AFRICA AND THE ‘GLOBALIZATION BARGAIN’: TOWARDS A COLLECTIVE ECONOMIC SOVEREIGNTY

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Introduction

A collective stance will enable member states to reap the benefits of economies of scale and greater bargaining powers, vis-à-vis other global players. The obverse is of course that states cede some of their sovereign powers to [a] common institution (Wachira 2007, 12; brackets are mine).

Wachira’s assertion cited above aptly and succinctly situates the thrust of this paper. The paper examines the status and future of economic sovereignty among African states in the current era of globalization, against the backdrop of the eroding impacts of globalization on the sovereign powers of states, which calls for a collective mitigation; to wit a collective continental approach to economic sovereignty.

Scholarship on sovereignty has come a full cycle, yielding contending and contradictory perspectives. Of these perspectives, two schools of thought are readily discernible. The first is the school that believes in the demise of sovereignty. The school contends that forces of globalization have fundamentally altered the contemporary state system in such a manner that renders the concept of sovereignty otiose (Ivan 2013; Lodder 2017). A corollary of this perspective is that claims of national sovereignty in the new world order is merely a matter of pretension; hence sovereignty is seen as an “organized hypocrisy” (Krasner 1999, 23). The second school posits that in spite of the influences of globalization on national sovereignty, states still

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retain appreciable degree of sovereign powers (Waller and Simon 1985; Rothe 2010; Zhongying 2005).

In the same vein, academic discourse on aspects of economic sovereignty in the context of the globalizing world has been perennial (Quiggin 2000; Buxbaum 2002; Quiggin 2005; Sakong 2016; Richardson and Stähle 2017). At the core of the discourse is the dilemma of reconciling the imperatives of national economic sovereignty with the exigencies of the increasingly interdependent and globalizing economic world. In a public presentation in 2016, Dr. I. Sakong of the Institute of Global Economy engaged this dilemma in a salient analytical poser: “Should Economic Sovereignty be a Top National Priority?” And he went on to posit: “If the answer is a simple ‘yes’, then ... countries would be reluctant to join any form of multilateral institutions, such as the IMF, World Bank and the WTO, or to participate in any bilateral or regional agreements, such as various free-trade agreements, customs, monetary, or fiscal unions” (Sakong 2016, 1). Sakong seems to be of the opinion that although national economic sovereignty matters, its pursuit may ultimately be a needlessly costly venture. According to him:

[O]pportunity costs of insisting on the national economic sovereignty at all times could be devastatingly high, especially in this deeply interdependent global economic world. China made nearly 10 years’ efforts to join the WTO in 2001 and the Chinese economy prospered afterwards. North Korea is an illuminating opposite case. The UK’s decision to exit from the European Union apparently is not simply motivated by keeping the economic sovereignty alone. Even then, both short-and long-term economic costs for the UK will be staggering as many foresaw, and short-term damages are already becoming apparent (Sakong 2016, 1).

If globalization has come to stay and its immanent grip on the global economy is for now irreversible, then pursuit of inward-looking economic sovereignty by any state is not only costly but also vain. For African states that are already at the receiving end of globalization, prioritizing national economic sovereignty over supranational collective sovereignty would be both futile and catastrophic. As Wachira (2007) rightly observes, the ultimate bargain is that African states cede some of their sovereign powers to a common supranational institution. This is the prime standpoint of this paper.

Literature has blossomed rather disproportionately with regard to the political aspects of the sovereignty-globalization problematic (Waller and Simon 1985; Wachira 2007; Lodder 2017). In the prevailing gamut and litany of scholarly perspectives, only little has been said concerning the economic dimension of the problematic. This is a fundamental epistemic

gap, considering the fact that it is economic sovereignty that determines the efficacy of political sovereignty. In effect, in absence of economic sovereignty, "Political sovereignty becomes a chimera, an empty word whose meaning is increasingly symbolic [...]" (Savanovic 2014, 1038).

The paper has its essence in para-theorizing and analytical prescription. It rethinks the extant perspectives on sovereignty and underscores the imperative for economic sovereignty for Africa in the age of globalization. Yet its purpose is not only theoretical and prescriptive, for it proffers a polemical engagement with its subject matter with a view to engendering a praxis-oriented scholarship. If the outcome of the discourse only helps in edifying intellectual and policy endeavors towards the appreciation of the necessity for 'trans-nationalization' of sovereignty in Africa in the ongoing era of globalization, then the purpose of the paper must have been creditably met.

The remainder of the paper is thematically organized in a number of sections. What comes next is the conceptual clarifications wherein the key terms implicit in the subject matter are considered with a view to operationalizing them. This is followed by a theoretical exploration of the notion of sovereignty, designed to situate the discourse in proper epistemological perspective. After this comes a discussion on the necessity for a collective economic sovereignty in Africa in the era of globalization. The last section is the conclusion.

Conceptual Clarifications

Five key terms form the conceptual frame of this paper, namely collective sovereignty, economic sovereignty, globalization, globalization bargain and multilateralism. These terms are considered hereunder (Table 1) in order to operationalize their meanings in the context of the present discourse.

Table 1: Conceptualization of Key Terms

Term	Conceptualization
Collective sovereignty	This a mechanism for leveraging and coordinating national jurisdictions into a multilateral arrangement dedicated to functional supra-nationalism. It is premised on the principle that “states have and are willing to cede some of their sovereignty to effectively achieve common competencies through a supra-national entity” (Wachira 2007, 1).
Economic sovereignty	“As a general matter, economic sovereignty encompasses the right to continue and preserve economic activities closely linked to the existence of the state. A test for the validity of a claim of economic sovereignty involves consideration of three elements: 1) the interference with a preexisting fundamental state policy; 2) the relationship between the party to the dispute and the state policy; and 3) the presence or threat of injury to the state itself” (Waller and Simon 1985, 8). Simply put, economic sovereignty means the “ability of a state to impose the rules of appropriation, exchange and use of resource” (Savanovic 2014, 1038) within its jurisdictional spheres without external hindrances.
Globalization	“This refers to the transformation of the world into a global society, characterized by interconnectivity and inter-dependence” of people and nations (Okoli and Atelhe 2018, 102). “Globalization is characterized by the dynamics and dialectics of spatial and temporal integration on the worldwide and regional scales. It is a dynamic and complex phenomenon with multifaceted expressions in the realms of politics, economy, environment, and culture” (Okoli and Atelhe 2018, 103).

Term	Conceptualization
Globalization bargain	The negotiable prospects of a nation in the globalization process, mediated by its structural positionality as well as competitive bargaining advantage in that context. Africa's globalization bargain is low and unpromising, owing largely to the underdevelopment and dependency of her states, which have made them subjugated to the whims and caprices of the global centres (Okoli 2017). This poses a phenomenal prosperity challenge to the continent in the era of on-going globalization.
Multilateralism	"Coordinating relations among two or more states based on certain agreed principles" (Ruggie 1992: 568). It is rules-based, institutionalized and normatively sanctioned relations geared towards the pursuit of mutually beneficial higher competences that transcend state-based territorial jurisdictions (Bouchard and Peterson 2011; see also Table 2).

Source: Various authorities cited in-text.

Exploring Sovereignty: Theoretical Conceptions and Extrapolations

This paper, in a way, has its essence in pre-theorizing. As such, it “takes the prior step of developing a conceptual framework” that can drive a discourse (Bouchard and Peterson 2011, 5). According to Stoker (1999, 18):

Conceptual frameworks or perspectives provide a broad language and a frame of reference in which a reality can be examined. They go further than a model in providing interpretations of relationships between variables. Conceptual frameworks achieve a greater depth and breadth in their attempts to explain a reality.

This section thus explores the concept of sovereignty as a frame of reference of the paper. To begin with, it is pertinent to observe that the notion of sovereignty is to some extent a conceptual problematic. This is more so considering the various senses in which the concept has been applied by analysts. In the words of Barnett (2017, 1), “For many outside academic

circles, the concept of sovereignty has remained esoteric in nature, lacking a clear standard definition”.

At its most basic level “Sovereignty means superiority or supremacy over each person or organization” (Kitagawa 2014:2). From the standpoint of the traditional legal doctrine, sovereignty is understood as the “exclusivity of jurisdiction and non-intervention in another state’s internal affairs” (Ivan 2013, 173). This orthodox legalistic conception has found its loudest expression in the Westphalian conception of sovereignty, hinged on the principles of territorial non-violability and non-interference (Jordaan 2017).

Essentially, sovereignty refers to the jurisdictional supremacy of the state and its laws. In this respect, Nibblett 2016, 2) elaborates:

At its most basic level, sovereignty is the legal status that all states possess when they are recognized by their peers through the United Nations, reflecting their jurisdiction over a territory and the permanent population living there. The governments of sovereign states have the legitimate right to use force in self-defence and to maintain security within their territories; to enter into agreements with other states in the conduct of their international relations; and to write the laws by which their countries are governed.

A number of dimensions of sovereignty have been identified in the literature, namely international legal sovereignty, Westphalian sovereignty, interdependence sovereignty, and domestic sovereignty (Hainsworth 1995; Quigg 2000; Ivan 2013). In this respect, Quiggin (2000, 2-3) elaborates:

International legal sovereignty is the acceptance of a given state as a member of the international community, and is, in most cases, relatively uncontroversial. Westphalian sovereignty is based on the principle that one sovereign state should not interfere in the domestic arrangements of another. Interdependence sovereignty is the capacity and willingness to control flows of people, goods and capital into and out of a country. Domestic sovereignty is the capacity of a state to choose and implement policies within its territory.

Sovereignty has its real substance in the jurisdictional supremacy of the state and its legal ordinances. Hence, “the two qualities that are indispensable to the idea of sovereignty are elements of control and authority, which accompanies the sovereign supreme governing competences” (Negan and Haddad 2011/2012, 435). Following a peculiar typological schema, Vernon (1968) identifies two dimensions of sovereignty, namely national and popular

sovereignty. The former refers to the supreme public power that has the right and the might to impose its dictate in the last instance while the later has to do with an entity that wields legitimate power and so recognized to have authority.

The economic dimension of sovereignty refers to the capacity of a state to initiate and pursue the course of its destiny without any untoward ideological influences or structural encumbrances from external forces (Vernon 1968). Economic sovereignty is the true test of national sovereignty. According to Savanovic (2014, 1038), "real power and real sovereignty are manifested in the issue of resource use rules". In other words, the true worth of a country's national sovereignty has a lot to do with its ability to hold sway in matters of economic production and resource use rules.

The conception of sovereignty has changed over the years in keeping with the dynamics of the international system. The New World Order (NWO) instantiated in the phenomenon of globalization has come with important changes that have altered the traditional understanding of sovereignty. These changes are evidenced in the increased internationalism and globalism, the rise of inter- and supra-national organizations, and the normative propagation of human rights and humanitarian law (Wachira 2007, 2). This trend has necessitated an incremental shift from the Westphalian notion of sovereignty to a more liberalized paradigm (Sono 1979; Hainsworth 1995).

Table 2: Sovereignty - Then vs. Now

Then (Westphalian status)	Now (Neo-liberal status)
It espouses the principle of non-interference	It espouses the principle of non-indifference
It emphasizes territorialization	It emphasizes de-territorialization
It values inward looking national security	It values inward and outwar*d looking national security
It is characterized by unilateralist pursuit of national interest	It is characterized by multilateralist pursuit of national interest
It is state-centric	It is citizenry-centric (popular sovereignty)
It is pro-defence (state preservation)	It is pro-development (national prosperity)

Source: Author's elaboration.

Part of the post-Westphalian thinking on sovereignty espouses the idea/ of human security in an attempt to highlight the transformation of sovereignty from a state-centric end to a citizen-centric one. The latter has

also been rightly referred to as “popular sovereignty” (Farmer 2012, 101), which highlights the stake that the people wield in that regard. As opined by Farmer (2012, 94):

Since the 1990’s the concept of human security has come to challenge [the] state-centric view of sovereignty. As such, sovereignty is no longer viewed as an intrinsic right of states but rather that this right derived from the people. This means that the state maintains its right to rule as long as it respects the basic human rights of its citizenship.

Generally, the traditional conception of sovereignty has been variously negotiated by the abiding normative salience of international laws and institutions, the activities of multinational corporations, the course of economic integration, and the increasing interdependence of states in the ongoing globalization era. The consequence is the substantive erosion of national sovereignty, conceived in its standard unilateralist sense. This development has called for a new thinking aimed at re-conceptualizing and re-contextualizing sovereignty in a manner that reflects its contemporary essence and significance. In effect, as “the traditional concept of sovereignty has diminished and continues to be restated”, in the light of “the increased need for state cooperation and interactions to meet the new global challenges”, there is a need “that states review and rethink the concept of sovereignty” (Wachira 2007, 11). This new conception of sovereignty is designated herewith as multilateralist approach to sovereignty.

Illustratively, multilateralism may be defined as “Three or more [state] actors engaging in voluntary and (essentially) institutionalized international cooperation governed by norms and principles, with rules that apply (by and large) equally to all states” (Bouchard and Peterson 2011, 10; brackets are mine). It is a pattern of international regimen that entails basically the following:

- i. Importance of rules;
- ii. Inclusiveness in terms of parties involved or affected; and
- iii. Voluntary cooperation that is at least minimally institutionalized (Bouchard and Peterson 2011; see also Table 2).

The multilateralist view of sovereignty envisions “the transfer of sovereignty in a jointly designed and mutually acceptable legalistic international institution which “allows the state interests to be both respected

and represented at the international level” (Hainsworth 1995, 583). This is presupposed in the collective economic sovereignty schema being ultimately advocated in this paper.

Table 3: Forms of Multilateralism

	Institutionalized	Crystallizing	Aspirant
Characteristics	Rules-based international organizations are established	New international rules and organizations are in the process of being established	Norms inform foreign policy behaviour in the absence of any formally-codified rules
Examples	WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Judicial intervention and the ICC• Climate change post Kyoto	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child labour• Foreign investment

Source: Peterson et al (2008, 9), as adapted in Bouchard and Peterson (2011, 21).

Perspectives on Globalization and Sovereignty

Globalization is a worldwide phenomenon whose historical contours and dynamics have manifested in a variety of forms and dimensions over the years. Between the 19th and 21st century, the forces of globalization have found expression in some fundamental transformations on the world stage (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Historical Transformations of Globalization in the 20th-21st Century

Source: geo41.com (n.d).

Globalization has fundamentally altered the essence and functionality of the contemporary state system. It has changed the manner in which the

state is conceived, but also how it operates. This development has been figuratively represented thus:

They used to be close, the nation state and the law. The nation was primarily defined by borders; the state reigned as a sovereign within and could apply its laws. This simple and effective state of affairs changed due to various developments (Lodder 2017, 60).

Obviously, the most crucial of such developments is the impact of globalization on the national sovereignty of states. Quiggin (2002, 2) observes that "Globalization is frequently discussed as a counterpoint of national sovereignty". He adds that "It is commonly asserted that globalization has eroded national sovereignty or that it has rendered borders obsolete".

Essentially, the relationship between globalization and sovereignty is at best dialectical. According to Savanovic (2014, 1022), "the globalization process leads towards de-sovereignization". The de-sovereignization process follows a three-dimensional pattern of occurrence:

Firstly, it is a process of transferring decisions to supranational entities, such as the European Union (EU), which are given the legislative powers in certain (many) aspects of social, economic and political life. Secondly, it represents an increasing inferiority of states in relation to requirements that come from some external institutions, such as the IMF, WB, WTO, etc. Based on their powers, these institutions are able to force the states to make certain decisions. Third, and perhaps the most interesting, there is a process in which large transnational corporations (TNC), based on their economic power, can influence economic and political decisions of sovereign states (Savanovic 2014, 1026).

One crucial dimension of the prime de-sovereignizing tendencies in the contemporary international system is the dynamics of economic integration, which is becoming widespread at regional and continental levels. In this regard, Hainsworth (1995, 583) succinctly asserts that "Economic integration is altering the role of the state and the concept of sovereignty in international law. Intensifying economic interdependence has rendered sovereignty almost meaningless for an isolated state". Allied to this is the rising saliency of multinational corporations as well as supranational organizations in the fast globalizing world (Sono 1979; Wachira 2007).

The de-sovereignization process is such that nation-states are either persuaded, cajoled or constrained to make substantive concessions that divest

of their sovereign integrity. Some of these concessions come in the fashion of neoliberal market tradeoffs while some others emanate from normative commitments arising from negotiated agreements as well as demands of sundry multilateral engagements. The significance of this development is that national sovereignty is increasingly becoming more symbolic than substantive. This does not, however, presuppose the demise of sovereignty as some analysts are wont to contend (Ivan 2013; Lodder 2017).

Africa and Globalization Challenge: Towards a Collective Economic Sovereignty

The Imperative

The exigencies of globalization have mandated a paradigm shift in the conception and application of national sovereignty. This paradigm shift is to the effect that national sovereignty is not to be approached based on unilateralist jurisdictional exclusivity of states but, rather, in terms of their multilateral solidarity. In fact, the in-thing should be a movement should be from individualist to collectivist pursuit of sovereignty as envisioned herein (Figure 3).

The unilateral and exclusivist pursuit of sovereignty has become meaningless, for “states have increasingly acknowledged that certain problems affect them collectively and consequently their resolution can only be attained through global efforts” (Wachira 2007, 2). Such problems include terrorism, climate change, transnational criminality, and the like. In effect, “If a state cannot attain necessary objectives on its own, it must seek to attain them on a supranational level” (Wort 1952, 3). This position underscores the necessity for a collective sovereignty regimen for Africa in the prevailing era of globalization.

The essence of collective sovereignty is “the transfer of some sovereign powers” to a supranational organization, “which will ensure greater coordination and effectiveness in executing common competences” (Wachira 2007, 12). For Africa, this is a desideratum, given the individual weaknesses of her states, which has recommended a sort of collective multilateral actions in respect of certain domains of governance. The ultimate way forward is an incremental transformation into a multilateralist model of sovereignty based on established rules and regularized institutional arrangements (see Table 3).

In discussing the necessity for a collective sovereignty in Africa, this paper focuses on the economic dimension of national sovereignty. This

is profitable considering the fact that economic sovereignty is the real and ultimate substance of national sovereignty. To be sure, many states in the world today would look ostensibly politically sovereign whereas in reality they are far from it, based on salient economic indices. Concerning such states, Savanovic (2014, 1038) opines:

Although politically sovereign, they are not economically sovereign. Political sovereignty becomes a chimera, an empty word whose meaning is increasingly symbolic, while the real power and real sovereignty are manifested in the issue of resource use rules.

Suffice it to state collective economic sovereignty being advocated for herewith is both expedient and profitable. It affords the member states with the advantage of competitive collective bargain within the framework of a trans-national economy of scale and solidarity. This enables weaker states within the arrangement to gain strategic leverage based on the support of the more privileged ones in the abiding 'asymmetries of interdependence' that defines the prevailing global order (Schneider 2005, 667). And together, all member states will enjoy the mutual benefits accruable from collegial multilateral synergy and solidarity.

Extant Continental Initiatives

The defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU) espoused the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states in deference to the traditional notion of sovereignty. The African Union (AU) has departed from this traditionalist approach by substituting the principle of 'non-interference' for that of 'non-indifference' in affirmation of the multilateralist view of sovereignty. This stance is most stipulated in the fourth section of its enabling instrument thus:

(h) the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity (cited in Farmer 2012, 99).

In line with the above tenet, AU has made some strategic interventions in domestic affairs of member nations, guided by the principle of multilateral solidarity. A case in point is her tenuous mission in respect of the Sudanese crisis. But beyond political engagements, AU has been in the forefronts of pan-African economic integration. Her most ambitious stride in this regard is

the nascent African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) initiative.

The Establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was signed in Kigali, Rwanda, by 44 Heads of State and Government of the 55 AU Member States on 21 March 2018. The initiative was inspired by the Abuja Protocol (2018) whose objective is “to facilitate the implementation of the African Economic Community by providing for the progressive implementation of the free movement of persons, right of residence and right of establishment” (International Trade Centre 2018, 9).

Article 3 of AU’s Abuja Treaty envisions an African Economic Community (AEC) with the following objectives (International Trade Centre 2018, 2):

- i. To promote economic, social and cultural development and the integration of African economies in order to increase economic self-reliance and promote an endogenous and self-sustained development;
- ii. To establish, on a continental scale, a framework for the development, mobilization and utilization of the human and material resources of Africa in order to achieve self-reliant development;
- iii. To promote cooperation in all fields of human endeavour in order to raise the standard of living of African peoples, and maintain and enhance economic stability, foster close and peaceful relations among Member States and contribute to the progress, development and the economic integration of the Continent; and
- iv. To coordinate and harmonize policies among existing and future economic communities (Figure 2) in order to foster the gradual establishment of the Community.

Figure 2: African Union and the Various Sub-Continental Economic Blocs/Communities

Source: Wikimedia Commons (n.d).

Also included in the Treaty was the target of “establishing, at the level of each Regional Economic Community and within a period not exceeding 10 years, a Free Trade Area (FTA) by the gradual removal of tariff barriers and non-tariff barriers to intra-community trade and the establishment of a Customs Union by means of adopting a common external tariff” (International Trade Centre 2018, 2). Table 4 gives useful insights into the state of progress in respect of regional economic integration in Africa from the standpoint of the performances of the various regional economic blocs.

Table 4: Status of Regional Integration in Africa by late 2010s

RECs	Free Trade Area	Customs Union	Single market	Countries that have implemented free movement protocol	Economic and monetary union
AMU	No	No	No	3 out of 5	No
CENSAD	No	No	No	Unclear	No
COMESA	Yes	No	No	Burundi and Rwanda ratified; Kenya and Zimbabwe signed but not ratified	No
EAC	Yes	Yes	Yes	3 out of 5	No
ECCAS	Yes	Yes	No	4 out of 11	No
ECOWAS	Yes	Yes	No	All 15	No
IGAD	No	No	No	No protocol	No
SADC	Yes	No	No	7 out of 15	No

Source: Adapted from International Trade Centre (2018, 7).

Table 4 highlights the state of regional integration in Africa as of 2016. Among other things, the table shows that the eight RECs recognized by AU (UNCTAD 2016) are at different levels of integration, with the EAC being the most integrated for the time being. EAC has attained the status of Free Trade Area, Customs Union and Single Market. It is followed by ECOWAS and ECCAS each of which has achieved Free Trade Area, Customs Union. All of the RECs are yet to attain the status of a full economic community as envisaged in the Abuja Protocol. But the gradual gravitation of some of the RECs towards a customs union and a single market is indicative of an incremental progress, after all. Remarkably, AfCFTA's operational phase has been successfully launched in July 2019 amid prospects and challenges ahead of the pan-Continental dream.

Overall, AU represents the most promising stride towards a pan-African economic cum political integration. As Wachira (2007, 7) puts it, "A possible African equivalent to the European Commission could be the AU Commission". By the same token, AU's AfCFTA initiative represents the most ambitious and auspicious regional integration project in Africa. To wit, AfCFTA aims at deepening "economic integration of the African continent by

creating a single continental market with free movement of business, people and investments" (International Trade Centre 2018, 3). Signe and Van der Van (2019, 1) note that AfCTA promises "to be the largest free trade area since the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) [...]". As a neo-pan-African project, its success, however largely depends on how member states would wish to make good its intents and purposes (UNCCTAD 2015), especially against the backdrop of the structural and circumstantial challenges that are highlighted in the preceding sub-section.

Challenges and Prospects

The promise of collective economic sovereignty in Africa faces a myriad of challenges that are variously political, geo-political, socio-political, and jurisdictional in nature. The political challenges arise from the impediments posed by nationalism and sub-regionalism. There is a tendency for African states to hold tenaciously onto their national sovereignty, with some of them only inclined to a loose regional integration at the sub-continental level. Negating these centrifugal tendencies requires a renewed commitment to a pan-African solidarity that transcends national and sub-regional allegiances.

The geo-political dimension of the challenge derives from the differences arising from 'politics' of geography and spatial location. This is evidenced by the divisive relations among African states based on geo-locational in-grouping, closures and cleavages. For instance, the states of the Maghreb in North Africa are inclined to identify, first with themselves and then with the Middle East, in terms of multilateral engagements in view of their geographical contiguity therewith. This inclination also has a lot to do with geo-cultural affinities between North Africa and the Arabia.

The socio-cultural barriers emanate from the differences in customs, language and heritage. The legacies of colonialism and Islam and Christianity in Africa engendered the problem of multiple and often conflicting heritage. The fault lines of this triple heritage have created pretexts for parochial cleavages among African states. An instance of such occurrence is the rising Anglophone-Francophone divide in West Africa, which has been a veritable obstacle to regional integration in that context.

In addition to the aforementioned are problems arising from jurisdictional issues. The challenge of harmonizing multiple fiscal, monetary, trade and immigration policies across the continent remains herculean. The proliferation of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in the continent has also posed a challenge of effective harmonization of jurisdictional issues (UNCTAD 2016). Protectionist regimes are apprehensive of the erosive

impact of continental supranationalism. This challenge is complicated by the apparent indifference or lip-service of some African leaders towards the goal of pan-African integration.

In spite of the aforementioned potential and existential challenges, the promise of a pan-African economic sovereignty remains assured and realizable. What African states need to do going forward is to capitalize on the gains of the existing regional and continental economic integration platforms to leverage capacities for a pan-African sovereign economy through incremental but guided internal de-sovereignization. This would require a great deal of strategic continental bridge-building, multilateral institutional mainstreaming, and renascent pan-African leadership spirit.

Figure 3: The Imperative for Collective Economic Sovereignty for Africa

Individualism = National economic sovereignty.

Collectivism = Collective economic sovereignty.

Common Good = Pan-African economic solidarity and prosperity.

Source: Author's elaboration.

Final Remarks

Globalization is the essence of the contemporary international order. It is a contradictory phenomenon that has brought about enormous blessings as well as curses to nations. The tragedy of globalization, however, is such

that its gains and burdens are not equitably distributed among nations. What determines the fate of a nation in the context of globalization is its place within the structural asymmetries of material inequality and dependency that underpin the process. While the powerful nations of the global centre enjoy the best of prosperity offered by globalization, the weak nations at the periphery are subjected to its adversities.

Africa's existential condition in the globalizing world's political economy is one of a double jeopardy. Her states have been forcibly conscripted into the global capitalist order. Yet, none of these states possesses the requisite bargaining powers to play effectively within the system, owing to structural weaknesses arising principally from their poor industrial and technological standing. This situation has been complicated by the gamut of socio-political and economic challenges bedeviling the continent, some of which are best tackled through some form of collective action.

This paper has considered the fate of Africa in the globalization process from the analytical departure of economic sovereignty. It is observed that Africa's future in that context is contingent upon the strength of her bargaining power. National economic sovereignty guarantees no remedy, for that has been largely eroded by the structural eventualities of the same globalization. African states should strive to transcend their disempowering territorial-cum-nationalistic divides and capitalize on the relevant existing multilateral mechanisms towards mainstreaming collective sovereignty, based ultimately on the principle of pan-African supranationalism. To that end, leveraging and maximizing the gains and prospects of extant regional and continental supranational organisms would become both salient and expedient.

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ABSTRACT

Africa's existential situation in the prevailing global order is such that no state thereof can afford to take national sovereignty too seriously. Apart from the myriad of structural challenges imposed on the continent by globalization, Africa is faced with a gamut of political and economic problems that can only be meaningfully addressed through some form of strategic multilateral collaboration. Africa's aspiration to economic sovereignty has been constrained by the structural conditionalities of globalization, which have kept the continent overly weak, dependent and underdeveloped. The constraint is so immanent that individual African states can hardly afford even the relative sovereignty to harness a strategic balance in the fast ossifying asymmetries of interdependence that characterize the contemporary global political economy. It is posited in this paper that the remedy for Africa lies in the ability of her states to transcend their disempowering territorial-cum-nationalistic divides and capitalize on the existing continental multilateral mechanisms towards mainstreaming collective sovereignty, based on the principle of pan-African supranationalism. To that end, leveraging and maximizing the gains and prospects of extant regional and continental supranational organisms would become both salient and expedient.

KEY WORDS

Africa; Economic Sovereignty; Globalization; Globalization 'Bargain'; Multilateralism.

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