

A PASSIONATE LETTER TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: 44TH EDITION

REVIEWING THE JUNE 2017 ECOWAS SUMMIT □ **Your Excellency Sir,** It's been six months since I subscribed to my usual publications of this piece. And this is primarily because I have been out of the country for the entire period, and as such would not normally objectively tender a subscription. I do apologize to my readers for this. So having being in Monrovia, Liberia for the recently concluded

ECOWAS Summit

, I would like to

do some analysis on such a historic august body and gathering of this sub-Saharan/West African region.

In resume, among other crucial achievements,

ECOWAS,

through its military apparatus,

ECOMOG,

played very

sacrificial and invaluable roles in bringing peace, security and democratic governance to both Sierra Leone and Liberia during their past civil wars, and most recently ensuring that the Gambian people's democratic change of government from the notorious dictatorial twenty seven years regime of Yaya Jarmeh, to the current government of President Adama Barrow, through their tactical robust intervention, overseen by President Helen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and other ECOWAS Presidents/actors, was enforced

. Furthermore, ECOWAS has also spearheaded the enactment of several socio-political, advocacy and economic treaties in the sub region.

Also, more importantly, apart from its interventions, where armed/civil conflicts may be unavoidable, I would like to

proffer that the ECOWAS parliament works much assiduously in its conflict prevention mechanism and impartial good governance structures and measures within its member states

, though being cognizant of the independence and sovereignty of each member state. You may agree that

conflict prevention is much cheaper and easier, socially, politically, militarily and economically than its resolution and management.

For

real lasting security and peace to be realized in West Africa (and Africa,) the

“herculean monster” of corruption

, which brings about social and legal injustice and bad governance, must be decisively,

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Written by Rev. Dr. Abraham J. Williams
Tuesday, 20 June 2017 12:43

sincerely and impartially tackled by the ECOWAS parliament and our respective member states.

I opine that, Corruption must be legally elevated to a treasonable offense, especially those of high magnitude; which must be punishable either by death or life solitary confinement. Lesser ones must also be made to attract stiff jail sentences and confiscation of properties as the case may be.

Only this can lead us into meaningful, rapid and sustainable development, good governance and lasting societal security.

The prolonged menace of corruption with impunity breeds repression, which inadvertently, sooner or later, breeds rebellion and war

In addition, I do implore your good office to ensure that

ECOWAS actors and election observers independently and sincerely observe and address the entire electioneering processes to ensure that they are truly free, fair and transparent indeed. So as to provide a level playing field for both incumbent and opposition political parties.

This would certainly remove disaffection from all the political actors, thereby forestalling conflicts before, during and after elections.

What was also very noteworthy was the inclusion of the Israeli Prime Minister in this year's summit. Aside the few security exuberances that occurred, which I would not like to belabour on, I think

Israel's active international cooperation with Africa, in terms of fighting terrorism, agricultural and human resource development, as well as scientific and economic empowerment would be invaluable.

This cooperation must be explored as much as that of Africa and China.

In effect, with the

increasing spate of global/Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism, the extreme porosity of our borders, coupled with bad (poor) economies of most African states, our West Africa, could well be a viable target for so-called Islamic State/terrorist recruitment and activities

. And it must further be noted that any country that identifies and/or embraces Israel receives the blessings of the Sovereign Lord of the universe, as implied in His word, the Holy Bible.

However, having travelled to some of the countries in sub Saharan Africa, both by land and air, I have observed that our cross border trade agreements are a complete fiasco. The unnecessary, cumbersome check points and systemic extortion of both businessmen and other commuters are very shameful and extremely unreflective of the ECOWAS treaties being enacted.

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Sometimes, it may even seem unnecessary to have obtained all your travel documents and requirements. Because you would still be made to pay illegal fees or be unduly detained before being released to go. Travelling with your private vehicle as a non government functionary /non diplomat can be even more frustrating. No matter how many documents you present, you would always be required to provide another, just so you cannot escape the border extortion syndicate. The schemes are just many.

The

common commodity ECOWAS intra trade taxations at the entry ports and border crossings that are meant to create affordable prices for the common man, are so irregular, subjective and criminal, to say the least. And very unfortunately, it is the struggling local businessmen and masses that bear the brunt of all these irregularities and disjointed trade signals.

I am writing all of these observations just to make you understand what obtains on the ground at our ECOWAS legal entry points, especially as you travel by land; our systems are completely dysfunctional and even much counterproductive to the economic and

security interests of our countries.

Sir, I trust that once again my pro bono observations, analysis and discourse would be relevant towards critical thinking and effecting necessary change for the general good and the betterment of the commoners especially.

**MAY THE ALMIGHTY GOD HELP YOU!!!
LAND THAT WE LOVE OUR SIERRA LEONE.**

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Best Regards,

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