

THE AFRICAN UNION (AU) AND MIGRATION :
IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN TRAFICKING IN
AFRICA

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The African Union (AU) and Migration : Implications for Human Trafficking in Africa

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Abstract

Through the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) or Abuja Treaty (1991), the African Union (AU) promotes the formation of Regional Economic Communities (RECs), such as among others, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In addition, the AU has adopted two policies that focus on migration, namely, the Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA) and the African Common Position on Migration and Development (ACPMD). Both policy frameworks and the drive towards RECs, essentially imply the efficient management and harnessing of the potentials of migration (and the eradication of irregular and criminal forms of migration such as human trafficking) for inclusive development and inter alia, economic growth. In this light and based on an extensive review of literature and policy documents on the subjects of continental and regional integration in Africa and human trafficking, this paper argues that despite the moves towards regional integration, as defined by different stages of RECs in Africa, there is still a rise in human smuggling and trafficking on the continent. The paper therefore suggest that Africa needs a new strategy for improved regional integration. She also needs to embrace post-neo-functional approach (a composite of neo-nationalism, post-nationalism, and humanism). This approach which advocates that regionalism in Africa should proceed from national integration and establishment of regional security organisation.

Keywords : African Union, Migration, Regionalism, Human Trafficking, Africa.

The African Union and Migration : An Introduction

The on-going process of regional economic integration in Africa, through the formation of RECs, was designed in large part to facilitate labour mobility and economic development. Many of such RECs or their precursors now exist such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC). There are also regional dialogues such as the Migration Dialogue for West Africa (MIDWA) and the Migration Dialogue for South Africa (MIDSA) (Adepoju, 2016). The AU at the level of the Heads of State Executive Council adopted the Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA) in 2006 with the prioritisation of youth employment and harmonised labour market information systems. The Framework urges, among others, a comprehensive approach to regulatory and administrative measures to ensure safe, orderly, and productive migration. Since then, the efficacy of the framework has been evaluated and subsequently altered. Members met in Zanzibar in 2016 to update the MPFA and created a ten-year action plan for its implementation. This means that the AU has a position on migration as articulated in two policy documents : the MPFA and the African Common Position on Migration and Development (ACPMD), both introduced in 2006. In the MPFA, the AU provides for member states and African RECs to formulate policies that exploit migration for development. The ACPMD proposes eleven priority migration-related policy issues and recommendations for national, continental, and international action (Fioramonti and Nshimbi, 2016).

There is also the Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP) which is a four-year AU-led initiative for regional integration and development in Africa, co-sponsored by the AU Commission (AUC), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). It was endorsed by the Extraordinary Session of the AU Labour and Social Affairs Commission (LSAC) in Windhoek, Namibia, in April 2014, and adopted by AU Heads of State and Government at the 24th Session of the AU Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in January 2015. The JLMP mainly aims at strengthening the effective governance of labour migration and the promotion of decent work against the background of regional integration and inclusive development in Africa. The goals of this programme are consistent with Articles 6 and 71 of the Abuja Treaty and the various AU goals seeking continental free movement and exchange of labour between member countries (Fioramonti and Nshimbi, 2016).

Also, the 2013 Youth and Women Employment Pact for Africa includes promotion of regional and sub-regional labour mobility and calls for an AU and RECs Labour Migration Plan. The AU aims to

facilitate migration in Africa as well as tackle issues such as brain drain, brain waste, and security risks of migration. At the 17th Ordinary AU Summit held in Malabo in July 2011, African Heads of States and Government adopted a declaration which included commitments to harmonise labour market information systems (LMIS), address skills mismatch, and seek coherence in certification systems (Dimechkie, nd; Tambi, nd). The African passport is also a project of the AU. The Union aims to establish a common market enabling the free movement of all factors of production including labour, and abolishing all visa requirements for African citizens in all member states by 2018. In addition to this, the AU seeks to use migration as a means of development. This will be done through the promotion of low cost remittance transfers as well as human capital transfers (Tambi, nd). Additionally, the AU aims to improve the mobility of the African population as a method of inducing a brain gain. By promoting investment in the productive capacity of African states through increased education funding, they aim to expand student and academic mobility. In this way, African states, which are depicted as homogenous sufferers of the brain drain, can in fact experience a brain gain as those in education as well as the educated are able to go abroad and put their skills to use. The risks and downsides of migration are also addressed in the MPFA (Fioramonti and Nshimbi, 2016 ; Tambi, nd).

Realising the significance of labour migration, the Abuja Treaty encourages AU member states to adopt employment policies that will eventually allow free movement within the planned African Economic Communities (AEC) to be completed by 2028. The Treaty also calls on AU members to establish the right of residence and establishment for any citizen of a member state. The 1998 AU Protocol on Relations between the AEC and the RECs provides for inter-REC cooperation. For instance, at their 2005 Summit, COMESA, EAC, and SADC, proposed stronger and deeper economic integration, resulting in a tripartite free trade area for 26 African countries. Three years later, the tripartite leaders drew up a harmonisation programme for trading arrangements, free movement of people, joint implementation of inter-regional infrastructure programmes, and institutional arrangements for cooperation (Aniche, 2014 ; Fioramonti and Nshimbi, 2016).

There is also the intra-Africa Talent Mobility Partnership Programme (TMP) which is a voluntary initiative between selected African countries in West, East, and Southern Africa. The Africa Centre for Economic Transformation (ACET) in Ghana leads the programme in West Africa, while the Regional Multidisciplinary Centre of Excellence (RMCE) in Mauritius coordinates the programme in East and Southern Africa (Fioramonti and Nshimbi, 2016). The initiative seeks to establish Schengen-type mechanisms for the movement of skilled labour as well as the development of skills

in the regions. The World Bank's sponsored TMP also aims to promote the opening up of borders, establishment of common legislations and policies for labour mobility between African countries, and acceleration of economic integration. The TMP is premised on the understanding that professional skills inevitably move from areas of surplus to areas of scarcity. Therefore, an efficient regional labour migration framework would balance out the shortages and surplus supply of talent between sending and receiving countries within RECs and across the continent. The TMP's interventions are expected to enable the private sector in the participating RECs to source skills that are essential to boosting competitiveness, economic growth, and transformation. The TMP memorandum of understanding (MOU) prepared for participating countries addresses key issues aimed at tackling the challenges encountered by labour migrants such as regulations that hinder the granting of work permits, common standards on which qualifications for given professions can be evaluated, and the establishment of labour information systems (Fioramonti and Nshimbi, 2016).

The fact that all AU member states have signed into the JLMP can be interpreted as a commitment to achieving an effective continental labour migration regime for Africa's integration and development and to encouraging labour migration across national borders. State commitment to the free movement of labour is also seen in the voluntary participation in international projects that promote the transfer of skilled labour across borders such as the TMP (Fioramonti and Nshimbi, 2016).

The African Union (AU) now aims to criminalise and prosecute those involved in human trafficking and people smuggling in Africa (Tambi, nd). The UN defines human trafficking as:

the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000, p. 2).

Sometimes, there is a thin line between human smuggling and trafficking. This is precisely because what may start off as a human smuggling transaction ends up as human trafficking (IOM, 2010; Batsyukova, 2012). Trafficking can take different forms, and the crime in essence has three phases: recruitment, transportation, and exploitation. Recruitment for trafficking can be partially deceptive,

fully deceptive, or forced. In a partially deceptive recruitment, victims may be informed of the nature of the work but not of the conditions. While some victims are fully deceived as to what they are signing up for, others can be taken by force by the recruiters or directly by the traffickers. The recruiter is often someone known to the victim, in which case the offer of a job or an education opportunity may seem perfectly normal. Recruiters are usually good at manipulating people's dreams of a better life and using customs and traditions (such as fostering) to hide their intent. Once the victim is recruited, he/she is usually transported to another location (IOM/UNHCR, 2011).

The objective of this paper therefore is to examine AU role in promoting regional migration and the implication for human trafficking in the region. To achieve this objective, the paper is divided into five parts. After this introduction is a discussion of migration and human trafficking. This is followed by a section which considers the history of migration and trafficking in Africa. Then, there is a discussion of the AU's continental and regional integration projects and their implication on human trafficking. The last part offers a conclusion and suggests recommendations.

Migration and Human Trafficking

Smuggling of migrants is necessarily transnational, while trafficking in persons may be transnational or perpetrated within the borders of one state. Smuggling of migrants does not involve the exploitation of a person. On the other hand, exploitation is the purpose of trafficking in persons (TIP) and thus a key element of its definition. Also, the consent of a victim of trafficking (VOT) is irrelevant when any of the means provided for by the Protocol against TIP has been used, while in the case of smuggling of migrants, it is the smuggled migrants that resort to smugglers to emigrate (UNODC, 2015). Based on the above clarifications (as adopted by the 160 UN member states that have ratified the Protocol), there are three distinct "constituent elements" of trafficking in persons : the act, the means and the purpose. All three elements must be present in order for a case to be defined as a TIP. Each element has a range of manifestations (UNODC, 2014).

The TIP Protocol specifies that "the act" means the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons. "The means" refers to the method used to lure the victim. Possible means are threat, force, deception, coercion, abduction, fraud, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or giving of payments or benefits. "The purpose" is always exploitation of the victim, although this can take on various forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, removal of organs or a range of other forms (UNODC, 2014). Most trafficking flows are intra-regional. This means that the origin and the destination of the trafficked victim is within the same region. Often, the flow can also be

within the same sub-region. For this reason, it is difficult to identify major global trafficking hubs. Victims tend to be trafficked from poor countries to more affluent ones (relative to the origin country) within the region. Most victims of TIP are foreigners in the country where they are identified as victims. In other words, these victims have been trafficked across at least one national border. Domestic trafficking is also widely detected, and for one in three trafficking cases, the exploitation takes place in the victim's country of citizenship (UNODC, 2014).

While a majority of trafficking victims are subjected to sexual exploitation, other forms of exploitation are increasingly detected. Trafficking for forced labour has increased steadily in recent years. Some 40 per cent of the victims detected between 2010 and 2012 were trafficked for forced labour. Trafficking for exploitation that is neither sexual nor forced labour is also increasing. Some of these forms, such as trafficking of children for armed combat, or for petty crime or forced begging, can be significant problems in some locations, although they are still relatively limited from a global point of view. Even though males still comprise the vast majority of TIP, the share of women victims is nearly 30 per cent (UNODC, 2014).

The forms of exploitation vary according to context as the victims are trafficked to areas where the potential profit from their exploitation is the highest. Some forms of exploitation include sexual exploitation (pimping networks), forced labour (domestic work, gold mining sites, agriculture, fishing, construction, manufacturing, livestock), exploitation through begging and removal of organs. Forced labour accounts for 37 percent while sexual exploitation accounts for 53 percent of trafficking in Africa, while the rest is made of other forms of exploitation, including forced child begging or recruitment of child soldiers (UNODC, 2015).

To keep their victims in situation of exploitation, the traffickers exert several forms of control, including violence and threats of physical and psychological abuse on victims and their families, deception, blackmail, forcible confinement, debt to finance the trip, use of occult practices, psychological influence, manipulation or conditioning. The victims dare not to ask for help because most of the time they do not speak the language of the host community or are simply distrustful and too afraid of being exploited again or suffering new forms of violence by trying to escape (IOM, 2015 ; UNODC, 2015).

It has been observed that in spite of some legislative progresses made in some countries, there are still very few convictions for trafficking in persons. Only 4 in 10 countries reported having 10 or more yearly convictions, with nearly 15 per cent having no convictions at all (UNODC, 2014).

A Brief History of Migration and Trafficking in Africa

Africa has a long tradition of migration and human trafficking. The slaving and trading wars propelled massive population displacements and forced migrations, which continued right down to the nineteenth century (Osaghae, 2006). But trading in humans for sundry reasons predated the nineteenth century transatlantic slave trade in Africa. During this period, in Southern Africa, for instance, people migrated for work, trade, and cultural reasons. Large-scale migration towards South Africa became particularly significant after the discovery of diamonds in 1860s and gold in 1880s, which contributed to the development of an organised regional labour migration system. Others migrated from conflict torn or minority ruled countries (e.g., Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe) to Tanzania and Zambia. Today, migration towards South Africa from the Southern African region and other parts of Africa remains mainly motivated by trade as well as opportunities to work (Crush, Williams & Peberdy, 2005 ; Fioramonti and Nshimbi, 2016).

During the apartheid regime, skilled professionals drawn mainly from Ghana and Nigeria migrated clandestinely to the then homeland states in South Africa. The numbers were small, mostly teachers, university professors, doctors, lawyers, nurses and engineers. After independence in 1994, the prospects of a booming economy in a democratic setting opened a floodgate for immigration into South Africa resulting in highly skilled professionals from Ghana and Nigeria migrating to South Africa to staff the universities and other professions. Also, tradesmen from Mali and Senegal - including street vendors and small traders, and a wide range of illegal migrants - allegedly migrated to South Africa engaging in illicit activities. Some of these illegal immigrants entered the country without proper documentation while others overstayed the legal residency (Adepoju, 1998).

In West Africa, migrants have historically included refugees, cross-border traders, professionals and clandestine workers. During the colonial era, Burkinabe, Malians and Togolese were contracted or subjected to compulsory work in plantations, mines and road construction in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria. These oil and gold economies historically attracted regional migrants while Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Mali, and Togo supplied labour. Population pressures, poverty and post-independence conflicts have further spurred migration (Fioramonti and Nshimbi, 2016). A more recent phenomenon, one that accelerated in the 1960s and the 1970s, is the migration of ECOWAS nationals

to Europe. This increase of migration to European shores has been fostered by the recurrent crises in West Africa, which pushes people out of their homes in search of livelihoods. Migration to Europe is also the result of the relative lack of economic opportunities in West Africa when compared to Europe (Altai Consulting, 2015).

Continental and Regional Integration and Human Trafficking

The objective of Africa's continental and regional integration programmes is to reduce to the barest possible minimum irregular forms of migration such as human trafficking, as evidenced by the MPFA, ACPMD and the existing RECs in Africa. In spite of these efforts, it appears that irregular migration and the various forms of human trafficking are not reducing. A case in point is the "Triangle of Shame". This is the Niger/Chad/Nigeria border. In this zone, hundreds of girls trafficked from Edo State, Nigeria, end up in the sex industry in Italy (Adepoju, 2005 ; Yaro, 2008 ; Sofie and Olsen, 2011).

In some cases, migration of children and child fostering are frequent and accepted practices that are considered to be strategies for coping with poverty. In Burkina Faso, 9.5 percent of children from age 6 to 17 do not live with their parents, and out of these 29 percent live abroad, mostly in Cote d'Ivoire. These practices increase children's vulnerability to traffickers, and can be used to cover practices that amount to trafficking (Carling, 2006; Shaw, 2007). For example, Kebede (2001), described a range of situations faced by Ethiopian women who become VOTs. Often the woman (or young girl) is promised legitimate work but forced into prostitution on arrival. In some cases, voodoo rituals are used to bind the girl and her family to an agreement. In some cases, prostitution is considered legal as in Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Mauritius and Uganda, and this can make it difficult to enforce laws against trafficking (Shaw, 2007).

Victims are transported from countries and regions of origin to destination countries and regions, which can be domestic or international. It can be done illegally with the help of smugglers, or by using legal travel documents and routes. Transportation can be done by air, sea or land. In short, it can be any type of relocation: from a short bus trip to a months-long journey across countries. Usually, however, travel arrangements are made by the recruiters or traffickers (or their agents). The victim might also begin to feel loyalty towards the traffickers, as a survival mechanism, and might potentially suffer from memory loss and be unable to recount their story, due to post traumatic stress syndrome, or a forced drug habit. Victims are often accompanied and are kept from making contact with other people. Sometimes, the victims give misleading information. As a result, victims of

trafficking (VOTs) are often unable to find their way back and might not even know the country of their destination. Once at the destination, exploitation awaits the victim. It should be noted, however, that some VOTs might already be exploited while making the journey, and that some people may become VOTs along the migration route (IOM/UNHCR, 2011; IOM, 2012).

The purpose behind recruiting and transporting someone is personal profit through exploitation. The traffickers can receive direct financial gain or profit through the free or almost free services and labour provided by the victim. The exploitation can happen in various ways and different situations. However, the local context determines who is at risk of trafficking and how they can be exploited. Common forms of exploitation include sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced begging, forced marriage, forced military service (child soldiering), and removal of organs (IOM/UNHCR, 2011).

Martin, Martin and Weil (2002) estimated that 15,000 Malian children between the ages of 12 and 18 had been sold into forced labour on northern Cote d'Ivoire plantations over a period of few years, with even greater numbers pressed into domestic service. Black (2004) estimated that 10,000 Nigerian prostitutes work in over 300 brothels in Europe and South America. It became so easy to get Nigerian documents with false information that the Dutch authorities came to view them as invalid until verified (Gastrow, 1999; Shaw, 2007).

Movements are more clandestine and spontaneous involving riskier passages and trafficking via more diverse transit points. Some of the migrants enter the host countries clandestinely as tourists or students and later work and live there without officially changing their status. Others travel via intermediate countries such as Cape Verde, Gambia or Guinea to obtain false documentation for a fee *en route* to Italy, Libya, Portugal, or Spain invariably via another country, giving rise a multi-polar and multidimensional migratory path. While some continue with the traditional two-step moves from a village to a coastal city and then to Europe, many others pursue varied routes through Sahelian or coastal African cities to reach Europe (Adepoju, 2000).

The irregular routes to Europe are numerous but most move through Libya. These routes are dynamic and shift according to levels of control along particular borders. For example, sea crossings to the Canary Islands and through the Strait of Gibraltar decreased in response to greater controls put in place since 2006. The journeys are often fatal, with migrants perishing not only in the Mediterranean but also in the Sahara, and the numbers of deaths along the way are increasing (Altai Consulting,

2015). Several migration theories (such as theories on new economic labour and transnationalism) have shown that former colonial push-pull models cannot grasp the complexity of the current focus on communities, households and migrant's agency. Trends are changing in terms of migrants' profiles, routes taken and destinations chosen (Sofie and Olsen, 2011). There are however three main routes to Europe from Africa. These are: the Central Mediterranean Route through Niger, the Central Mediterranean Route through Mali, and the Western Mediterranean Route from Mauritania (IOM, 2015; UNODC, 2015; Adepoju, 2016).

The Central Mediterranean Route through Niger is the most prominent route to North Africa and Europe. Agadez in Niger, is the main hub for smuggling to Europe. Migrants found on this route are from all over West Africa. From Agadez, there are two main routes north, either through Libya or Algeria. The route to Libya moves from Agadez to Dirkou, Seguidine, Madama, and Tummo and often ends up in Sebha. It costs around USD 150-200. The route to Algeria moves from Agadez to Arlit, Assamaka and In-Guezzam and often ends up in Tamanrasset for about USD 100. From Tamanrasset, migrants move with smugglers and continue either through the desert to the Libyan border or continue up north to Morocco. The journey to Morocco passes through Ghardaia and then Oran, Maghnia and over the Moroccan border into Oujda and Nador. Local authorities estimated the number of people transiting through Niger on their way to North Africa in 2015 at 80,000 to 110,000 (2,500 per week) (IOM, 2015; Adepoju, 2016).

The Central Mediterranean Route through Mali is an alternative to the Nigerien route and is often taken by Malians and migrants from the Atlantic coast of Africa, including Gambians, Guineans, and Senegalese. This route, although still active, has suffered from the conflict in North Mali that triggered more irregular and unsafe journeys. The route often moves from Gao to Borj Mokhtar (Algerian border) and ends up in Tamanrasset. From Libya, migrants move to either Italy or Malta. The main departure point for boat crossings across the Mediterranean along the Central Mediterranean route is Libya. Libya is the main departure point for boat crossings to Italy, with 83 percent of boat arrivals in Italy in 2014 having departed from the Libyan coast. Earlier in 2012, while Libya was still the most common departure point, not less than 40 percent of all arrivals in Italy had departed from the Libyan coast (UNODC, 2015; Adepoju, 2016).

The Western Mediterranean Route from Mauritania to the Canary Islands in Spain received significant flows until 2006, when increased controls decreased movements along this route. In addition, the land routes to Morocco through the desert are constrained by the Mauritanian military

zone in the north east of Mauritania (East of the 10th Meridian West and North of the 20th parallel) at the Algerian, Moroccan, and Malian borders for security reasons. For those who take the route from Morocco to Spain, sea routes traditionally cross the strait of Gibraltar from Tangier to Tarifa (a distance of only 14-30kms), and land routes involve crossing the fences into the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in North Africa. Recent trends also show sea crossings to these enclaves (by taking a boat from one side of the border to the other). Most of the migratory flows in the Western Mediterranean were traditionally carried out by sea; however, in recent years, the sea crossings have decreased, as a result of greater monitoring, and the flows overland have increased. In 2013, nearly two-thirds of the detected irregular border crossings on the Western Mediterranean route were reported at the land borders in Ceuta and Melilla. In 2014 there were 7,842 detections of illegal border-crossings along the Western Mediterranean route, which is an increase by 15 percent when compared to 2013 (6,838) (IOM, 2015; UNODC, 2015).

In more recent times, migrants have attempted to enter Ceuta by boat by sailing around the coast. Traditionally, migrants made the crossing with smugglers, which was quite expensive and could cost them up to USD 3,000. More recently, migrants have started to make the journey on their own. Typically, a group of migrants put their money together and buy vessels with which to make the journey (usually basic rubber dinghies and sometimes row boats). As a result, the vessels are much less seaworthy, making the journey more dangerous. In more recent years, controls in Tangier have increased and successful sea crossings have become more and more difficult (UNODC, 2014; Adepoju, 2016). There is also a route by air that is utilised by migrants that can afford it. Sometimes it is carried out with the help of a smuggler and sometimes it requires the purchase of a visa. In Senegal, this practice is commonly used by migrants wishing to reach Europe (mainly Italy and Spain). Some Senegalese first move to Morocco by land and then fly to Europe from there, as they do not need a visa to enter Morocco (a 45-day visa is issued on arrival) and flights from Morocco to Spain and Italy are cheaper than from Senegal (UNODC, 2014; IOM, 2015).

A majority of the migrants on this route are from West Africa (in particular Malians) but also Cameroonians, Algerians, Moroccans, etc. Migrants that wish to cross the fence into Melilla tend to wait in the forests surrounding Nador (Gourougou) and Oujda for long periods of time. They usually make the attempted crossings in very large groups (sometimes more than a hundred people and lately even several hundreds) who storm the fences together, allowing some migrants to pass through while the majority are stopped by authorities. Those that storm the fences are typically young and strong men of sub-Saharan origins. The fences are six metres high and topped with barbed wire in most

parts, so it requires a lot of strength and is quite dangerous. Very few women have ever crossed the fences. Migrants that can afford to do so also tend to avoid the crossing of the fences in favour of crossing the border with a fake or rented Moroccan passport, as Moroccans are permitted into these enclaves for limited periods of time without visa requirements. Algerians tend to use this technique more than West Africans for they can pass more easily for Moroccans. A forged Moroccan passport costs around USD 2,000, which is also why West Africans are less likely to adopt this method (IOM, 2015; Adepoju, 2016).

EU member states' authorities registered 114,000 arrivals of irregular migrants identified/rescued during the first 8 months of 2014 in the central Mediterranean region, which is six times higher than in 2013 at the same period. Italian authorities, through their Mare Nostrum operation, supported by civilian vessels, rescued 150,000 migrants between 2013 and 2014. The Libyan coast is by far the most concerned, with nine departures out of ten leaving from this country. Among the migrants rescued in this part of the Mediterranean, nationalities identified include among others Malians, Senegalese, Nigerians and Gambians. (UNODC, 2015).

While much focus has been put on deaths at sea in the discourse around irregular migration to Europe, some experts in the region believe that deaths in the desert are probably even more commonplace. Migrants interviewed in Libya and Niger reported that many were injured during these expeditions, while malnutrition and dehydration in the desert were also commonplace. Migrants generally eat once a day, sometimes contending with only biscuits, and trips often take much longer than expected, sometimes several weeks, due to mechanical issues. These lead to migrants being exposed to shortage of water and food. Expectedly, migrants who become ill are often dumped by the smuggler in the desert to prevent the rest of the group from being contaminated (IOM, 2013; Adepoju, 2016).

Deaths in the Mediterranean represent 73 percent of the total number of deaths at sea globally, making it the deadliest sea in the world. In 2014, an estimated 2,993 people lost their lives while attempting to cross the Mediterranean compared to an estimated 600 in 2013. The 2015 figures are likely to surpass those of 2014, as from the January 1 to September 16, an estimated 2,812 have already perished in the Mediterranean. Of those who lost their lives in the Mediterranean in 2015, sub-Saharan Africans were the largest identifiable group (IOM, 2015; UNODC, 2015; Adepoju, 2016). Smugglers in Libya use vessels that are not seaworthy. They are usually dinghies that have the capacity for a maximum of 30 people but are often filled with over 200 people. These boats are difficult to manoeuvre due to their weight and inadequacy. Migrants interviewed in Nigeria who had

returned from Europe described long journeys of up to eight days at sea. Travellers on board were often sick, without adequate food or water, and often resorted to drinking sea water in order to survive (Altai Consulting, 2015).

Undocumented migrants are vulnerable to abuse. In South Africa, sectoral studies reveal widespread economic and sexual exploitation in sectors with large number of irregular migrants, accompanied by substantial fear among migrants (Black, 2004). Trafficked women can even find difficulties in obtaining public help. For example, in South Africa many shelters for battered women require a South African identity card as a condition of entrance (Shaw, 2007). Most women migrants from Ethiopia to the Middle East are transported by either traffickers or smugglers, and are not recorded in official statistics.

Not all African countries in the West Africa region experience the same levels of trafficking. Mauritania reported fewer case of trafficking while Nigeria is reported to experience particularly high levels of trafficking with the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) reporting that there are no less than 100,000 Nigerians trafficked each year, particularly women in a context of sexual exploitation, and young boys in a context of labour exploitation (Adepoju, 2016). The number of women who arrived irregularly by boat in Italy in 2014 in the context of trafficking for sexual exploitation increased by 300% when compared to arrivals in 2013 and Nigerian women account for most of the increase (but there was also an increase in the numbers of trafficked Cameroonian women). Some actors in Italy also felt that there is a demand for the women in Europe, which also encourages the flow. In addition to Italy, these women are also trafficked to Spain, the UK, Belgium, Finland, Russia, France and Norway. Some of them are also trafficked to Saudi, Kuwait, the Emirates and Egypt to undertake domestic work (IOM, 2015).

It has been observed that most VOTs into Italy that come from rural areas in Edo State, Nigeria, tend to be 22 years old or younger, and quite innocent. They always have a very basic level of education and either come from very large families or are orphans. Most VOTs believed that they were coming to Italy to do domestic work but even those that realised that they would be forced into prostitution were not aware of the level of exploitation that they would be exposed to. Most of them believed that they would make much more money than they actually do, which is generally common for all migrants, not just the VOTs, and most were not aware of the modalities of their prostitution. They did not realise they would be soliciting on the street. Traffickers organised the entire journey for the

women, from their location of origin, to the final destination, through an integrated trans-national criminal network (UNODC, 2014; IOM, 2016).

More recently, cases of young boys and girls being trafficked to Belgium for sexual exploitation have been reported. Perhaps, one of the most popular child trafficking cases in the last decade is the “Ark of Zoé” incident, in which a French association tried to take 103 children to Paris (de Andrés, 2008).

Child trafficking also occurs in a context of forced begging. An example is what obtains in Senegal where some of those who begged are trafficked from neighbouring countries. They are often threatened with physical and emotional abuse if they fail to meet the established daily quota for begging (IOM, 2015; UNODC, 2015).

The crime of TIP affects virtually every country in every region of the world. Between 2010 and 2012, victims with 152 different citizenships were identified in 124 countries across the globe. Moreover, trafficking flows criss-cross the world. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has identified at least 510 flows based on official data reported by national authorities (UNODC, 2014).

Since UNODC started to collect information on the age profile of detected trafficking victims, the number of children among the detected victims has been increasing. Globally, children now comprise nearly one-third of all detected trafficking victims. Out of every three child victims, two are girls and one is a boy, or in a ratio of two is to one. In Africa, children comprise a majority of the detected victims.

Italian authorities have reported that criminal networks accept even human organs as payment from migrants who are not able to pay for their trips. The migrants may be abandoned in the desert, transformed into objects of exploitation or subjected to other forms of abuse, or held in inhumane conditions. Some migrants may find themselves stranded in their migratory journey for various reasons (theft of their personal effects and financial resources, health problems putting them in critical financial situations, insufficient resources to continue their journey, etc.) and have to find the funds needed to continue their journey. Finding such resources may be by working, borrowing, receiving remittances or engaging in unlawful activities or by contracting a debt to the smugglers with the hope that they will repay the debt progressively or when they arrive their destination (UNODC, 2015).

TIP and smuggling of migrants generate and feed corruption. Corruption in the context of TIP may be visible both in the act of trafficking itself, in the criminal justice system, or in the protection of victims. Corruption in smuggling of migrants is also found at several levels and primarily through border crossings, facilitation of the stay in a given territory or production of travel and identity documents. It manifests in complicity or inaction of border authorities, obstruction, communication of information, etc. It may involve administrative or diplomatic authorities (consulates, prefectures, etc.), border officers, customs officers, immigration officers, police, traditional authorities, judicial authorities, private sector, and civil society (IOM, 2015; UNODC, 2015). The bottom-line is that traffickers and smugglers take undue advantage of AU's promotion of migration in Africa to embark upon both regular and irregular transit migration to traffic and smuggle migrants to Europe and other destinations. The resultant effect is increasing human trafficking in Africa.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Migration has dominated news cycles and academic conversations in recent years as illegal migration from Africa through the Mediterranean, and the many resultant deaths have been discussed frequently. A great deal of the discourse in the field of migration focuses on the movement of people from the global south to the global north. That trend in migration discourse ignores the fact that migration between developing countries accounts for almost half of all migration cases (Shaw, 2007). Irregular migrants are victims of serious violations of their physical integrity throughout their journey and are particularly vulnerable to abuse. The vulnerability of migrants, in such conditions, is very high. The perpetrators of such abuses may be the smuggling and trafficking networks, the authorities of transit countries, militias or other armed groups controlling these regions (UNODC, 2015).

It can be concluded that AU's promotion of regional migration does not reduce TIP on the continent. This is because, despite the moves towards regional integration, as defined by different stages of RECs in Africa, there is also a concomitant rise in human smuggling and trafficking on the continent. This disjuncture suggests that, Africa should rethink the neo-functional strategy to regional integration and embrace post-neofunctional approach (a composite of neo-nationalism, post-nationalism and humanism) which advocates that regionalism in Africa should proceed from national integration and establishment of regional security organisation (Aniche, 2018).

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