sudan (Nile Valley), and Kenya, Uganda (Great Lakes).

8. Southern African Development Community (SADC)

- Second largest after ECOWAS) One of the most economically powerful due to the presence of South Africa
- Initial (South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia, and Botswana) and expanded membership (Comoros, DRC, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe).





ECOWAS

West Africa in Historical Perspectives

- Cultural Spheres.
- Socio-Geographic factors and cultural Spheres

West Africa and the West

- European proximity: Impact on the mapping.
- Americas: Pre-Columbian relations.
- Transatlantic Enslavement.
- Leadership for Pan-Africanism.









ECOWAS

Formal Founding Date: 28TH May 1975.

- Organization comprised of 17 West African countries.
- New Development: Morocco, a North African country requested to join ECOWAS. Request: Pending.

Objectives:

- Economic integration of West African States in the scope of transport, trade, and telecommunications.
- Political integration as a foundation for the above areas of integration: Major achievement Passport and free movement of people (no visa required).





ECOWAS: Socio-economic Development-Transport

- Exponential Transport growth.
- Highway Projects: Intra road network especially the projected Lagos-Abidjan highway.
- Highway started from Côte d'Ivoire & ends in Lagos (Nsikan, 2017). Retrieved from:
[https://www.westafricancountries.com/top-6-achievements-of-the-ecowas.](https://www.westafricancountries.com/top-6-achievements-of-the-ecowas)





ECOWAS

Pan-Africanism:

- ECOWAS revived the Pan-Africanist movement by creating the Ecowas passport.

Objective:

- To ease travel restrictions within the African continent.
- Unification of Anglophone, Francophone, and Lusophone countries.





ECOWAS-Information Technology

- ICT-Information & Communications Technology.
- An efficient telephone network was installed.
- Connected all the West African countries.





ECOWAS-PEACE

ECOWAS established the ECOWAS Monitoring Group, ECOMOG.

ECOMOG was instrumental in fostering peace in war-torn country -Sierra Leone.





THANK !

