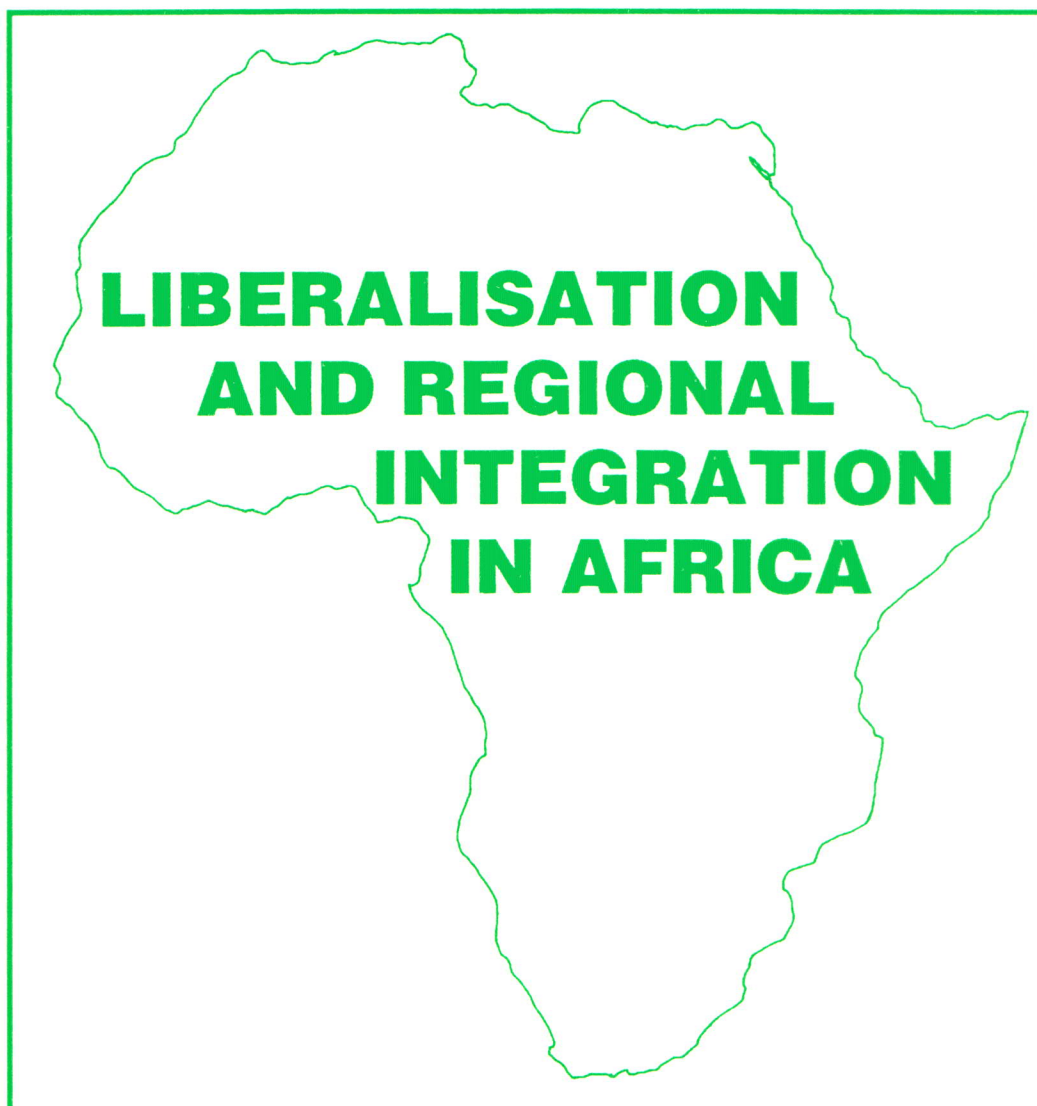


FRIEDRICH-NAUMANN-STIFTUNG



**Proceedings of an International
Conference in Arusha, Tanzania
May 25-28, 1992**

Liberalisation and regional integration in Africa

Proceedings of an International Conference in Arusha, Tanzania May 25-28, 1992

The papers in this booklet were presented at an international conference on the "Liberalisation of National Economies and Regional Economic Integration through PTA, SADCC and ECOWAS" which took place at the Arusha International Conference Centre, (AICC), between May 25 and May 28, 1992. The AICC was formerly the headquarters of the now defunct East African Community. Participants from 21 African countries representing private sector associations and regional bodies such as PTA, SADCC and ECOWAS took part. The results of the discussions about the need for economic liberalisation, the transformation of parastatals into private enterprises and aspects of regional integration are reflected in the concluding chapters.

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Problems and obstacles of regional economic integration

*by Klaus Baron von der Ropp**

A German view

When I came to this part of the world for the first time in 1964, I did not really come to Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. 'You are', many of my colleagues told me, 'in East Africa'. They were determined to maintain and develop their East African Community (EAC), this most valuable inheritance, from an otherwise humiliating European colonial past.

Indeed East Africans in the early sixties had something close to a political union, something we in Europe hope to achieve as a result of the member states of the European Community's (EC) signing the "Treaty on European Union" in Maastricht/Netherlands in December 1991. It was not only citizens of the then six EC countries who took a keen interest in the EAC. All over the Third World, particularly in post-colonial Africa, the structures of the EAC were carefully studied and in many of its universities and governments, scholars, civil servants and politicians asked whether the EAC with its successes and challenges could not serve as a model for their own attempts to achieve regional integration in their respective parts of the world. At that time in Africa, people had many reasons for believing that they would succeed in their efforts of regional co-operation. African governments apparently had so much more in common than those of Western and Eastern Europe: the overcoming of foreign domination and the realisation that only the spirit of Pan-Africanism would enable them to resist neocolonialist forces and threats to their newly won independence.

In 1964 the then European Economic Community (EEC) had been in existence only seven years. We did not have, what had started in East Africa much earlier: no controls at the borders, a common fiscal policy, a common currency, one railway system, one harbour administration, one airline and all the other elements of the East African Common Services Organisations. Maybe — as I at least saw it in 1964 — the greatest achievement was the common East African University, the departments of which were spread over the three capitals. Departmentwise at least, the future elites of the three countries were educated together! Was there a realistic hope that Europeans in the western part of their continent in my lifetime would achieve a similar level of co-operation?

However, things in East Africa developed very differently, in June 1977 Charles Njonjo, then Kenya's Attorney General, announced the EAC's final dissolution.

What was the main reason of this historic setback? Undoubtedly a lack of 'East Africanism' among the elites of the three countries. In the second half of the sixties it had become clear that Jomo Kenyatta's Kenya and Julius K. Nyerere's Tanzania had chosen totally different, incompatible roads of development. Kenya had chosen the road of a politically relatively liberal order and, to quote a British satirist the name of whom I forget, a "Marxless brand of socialism", i.e. a market economy.

* Dr. Klaus Baron von der Ropp is a senior researcher on African affairs in Germany.

Tanzania on the other hand had opted for a specifically African order of a *de lege* one party state and *ujamaa* socialism. President Milton A. Obote, being philosophically much closer to Nyerere than Kenyatta, endeavoured to adopt key elements of the *Mwalimu's* thinking and failed. Even before Obote's government was toppled by General Amin in the early seventies, the chances of the planned East African Federation had gone. And the economic cleavages between Kenya and her two partners deepened. During the days of colonialism the settlers' colony of Kenya had reached a higher level of economic development than the protectorate of Uganda and the League of Nations and after 1945, UN-mandate of Tanganyika. The massive flow of development funds from Scandinavian, West German, other Western and Chinese sources could not hinder Tanzania's further economic decline. The ideological differences between Kenya and Tanzania even more than the political differences between Tanzania and Uganda in the seventies had made the EAC's dissolution inevitable!

In Europe, however — despite quite a number of setbacks and crises — regional co-operation proved a success. This became particularly so after the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the former USSR in 1989/91. Recently, even President Nursultan Nasarbajew of Kazakhstan expressed an interest in his nation's joining the EC. *Alma Ata* will hardly ever get a chance but quite a number of those European nations that today knock at the EC-doors in Brussels could be successful with their applications. Apparently the EC-Commission differentiates between four groups. The EFTA members: Sweden, Austria, Norway, Finland and Switzerland/Liechtenstein might join after 1995; their signing a treaty with the EC on the establishment of the "European Economic Area" in 1992 will, as was generally expected from the very beginning, only be a temporary solution. The success of the EC, (that 35 years ago, started with only six members), seems to leave the EFTA countries with no other option but to apply for EC membership. The CSFR and Hungary seem to have a better chance than other former CMEA-countries to overcome the often disastrous heritage of their communist past, and are expected to be allowed into the EC by the turn of the century. Together with Poland, these two countries have — as a first step of their EC rapprochement — signed treaties of association. Even later than the CSFR and Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and former Yugoslavian republics might successfully apply for EC-membership. Turkey, Cyprus, Malta and Iceland for different reasons have only remote chances of being admitted in the foreseeable future.

Of course an EC of some 30 members will be most cumbersome, if its present structure is maintained. As a consequence there is a lot of discussion on how to reform it. As each new membership will complicate the development of the EC — a process of expanding the EC has started. A most important step into this direction was, as has already been mentioned, the signing of the Maastricht treaty.

What a tragic difference between the development of the communities in East Africa and Western Europe! The EAC's failure is even more tragic, as few European countries will need our community as much as Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania needed theirs to promote their respective development! The failure of the EAC was undoubtedly one of the first factors that led Europe to the "*afropessimisme*" which today very much complicates African-European co-operation.

The renewed debate in Germany on regional co-operation in Africa

During the negotiations on Lome IV in 1989, fear was expressed in ACP-circles that with the completion of Europe's internal market on January 1st 1993, sub-saharan Africa would be further marginalised. I do not share this view, I do not see black Africa's chances as a trading partner of

the EC diminishing. But I do see another obstacle, in the long run, that of maintaining and furthering development and trade-co-operation between our two continents.

Since the collapse of communism in the East, Western Europe and North America are deeply involved in costly attempts to support the reconstruction of Eastern Europe. There are common Western and specifically German interests. Among the former is the economic, infrastructural and ecological rehabilitation of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics; there is the issue of the safety of the often technologically backward nuclear power-stations in the East etc. And there are extra costs covered by Germany alone: the socio-economic reconstruction of the Eastern part of our country. The resettlement of some 400,000 Soviet soldiers stationed in East Germany, and their families in the Russian Federation and other CIS-Republics and finally our support for 2.5 million ethnic Germans who since their deportation by Stalin's regime to Siberia and former Soviet Central Asia and Kazakhstan are struggling against losing their German identity.

Furthermore, on the German side — as on the African one — there is disillusionment with what was achieved in the 35 years of co-operation. The rivalry between the two German states all over the world, and often in sub-saharan Africa, made the governments in Bonn and East Berlin more active than would a government of an undivided Germany be. Unlike France, the United Kingdom, Belgium and Portugal, Germany does not have particular interests in Africa; like German colonisers, German businessmen went East, not South.

In spite of these and other odds the German Minister of Development Co-operation, Carl Dieter Spranger, in a speech at the end of last year entitled "The Perspectives of German Development Aid for Africa after the Reunification of Germany" made it clear that Africa will remain one of united Germany's top partners in the Third World. Some 40 % of German bilateral aid goes to Africa and Germany is a very important contributor to the EC's development fund and the World Bank's African programmes. Besides asking a number of African countries to liberalise further their economic systems and to democratise their political orders, the minister insisted on the importance of intra-state co-operation. Regional co-operation he said was a necessary part of socio-economic progress in Africa. Apparently he — like many other Germans closely following African developments — thinks it possible that the projection of an All African Economic and Monetary Union as signed by the African Heads of State at the OAU-meeting in Abuja in mid-1991, is too ambitious to have a chance of realisation as early as 2025. But Spranger explicitly came out in favour of sober and thus more realistic approaches to regional co-operation.

It is along these lines that the Deutsche Bundestag, the federal parliament, early in 1992 after a remarkably uncontroversial debate adopted a resolution entitled "A contribution to Peace and Development in Southern Africa through Regional Co-operation". In it, the German government is asked to concentrate — within the EC frame — its foreign, economic and development policies on a further promotion of regional integration in Africa and particularly in changing Southern Africa. In the southern sub-continent especially, projects that cross national frontiers are to be promoted; examples of this approach will be found in the fields of technical co-operation, the protection of the environment (Okavango), transportation, energy, husbandry and structural adjustment. Whenever decisions are to be taken, it shall always be borne in mind that German policies shall contribute to the founding of a "Common Market Southern Africa". The Deutsche Bundestag holds the view that South Africa's abandoning *apartheid* and her turning into a democratic society will enable the formation of balanced and stable regional structures based on the principles

of political pluralism and a market economy. Finally the Bundestag states — that in times of scarce resources worldwide, development aid must be efficiently invested.

Why this concentration on Southern Africa? There seem to be two reasons: 1) The relative success of the very pragmatic and realistic approach of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) and the hope of mutually fruitful co-operation between today's SADCC-countries and post-*apartheid* South Africa. 2) The realisation that Germany, both before and after unification, did not play a role in mediating in the Southern African conflicts. For whatever reason, German diplomats and politicians were never involved in the UK-US-SU diplomatic efforts, started in early 1988, that led to South Africa's and Cuba's withdrawing their troops from Angola, Namibia's independence and finally, in December 1991, the official opening of the "Convention for a Democratic South Africa" in Johannesburg. The key-figure in this mediation process, Sir Robin Renwick, the British ambassador in South Africa from 1987 to 1991, an "interventionist diplomat", knew only too well that Germany has far fewer interests in Southern Africa than the UK and at least in the times of foreign minister Hans Dietrich Genscher, a well known populist, could not be expected to play a particularly helpful part.

It is to be hoped that Germany's partners in Africa take the initiative "A Contribution to Peace and Development by Regional Co-operation in Southern Africa" most seriously. If it fails, the "*afropessimisme*" — which is not rare in Germany these days — will gain further ground. In the face of the enormous challenges in the east of Germany, in eastern and southeastern Europe and in the CIS-Republics a new failure in Africa would definitely strengthen forces in Germany — and in Brussels within the EC — that propagate a policy of co-operation with the East at the expense of Africa.

Setbacks and successes of regional co-operation in sub-Saharan Africa

Francophone West and Equatorial Africa have managed over the last 30 years or so to maintain their monetary co-operation within the Union Monétaire de l'Afrique Occidentale and the Union Monétaire de l'Afrique Equatoriale. Most of francophone Africa realised what it would lose — namely a convertible currency — if it gave in to "progressive" temptations and left the Franc Zone. Of course the examples of Guinea-Conakry, Mali and Madagascar were not particularly encouraging.

The last 30 years have seen — particularly in much of balkanised West Africa — very many stillborn attempts at regional co-operation. In this paper only three examples will be discussed in greater detail: 1) The Communauté Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEAO), founded with the support of France and the EC in 1972/4, the members of which are Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Niger, Mali, Mauretania and Benin. 2) The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), founded in 1975, comprising CEAO members plus all other West African States, headed by Nigeria. 3) The Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale (CEEAC), founded in 1983, consisting of the long established Union Donanière et Economique de L'Afrique Centrale (UDEAC) and the Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs (CEPGL); members of CEEAC are today Congo, Cameroon, Chad, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, the Central African Republic, Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi and Sao Tome/Principe. CEAO, ECOWAS and CEEAC are the cornerstones on which, according to the OAU, up to the year 2025 the All African Economic and Monetary Union shall be built.

Four main reasons led to the foundation of the three communities:

- a) The small size of most of the national markets;
- b) The necessity of transnational development projects;
- c) Pan-Africanism as the only way ahead for the newly independent states in a world of much more powerful and economically developed nations;
- d) Mainly in francophone Africa the realisation that the preservation of African intra-state co-operation, inherited from colonial times, would very much facilitate co-operation in the post-colonial era.

The treaties establishing CEAO, ECOWAS and CEEAC all provide for strict liberalisation of intra-community trade and the establishment of common external tariffs. In this context it is to be remarked that the trade within all these communities has always been below 10 per cent and often below five and is much lower than it has ever been in Western Europe. The EC countries in general are each other's most important trading partners. Starting from quite a high level of intra-community trade the EC has, since 1957, become the most important trading partner for most of its members, the exceptions being Denmark and Ireland. Other than Europe's national economies the African ones very often are not complimentary but competitive! What can trade be like if there are only relatively few tradeable goods? And what is a free trade area good for, if there is very little to trade? Africa's important trading partners are mostly in Europe and, unfortunately, not in Africa!

Apparently only the CEAO, since its foundation has managed to increase trade among its members. There seem to be a number of reasons for this: other than within ECOWAS and CEEAL, in CEAO (as in UDEAC) there is, inherited from the days of colonialism, a tradition of trade and co-operation; unlike East Africa this has not been wasted. Trade developed, as there is quite a good infrastructure within the CEAO (and UDEAC). Also, within CEAO (and UDEAC) there is only one currency, the Franc CFA, as there used to be in East Africa in the days of EAC. Within the other communities trade is often hindered by the fact that a number of currencies are not convertible. Finally, only the CEAO seems to have been able to practise a system of compensation for those members that lose income by the lowering of taxes: the Fonds Communautaire de Developpement (FCD), financed by payments compensating for those losses.

Looking at the aims of co-operation enshrined in the treaties establishing the communities, all are ambitious, the ECOWAS and CEEAL even over-ambitious. As if the adding up of different national economies would help the creation of a community! As if the concept "integration by declaration" could work!

Other than the EC since its foundation in the late fifties the members of all the communities with the exception of UMAO and UMAE have abstained from transferring part of their sovereignty to community-organs. The question to be asked is how the involved countries want to survive. As former Soviet President Michail Gorbachev told the former East German leader Erich Honecker in October 1989, just one month before the collapse of the German Democratic Republic, "Those who are late are punished for life". Few African leaders seem to agree with the former OAU Chairman, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, who ruefully observed, "The litany of Africa's woes is awesome, painful and agonising... While the rest of the world is on its way to modernisation, Africa remains a virtual museum piece".

As a consequence the CEAO, ECOWAS and CEEAL treaties do not speak, as the EC-treaty does, of common policies but only of the necessity of harmonising agricultural, industrial, transportation and communication policies. Both ECOWAS and the younger CEEAL did not succeed in those fields. There is no coordinated development policy that in the long run might increase the number of tradeable goods and thus trade! As Nigeria's ambassador to the UN, Ibrahim A. Gambari, remarked some two years ago. "... the European Community has moved from an economic community towards a single market, complete with political trappings, while ECOWAS remains a static collection of distinctly independent states with independent economic and political policies..." Nobody will believe, ECOWAS' interference in the Liberian civil war since August 1990 will compensate for any of the lost opportunities to strengthen this community. Furthermore, Nigeria, economically by far the strongest partner in ECOWAS, seems to have partially lost interest in it, and has, since the mid-eighties concentrated on domestic issues. Finally, it must be taken into consideration that the CEAO was founded 20 years ago to be a counterweight against Nigeria's otherwise dominating role in West Africa. Not a particularly promising base for co-operation in ECOWAS!

How can the communities be revitalised? The relative success of SADCC makes us ask whether a look at its experiences cannot be helpful. Maybe SADCC-like structures can be used elsewhere in Africa to substantially contribute to the creation of the infrastructural and economic bases on which ambitious projects such as ECOWAS, CEAO and CEEAL can be developed and which will really lead to that All African Community planned for by the OAU.

The Southern African Development Coordination Conference, founded in 1980, originates from the political grouping of the then Frontline States' (Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania). The Frontline states were joined by Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Namibia. Their approach to co-operation is not the classical one: SADCC is not a free trade area, it is not a customs union, it is not an economic community. It is an attempt to practice close and coordinated co-operation in areas of mutual interest on a most flexible and most pragmatic basis. Co-operation is limited to the feasible. SADCC's main objectives are, as laid down in SADCC's Lusaka Declaration of 1980:

- 1) to reduce the members' dependence on South Africa and other foreign powers (SA's GNP being approximately three times as high as that of all SADCC nations together, but SADCC having about twice the population of the subcontinent's powerhouse);
- 2) the forging of links to create a genuine and equitable regional integration;
- 3) the mobilisation of resources to promote the implementation of national, inter-state and regional policies;
- 4) concerted action to secure international co-operation within the framework of the strategy for economic liberation.

SADCC countries had the following interests in common, but there were also considerable differences.

- 1) *Intensity of and attitude towards relations with the RSA:* Angola and Mozambique during most of the eighties were at war with South Africa. Malawi had diplomatic relations with Pretoria; Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho maintained all but diplomatic relations with the RSA. Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Zambia did what they could to support Angola, Mozambique, SWAPO, the ANC and PAC in their armed struggle.

2) *Organisation of government and the economy.* Other than their partners in SADCC, Angola and Mozambique in the early eighties still tried to shape their political and economic structures along Cuban, East German and Soviet models. The other countries oriented their foreign economic relations more towards the western industrialised countries (f.i. co-operation with the EC within the ACP-frame; and most of them co-operated with the World Bank and the IMF).

3) As far as economic resources and their development are concerned, SADCC members are a most heterogeneous grouping.

Not only to have survived but to have developed positively is undoubtedly a great achievement by SADCC. How are its successes to be explained? No doubt, in the eighties all its members felt threatened and indeed were threatened by South Africa's policies of destabilisation in the region; thus Pretoria forced its victims to co-operate with each other. Second, it cannot be stressed enough that SADCC's leaders concentrated on what, under the given circumstances with the help of foreign donors, was and is politically and economically feasible.

When SADCC was convened, a number of fields of co-operation were specified and individual member states undertook to assume responsibility for the required preparatory work involved. This distribution of competence was intended to emphasise the importance of "decentralisation in cooperation" and also to eliminate the fear experienced by the smaller, non-Frontline states of becoming dominated by the Frontline states.

The distribution of country responsibilities was determined at the conference held in Blantyre in 1981 as follows:

Angola:	energy development, including alternative energy sources, and related environmental problems;
Botswana:	projects to combat animal disease; establishment of a regional crop research centre specialising in semi-arid tropical vegetation;
Lesotho:	land use and the prevention of soil erosion;
Malawi:	fisheries and wildlife development;
Mozambique:	transport and communications;
Swaziland:	training and advanced training of specialist personnel;
Tanzania:	industrial development and industrial co-operation;
Zambia:	establishment of a Southern African Development Fund; mining;
Zimbabwe:	foodstuff supplies and food security.

The areas selected are of varying significance with regard to the achievement of the objectives set; judging by the experience which the individual countries have in the fields allocated to them, it cannot be denied that the distribution of responsibilities took place less on the basis of any effectiveness principle but on that of wanting to ensure that each country was allocated one field. The key areas are undoubtedly transport and communications, foodstuff supplies and food security, and industrial development.

The most important of SADCC's successes is that in the time of war and often desperation, SADCC contributed significantly to the creation of a regional southern African identity, "a sense of common destiny". Studying the "Annual Progress Reports" of the organisation, published by its very small but efficient secretariat in Gaborone, one learns that mostly in the field of infrastructure, communication and transportation SADCC has succeeded. It is to be hoped that this development can be intensified now that there is a chance that the Angolan war will be settled. Maybe SADCC will manage to create the kind of common organisations like the East African Common Services Organisations that in the old days were the nucleus of the East African Community and which should have led to the establishment of the planned East African Federation. Maybe SADCC can become a community of mutual interest that none of its members can leave without severely harming their national interests. SADCC will then have achieved something similar to what was achieved in the last 35 years in Western and hopefully in the not too distant future in the whole of Europe: the point of no return. Only if the SADCC members succeed in weaving such a web of mutual interest, including physical infrastructure, and the production of tradeable manufactured goods will this happen. Only then will the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa, (PTA), SADCC's "trading roof" set up in Lusaka in 1981 and incorporating 20 states from Ethiopia to Swaziland be able to overcome the existing balkanisation.

SADCC might soon be confronted with a historical challenge: If, and in my view there are still a number of big ifs — the "Convention for a Democratic South Africa" manages to agree on the constitution of a truly non — racial and democratic South Africa, if the citizens of the new South Africa manage to practice this constitution and if — despite the must of redistribution — South Africa's highly developed economy can be maintained, then SADCC and the Republic of South Africa will have to open very difficult negotiations on their future relationship. There is still an extremely asymmetrical inter-dependence between the two camps. There is a high degree of structural dependence upon South Africa. Maybe it is an exaggeration to take the line that no country in the region, not even Zimbabwe, would economically survive, if the full force of the South African economy was allowed to compete with the economies of the SADCC countries. But, if despite very many obstacles, South Africa's economy survives in the Post-Apartheid South Africa, then it goes without saying, that it can not just be taken into SADCC and PTA, as happened after independence with Namibia. For despite the deep structural crisis of South Africa's economy and the difficult road ahead to its transformation, the powerhouse at the Cape of Good Hope would be too dominating a factor. South Africa would not join SADCC but would SADCC join South Africa? The protection of all SADCC economies against the South African one, without destroying the latter's role as the region's main driving force of production, trade and development will be the key to the eventual founding of a Southern African Economic Community.

The European Community: the road from Gottterdämmerung to successful co-operation

Under the present very difficult circumstances it will take Africa not years but decades to catch up with the EC's level of co-operation. In the final chapter of this paper I will try to analyse why, despite a number of grave crises and often divergent interests, the EC is a success-story.

It is conceivable that future historians will come to the conclusion that last year's European summit in Maastricht was a key event in the history of European integration. The twelve European heads of state agreed to introduce a common European currency not later than January 1 1999, but only those that fulfil certain "criteria of convergence" will be allowed into the monetary union (indebtedness, rate of inflation, interest rate and stability of the national money in

comparison to the other EC currencies). As is well known, West Germany with its Deutsche Mark, the key currency for a long time, refused to agree to a common EC monetary policy. The Bonn government changed its view when it realised in 1990 that the reunification of Germany would become more acceptable to its partners, and a united Germany could be even more integrated into the EC than the old Federal Republic had ever been. Of course Auschwitz and World War II are remembered! In other fields, Maastricht was far less progressive than the then presidential power, the Netherlands, had hoped: the common social, regional and environmental policies still need to be intensified. There will also be closer co-operation in the fields of internal policies including the establishment of EUROPOL. In future there will be an embryonic industrial policy. But no progress was made in the fields of foreign and security affairs. There will be no common policy in those fields; instead the European Political Co-operation (EPC) existing since the early seventies, will be slightly intensified.

The results of Maastricht are a rather painful compromise between the "Euro-Federalists" and the apparently growing camp of advocates of the idea of a "Europe *des patries*", that is to say the "Euro-Confederalists". In a way — and this was both typical of the EC and inevitable — Maastricht avoided to set the course. The agreement on new common policies, particularly a common monetary policy, and the intensification of old ones are clear indications that the EC will develop towards a federation. But the unwillingness to go beyond EPC in the fields of foreign and security policies is a sign that at least EC key members are not prepared to renounce this part of their national sovereignty and therefore see the new Europe as a confederal order. Maastricht thus ended with a compromise. In the years to come the EC will include federal and confederal elements, that is to say the EC will have a political system *sui generis*.

In the following months in Denmark and Ireland there will be referenda on the Maastricht agreements. In the ten other EC-countries the national parliaments will have to ratify them. If only one country gives a negative answer, Maastricht will fail. Then the whole complex will have to be re-negotiated. European co-operation has seen serious failures before: in 1954 the project of the European Defense Community failed after being vetoed by the French national assembly and the European Economic and Monetary Union as recommended by the so-called Werner-Report in the early seventies, which also never came into being. What is most remarkable about European integration is the idea's survival, it did indeed survive these setbacks and other crises such as President Charles de Gaulle's "policy of the empty chair" in the mid-sixties and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's insistence on "getting her money back" in the early eighties.

The decisions taken in Maastricht are based on the achievements of the European Coal and Steel Community (1951), Euratom (1958) and the European Economic Community (1958) and finally the European Single Act (1987). The question to be raised is what made the Benelux-countries of France, Italy and West Germany take this very new road in the fifties? What made them sign treaties that by the way do not include the right to give notice? All of them were still very much aware of the traumatic experiences of the two world wars. Furthermore, for the Western part of divided Germany this policy was a very significant step towards being re-admitted into the international community. The Bonn government took this decision even at the risk that it would further deepen the division of Germany into two hostile states!

Another very important factor was the outbreak of the cold war. The Europeans involved realised that they were threatened with extinction at any time. And they realised also that they were not actors but mere objects in the two super-powers' struggle for domination. Since the fifties the number of EC members has doubled and it might double again. A web of mutual interests has been

woven. To leave it or destroy it would be disastrous for the bigger and suicidal for the smaller countries. Such a step is therefore just out of question.

Has independent Africa not always known the fear of being a mere object in the international system? Is this fear not intensified now that as a result of the end of the cold war Africa runs the risk of being marginalised even further? Should such scenarios not be an impetus for African leaders to follow. For the EC has long reached the point of no return. The EC and its members, particularly within the ACP-frame, are well prepared to share their experiences with Africa. Both Europeans and Africans should realise that time is running out for Africa!