

SENE-GAMBIA : HOW MANY PEOPLE AND HOW MANY NATIONS ? AND WHICH WAY FORWARD?

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The Asiwaju thesis on the artificiality of African boundaries is constructed on the visible premise that colonial boundaries partitioned traditional nation states, ethnic groups and families with impunity. The Sene-Gambia polity is an eloquent illustration of the parcelling of African peoples into two sovereign states in utter disregard to any form of logic. In this era of the African union coming in the wake of the European Union, the concept of viability of nation states in Africa need to be revisited and subjected to academic scrutiny. The sister Republic of Senegal and the Gambia share too much in common to be different, yet they struggle to stand out painfully as distinct sovereign states. This paper interrogates the nature of these types of states in the light of economic viability and the prospect of sustainable poverty alleviation. It advocates a union of the two states in spite of the previous abortive attempts to amalgamate the Senegal and the Gambia. It is being proposed that new efforts should be made to unify the two countries in the light of current globalization trends.

A meaningful attempt to reduce poverty in such small-scale will have to be predicated on an amalgamation of the two to provide a large market, to become an attractive investments target for multinational cooperation, multilateral agencies and national donor institution. Economic scale advantages can also be more realized in such arrangement. Such an amalgamation will dismantle the artificial colonial creation of these two separate entities, a creation which undermines the concept of nationhood in these countries.

The common cultures that exist in Sene-Gambia entity would have to be used as basis for determining policies and guiding the implementation of such policies. The positive traditional elements can be used as useful guide to embark on meaningful development strategies that the Sene-Gambian society can support in a sustainable manner. Culture would have to be brought to the heart of the policy-making agenda in the proposed amalgamation. In both the Gambia and Senegal, economic growth has led to imbalances, where the Sene-Gambian has become increasingly out of tune with his environment. He has become obsessed with quantitative progress being set as the primary target, whereas the Sene-Gambia society's development should tend towards the qualitative improvement of life. The proposed set up should determine the new nations economic and social objectives within a wider Sene-Gambian cultural context

and the reassert those values, which contribute toward realizing a human society, Cultural authenticity and technical progress, in the reciprocity and complementarily of our efforts, are the surest guarantee of cultural sustainable human development in Sene-Gambia.

This paper is divided into three parts. Firstly, an attempt is made to highlight the commonalities of the Sene-Gambian people. Second, we explore previous abortive attempts at establishing a closely women political union between Senegal and the Gambia. Thirdly, we explore and propose viable ways of achieving a total and effective union between Senegal and the Gambia. As a strong point for the African Union.