



The 1980 decade will be crucial for Africa. It is becoming increasingly clear that the West (in reality the North-West) will oppose the emancipation of captive economies.<sup>1</sup> The arrogant language used by the World Bank in its famous report on Africa South of the Sahara bears this point out. It is known that this report does not suggest less than the continuation of the colonial Pact the essence of which is that countries of the periphery should serve economically speaking, countries of the North-West by sustaining their growth and making it possible for them to palliate the effects of the crises.

In order to rid Africa of under-development, economic co-operation appears as a vital need. Yet, it is making no headway. It is absolutely necessary to think over the conditions in which the problem of co-operation was posed. It seems to me that the LPA gives us the opportunity to do so. This is what we are going to attempt to do by summing up in a first point, the content of the old problematic.

In a second point, we shall show the originality of the problematic implicit in PAL, prior to identifying, in a final point, the fundamental implications:

- (1) Title of a book of Mamadou Dia
- (2) LAGOS Plan of Action.

1. The old problematic

During colonization, and in spite of balkanization intra-African co-operation was not necessary, as each colony or group of colonies was directly integrated in the economic space of the colonial power.

Since independence, co-operation has proved to be an urgent necessity both for internal development and reduction in the adverse effects of the operation of the world capitalist system divided into the centre and the periphery.

During the last twenty years, co-operation between developing and particularly, African countries was justified by the fact that, it makes possible, through economies of scale, an industrialization process based on the expansion of the regional or subregional market. Hence, the trend towards the formation of zones of free circulation of products, particularly, industrial products.

Emphasis was laid almost exclusively on the contribution of co-operation to the resolution of growth problems and possibly social problems. Its function in the re-adjustment process of external economic relations was neglected; to be more exact, "Communities" were conceived as attractive spaces for transnational corporations. The question as to whether these transnationals could not compromise the development process was not raised. This practice rested on another assumption, namely, that African economies are "market economies." In fact, the formation of customs unions and common markets is not compatible with planned economies, that is, economies in which the role of the market is no longer decisive.

Therefore, during the last twenty years intra-African economic co-operation presented three essential characteristics. These objectives were strictly economic in the narrow sense; the reduction in inequalities characteristic of North-South relations was not taken explicitly into account. This operation was not and could not be planned.

2. The demand for planned co-operation at the regional level.

The Lagos Plan of action stresses self-reliant development. National and subregional planning is enshrined in it. This is what is recommended in chapter XIII devoted to development planning. In it, we read:

"The Member States should elaborate on the basis of well identified objectives and priorities, national short, medium and long-term integrated development plans which should be integrated at the sub-regional, regional and continental levels", (p. 121 English-Version).

The above quotation seems to point out rightly that national plans should be defined in line with regional plans.<sup>1/</sup> Which means that the implementation of the Action Plan entails the supranationality of regional development organs. It is these organs, vested with supranational powers which should on the one hand, elaborate regional plans and on the other hand, avoid that Member States continue to maintain with developed countries relations incompatible with the objectives of Lagos. It is only then that we will be able to talk about planned co-operation.

Here, it is a question of an entirely new problematic. Indeed, one could have conceived a planned co-operation, without a supranational institution exercising hierarchical powers over national institutions as suggested by the example of COMECON: the Council has no supranational powers and each member country is free to sign agreements with third parties. This formal aspect should not however, conceal the reality, namely, that the cohesion of the whole structure depends on the presence of a big power: the U.S.S.R. For Africa, which expects that relations between the constituent parts be relations

---

<sup>1/</sup> Here, by region we mean, the first level, that designated as sub-region by the L.P.A. (Lagos Plan of Action). It is useless to dream of a short-term continental plan.

of equality, the COMECON model is inapplicable. The African model is the one which rests on the supranationality of the process of planning and hence on agencies which assume its design and ensure its execution. Without agencies vested with supranational powers, there can be no real co-operation as a support to self-reliant development.

Is it possible? or rather, what are the conditions of possibility? This seems to be a fundamental question to us.

### 3. The demand for political co-operation.

1. By supposing that each African State has a real will to implement the recommendations of Lagos, the most important problem is the attitude of developed countries, particularly the capitalist countries. In fact the implementation of the L.P.A. has as an important implication, the planning of the rate of exploitation of natural resources in relation to the needs of self-reliant development, by relying on its own efforts. Now, Africa is the reservoir continent of raw materials and hydrocarbons "par excellence". The developed countries are opposed and will be opposed to the implementation of the principles of Lagos. In other words, they will be opposed to the planning process of planned co-operation, including the recourse to subversion.

Thus, co-operation will only fulfil the economic functions attributed to it by contributing to the political, and even military strengthening of Africa. This is why, the process of political merger on the regional scale appears, in most cases, as a prerequisite for the development of co-operation.

Quite obviously, this demand is not only economic. It is a general demand which starts from the established fact that today Africa does not exert its proper influence on the march of world events; on the contrary it submits to it. The underlying ambition

of co-operation is that it make it possible to exert a proper influence. This is why, even if the recommendations of the Berg Report could lead the economic development of micro-States, we would reject it all the same, because, mend and less still, nations do not live by bread alone.

2. If we make the assumption that only certain countries undertake to implement the principles of Lagos, then obviously, co-operation will not be able to assume a general and planned character. The best form of co-operation is therefore, that co-operation which is neutral in relation to national experiences. This will be sectoral co-operation by a light institutional machinery. In any case, the models of co-operation inspired by the E.E.C. will not be suitable.

### Conclusion

We believe that we have succeeded in revealing that the L.P.A. calls for a renewal of reflexion on intra-African co-operation.

The latter should assist in achieving collective self-reliant development; it should, of necessity, be planned; the models of the past, drawn, or copied from the European Economic Community have not been operative in the extraverted economies of the last twenty years. We would be embarking on a bad course if we continued in the same direction; it would also be an error to think that the East-European model, based on the principle of Sovereignty of States, but with a big power to ensure cohesion, could be directly useful to Africa. The African model of co-operation should consider as a necessary condition for its efficiency, the political debalkanization of the continent. By what phases can we achieve this? This is another problem to be examined seriously according to a voluntarist approach which is ours.

ANNEX 1: EXTRACTS FROM THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION

A1 - P1 - "We resolved to adopt a far-reaching regional approach based primarily on collective self-reliance".

A2 - P5 - "We commit ourselves, individually and collectively on behalf of our governments and peoples, to promote the economic and social development and integration of our economies with a view to achieving an increasing measure of self-sufficiency and self-sustainment."

Further on: "Efforts towards African economic integration must be pursued with renewed determination in order to create a continent-wide framework for the much needed economic co-operation for development based on collective self-reliance.

A3 - P6 - "We commit ourselves, individually and collectively, on behalf of our governments and peoples, to establish national, sub-regional and regional institutions which will facilitate the attainment of objectives of self-reliance and self-sustainment".

B - EXTRACT FROM CH. XIII

"Development planning, statistics and population".

P. 121 - "The Member States should elaborate on the basis of well identified objectives and priorities, national short, medium and long-term integrated development plans which should be integrated at the sub-regional, regional and continental levels.

EXTRACT FROM THE FINAL ACT.C - The final act.

"We reaffirm our commitment to set up, by the year 2000, on the basis of a treaty to be concluded, an African Economic Community, so as to ensure the economic, social and cultural integration of our continent. The aim of this community shall be to promote collective, accelerated, self-reliant and self-sustaining development of Member States; co-operation among these States; and their integration in the economic, social and cultural fields.

ANNEX II: EXTRACTS FROM AN IMPORTANT TEXT

of A. Adedeji on the Intra-African Cooperation<sup>1/</sup>

- P. 7 - "The full implications of the effort to achieve economic cooperation in West Africa cannot be fully realized unless it is seen within the context of the struggle of the developing world to achieve a new world economic order. The adjustment of relations between the industrialised countries of the North and the developing countries of the South of this planet of ours is now the dominating issue that faces mankind".
- P. 9 - "Thus, economic cooperation must be given two dimensions mutual support in the pursuit of national socio-economic objectives and mutual support (i.e. collective bargaining) in respect of relations with third parties".
- P. 11 - "In other words, economic cooperation must be seen not merely as a means for market expansion but primarily as an instrument for the transformation of the structure of production and distribution".

---

<sup>1/</sup> Adebayo Adedeji: Collective self-reliance in developing Africa: Scope, prospects and problems, papers on ECOWAS prepared under the auspices of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos 1976. The paper stresses the need for a global approach to intra-african cooperation.



- P. 15 - "It is concerned with the transformation of production and reorganisation of distribution for the purposes and in the manner African Governments have decided up".
- P. 15 - "Collective self-reliance is not wholly satisfied by socio-economic cooperation. It implies a capability of the group as a whole to respond to challenge to its survival and development and these challenges need not take an exclusively economic form though they may have an economic purpose".
- P. 16 - "Collective self-reliance need not, however, anticipate such dramatic challenges even though it implies capability for fending off aggressive invaders of the community or any of its members. It could include capability for handling natural disasters or for protecting the community as a whole against serious damage to eco-systems. It could imply the readiness and the ability of other members to come to the aid of a member subject to serious economic stress generally or of specific kinds".