



**BANJUL – DAKAR RELATIONS: IMPACT OF
THE CASAMANCE CONFLICT**

BY

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The Gambia and Senegal once shared a unique vision for a common destiny. This vision, however, was short-lived and therefore never realised. Despite such an unfortunate instance, these mutually dependent neighbours continued to close ranks and work together. Nevertheless, relations between them are far from being ideal due to The Gambia's complicit role in the Casamance conflict of southern Senegal. This study, therefore, is part of a growing body of knowledge of research about the Casamance conflict in southern Senegal. Specifically, the study examines the impacts of the Casamance conflict on the relations between The Gambia and Senegal. As a result, therefore, the significance of my research is to not only add to the already understanding of the relations between The Gambia and Senegal, but will contribute to greater understanding of the Casamance conflict and also stimulate where necessary, further research on the subject matter and on other perspectives of the Casamance conflict hitherto not dealt with. By examining the impacts of this peculiar conflict, I clarify the unfortunate situation experienced when instead of working hand-in-glove in finding common ground to solve the conflict; The Gambia and Senegal faces the real situation of grappling with diplomatic antipathy due to this conflict that is really affecting their relations, drifting them further apart. My piece of work attempts to solve this problem, drawing more attention to this phenomenon and underscoring the urgent need to put off the flames of the Casamance conflict and restore the trust and confidence that once characterised relations between The Gambian and Senegal.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
BDS	Bloc DemocratiqueSenegalais (Senegalese Democratic Bloc)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	International Relations
MFDC	Mouvement des Forces Democratique de la Casamance (Movement for the Democratic Forces of Casamance)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SFIO	Section Francaise de l'InternationaleOuvriere (French Section of the Workers' International)
UN	United Nations
US	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Aid
WB	World Bank
WWII	Second World War

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In the early 1980s, both The Gambia and Senegal have their peaceful and serene environments tested by turbulences of political instabilities. The Gambia witnessed an insurgency leading to a coup d'état whilst in Senegal, a rebellion in its own territory in the region of Casamance, south of the country, hatched. These two unique and separate ugly monsters changed the Senegambian political and social landscape and led to an appetite for greater cooperation with security issues being the most urgent and paramount.

The Gambia and Senegal, now being threatened by a common enemy, instability, shared a common identity that made them ready to cooperate more in both the present and the future. Thus, the spirit and desire of close collaboration led, amongst other things, to the establishment of the Senegambia Confederation in 1982, a prerequisite meant to bring the two countries closer as ever. The Confederation has the logic to usher in an era of economic union between The Gambia and Senegal with an invisible hand that has the benefit of eventually spilling over to a political union between the two. This brought The Gambia and Senegal closer together with each advancing their relative interests as well as protecting their ulterior motives over and against the other. However, after seven years of failed negotiations on the implementation of the protocol instruments, the nature and form of cooperation and parallel perceptions of the intentions of the union, the Confederation came to an abrupt collapse in 1989. This abrupt collapse did not shatter hopes of cooperation between The Gambia and Senegal as they continue to engage each other, cooperating in that same spirit that once characterized their relationship.

Despite this commitment to cooperation, relations between the two neighboring countries are barely always smooth and far from being ideal not only for the two governments but for their respective citizens too. When circumstances change at times, the very reasons that brought countries together could also be the very same reasons that strain their relations. During the infant stages of the conflict in Casamance, southern Senegal, which began in 1982, the same year in which the Senegambian Confederation between The Gambia and Senegal was established, differences with regards this conflict never surfaced. But with the advent of the second republic of The Gambia brought about by a military takeover in July 1994, this once-a-time drowned and silent differences, became largely pronounced and in a way resulted in a change in how both countries perceive each other. Therefore, a relationship once built on faith and trust was unfortunately transformed into that of mistrust.

Whilst the Senegambian Confederation was a strategic measure aimed at drawing The Gambia and Senegal towards a common destiny, the Casamance conflict on the other hand, is like cancer feeding on the thick layers on which relations between The Gambia and Senegal is built upon. Consequently, therefore, The Gambia and Senegal are being drifted further apart with serious implications to their cordial and friendly relations.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The Gambia and Senegal experienced and continue to experience rough waves in their relations because of this peculiar Casamance conflict. Senegal accuses The Gambia of aiding and abetting the rebellion by providing arms and providing safe sanctuaries for the rebel leaders. The Gambia on the other hand, condemns this view and strongly repudiates the Senegalese accusations. Instead, The Gambia charges that it is Senegal that is funding voices of dissent in the country due to the fact that all those accused of wanting to topple the democratically elected government of President Jammeh (President of The Gambia) reportedly received and continue to receive help

from Dakar, Senegal where they are also given refuge once they abscond. The Gambia suspects that Senegal is using the conflict in its favour, using it as a platform to destabilize The Gambia with intent to change the latter's regime. However, despite open statements from both countries emphasizing their commitments to peace, friendship and good neighbourliness, it seems such is not good enough to dissipate the mistrust that exists between them due to the Casamance conflict.

1.3 Rationale and Significance

The rationale for this research is inspired by the importance of the need for strong diplomacy and finding common ground for long lasting relations between neighbouring countries and their peoples with specific reference to The Gambia and Senegal. In conducting such a research and presenting my findings, I believe I can bring out some meaningful recommendations to be adopted by the concerned authorities.

As a result, therefore, the significance of my research is not only to add to the already understanding of the relations between The Gambia and Senegal by discovering something new, but also to stimulate where necessary, further investigation(s) on the subject matter for better relations between the two governments and their peoples. This research also has the significance of bridging the gap of mistrust between The Gambia and Senegal, restore the shattered spirit of mutual friendship that once characterized their relations and, usher in a new era of cooperation.

1.4 Research objectives

My research aimed to investigate and identify the significant problems of the relations between The Gambia and Senegal with respect to the Casamance conflict. It further aimed to understand the impact of the identified problems on The Gambia – Senegal relations and convey them in a clear and objective manner, setting aside any

individual or personal interests whilst maintaining a balanced approach. In addition, it is also the aim of this study to propose some practical and meaningful recommendations for improved relations.

1.5 Purpose of study

This study is not in any way intended to predict the future of relations between The Gambia and Senegal but to help people or readers grasp whatever developments taking place within the framework of Banjul – Dakar ties as they unfold. The purpose of my research is to identify, evaluate and analyse the impact of the Casamance conflict on Banjul-Dakar relations. It is also the purpose of my study to emphasise the need for strong diplomacy and finding common ground for enduring relationships between two neighbouring countries with specific reference to The Gambia and Senegal.

1.6 Structure/Scope of thesis

This piece of study has six (6) chapters. The first chapter is the Introduction, which includes the statement of the problem, rationale and significance, research objectives, purpose of the study, and structure of the thesis. Chapter two (2) deals with the Literature review, linking my study to others already in the field whilst focusing on the main theories of international affairs such as Realism, Geographical Determinism, Game Theory and Conflict Resolution, just to name a few. Chapter three (3) is the research methodology, dealing with the research area, hypothesis, research findings, research limitations and, the summary. Chapter four (4) is designed to focus on the history of relations between The Gambia and Senegal. A brief description of some of the areas or components of bilateral cooperation between them will be stated. Chapter five (5) investigates the Casamance conflict by striving to establish the root causes that triggered it and its possible consequences. A careful analysis of the extent to which the conflict affects relations between The Gambia and Senegal, will also be looked into. Thus, given the failure of the Senegalese government to negotiate a meaningful and

lasting peaceful truce of the Casamance conflict, this chapter will also examine the impact this has on its relation with The Gambia. In Chapter six (6), I will explore possible recommendations for improved relations between the two countries and the way forward for the mutual benefit of the governments and peoples of The Gambia and Senegal.

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CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

For over a long period of time now, the most featured theories employed for understanding the study and basic rudiments of international politics with which the study of international affairs is best understood include but not limited to Realism, Liberalism, Game Theory and Environmental Determinism just to name a few. The literature review of this study therefore is based on the analyses of such existing theoretical and practical knowledge. The reason for this is to present all the empirical links that academic researchers have unlocked between the theory and substance of foreign policy and its method, diplomacy as well as conflict. Their conclusions and recommendations will be summarized and critically evaluated throughout this piece of work.

Whatever its nature, a relationship is established based on some particular interests, real or imagined. This is also true when it comes to states. Accordingly, (McCornick, 2008) argued that states come together out of the need for security in the face of a common external threat, as did the members of NATO (1949) during the Cold War. He further argued that they also decide that they can promote peace and improve their quality of life more successfully by working in tandem rather than separately, thus the establishment of the Senegambian Confederation between The Gambia and Senegal in 1982.

In *Essential Readings in World Politics*, (Mingst & Snyder, 2004) pointed out that Realism was the dominant theoretical perspective throughout the Cold War period simply because it provided somewhat rational and powerful explanations for war, alliances, imperialism, obstacles to cooperation and other international phenomena. It depicts international affairs/politics as a struggle for power among self-interested states and is generally pessimistic about the prospects for eliminating conflict and war. Realism further argues that states strive to protect and advance their

interests relative to each other and to ensure their survival in this hostile global environment. Therefore, the search for and maintenance of national interests, which in a way enhances security and welfare, influence interstate relations.

As the end of colonialism signals the advent of inter-African state relations, so does the beginning of intense diplomacy by the newly independent African states. For this reason, (Touray, 2000) in his book: *The Gambia and the world. A History of the Foreign Policy of Africa's Smallest State, 1965 – 1995*, asserted that relations between The Gambian and Senegal began before the former's independence when Senegal wanted to incorporate The Gambia. As a result, therefore, Touray stated that UN was tasked to look into the possible forms union between The Gambia and Senegal could take. The UN report according to Touray, outlined three alternatives. The first alternative called for the full integration of The Gambia into Senegal; the second suggested the creation of a Senegambian federation in which the power of the federal government would be limited to defence and overseas representation and; the third advanced the possibility of a Senegambian entente in which both states would remain fully independent.

Whilst Realists contend that the foreign policy of states largely depends on the international environment in which they live and operate, geographical determinism on the other hand, asserts that socioeconomic and security needs are related to geographical attributes. Accordingly, (Holsti, 1967) noted in his book *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis* that some states are relatively distant from major centres of military power and therefore, relatively free of security threats whilst some are relatively isolated with no military apparatus and therefore relatively more prone to security threats. This second part of the equation applies to The Gambia with national attributes such as a small territory; small population and poor performance level of economic development.

On his part, (Walt, 1987) in his book: *The Origins of Alliances*, opined that states facing, or at least have unilaterally perceived that they are about to face, or perhaps have already faced an internal challenge, may seek external support, by

forming alliances, in order to deal with the danger. Given the fact that The Gambia is a small country almost surrounded by Senegal, this opinion is very important in explaining why it was imperative for The Gambia to form an alliance with Senegal.

In his book *The International Dimension of Internal Conflict*, (Brown, 1996) identifies five main clusters of variables that predispose some places in the world to conflict. These are structural, political, economic/social, and cultural/perceptual factors. These factors are present in any conflict, and the Casamance conflict is no exception. On her part, (Fall, 2011) focuses on the factors that triggered the Casamance conflict when she wrote her thesis on the topic: *Understanding the Casamance conflict: A Background*.

(Trzcinski, 2005) claimed in his book *Origins of Armed Separatism in Southern Senegal*, that the establishment of regional anti-government movements like that of MFDC in Casamance, southern Senegal, is connected with the existence of specific conditions. His study was based on the premise that the outbreak of the armed conflict in Casamance took place in the context of a number of different factors and will aim at sorting those at its genesis and at showing their complexity. His piece of work is extensively used in detailing the causes of the Casamance conflict dealt in my fifth chapter.

In *Understanding Causes of War and Peace*, (Ohlson, 2008) puts forward a new conceptual framework to facilitate the analysis of the outbreak, conduct and resolution of armed conflicts within states. This "Triple-R" framework involves the consideration of reasons, resources and resolve for engaging in violence. He further went on to suggest that the causes of war can be explained in terms of his "Triple-R Triangle." In order to resort to violence, he continued, an actor or group must have reasons, resources and resolve.

Exploring how armed groups developed, (Schlichte, 2009) article: *With the state against The State? The Formation of Armed Groups* investigates the formation of armed groups using the concept of figuration, which emphasises the interdependence of individuals. He postulated that there are three main ways by which armed groups

come into being: in response to violent repression, through exclusion from the ruling class and when government-created informal armed forces become free from state control. For Klaus, these mechanisms provide insights into the conditions under which armed groups are likely to form and whether they become institutionalised.

Holsti further stated that most governments, most of the time, respond to the actions and policies of other states, that is, to those that take initiatives that are perceived to have some impact on one's own interests, principles and preferences. Such is the nature of Senegal's position and reacts rather nervously when The Gambia is improving her military capabilities in the face of the Casamance conflict. As stated earlier, interstate relations are influenced by geopolitical considerations. However, interstate relations like that of The Gambia and Senegal in particular and that of other countries in general, could be affected by certain impactful phenomena such as conflict. Conflict, whether intra or interstate, like that of the Casamance conflict, is supposed to bring The Gambia and Senegal closer together in finding solutions to solve it. Unfortunately, instead of producing the ideal situation of working hand-in-glove, it somehow drifts The Gambia and Senegal further apart and leaves them to grapple with the real situation of diplomatic antipathy.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the research area, hypothesis, research methodology, research findings, research limitations and, the summary.

3.1 Research Area

The research focused on the conflict in the Casamance region of southern Senegal, its broad consequences and the strict specific impact it has on the relations between The Gambia and Senegal.

3.2 Hypothesis

The Gambia and Senegal share a common history between their peoples. Nevertheless, even after committing themselves to good neighbourliness, the relationship between the mutually dependent neighbours is barely smooth through all seasons and weathers. My research, therefore, aimed at investigating the reasons for such a phenomenon which I strongly believe at this point is the result of the conflict in Casamance, southern Senegal. I will also show that relations between The Gambia and Senegal is not at its lowest point because of the mere existence of the Casamance conflict, but because of the fact that the longer the duration of the Casamance conflict, the more it takes its toll in eroding the thick layer of friendship and trust between the two akin neighbours. To ensure close, friendly and fraternal relations, The Gambia and Senegal must collaborate hand-in-glove to resolve the Casamance conflict.

3.3 Research methodology

This research was conducted using the qualitative method. The rationale for this is to find out exactly how analysts and Senegambian scholars view the relations

between The Gambia and Senegal in the face of the ongoing conflict in Casamance that seems not to end. The first-hand data was collected from various in-depth interviews with officials, in The Gambia and Senegal, who are au-fait with Senegambian politics and in Guinea Bissau. Those interviewed included, but not limited to, diplomats, government officials, concerned Gambians and Senegalese as well as Casamancais (term used to describe those in Casamance).

The second-hand data came from reference books, journals or newspapers, articles, internet/websites, and some government documents.

3.4 Research findings

My research, inter alia, discovered that the Casamance conflict, which is the most painful and embarrassing experiences of post-independent Senegal, is the major determinant of how Senegal perceives The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau as well as the medium through which her relations with both countries is anchored upon. Coupled with the emergence of new forms of security threats within the sub-region and the fragile situation in Guinea-Bissau that can neither ensure peace nor provide security, my research also found out that the Casamance conflict has created the environment for an appetite for arms race. Furthermore, my research underscored the fact that the only way relations between The Gambia and Senegal could be in a state of being ideal and fruitful, would be the peaceful resolution of the Casamance conflict without which relations between The Gambia and Senegal will remain fractured.

3.5 Research limitations

Some limitations were encountered during the conduct of my research. The number of officials meant to be interviewed for this research was not all met due to busy work schedules on their part, which in some cases included travelling out of the country for official duties. In addition, during the interview process, some respondents were reluctant to answer some questions directly pertaining to the Casamance conflict,

which they deemed too sensitive. Their sincere refusal to answer the questions was partly because they do not trust me nor do they think I am credible enough to ensure confidentiality. This made me rely somewhat heavily on secondary data.

3.6 Long range consequences

The belief, as explicitly stated in my hypothesis that the consequence of the somewhat not smooth relation between The Gambia and Senegal is necessitated not by the mere existence of the Casamance conflict but more so by its long duration, is only an opinion which is heavily dependent upon and supported by the data I was able to gather during my research. Despite my effort to get the data in an environment in which interviewees were not forthcoming with much needed information, it is now up to the discretion of the reader to either:

- Confirm my hypothesis (or opinion);
- Contradict my hypothesis;
- Or, possibly render my hypothesis inconclusive.

CHAPTER IV

THE GAMBIA AND SENEGAL: HISTORY OF RELATIONS

4.1 Introduction: The colonial experience

The formal colonial era in West Africa was traced back as far as the late nineteenth century in which France and Great Britain were the primary colonial powers (Britannica Educational Publishing, 2011). The spirit of the Berlin Conference of 1884 inspired this colonial adventure. The Conference, among other things, established ground rules and spheres of influence, the future exploitation of Africa in the name of evangelisation and liberation of "Black Africa", and the final settlement of the political partitioning of Africa without any due participation from Africans as though Africa were a very cheap commodity to be shared as per their wishes and aspirations. Thus, motivations for colonialism were driven in part by a quest for territory; in part by the entrepreneurs who represented nations or bodies and acted as the vanguards for conquering lands and peoples; in part by competition from other European nations, including intense exploration by Belgium and Germany, in specific hotspots of regional competition; and in part by the new economic movements sweeping the European continent which inspired the pursuit of new markets and resources (World Model UN 2012).

The end of WWII and the creation of the UN invariably lay the strong foundation leading to the moribund of colonialism. This long-awaited demise was to some extent precipitated by assertions of the inherent right to self-determination ferociously echoed by the colonised peoples of the Third World. The post-WWII years elsewhere in British Africa, especially West Africa, witnessed the rise of nationalists movements seeking greater African participation in government and eventual independence. This nationalism brought in its wake a revolution in Africa within a decade. This to some extent led the British to make concessions on most of their

colonies and eventually accepted to grant independence to her African territories hitherto acquired through colonialism and conquest. Ghana (formerly Gold Coast), Nigeria, and Sierra Leone all became independent between 1957 and 1961 leaving The Gambia as the only area in West Africa still under British control and influence.

During all these periods, both the Colonial office and the Gambian government representing Great Britain and the indigenous people of the colony respectively, considered that the territory was too small and poor for independence to be considered as a viable goal. As the other British West African territories such as those mentioned in the preceding paragraph progressed towards independence, several alternative arrangements were proposed for The Gambia. In 1949, Governor Percy Wyn-Harris favoured a "Channel Island" solution, whereby The Gambia would achieve internal self-government, but would continue to rely on Britain in such matters as defence, foreign representation and economic development. This plan was abandoned after the fall of the Labour Government in Great Britain in 1951. However, in 1955, the Conservative Government proposed adopting the "Malta Plan", which envisaged The Gambia obtaining limited self-government while at the same time sending representatives to the British Parliament in London. But after the Maltese political parties rejected this option in 1958, this approach was also squashed. In 1958, Sir Edward Windley, the successor to Wyn-Harris, aimed to encourage a union of The Gambia with the neighboring French colony of Senegal. Despite all these maneuvering by the British, it was clear that The Gambia preferred independence as a sovereign state, the same as the rest of British West Africa.

Thus, influenced by the independence struggles of fellow Africans elsewhere within the African continent in general but very near within her West African backyard in particular, The Gambia also strongly believed that she should be no exception and therefore, successfully negotiated the right for self-determination and self-direct rule from Great Britain. On October 1963, therefore, The Gambia was granted full-government status and a constitutional conference held in July 1964 in London, UK agreed to the mechanisms of achieving independence for The Gambia.

Thus, on 18 February 1965, The Gambia became an independent state within the Commonwealth.

4.2 History of relations

Now that colonialism is over with African leaders taking control of the reigns of their countries, newly independent African countries began forging relations with other countries in the continent and forming alliances with their neighbours and those in their immediate sub-region. This was true in the case of The Gambia and Senegal, two neighbours not only based on geography but also on social and cultural affinity. Senegal, the only country that borders The Gambia on the east, north and south, with the west opened to the Atlantic Ocean, gained independence five years earlier from France in 1960 (refer to Figure 1: Map of The Gambia and Senegal).

The present boundaries of The Gambia were defined in 1889 after an agreement between the United Kingdom and France. Starting with the placement of boundary markers in 1891, it took almost fifteen years after the Paris meeting to determine the final borders of The Gambia (www.wikipedia.org/wiki/gambia). Today, The Gambia is the smallest country in mainland Africa with a population estimated at around 1.8million as at July 2013. It comprises an area of 11,360sq.km and surrounded by Senegal on the north, south and east with the west opened to the Atlantic Ocean. The Gambia's border with Senegal is about 600km long and largely permeable. There is no natural division between the two countries and no physical landmark to distinguish it from Senegal (Touray, 2000). The Gambia is made up of different ethnic groups. These include but not limited to the Mandinka 42%, Fula 18%, Wolof 16%, Jola 10%, Serahuli 9%, and others making the remaining 4%. Also, The Gambia is predominantly Muslim who make up 90% of the total population. Christians make up 8% with the remaining 2% being indigenous beliefs (2003 census).

Senegal, the country that almost completely surrounds The Gambia except for The Gambia's short Atlantic coastline, covers a land area of about 197,000 square

kilometers and has an estimated population of 13million as at July 2012. Like The Gambia, Senegal is also comprised of the same ethnic groups that make up The Gambia but in different degrees. In Senegal, the Wolof form the majority with 43%, Fula 23.8%, Serer 14.7%, Jola 3.7%, Mandinka 3%, Soninke 1.1%, European and Lebanese 1%, other 9.4%. Similarly, Senegal is equally Muslim dominated with 94%, followed by Christians with 5% and the indigenous beliefs with 1% (CIA World Factbook, February 2013).

When The Gambia achieved independence from Great Britain in 1965 as mainland Africa's smallest state, its future seemed uncertain. In addition, its enviable political stability, together with modest economic success at least until the early 1980s, enabled it to avoid being absorbed by its larger French-speaking neighbour, Senegal as was being anticipated by many at the time of the country's independence. Prior to The Gambia's attainment of independence in 1965, it was unclear whether The Gambia should be allowed to be a separate independent state or whether it should form a union with Senegal. The UN intervened and tried to settle the lingering dust of The Gambia's future by outlining three alternatives on the form the union between The Gambia and Senegal should take. The first alternative according to the UN report was the full integration of The Gambia as the eighth Senegalese province. The second was a possible Senegambian federation in which the power of the federal government would be limited to defence and overseas representation, with complete autonomy in other aspects for the federated states. The third alternative was the establishment of a Senegambian entente that would not involve the creation of a new state but both states would remain fully sovereign. The Gambia rejected the first two alternatives but strongly favoured the third and called for a confederal structure in which responsibility for defence, foreign affairs, and overseas representation would be vested. This was not acceptable to Senegal, which countered with proposals envisaging the eventual political integration of The Gambia with Senegal.

But what motivated Senegal to want a union with The Gambia? From Senegal's vantage point, such considerations could be said to be based on logistical, political and security concerns. Senegal was aware of the geographical accident of The Gambia's

location and was worried that The Gambia would isolate the southern region of Casamance from the northern region of Dakar. Senegal was therefore concerned that this could lead to future logistical obstacles between the two countries. Also, there were some legitimate concerns that The Gambia would become a base for the operation of banned political parties or for subversion from outside. It is therefore fair to assume that these considerations influence Senegal's motivation for a union with The Gambia (Touray, 2000).

Figure 1: Map of The Gambia and Senegal



Though the politicians who vehemently pushed for independence felt that integration with Senegal was undesirable, they were equally smart enough to make sure they refrain from moves that would alienate Senegal. Therefore, The Gambia and Senegal signed agreements on cooperation on foreign policy, and on matters of security and defence on 18 February 1965, the day The Gambia attained independence. This in my view was meant to spare Senegal from the embarrassment of total defeat in their quest for a union with The Gambia as well as serve as a cooling stimulant to assure Senegal that though they failed to secure a union, The Gambia will always cooperate with Her with regards matters of mutual interests. The defence

agreement, among other things, provided for mutual assistance in the face of any form of external threat. Thus, when The Gambia faced a rebellion in 1981, Senegal intervened by rapidly mobilising and sending her troops to crush the rebellion with success. This controversial intervention by Senegal was made possible by this defence pact. Arguably, the 1965 defense agreement with Senegal was to be invoked when either country was subject to external threat. President Jawara (former President of The Gambia) successfully invoked such an agreement with ease even though it is well beyond any reasonable doubt that the coup was an exclusive internal matter of The Gambia. However, despite this seemingly obvious fact, why would The Gambia invoke such a treaty when it did and why would Senegal be equally drawn into such a situation when the defense agreement clearly suggests otherwise? Is it a desperate measure for The Gambia or is it a smart and strategic move for both The Gambia and Senegal?

I will answer the second question first as to why Senegal intervened militarily even when this clearly seems to violate the cardinal principle of the defense agreement that she signed with The Gambia. On the other hand, Senegal's intervention may be justified or even obligatory given the fact that any political instability in The Gambia could eventually spill over to the southern part of Senegal that was at the same time, beginning to see a violent secession struggle. Therefore, it was Senegal's responsibility to intervene not as a violation of The Gambia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, but because there was no domestic avenue or institution including military, available in The Gambia to address and curb the coup. Given this scenario, therefore, Senegal had the right, out of self-defense or even out of goodwill to interfere in the domestic affairs of The Gambia where it is beyond all reasonable doubt that The Gambia cannot provide protection to both its regime and people. This justification is inspired by the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) that affirms that if a state cannot provide much needed security in such situations, then it is the obligation of others to protect and intervene as and when necessary.

Despite the good reasons for intervening to stop the 1981 coup in The Gambia, Senegal has another ulterior motive it seems to do so. This motive was not for Senegal to be necessarily seen as a saviour that sacrificed its own military and resources to

save Gambians from bloodshed, but to serve as a strong incentive to convince The Gambia for the need to enter into an eventual political union with Her. This suspicion is more convincing given the fact that Senegal has always wanted such union with The Gambia especially prior to the attainment of the latter's independence. At this same time, there was an idealistic or perhaps a realistic view depending on outlook that out of the ruins of post-coup Gambia and before she would reassert herself, there was an opportunity, by Senegal, to seize the chance to create a new Senegalese federation. This view was based on the perception that the Gambian state has lost its footing and therefore could not guarantee the safety of her citizens and that if the pre-coup era was rebuilt, there would be a return to nationalism, a situation not craved for by Senegal at least until they achieve some sort of union with The Gambia. Pro-federalists in Senegal, therefore, pushed for a federal Senegambia hoping that political integration would be preceded by economic, social and cultural integration.

Therefore, in a bid to politically repay Senegal for her sacrifice and for a job-well-done in restoring peace and stability, but most importantly for re-establishing political and constitutional authority back to the deposed government, and coupled with the federalists support in Senegal for a union, The Gambia wasted no time in agreeing to set up a confederation with Senegal. Thus, a confederation known as the Senegambian Confederation was established between The Gambia and Senegal formally coming into effect in February 1982. This Confederation was thus established with the hope of a common destiny with Senegal. Clearly, Senegal had hoped to exploit the dependence of The Gambia government on her and had sought to convert what initially had been deliberately loosely constructed association into a full-blown union of the two countries. The Confederation had the logic of ushering in an era of economic union between The Gambia and Senegal with an invisible hand that has the benefit of spilling over to a political union between the two. Both countries, among other things, were to integrate their military and security forces; form an economic and monetary union; coordinate their foreign policies and communications infrastructure; and establish confederal institutions.

Despite its good intentions, the Senegambian Confederation seems to lack equilibrium between the two. This is because there was no genuine intention for a win-

win situation in negotiating the confederation to set in motion a long lasting relationship. Senegal wanted to win at all cost because they wanted to annex The Gambia as the eighth region of Senegal. On her part, The Gambia saw the confederation as just a marriage of convenience at least for the short term before it could fully take control of its national security requirements. Therefore, after seven years of failed negotiations on the implementation of the protocol instruments, the confederation came to an abrupt collapse in 1989. This was mainly because The Gambia perceived that its sovereignty and political independence was increasingly threatened by Senegal for demanding ever-closer economic ties and eventual political evolution towards a unitary rather than a confederal State. In addition, there was growing belief that The Gambia can now manage her own affairs. Moreover, when The Gambia hesitated not having a customs union with Senegal because of strategic economic and political interests, the future of the Senegambian Confederation became more certain heading to a wide open coffin with only the hammer missing to drive the nails through. Finally, in mid-1989, the Senegalese government, under the pretext of a military crisis on its border with Mauritania, unilaterally withdrew its forces from The Gambia and placed the Confederation on hold. This time around, the hammer was found and the Confederation was formally nailed down, leaving the Senegalese government embittered, somewhat betrayed and unwilling to provide any further military support to the Jawara government. No wonder that Senegal never came to Jawara's rescue this time around when the young lieutenants of the Gambia National Army struck and ousted him on 22 July, 1994.

Now I would examine why The Gambia decided to form an alliance with Senegal in the first place. It is argued that states pursue their foreign policies within the context they find themselves in in relation to their goals and interests employing the best methods possible of achieving them. Foreign policies, therefore, it is argued are designed to sustain or change a current condition or practice in the external environment. While some policies are designed to change conditions abroad for their own sake, most are said to promote some domestic purposes and needs such as the search for security, welfare, autonomy and prestige – values that all states and governments pursue. Whilst realists contend that the foreign policy of states largely

rests on the international environment in which they are situated and operate, geographical determinism, on the other hand, asserts that socioeconomic and security needs are related to geographical attributes. Accordingly, as noted by Holsti (1967), some states are relatively distant from major centres of military power and therefore, relatively free of security threats whilst some are relatively isolated with no military apparatus and are therefore more prone to security threats. This second part of the equation applies to The Gambia with national attributes such as a small territory, small population and poor economic performance level of economic development. Because great powers are more likely than others to use military power as a means of defending their interests and pursuing their purposes (Wright, 1965), I believe the most rational move for small states like The Gambia, is to forge qualitative alliances with relatively larger states.

As opined by Walt (1987), states facing, or at least have unilaterally perceived that they are about to face, or perhaps have already faced an internal challenge, may seek external support, by forming alliances, in order to deal with the danger. As a small country, therefore, perhaps the strategic move for The Gambia, as determined by its geographical environment, was to weave closer ties with her immediate neighbour, Senegal. The Gambia, emerging from a very difficult and painful period in the early 1980s that saw a coup and fearing that a repeat of the 1981 coup could take place, decides to outsource and requests Senegal to take care of her security needs. This is partly because the government could no longer trust the Field Force, who instead of loyally protecting the state against any unconstitutional and subversive move, joined ranks with the coup plotters to overthrow it. As exposed by the nearly successful coup, The Gambia was very vulnerable internally with no viable security apparatus to protect her. Perhaps, believing in the statement that in international politics God help those who help themselves, therefore, it was imperative for The Gambia, like all other states that pursue values of which security is the most important, to forge an alliance with Senegal, to protect her national interest as well as ensure her survival. Therefore, from a realist point of view, I argue that the only reason why the Senegambian confederation ever existed was that both the governments of The Gambia and Senegal

decided that it was in their best interest to do so; they were both striving to protect their interests relative to each other.

4.3 Brief scope of bilateral cooperation

As mentioned earlier, The Gambia and Senegal signed agreements of cooperation in matters of foreign policy and in security and defense in the wake of the former's attainment of independence in 1965. The security and defense agreement, through which a Senegalese intervention in The Gambia was made possible when the latter experienced a coup in 1981, was a commitment of both countries to help and assist each other and to secure their external security and defence against any form of threat. How The Gambia, with no military unlike her Senegalese counterpart at the time of signing the treaty, was to carry through such a commitment remained to be seen. Nevertheless, under the umbrella of the security and defence treaty, Senegal undertakes the responsibility to provide The Gambia with the technical assistance necessary for the organisation, staffing and training of Gambians in Senegalese military colleges and institutions. Whether this too was done I am sure it would be met with different reactions.

Furthermore, expressing their mutual desire for close cooperation in the field of foreign policy, being conscious of the need to assert the continuing bonds of friendship and cultural affinity, and recognizing that their foreign policies could be derived from the same values and principles, The Gambia and Senegal entered into treaty in matters of foreign policy. This treaty, among other things, states that Senegal shall, at the request of The Gambia, undertake on behalf of The Gambia, diplomatic and consular representation in such states or with such organisations where Senegal has or may establish representation. The treaty also envisages the sharing of information between The Gambia and Senegal and holding joint consultations with regards matters of foreign policy.

The Gambia and Senegal also signed an agreement of a judicial nature, Extradition. Under this agreement, extradition shall be subjected to:

- a) Those individuals who are prosecuted for crimes or offences punishable by the laws of the State applied to by a sentence of at least two years and,
- b) Those individuals who for crimes or offences punishable by the laws of the State applied to are sentenced, after hearing both sides or in default thereof by the courts of the Applicant State, to a sentence of at least two months imprisonment.

The treaty also states that extradition shall be refused in the event that:

- c) The offences by reason of which it is requested have been committed in the State applied to,
- d) The offences have been finally decided in the State applied to,
- e) Statutory limitation of the proceedings or penalty is obtained in accordance with the laws of the applicant State or of the State applied to at the time of receipt of the application by the State applied to,
- f) The offences having been committed outside the territory of the applicant State by a foreigner to,
- g) An amnesty has arisen in the applicant State, or an amnesty has arisen in the State applied to, provided that in the latter case the offence is one of those which can be prosecuted in that State when they have been committed outside its territory by a foreigner.

However, when Senegal unilaterally withdrew her security forces from The Gambia to focus on a more pressing security situation in her border with Mauritania in the late 1980s, precipitating the eventual collapse of the Senegambian Confederation in 1989, the close collaboration and cooperation once enjoyed by both countries appeared to be shattered. This state of broken relations was soon dispelled as The Gambia and Senegal continue to bolster their relations. This is partly because The Gambia's foreign policy, based on mutual respect for the sovereign equality, independence, and territorial integrity of States, is a policy anchored to the pursuit of international peace and security and the promotion of friendly relations and cooperation among all peace-loving and progress-oriented nations.

In addition to establishing and maintaining diplomatic, cultural and economic ties, and inspired by the Treaty of Association between The Gambia and Senegal signed in

1967, both countries agreed to establish The Gambia/Senegal Boundary Management Commission in 2011. This Commission serves as a medium through which both countries exchange information on their border policies and harmonize them with the view to strengthening cooperation between them. It also has the purpose of promoting the free movement of people and goods across the territories of both countries in particular, through mutually agreed customs corridors. This Commission shall oversee and where and when necessary, facilitate the conduct of the following:-

- a) reconfirmation and marking of The Gambia/Senegal Boundary as a matter of priority;
- b) an observation of a buffer zone at the Senegal/Gambia border, in the absence of other alternatives;
- c) densification and maintenance of boundary pillars;
- d) immediate rehabilitation of all damaged boundary pillars;
- e) Sensitization of the populations living at the borders on the other socio-economic aspects of their common livelihood, notably aspects relating to health, peace and the environment;
- f) Production of updated boundary maps for nation-wide distribution in both countries;
- g) Allocation of sufficient resources to the Commission for the continuous maintenance of the boundary pillars, and;
- h) Regular monitoring of the boundaries between the two countries.

CHAPTER V

THE CASAMANCE CONFLICT AND ITS IMPACT

5.1 Introduction: the larger picture

In 1970, Albert J. Meyers investigated the state of Africa after its decolonization and claimed that, for many African nations the era of violence is ending and is being succeeded by a period of economic development (Pakenham, 1991). Sadly, this development was not as equal or as prosperous as promised. Today, chaos still reigns in some formerly colonial African states: more than forty military coups have been undertaken; one-party rule exists alongside human rights abuses and the compromise of civil liberties. Corruption is in full force, as is the inefficiency of governments. Meanwhile, Europe's interests continue to be suited as missionaries travel providing Christianity, and white executives exploit the territory. As countries become more industrialized, they require more energy resources to run as efficiently as possible. In addition, the potentially vast undiscovered amounts of natural resources, to be used in new and more creative ways, also threatens the independence of Africa.

Upon gaining independence, there was great agitation that the new leaders of the changed political landscape would generate progress, peace and prosperity. Unfortunately, quite the opposite was achieved, throwing the hopes and aspirations of many enthusiasts in the mud. Africa continues to portray a society that is characterised by violent conflicts and civil wars, acute underdevelopment and abject poverty.

Today, Africa is still suffering from political turmoil brought about by unsettled conflicts that has not only threatened its particular peace and security but that of the international system as well. For example, as observed by (Sollenberg, 2001), Africa has 51% of minor conflicts, 38% of intermediate conflict and 53% of war out of all global conflicts and wars during the period 1980 to 2000. In addition, (Elbadawi &

Sambanis, 2000) noted that over the last 40 years nearly 20 African countries have experienced at least one period of a civil war. This is particularly true in West Africa, which has also shared a significant portion of overall conflict situation in Africa. Senegal has witnessed a secession rebellion in its southern region of Casamance; Guinea-Bissau has been interrupted by many military coups leaving the country with very fragile political institutions; Liberia was brought to its knees with a civil war that claimed many lives; and for her part, Sierra Leone has to endure one of the most brutal civil conflicts to be witnessed in the sub-region with victims maimed by either cutting their arms or limbs, famously dubbed "short" or "long sleeve."

For this reason therefore, Africa attracted the focus of international attention for some time now, both during the last few decades and presently where new forms of insecurity abound. This is because of the threat it poses to international peace and security, and the obstacles it creates to African efforts to achieve regional integration and development. The African continent accounts for almost half of the world's conflicts and this has made the African economies weak despite its abundant natural resources, its political institutions fragile and its social infrastructures also remain frail.

Africa has witnessed a significant number of violent conflicts and civil wars and this has prompted many scholars of security to label it as one of the hottest geographical spaces of internal dissidence and interstate conflicts most especially in the Horn of Africa, which is home to Africa's longest civil wars. In addition, the Horn is one of the most complex and conflicted regions of the world. Each of the countries of the Horn—Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and Sudan—suffers from protracted political strife, arising from local and national grievance, identity politics and regional inter-state rivalries. For 150 years, the Horn has also been a theatre for strategic power struggles—the British Empire's demand to control the Red Sea; Egypt's attempt to control the Nile Waters; the Cold War confrontation in which each of the principal countries of the Horn switched sides at crucial junctures; and most recently the U.S. Administration's global war on terror.

The peace and security situation in the African continent is still fragile and precarious due to the slow pace of efforts to promote peace and security, compliance with the rule of law, and the observance of constitutional order. The most notable conflicts are those in Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and the Islamist occupation of northern Mali vowing to divide the country into two with their demand for an independent Islamic state. The consequences of these conflicts are huge and unbearable given the scale of atrocities caused. They inflict human suffering, destruction of homes and livelihoods, constant displacement of peoples and insecurity. They also disrupt the process of production, create the conditions for the pillage of the continent's resources and divert their attention from development purposes to servicing war. Thus, violent conflicts and civil wars in developing countries have heavy human, economic, and social costs and are a major cause of misery, poverty and underdevelopment in the African continent.

States affected by conflicts tend to bolster their own security and try to weaken other states believed to be undermining their sovereignty thus setting the insecurity dilemma in motion with a terrible arms race scenario. Inability of states to dialogue with others especially those groups within their borders in addressing grievances, eventually leads to very dire consequences to the already volatile security situation. This state of affairs has created failed states that eventually become fertile nurseries for the cultivation of not only terrorist cells but also a painful thorn in the flesh of African states seeking peace both with themselves and with others especially their neighbours.

5.2 The Casamance conflict

Given the state of affairs within the African continent as already stated in the preceding paragraphs, it is obvious that certain parts of Africa; notably the Horn and East Africa, experience persistent violence and seemingly intractable conflicts more than others such as the southern part of Africa. Generally, these long-standing conflicts are strongly anchored on the seabed of history most of which could be traced

back to colonialism. One such conflict is the Casamance conflict that is not only causing problems for the Senegalese state but also has the potential of undermining regional peace and security.

The region of Casamance is that southern part of Senegal largely separated from the rest of northern Senegal by The Gambia, which stretches into Senegal. It is a region that is almost sandwiched by both The Gambia situated on its north and Guinea-Bissau on its south. The Casamance region is further divided into two principal administrative areas, namely, Ziguinchor and Kolda. All these features cause Casamance to be very isolated in terms of communications from the remainder of the country, and this, in consequence, leads to the region's low degree of economic and social integration with the rest of Senegal. In addition, it is reported that Casamance, which was once the pride of Portuguese possessions, is the product of Portuguese and French colonial struggles of strategic land grabbing. As a result, therefore, a border was amicably chartered out between the French colony of Senegal and the Portuguese colony of Guinea-Bissau in 1888 with Portugal eventually losing Casamance out to France(Wikipedia).

Figure 2: Casamance region of Southern Senegal highlighted in yellow



The Casamance region (highlighted in yellow in the above map) comprises about one-seventh of Senegal's land area. The region is ethnically diverse with the Jola ethnic group forming an absolute majority (61%) according to the 1988 census. Other

ethnic groups in the region are the Mandinka and Fula. Like the entire Senegalese state, the Casamance region's population is also mainly Muslim (75%) but with significant Christian (17%), mostly Roman Catholic and, indigenous belief (8%). Also, the Jola ethnic group is 60% Muslim. These figures according to Evans (2004), represent a significant divergence from the national average – Senegal is 94% Muslim – leading some Western media coverage of the conflict falsely to characterise the Casamance region as a predominantly Christian or animist enclave pitted against Muslim northerners in Senegal. Rather than religion, Evans further stated that a strong regional identity is expressed among Casamancais (a term used to describe those from Casamance), particularly the Jola, in which they distinguish themselves from the Nordistes (a term used to describe northern Senegalese) and which also forms part of the Separatist's discourse.

Like most African conflicts, the Casamance conflict is one of the longest and few separatist conflicts that contemporary Africa has witnessed. A low-level civil war, the Casamance conflict is being fought between the Government of Senegal and the Movement for the Democratic Forces of Casamance (Mouvement des Forces Democratique de la Casamance - MFDC) since 1982 over the question of independence for the Casamance region. The Movement for the Democratic Forces of Casamance (Mouvement des Forces Democratique de la Casamance - MFDC), from which the present MFDC operating in Casamance, southern Senegal, derived their name from, was a regional movement founded in 1947 by Emile Badiane and Ibou Diallo, school teachers in the Casamance region. The main objectives of this movement at its nativity were to defend the interests of the Casamance region in particular but also to serve as a platform to create awareness of the challenging issues faced by peripheral regions in Senegal.

Today, the MFDC is claiming political independence for the Casamance region, claiming that the region has never been part of Senegal. It seems therefore that the logic of MFDC's claim rest on the belief that the colonisation of the Casamance region was with but not in or part of Senegal. However, in December 1993 France issued its judgement that Casamance had not existed as an autonomous territory prior

to colonial period, and that independence for the region had neither been demanded nor considered at the time of decolonisation. On their part, the MFDC leaders entrusted French historian Jacques Charpy with investigating this issue based on available data. This expert evaluation from 1994 – based on the study of documents and writings of the colonial era – did not find any evidence that could indicate that Casamance had ever enjoyed any formal autonomy within French West Africa. Thus, research did not confirm that when Senegal was being decolonised the region had any right to independence on the account of a separate colonial heritage.

According to popular but unsubstantiated belief, Senegal's first President, Leopold Sedar Senghor, made a promise to the leaders of the MFDC, the de facto representatives of the Casamance region, before independence from France in 1960 that if they joined Senegal for 20 years they would have independence granted to them afterwards. Such strong belief seems to be premised on the fact that when Senghor formed his political party, the Senegalese Democratic Bloc (Bloc Democratique Senegalais - BDS) in 1948 after splitting from the Senegal branch of the French Socialist Party (SFIO), he joined forces with the MFDC. Senghor's new party was based more in the rural areas emphasizing social and economic issues and geared its programmes closely to peasant interests and grievances, a platform appealing to the MFDC's founding fathers' agenda. According to the spirit of the merger between BDS and MFDC, it is reported that there was an agreement that the MFDC would be committed to supporting the BDS in its struggle for independence from France after which the Casamance region would be considered special status or even separate statehood after 20 years. Moreover, it is even believed that Emile Badiane, a founding father of MFDC who died in 1972, was assassinated by Senghor and copies of the written agreement destroyed as the 20-year period for independence for the Casamance region looms. Therefore, when the Senegalese government did not follow through on the promise of independence for the Casamance region due in 1980, the MFDC felt overwhelmingly betrayed and instead of exhausting all available peaceful means in dealing with the independence question, resorted into violence believing that the only rational means of achieving independence for the Casamance region is through violence. But, is this the actual *raison d'être* of the Casamance conflict that has

claimed many lives, gave Senegal her worst headache and, plunged the entire sub-region into political chaos and insecurity?

5.3 Causes of the Casamance conflict

According to (Roche, 1985), the grievances of the people of the Casamance region against the Senegalese government dates back to the French colonial era. As most of Senegal was under colonial control by the late nineteenth century, fierce resistance against colonial rule persisted in Casamance, thanks to the geographical separation of the region by The Gambia. This topographic reality left the French with no other option than to create a separate administrative system for the region that placed it under the direct authority of the governor of French West Africa, headquartered in Saint-Louis, northern Senegal. Later, the Casamance region was incorporated into the Senegalese colony as a “circle” with administrative structures parallel to Senegal’s other regions. Consequently, therefore, the MFDC assert that the region has a legitimate claim to independence under the accepted Organization of African Unity (OAU) norms of sovereignty and self-determination based on colonial boundaries.

Generally, the causes of almost all conflicts especially those witnessed in Africa and elsewhere in the Third World have some basic common characteristics. These include but not limited to the lack of ability of respective states to perform the essential functions of statehood, provision of basic services and infrastructure, as well as security of life, livelihood and property. This is blamed somehow, on the legacy of colonialism. Summarily, therefore, the source of protracted civil conflict as noted by (Azar, 1990), is rooted in the denial of those elements required in the development of all people and societies, and whose pursuit is a compelling need in all. These are security, distinctive identity, social recognition, poor economic management and marginalisation, political exclusion, abject poverty and lack of effective participation in the processes that determine conditions of security, identity and economic progress. In a nutshell, the same root causes (political, social and economic) also apply for the

Casamance conflict, dubbed as one of the longest protracted civil conflicts in post-colonial Africa.

The two principal factors that enormously wheeled the Casamance conflict as are the implementation of the 1972 land reform (Domaine National), and the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of the 1980s. According to (Eichelsheim, 1990), the land tenure system under the domaine national has the purpose, atleast from an official standpoint, of correcting improper land use and spontaneous or anarchic settlements. This is because local government paid little or no attention to the way land was distributed and how the regions were expanding as a result of which a great variety of so-called spontaneous settlements developed in the periphery of the towns. Until 1964, the question of land distribution and how it was used in Senegal, was dealt with solely by the different ethnic groups and their respective land tenure systems. For instance, the land where Ziguinchor stands belonged to the inhabitants of the surrounding Jola villages. With this new land tenure system, every transaction related to land use must go through the government that must give its expressed approval after which it is officially registered. This for the indigenous population of the casamance region and especially for the Jolas who form the majority of Lower Casamance, means a loss of their position as landlords whilst simultaneously losing control of their own land which they use for subsistence farming to the State represented by northerners. This policy was vehemently unacceptable by the people of Casamance.

Senegal, a welfare state from independence, was sent crashing down on her knees by the unpopular Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) implemented at the behest of the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the 1980s leading to drastic public sector spending cuts and painfully slicing down government size by laying off numerous civil servants. These crippling SAPs, as evidenced in other African and Third World countries, meant that Senegal could no longer provide the much-needed basic services to her citizens. (Darboe, 2010) remarked that as a result of this, many disaffected Senegalese began to form unions and even movements to express their disaffection and anger. Student activism also became widespread as students openly challenge the government for reneging on its

welfare responsibilities and advocate for the restoration of free university tuition and boarding. As much of these manifestations were taking place in Dakar and other major cities in northern Senegal, students in the southern periphery of Casamance also sounded their bell resulting in the death of a student. This incidence in December 1982 resulted in an MFDC-led protest in Ziguinchor, during which Senegalese flags were set ablaze. The Government of Senegal (GOS) was quick to quench the protest with brute force leading to the arrest of some MFDC leaders, not because they were suspected of organising the protests but as an opportunity to exert vengeance in the latter's claim for secession. This situation made the MFDC leaders to rethink their non-violence stance consequently embarking on tactical violence as a retaliatory measure to the brutal actions of the security forces.

As there is no fire without smoke, these two principal factors often cited as the main causes of the Casamance conflict, have been triggered by other factors namely, economic and socio-political factors. When Senegal gained independence in 1960, with Leopold Sédar Senghor as president, the Casamance region believed that their region would get due attention from the newly formed government. This was because Senghor's party (BDS) that had earlier merged with the MFDC in the late 1940s had promised to gear development efforts to the impoverished peripheral regions of the south. When this expectation was met with illusion, with lack of investment and development, it added to the frustrations of the Casamance region in the 1980s. Because of its natural attributes, Casamance is said to be the granary of the entire Senegalese state. Thus, the people of Casamance felt economically exploited as raw goods were purchased from them at very low and at times at give-away prices and sold internationally at very high prices.

Whether it was by design or by accident on the part of the authorities in Dakar, the Casamance region was eventually neglected, making the inhabitants of the region feel ignored and abandoned. Consequently, the region portrays that feeling of grudge against the central government for insignificant and poor investments especially in infrastructure and education. Most of the roads in the south were in bad shape making travelling to the region painfully and sometimes shamefully difficult whilst roads in

the north were better off. In addition, before the conflict hatched in 1982, it is reported that there was only one secondary school in the Casamance region coupled with the fact that there was no institution of higher learning either in Ziguinchor or in Kolda, the principal administrative areas of the Casamance region.

Embarking on a nationwide policy aimed at strengthening the identity amongst Senegalese of belonging to a nation state that allegedly functions above ethnic differences, the authorities in Dakar invariably promoted the Wolof language over and against the other local languages especially those dominant in the south. The Casamance people, most of whom are Jolas, Mandinkas and Fulas by tribe, opposed all these policies because they perceive them as discriminatory against their own traditional customs and values. This is because when the MFDC was re-established in 1982, its principal goal was to safeguard and purify the region against the so-called policy of 'Wolofisation' by emphasizing the nurturing of a separate identity unique to Casamance, and improving the living conditions of the region. However, the most unfair and frustrating issue for the educated elites of Casamance was the dominance of the northerners in the administrative posts in the south. The southerners felt politically marginalised and made to be voiceless in the decision-making process pertaining to their own regions. It is reportedly viewed suspiciously that the authorities in Dakar were afraid that if the southerners occupy those administrative posts, they would become very politically active, a situation less craved for in Dakar.

The Casamance conflict is a classic example of a conflict that ensued from the troubled relations between centre and periphery, bad governance problems and political failures leading to intractable violence that spills over international borders porous to guerrillas, arms trafficking and conflict goods.

5.4 Consequences of the Casamance conflict

The Casamance conflict, like all other conflicts that the African continent has witnessed, has serious consequences not only felt by the populations of where the

conflicts take place, but also spill over to neighbouring countries. For instance, the conflict in Sierra Leone was a result of a spill over from the Liberian conflict in the early 1990s. Such a spill over is often not limited to two countries only as in the case of Liberia and Sierra Leone or The Gambia and Senegal, but they could well be regional in nature too. The civil war in Liberia which later spilled over to Sierra Leone eventually floated over to Guinea in the late 1990s whilst the Casamance conflict of south-western Senegal, has far reaching consequences felt both in The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau. Apart from creating conditions of both domestic and regional insecurities, the immediate effect of the Casamance conflict that has inflicted horrific human suffering, is the destruction of homes, unfortunate loss of lives and livelihood by disrupting the processes of agricultural activities such as subsistence farming. The people of Casamance are also constantly displaced with mass exoduses to neighbouring Gambia and Guinea-Bissau as refugees or simply staying with relatives on both sides of the border thereby putting pressure on the already meagre social service provisions and invariably shifting the demographic patterns in both countries as the final destination of most energetic refugees is the urban areas.

According to (Humphreys & Mohamed, 2003), an estimated 3000 – 5000 people have died with at least 652 killed by landmines. In addition, a 1998 Caritas census gave a figure of 62,638 out of a total population of around 1.1million. Ziguinchor, the de facto capital of western Casamance, has reportedly received some 14,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), with a further 6,000 in other Casamance towns. The United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) figures indicate that a further 10,000 people fled to The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau.

Internal or domestic security crises, from ethnic or religious conflict to that of an armed conflict in Africa, like that of the Casamance conflict, have started as internal problems but have taken on regional and international dimensions as IDPs disrupt and shift demographic concentrations and refugees cross borders. Though the Casamance conflict is virtually unknown by many in the outside world, such consequences inflicted by the conflict are prone to attracting international attention, since they present serious security concerns and/or threats to the neighbouring

countries. The movements of refugees and IDPs generally influence some aspects of the overall human security phenomenon. This presents a threat to the human security of the asylum or host country, for example, they may relocate the unrest from the home countries. This therefore, significantly influences the internal security of the receiving states to some extent.

International security interests of outside actors, such as ECOWAS, AU, UNHCR, USAID just to name a few, and their pursuit of conflict management and resolution, has also given the Casamance conflict an international dimension, albeit in a lesser degree compared to the current Malian and Syrian conflicts which have a much more extensive media coverage with strategic interests at play. This pursuit therefore draws international attention to issues such as human rights violations and the protection of both civilian populations and minority groups. Raising such concerns with regards the Casamance conflict, have led to the attraction of international support for the urgent need to resolve the conflict through political means. The Casamance conflict is indeed a transnational conflict just as the situation in northern Mali is. The Casamance problem indicates that Senegal is suffering the same consequences of the conflict as both The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau are, though less seriously.

5.5 Impact of the Casamance conflict

While relatively small compared with civil wars elsewhere in Africa and West Africa in particular that witnessed civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia and now in Mali, the Casamance conflict in southern Senegal has had significant humanitarian consequences for the local populations of Casamance as well as political impacts with neighbouring Gambia. The massive influx of refugees from Casamance into The Gambia because of the conflict has caused a tremendous strain on the meagre socio-economic resources of The Gambia. Also, the repeated but unsuccessful attempts by the Senegalese governments to broker a truce in its negotiations to resolve the Casamance conflict, has led to undesirable tensions in its relation with The Gambia,

whom Senegal continuously blames for supporting the conflict by not only providing arms and ammunition to the rebels, but also offering them a sanctuary of safe haven. Instead of acknowledging that she cannot remedy the situation in Casamance, it misplaces this on The Gambia as the most potent reason for her failure.

Senegal has been frustrated in her attempt to solve the conflict in its Casamance region. On some occasions, she has used force as the only rational means of achieving peace. When this produced no results, she employed robust diplomacy with the rebels to secure peace but this also did not yield much desired outcomes. Grippled with this frustration of how to solve the endemic conflict that is tarnishing her good image, Senegal turned to The Gambia for help. The Gambia's involvement abruptly came to a halt because even though both agreed on the urgent need to solve the conflict, they also disagreed on how to do so. Senegal reportedly favoured a military solution while The Gambia pushed for a political solution instead. Nevertheless, The Gambia's stance was not surprising. This is because The Gambia has always and will forever advocate for the peaceful resolutions of conflicts and will never engage militarily in another sovereign state's internal matters on a unilateral accord of its own. The interest of The Gambia is not that it has a special relationship with Senegal, but more so because her primary interest is to resolve the Casamance conflict in a non-militaristic and non-violent manner. This is a core principle of The Gambia's foreign and security policy.

The Gambia's strong position of exhausting all viable means which she felt were not adequately explored, has also taken its toll on her relations with her only immediate neighbour, Senegal. Some Senegalese, however, interpreted The Gambia's stance as reluctance on her part not to help in resolving the conflict. This view gained weight especially after 1994 when the current president of The Gambia, Yahya Jammeh came to power through a successful military coup. Moreover, the President of The Gambia is from the same tribe that is dominant in the southern part of Senegal, Casamance, fighting a secession struggle. This accusation is so strong and unfortunate that it led to many undesirable tensions including border tensions between The Gambia and Senegal on numerous occasions. Such border tensions include

closing of border crossing points. This hurt the economy of both states seriously but more on that of The Gambia who generates a lot of income from re-export trade to Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Guinea and even beyond in some instances.

In 2010, The Gambia severed ties with Iran. This was because weapons consignment on board a vessel from Iran was seized in Lagos, Nigeria with reports suggesting that they were intended for The Gambia. Senegal reacted rather nervously charging that some of the weapons could possibly end up with the Casamance rebels. The Gambia once again, becomes the suspected entity in this whole saga. In my view, Senegal's reaction is fairly understood because The Gambia is modernising her military to boost her self-defence capabilities and to better cope with the new security threats gracing the West African sub-region at a moment when the flames of the Casamance conflict still rage on. Such threats include but not limited to drug trafficking, money laundering, religious extremism, terrorism and other transnational organised crimes. Often states respond to the actions and policies of other neighbouring states, that is, to those initiatives that are perceived to have some impact on one's own interests and security. Senegal therefore perceives that The Gambia's improved military capability could result in damaging regional peace, security and stability especially with the volatile security situation in the sub-region caused by the Casamance conflict and the seemingly unending political situation in Guinea-Bissau, a country south of the Casamance region.

The Gambia has participated in many roundtable negotiations to solve the Casamance conflict. But with the coming into power of President Abdoulaye Wade in 2000, The Gambia was reportedly asked not to take part in negotiations because the conflict is an exclusive internal matter to Senegal. President Wade (former President of Senegal) visited The Gambia several times to push for more cooperation with The Gambia especially on regional issues and even on a bilateral level, but relations were just superficial because of lack of trust in Gambia's complicit role in the Casamance conflict. There were and still seem to exist, large discrepancies between pronounced statements of bilateral commitments to meaningful continued cooperation and frequent practices of Senegalese trade and transport unions, which according to some

Gambians, are being used by the Senegalese state authorities and perception of each towards the other.

The Gambia – Senegal relations have also been further affected by the fact that The Gambia perceives Senegal of funding voices of dissent in the country. This is further substantiated by the fact that all those accused by The Gambia of trying to destabilise her peace and security abscond to Senegal once identified. Senegal not only give such political asylum which according to The Gambia is a violation of international law to give asylum to someone from a country in which the country granting country asylum shares a land border with the country of origin of the asylum seeker. The Gambia, therefore, appeals for Senegal not to extradite them to the former, but to expel them from the latter. This has the benefit of ensuring confidence and instilling trust between the two. Therefore, when Senegal refused to pay heed to The Gambia's appeals, it only reinforced and heightened The Gambia's suspicions about Senegal.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

In March 2012, Senegalese went to the polls and elected a new leader, MackySall. President Sall visited The Gambia as his first maiden trip overseas, being the first ever President of Senegal to do so. Accordingly, his trip was a step in the right direction in that it intends to cement and in a way normalise relations between the two countries. This is because apart from being the same people, The Gambia and Senegal share a common destiny with an obligation to foster genuine friendship and cordiality. In order to realise any meaningful development, it is therefore imperative to ensure peace and security, the necessary pillars on which prosperity hinges upon. For this reason, President Sall went to The Gambia to solicit the latter's support in solving one of Africa's longest civil conflicts because Senegal alone cannot do it as concerted efforts from both The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau are also to be harnessed.

This visit in my view has two possible outcomes. First, it is a visit that is intended to invigorate the close, friendly and cordial ties that characterise Senegambian relations. This is partly because relations between The Gambia and Senegal soared from 2000 – 2012, when his predecessor, President Wade was in power. The reason for this was Wade's government's belief that The Gambia is fuelling the Casamance conflict in the form of providing arms to the MFDC, an accusation The Gambia strongly repudiates. Thus, realizing the unfortunate deterioration in Senegambian relations, President Sall went to The Gambia to normalise ties, restore confidence, and inspire trust in his leadership. During his visit, President Sall vehemently solicited The Gambia's assistance in resolving the conflict in its troubled southern region of Casamance. This gave rise to make me wonder whether President Sall is acknowledging a positive reaction of Gambia's role and effectiveness in mediation and peace-building especially in the sub-region with

regards Guinea-Bissau, Or whether it is a negative feeling in the private thoughts of President Sall and his government, harbouring those same beliefs of that of his predecessor, President Wade. But, whatever the ulterior motif (s) of his visit, it is a gesture that is well appreciated by The Gambia as it not only builds trust between The Gambia and the new Senegalese leadership, but also lays the foundation of fraternal dialogue and brighter future in Senegambian relations.

The Gambia and Senegal must continue engaging each other. Both should see the need to continuously engage in formal but frank dialogue with each other on issues of substance most notably on peace and security. This could even be done multilaterally engaging ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), AU (African Union) or even UN. It is my hope that The Gambia firmly grips the olive branch extended by the new Senegalese government and muscle her efforts in working with Senegal to solve the Casamance conflict. This is because as long as the conflict rages on there will neither be peace in Senegal nor in The Gambia. Also, ensuring peace and guaranteeing security are sides of the same coin that cannot be pursued in isolation. Working closely with Senegal with regards the Casamance conflict will eventually dispel Senegal's suspicions about The Gambia's complicit role in the conflict and restore confidence between them. This will subsequently make Senegal to be much more sensitive and proactive in addressing The Gambia's concerns when it comes to giving asylum to those alleged criminals that The Gambia accused of subversive activities.

There should be genuine attempts to heal the wounds of the widening divisions openly and in the harbour of the private thoughts of the peoples of The Gambia and Senegal. This is because the Senegambian people, who made up both The Gambia and Senegal regardless of citizenship, have two lungs and will never breathe healthily and with ease until they use both lungs properly working in concerted harmony and peace. I also believe that if due attention and consideration is earnestly given to the conflict with efforts muscled together into finding common ground, peace, security and development will flourish not only in Senegal and in The Gambia, but could also be an

important major step in addressing the chronic security problems in the sub-region especially with regards Guinea-Bissau.

As a matter of political realism, newly independent African states were virtually unanimous in agreeing that respect for existing European-delineated boundaries should be a guiding principle in inter-African relations and that there should be no conscious attempts to alter them just as in the saying "what God has joined together, let no man put asunder". Therefore, going by this principle, it is arguably understandable why Senegal, despite the Casamance region's historical claim for independence, will never waver in her sacred duty of protecting her national and territorial integrity. Also, granting independence to the Casamance region would not only result in the creation of a new state, but could set in motion a very dangerous precedence for other impoverished and less developed regions of Senegal in claiming independence too. However, despite the numerous attempts made by the Senegalese government to resolve the conflict, no concrete measures were implemented or inadequately done where implemented, to ensure durable peace other than assassinating MFDC leaders and sowing seeds of discord in a divide-and-rule tactic, amongst the hierarchy of the MFDC. This in itself does not necessarily address the core issues that triggered the conflict, but plunges into confusion on what the priorities are as far as resolving the conflict is concerned.

From a Game Theoretical perspective, it is assumed that each player is individually rational in the sense that his preference ordering of the outcomes is determined by the order of magnitudes of his associated payoffs. Furthermore, a player is also said to be rational in the sense that he too assumes that the other player(s) is rational. Since, in general, a game of strategy is a model of a situation involving conflicts of irreconcilable interests. Such is the nature of the Casamance conflict – MFDC's honest claim for independence and the Government of Senegal's justifiable refusal to grant independence to the Casamance region but push for the full integration of the Casamance region into the wider Senegalese society instead, are incompatible. Such an unfortunate situation is an impasse leading nowhere because up until now, the resolution of the conflict is pursued on the solid foundations of a zero-sum game. Such

pursuit will never guarantee success because being armed against a disarmed adversary is obviously a desirable advantage, but being unarmed whilst facing an armed adversary is suicidal, opening oneself to embarrassing defeat and total annihilation.

The Prisoner's Dilemma advances two concepts of rationality essential to understanding the choices of parties involved in conflict situations. The first is individual rationality, which prescribes to each party the course of action most advantageous to it under the circumstances. The second is collective rationality, which prescribes a course of action to both parties simultaneously. If MFDC and the Government of Senegal act in accordance with collective rationality, then both will be better off than if each would relatively opt to focus on the narrow self-interest of each in accordance with individual rationality.

For the Casamance conflict to have any chance of being resolved peacefully, both Government of Senegal and MFDC must see the need to act in accordance with collective rationality, a situation even craved for by the war-weary people of Casamance whose suffering and pain caused by the long years of conflict, has crossed the limits of acceptable aberrance. This has also made the conflict very unpopular amongst and within the spheres of the current generation of the Casamance population. Thus, collective rationality creates a positive-sum game or a win-win situation for both the Government of Senegal and MFDC. This is necessary because it fosters the conducive environment and stable desired space needed for the Government of Senegal to embark on an effective and inclusive development agenda, addressing the core issues that caused the conflict, whilst at the same time, working with MFDC and concerned regional partners in peace building and image restoration as well as ensuring regional peace and security.

6.2 Recommendations

For the peaceful resolution of the Casamance conflict and improved relations between The Gambia and Senegal, I suggest that the Casamance rebels be enlisted into the mainstream Senegalese military and other members of the MFDC hierarchy be incorporated into other appropriate sectors such as ministries and/or departments or into any other establishment deemed fit. Most youths in Casamance become either teachers or soldiers once they finish secondary or even tertiary education in some instances with no other viable options to further their dreams. Therefore, income-generated investments such as tourism and mechanised-agricultural farming should be embarked upon in Casamance, so that the youths will have an array of employment opportunities to engage themselves with and not join the rebellion as their last resort, a means to ensure their survival in an underdeveloped and underinvestment region.

Therefore, it is my frantic view that for durable peace to take root in Casamance, the Senegalese government should lay the strong foundations on which the structures of sustainable peace would be built upon. This is because Senegal, through its security forces, is winning the battle against the MFDC, shattering its organisation and assassinating some of its leaders, but losing the civil war by not addressing the legitimate grievances of the Casamance people that triggered the conflict. For some sort of peace to be achieved in the Casamance region, therefore, at least some key areas should be focused upon. These include but not limited to improving local livelihood and protecting life and property, improving education, holding forums and wider consultations, especially with civil society groups, to find solutions to the conflict, and administering justice and addressing human security needs such as health and social welfare and economic development. This is because there will be no development without security, and until sustainable solutions to the many conflicts in Africa in general and the Casamance conflict in particular, are identified and measures for lasting solutions implemented, the quest for peace, stability and economic development, will remain elusive. Therefore, the Casamance conflict is the major impactful event that is affecting relations between The Gambia

and Senegal, and once solved, it will be like loving couples renewing their vows after a difficult and strained period.

I am of the strong view that my recommendations are both feasible and desirable. However, I also acknowledge that their feasibility largely depends on how both the Government of Senegal and the MFDC (Movement for the Democratic Forces of Casamance) perceive their implementation. How they perceive such also influences their levels of acceptance and participation in the overall process of peace negotiations for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Also, if my recommendations neatly dovetail into the relative interests of both parties, then the chance for a resolution likely beckons. But if they are in conflict and run parallel with each other, then the chance of success to end the conflict will be slim. Whatever the situation and whatever the risks analysed, the brute possibility of failure must never discourage the trial of implementing such proposed recommendations for the peaceful resolution of the Casamance conflict.

Therefore, given the seemingly sincere emphasis by the new Senegalese government to focus attention on the Casamance conflict and the renewed assurances of The Gambia in working closely with Senegal to resolve the conflict, I am strongly but cautiously optimistic that one of the longest conflicts in contemporary Africa would be resolved peacefully in the next ten to fifteen years. The Casamance region would then be fully integrated into the wider Senegalese society and eventually flourish in peace, security and development.

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