

REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN WEST AFRICA; A CASE STUDY OF THE ECOWAS FREE MOVEMENT PROTOCOL.

OGORUGBA VIVIAN AFORKEOGHENE

Matriculation Number: 19PAH01954

B.Sc International Studies and Diplomacy, Benson Idahosa University Benin-city

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BY

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF SCIENCE (M. Sc) DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, COLLEGE OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, COVENANT UNIVERSITY, OTA, OGUN STATE.

SEPTEMBER, 2021

ACCEPTANCE

This is to attest that this dissertation is accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of degree of Master of Science (M.Sc) in International Relations in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Leadership Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria.

Mr. John A. Philip

(Secretary, School of Postgraduate Studies)

Signature and Date

Prof. Akan B. Williams

(Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies)

Signature and Date

DECLARATION

I, VIVIAN OGORUGBA A. (19PAH01954) declare that this research was carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. Esther F. Owolabi of the Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Leadership Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria. I attest that this dissertation has not been presented either wholly or partially for the award of any degree elsewhere. All sources of data, scholarly information used in this dissertation are duly acknowledged.

VIVIAN, OGORUGBA AFORKEOGHENE

Signature and Date

CERTIFICATION

We certify that this dissertation titled **regional integration and sustainable development in west africa: a case study of the ECOWAS free movement protocol** is an original research carried out by **VIVIAN, OGORUGBA AFORKEOGHENE** (19PAH01954) in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Leadership Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria under the supervision of Dr. Esther F.Owolabi. We have examined and found this work acceptable as part of the requirements for the award of Master of Science (M.Sc.) in International Relations.

Dr. Esther F. Owolabi

Supervisor

Signature and Date

Prof. Daniel E. Gberevbie

Head of Department, PSI

Signature and Date

Dr. Bonnie Ayodele

External Examiner

Signature and Date

Prof. Akan B. Williams

(Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies)

Signature and Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the Almighty God for his protection, provision, guidance, love, mercies, and indefinite favour throughout my academic programme.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | | |
|--------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| i. | ASEAN | Association of Southern Asia Nations |
| ii. | AU | African Union |
| iii. | COMESA | Common Market for East and Southern Africa |
| iv. | EAC | East African Community |
| v. | ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| vi. | ETLS | ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme |
| vii. | EU | European Union |
| viii. | FGM | Female Genital Mutilation |
| ix. | FMP | Free Movement Protocol |
| x. | GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| xi. | LDC | Least Developing Countries |
| xii. | NAFTA | North American Free Trade Agreement |
| xiii. | NANTS | National Association of Nigerian Traders |
| xiv. | OECD and Development | The Organisation for Economic Cooperation |
| xv. | REC | Regional Economic Communities |
| xvi. | SACU | Southern African Custom Union |
| xvii. | SADC | Southern African Development Community |
| xviii. | SD | Sustainable Development |
| xix. | SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| xx. | UK | United Kingdom |
| xxi. | UN | United Nations |
| xxii. | UNASUR | Union of South American Nations |
| xxiii. | UNIFEM | United Nations Development Fund for Women |
| xxiv. | WAEMU | West African Economic and Monetary Union |
| xxv. | WAMZ | West African Monetary Zone |

ABSTRACT

This research examines the prospect, effectiveness and challenges of the ECOWAS free movement protocol, evaluate the degree of the protocol's implementation in Ecowas member states and identifies their utility to traders and other citizens residing in these countries. In Africa, regional integration appears to be a feasible means to achieve a socio-economic stability and also facilitate the integration of newly independent African nations in the world global economy. In the quest for new strategies for the achievement of all-round sustainable development, West African sub-region was determined to embrace a policy of regional, economic and cultural integration. In Lagos, Nigeria, sixteen West African countries signed a contract to establish the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in May 1975. States adopted a protocol on the free movement of persons, residence and establishment in May 1979, four years after the treaty's publication. It declared among other things that community residents have the right to enter, reside and develop economic activity in the territory of member states and it established a three-phased method to reaching the treaty's goal of "full freedom of movement"

This study looks at how the free movement protocol is implemented and how effective it is throughout ECOWAS member states. The research design adopted for this study is the case study design. Primary data were gotten through questionnaires while secondary data was retrieved from already published works such as academic journals, books, newspapers, reports and online materials. The study shows that the protocol is not fully effective and does not thoroughly cover commuters and trans-border traders from other member states. In addition, the study discovers that lack of infrastructure like rail network, bad roads and also lack of proper documentation by security personnel also contribute to the ineffectiveness of the free movement protocol. Consequently, the existence of bribery and corruption among the security officer along borders is also a problem, as criminals and terrorist can easily penetrate through borders.

Keywords: ECOWAS, ECOWAS free movement protocol, free movement protocol, regional integration, sustainable development