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**Economically Supporting West African
Countries Emerging from Conflict**

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Introduction

Following the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, many states around the globe experienced severe conflicts with the ascending competition between states. Especially a majority of the states located in West Africa suffered from civil wars which affected their social systems, economies, public infrastructure and many more elements negatively, elements which ensure a normal standard of living for their citizens. Hence, many doctors, academicians, teachers, politicians fled these countries to find a safer place to live.

With these dreadful impacts on the society and the government of these states, in the post-conflict times, the people who rule the country have a really hard time to recover all the damaged infrastructure in the country along with the destroyed social security system. Thus, supporting these states, especially economically since they get the most damage to their economic power and resources will ensure that the normal conditions and the normal standard of living for the citizens of that country will be provided along with their basic needs.

The issue at hand has a borderless concept and impact since these economically damaged countries prevent the United Nations and other states to fulfill the sustainable development goals around the globe. Therefore, we need to tackle this issue in a reasonable and considerate manner.

General Overview

The intra-conflicts in the West African countries has caused many of these states' economies to collapse completely since the government itself had limited economic resources before the conflict and spent almost all the resources to prevent the civil war from spreading around the country and overseeing most of the impacts on the social structure of the government. Thus, countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mali, Niger, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal, some of which has been experiencing conflicts extensively and some of which just started to show the signals of a conflict, need lots of economical support to reinforce and recover their governmental systems and social structures.

To start with, the state weakens and becomes less powerful with the intra-conflict emerging, so a need for the state to be renewed and reformed is born. However, the lack of a consensus within the powers of a state prevents these states from making effective decisions for the future of the country. In addition, the main social infrastructures of the country consisting of the education system, the transportation system, the healthcare system, and the communication system experiences a huge damage with the lack of a proper maintenance and a control mechanism during the

conflict itself. Thus, a proper control mechanism needs to be established as well with the economic contributions and economic improvements.

Definition of Key Terms

ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States

ECOMOG: The Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group

ECA: The United Nations Economic Commission of Africa

ECA/SRO-WA: The Office for West Africa of the Economic Commission for Africa

AU: The African Union

Intra-Conflict: The conflict taking place within a country to intentionally harm the government or divide the state to gain independence by a specific group of people.

Inter-Conflict: The conflict taking place between different states rooted from many different reasons such as economic or political reasons.

Social Infrastructure: The social infrastructure of a country covers this country's basic education, primary healthcare, nutrition, safe water and sanitation, which enables the citizens of that state to have their basic rights and a normal standard of living compared to other states.

Economic Recovery: The improvement of the economic sources and economic conditions in a state.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Liberia: In 1989, the first civil war outburst in Liberia resulted in the deaths of thousands of Liberians. In 1996 the conflict was finalized with a ceasefire with the help of ECOMOG forces and the ECOWAS. However, in 1999, a second civil war erupted because of the disagreements between the parties in the state. Unfortunately, with the end of the second civil conflict, there were many incidents of rape, torture, massacre and damage to the public institutions. Since Liberia is one of the states, which has experienced the impact of the conflicts on the social infrastructure along with the society and the government itself, its government has been cooperating with the ECOWAS and the ECA/SRO-WA to ensure the implementation of a solid economic development program after the conflicts.

Sierra Leone: Sierra Leone is a state, which experienced similar incidents as the Liberian government. A civil war outburst in 1991 and the following coup had dreadful effects on the country as a whole, specifically the social infrastructure and the citizens. This civil war, which ended in 2002, has been infamous because of its roots such as corruption in the government, bad social infrastructure, lack of a proper control and maintenance mechanism etc. In Sierra Leone, post-conflict actions of the United Nations were common which had a goal to support post-conflict reconstruction processes and establish a peace environment for the citizens.

ECOWAS: The ECOWAS was created in 1975, just when the conflicts throughout the region had arisen. After its establishment, the ECOWAS aimed for an integrated economy with the member states to strengthen their economies and empower their economic stabilities. However, with recent intra-conflicts the ECOWAS needed to interfere with the governments and aid them in the process of eliminating the conflict. For that purpose, the ECOMOG was created under the ECOWAS which was consisting mostly of military groups and soldiers to fight on behalf of the governments against the attackers to finalize the conflict. However, even though the ECOWAS was temporarily successful in finalizing the conflict and helping the states to recover economically, in some states the ceasefires were not permanent. Since then, the ECOWAS has been working to ensure the economic development and sustainability of its member states along with the ECA/SRO-WA and the support and aid of the United Nations ECA.

Timeline of Events

Date of Event	Description of Event
1958	The establishment of the United Nations ECA.
December 1989	The beginning of the first Liberian Civil War.
1991	The beginning of the civil war in Sierra Leone.
1996	The establishment of the ECA/SRO-WA.
1975	The establishment of ECOWAS.
May 21st 2001	The establishment of the AU.
2002	The Côte d'Ivoire civil war.
2007	The signing of the Ouagadougou Peace Accord in Côte d'Ivoire.
April 2012	The Coup d'état in Guinea Bissau.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

The West African states being aware of the roots of the problem, sought for ways to eliminate all the obstacles preventing them to recover properly. To begin with, they integrated more democratic leaders and governments in these states, which would enable them to be led reasonably and effectively and ensure that the economy would be well managed. Secondly, they focused on the economic aspect of the problem, which was the most crucial part. They integrated more solid economic policies where they increased the application of agriculture to increase economic power with the Quality Management Training Program of ECOWAS. This program has been applied in the West African states since 2015. In addition, the debt crisis was ended and more solid and cooperative relationships with the international community was born.

To exemplify, with the help of the International Monetary Fund, the states firstly managed to stabilize their economies. Then, they started cooperating with the UN along with the European Union and the AU. Most recently, the United Nations ECA has decided upon a meeting between experts and the West African governments to be held in ECA/SRO-WA to evaluate the decisions and policies decided upon by the ECOWAS states for the future.

Apart from these states, the international community has been working upon this issue too. For example, the UN Security Council has published the resolution 2343 regarding the mandate and the authority of the UN Integrated Peace-building Office in Guinea-Bissau in February 2017. In addition, the UN Economic and Social Council has also been working upon this issue with the help of the SC. The Progress Report of the Secretary General on peace-building in the aftermath of conflict published in 2017 within the Security Council and the ECOSOC sums up the efforts taken by the UN to support the West African states both economically and socially and indicates possible further actions to be taken in the future.

Possible Solutions

Even though, there has been a considerable progress since the end of the 19th century in the economic conditions of the West African states, there is still a lot to do and a lot of aspects, which need to be addressed.

For example, the budget planning aspect of the issue should be addressed immediately for these states to be able to spare enough budget for the recovery of the social structures. In addition, the delegates should also bear in mind a possible fund to be established specifically for the West African states emerging from the conflict.

Furthermore, you might also need to consider the social integration part of the economic support given by international organizations and how to mandate this process itself.

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