



# WEST AFRICA BRIEF

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No 267, 26 June - 31 July 2018

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## MALI'S 2018 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION



The presidential election in Mali was held, as scheduled, on 29 July 2018. According to the provisional results on 2 August, the incumbent president, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (IBK), won 41.4% of the vote. His main challenger Soumaïla Cissé (Soumi) obtained 17.8%. Turnout was 43%. A run-off election is scheduled for 12 August 2018. Some 8 million Malians -- less than half of Mali's population -- registered and were entitled to choose one of the 24 candidates running for presidency. Some 23 041 polling stations were set up across the country. The election was peaceful overall, but there

were some disruptions and incidents of violence, mainly in central and northern Mali. At least 6 400 sites reported disruptions and nearly 700 sites were unable to operate. ECOWAS deployed an election observation mission with some 150 observers, led by former ECOWAS Commission President Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo. As tensions are rising, the UN is calling upon all parties to respect the election results. Several candidates have already announced that they will contest the results. President IBK was elected in 2013 on the promise of curbing violence, and his 2018 campaign again focused on security. Cissé's campaign also mainly focused on "peace" and "bringing new hope for a new Mali." However, both candidates are part of Mali's political elite, which has been ruling the country for decades. Faced with the threat of an Islamist insurgency, the country largely depends on international support. "No one is under the illusion that [the] Malian presidential election will fundamentally change the political landscape," explained Arthur Boutellis from the International Peace Institute. "But it could serve to restart discussions between Malian authorities and its many, but too often, uncoordinated international partners on a genuine and holistic medium-term security sector reform vision and a realistic strategy adapted to the needs of populations and to new security threats."

The West Africa Brief is published by the Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD). It presents political, economic and social developments in the region. Special focus is given to news regarding regional organisations (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS) as well other SWAC Members' activities. The articles should not be reported as representing the official views of the OECD or of its member countries. Contact: [julia.wanjiru@oecd.org](mailto:julia.wanjiru@oecd.org)

## LOMÉ HOSTS UEMOA, ECOWAS, ECCAS SUMMITS



The Togolese capital hosted a series of important events for West Africa's regional organisations. UEMOA leaders met on 30 July 2018 for the 20th Ordinary Session of Heads of State and Government. The meeting was convened by President Alassane Ouattara of Côte d'Ivoire who is also the current chairman of UEMOA. Member countries recorded solid economic growth in 2017 at 6.7%. For the first time, three of the eight member countries respected the convergence criteria. The level of the community solidarity tax was maintained at 0.8%. The tax covers the operational costs of the UEMOA Commission among other things. It was recently reduced from 1% to 0.8% and is supposed to be further reduced to 0.5% by January 2019. Leaders also reviewed the political, economic and social situations of member countries. They welcomed the mostly peaceful election in

Mali and the newly-established consensual government in Guinea-Bissau. However, the overall security situation remains of concern. They asked the Commission to advance in the work to make the early warning system (MEVAP) operational. Just after the UEMOA summit, ECOWAS leaders gathered for their 53rd Ordinary Session of Heads of State and Government. President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria was nominated as new ECOWAS chairperson. Twelve out of 15 heads of state participated in the summit. Questions about the free circulation of people and goods were at the heart of discussions. ECOWAS leaders welcomed the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and encouraged member countries to join quickly. They also commended the regional food security reserve's interventions to assist vulnerable populations and urged member countries to replenish its food stocks. The joint ECOWAS-ECCAS summit was held on 30 July and focused on the security situation in West and Central Africa. Heads of state adopted the Lomé Declaration to collaborate on peace, security and the fight against terrorism and violent extremism in the ECOWAS-ECCAS space. They agreed to develop a common surveillance policy to enhance exchanges of strategic intelligence, particularly related to early warnings.

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## CROSS-BORDER DEVELOPMENT IN THE SAHEL



Cross-border experts, practitioners and international partners gathered on 3-4 July 2018 in Cotonou, Benin, to share experiences and discuss innovative mechanisms for making cross-border co-operations operational. The seminar highlighted the crucial contribution of border areas and populations to the regional integration process, based on the Local Cross-Border Co-operation Programme currently led by UEMOA in collaboration with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Participants also

identified obstacles and discussed the many institutional challenges and how they affect cross-border development, particularly in the context of increasing security challenges. Concrete examples illustrate how some of these challenges can be addressed; for example, the creation of inter-communal administrations with legal and financial arrangements between bordering towns could allow them to more easily implement joint cross-border interventions. On a larger scale, the SKBo triangle (Sikasso-Korhogo-Bobo Dioulasso) has developed the Integrated Cross-border Development Scheme (SATI). The 32 000 kilometres of borders that divide West Africa are often viewed as an obstacle to regional integration. The seminar promoted an alternative vision of the region's borders by highlighting their potential in terms of economic opportunities and security. The meeting was organised by the UEMOA Commission and the Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD) with the support of the SDC.

## 7<sup>TH</sup> UEMOA HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON **FOOD SECURITY**



For the seventh time, UEMOA leaders met to discuss the food and nutrition situation in member countries. The UEMOA high-level committee was held on 10 July in Niamey. Considering the critical pastoral situation, ministers in charge of livestock also participated in this event. Within the UEMOA area, some 3.5 million people are currently in a crisis situation and need urgent food assistance, notably in the Sahelian countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal).

Response plans are being implemented. Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo have also elaborated specific response plans for transhumant livestock breeders from Sahelian countries. The high cost of these emergency responses was discussed. It might be cheaper to scale up investments to support structurally vulnerable populations, in line with the objectives of the Global Alliance for Resilience (AGIR). These populations cannot withstand even the smallest shock and suffer from seasonal food shortages during the lean season every year. CILSS is in charge of strengthening the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to better assess the impact of these plans. Moreover, the SWAC president transmitted a letter to recommend the appointment of a West African ambassador for food and nutrition security who would lobby for greater support from technical and financial partners. The final communiqué puts forward a series of recommendations to member states, CILSS, UEMOA, ECOWAS and partners.

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## AU SUMMIT: **NEPAD BECOMES AUDA**

Mauritania hosted the 31<sup>st</sup> Summit of the African Union in its capital city Nouakchott from 25 June-2 July. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was at the heart of discussions. By now, nearly all (49 of the 55) member states have signed the agreement establishing the AfCFTA. Chad, Ghana and Niger are among the six countries that have already ratified the agreement. The free trade area will enter into force once at least 22 member countries have ratified it. The AfCFTA will offer new opportunities for business and boost integration within the African continent. African leaders also approved the creation of the African Union Development Agency (AUDA) as a technical body of the African Union, which will have its own legal entity. The NEPAD planning unit is in charge of developing a statute for AUDA, which

will be presented and approved at the next AU summit. The transition from NEPAD to AUDA will be organised as a second phase. "A core aspect of the current reforms is to streamline and improve effectiveness and efficiency in delivery in the implementation of AU decisions, policies and programmes across all AU organs and institutions," explained Ibrahim Mayaki, CEO of the NEPAD Agency. As regards the political and security situation, the members welcomed the progress and gains registered in Guinea-Bissau and Mali, as well as in the fight against the Boko Haram terrorist group. They also chose the theme of 2019: "Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement." Niger is already preparing to host the next AU summit in January 2019.

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## **SUMMER READING**

### **AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT DYNAMICS**

On the side-lines of the AU summit, the African Union Commission and the OECD Development Centre launched its first joint report entitled, "Africa's development dynamics." This first edition explores the dynamics of growth, jobs and inequalities. It proposes 10 decisive actions to promote sustainable economic and social development and to strengthen institutions in Africa. Chapter 7 examines economic dynamics of ECOWAS member countries from

1990 to 2015. Strong regional growth could be undermined by youth unemployment. Most young people are employed in the informal sector. The lack of formal employment, poor education levels and the gap between skills and jobs contribute to unemployment, particularly among youth. The report uses the lessons learned in the five African regions – Central, East, North, Southern and West Africa – to develop recommendations and share good practices.

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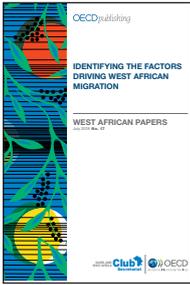
### **AN ALTERNATIVE REPORT ON AFRICA**

This report offers an alternative perspective on the development of the African continent. It is the first edition of a "report on Africa by Africans" produced by a consortium of African research institutes and think tanks. Some 40 intellectuals from across the continent and the diaspora have contributed to the report. Structured in five thematic areas, it aims to strengthen Africa's capacity to pursue independent research and to develop a forward-looking

vision of African societies. "Africa continues to be poorly measured, badly presented and poorly known by Africans. Statistical systems, if existent, don't accurately reflect the reality. There is no reliable database on development issues, nor on demographics, even less so on any other dimensions specific to the lives of Africans," state the authors. They explore African thinking from the past to today, and present their visions for Africa's future.

# SUMMER READING

## IDENTIFYING THE FACTORS DRIVING WEST AFRICAN MIGRATION TO EUROPE



The most recent West Africa paper, published by the SWAC Secretariat, analyses the motivation and driving factors of West African migration to Europe. Since 2014 over 600 000 African migrants have arrived in Italy through the perilous central Mediterranean route, and nearly 120 000 arrived in 2017 alone. This paper is the first examination of migration motivations at the individual level using nationally-representative surveys and focus group data collected in six West Africa countries. The study specifically focuses on Nigeria, the country of origin for a quarter

of all Africans traveling through the central Mediterranean route. Statistical analysis of the Nigerian data reveals that economic standing has a limited effect on Nigerians' desire to leave their home. Instead, individual perceptions of the strength of Nigeria's democracy are most strongly associated with their desire to migrate to Europe, in addition to their low levels of trust in local security institutions. Urban and more highly educated Nigerians, especially from Lagos, are also more likely to want to move abroad.

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## INCENTIVES AND CONSTRAINTS OF INFORMAL TRADE BETWEEN NIGERIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS



The scale of unrecorded trade across the borders between Nigeria, the region's biggest economy and market, and its francophone neighbours is high. Despite providing economic incentives, informal trade entails other costs, complications and sometimes risks. This West African Paper explores the

current policy choices and government actions that could create a more conducive business environment to support trade between West African neighbours on a formal basis. Drawing from informed examples, it considers options for further policy action and public investment.

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## OPINION: THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY IS THE CENTURY OF AFRICA'S UNIFICATION



In this interview, Samia Nkrumah, daughter of the father of Ghana's independence, calls for the political unification of Africa. The political unity of Africa is a prerequisite to facilitating its economic integration. She explains, "The majority of our people are suffering. People vote every three years, but nothing concrete changes. This must make us realise that there has to be another solution. You see that democracy alone is not enough, because our economies are very small. We

are not viable [alone]. Why don't we look at that original solution, the one we have never truly tried: unification. It could solve our economic problems. We were not made to be small countries. Are we the ones who drew these economic boundaries? No!" Samia Nkrumah continues in the interview, "If the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the century of independence, the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be the century of Africa's unification."

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## WHO'S WHO: SAMIA NKRUMAH, PAN-AFRICANIST



Samia Nkrumah, is a Ghanaian politician and the chairperson of the Convention People's Party. She was the first woman to head a major political party in Ghana. Daughter of Ghana's founding father, Kwame Nkrumah, she is a strong defender of Pan-Africanism. Samia Nkrumah is one of the founding members of the Africa Must Unite movement, which aims to promote her father's vision. She created and is president of the Kwame Nkrumah Pan-African Cultural Centre, dedicated to global African culture and history.

As a child, Samia Nkrumah was forced to leave Ghana following the military coup in 1966 that overthrew her father. She then lived for many years in Egypt, her mother's home country, before pursuing her studies in London. She obtained a bachelor's degree in Arabic studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London where she also completed a master's degree. Before starting her political career in Ghana, she worked as a journalist with the Egyptian newspaper Al-Ahram.