Cross-Border Crime In Central Africa: What Risks For Cameroon?

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RESUME

Si la fin de la guerre froide rompt avec les interventions militaires et a eu tendance à ouvrir une ère, notion qui n'a pas été remplacée par la paix, cette absence de paix se manifeste par une grande instabilité politique, les guerres asymétriques, les guerres entre Etats et les guerres civiles. Le concept de sécurité est inhérent à l'environnement humain. Il se rattache à toute perception qui susciterait une inquiétude, même de circonstance, à l'homme. Les Etas d'Afrique centrale ont bien compris la nécessité de la mise sur d'une plate-forme de coopération militaire. Le Cameroun pays d'Afrique centrale et acteur majeur de la sécurité ne saurait rester indifférent face à la montée en puissance de la criminalité qui s'accompagne de tous ses effets pervers. Il est un truisme que l'Etat ne saurait garantir sa propre sécurité qu'en menaçant celle des autres : c'est le dilemme de la sécurité. La criminalité transfrontalière étant difficile à juguler, les Etats doivent non seulement avoir la pleine maitrise de leurs frontières mais aussi travailler dans une parfaite coopération car, la sécurité est avant tout une affaire de tous.

Mots clés: Transfrontalière, criminalité

ABSTRACT

While the end of the Cold War broke with military interventions and tended to usher in an era, a notion that has not been replaced by peace, this absence of peace is manifested by great political instability, asymmetrical wars, wars between states and civil wars. The concept of security is inherent in the human environment. It relates to any perception that would arouse concern, even for circumstances, in man. The Central African States have clearly understood the need to set up a military cooperation platform. Cameroon, a country of Central Africa and a major player in security, cannot remain indifferent to the rise in crime which is accompanied by all its perverse effects. It is a truism that the State can only guarantee its own security by threatening that of others: this is the dilemma of security. As cross-border crime is difficult to curb, States must not only have full control of their borders but also work in perfect cooperation, because security is above all everyone's business.

Key words: cross border, crime

INTRODUCTION

The primary virtue of a security policy is to ensure stability by combating all forms of threats, whether internal or external. The need for security is a fundamental psychological drive of man, which if not satisfied, causes discomfort and mobilizes a significant part of intellectual, nervous and physical resources, which could be caused by insecurity. Insecurity, a thorny issue, is at the heart of the concerns of each State, each region and each continent. Cross-border insecurity is one dimension of this phenomenon. Central Africa, a group made up of 11 States [1] or reduced to 6 States [2], is nonetheless affected by this phenomenon. Cameroon, a pivotal state given the elements of power that it abounds compared to other states in the sub-region, is experiencing this phenomenon within its confines. Just like its border neighbors [3]. At a time when crime with regional tendencies is galloping on the African continent, it is necessary that the States of the sub-region adopt strong methods [4]. It seems necessary to define certain concepts. A feeling that all of humanity experiences remains the leitmotif, ensuring order and security . Hans BOUTELLIER reminds us that security is omnipresent in our lives. Rare are the topics discussed in which it is not mentioned, even once. It is alluded to in everyday discussions as well as in political debates [5]. Itself has become one of the most

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[1]ECCAS

[2]CEMAC

[3]Chad, Equatorial Guinea, the Central African Republic, Gabon and Congo if we stick to CEMAC Central Africa.

[4]The desirability of this mode of security organization is based on the fact that it brings states closer together and monitors their relations, especially with regard to the establishment of common standards and agreements. This makes it possible to multiply efforts in terms of information and intervention forces, increasing transparency and confidence, thus making it possible to limit the probability of a violent confrontation. This context is also that linked to the problems of democratic order of the States in particular in Chad with an opposition in mesh with the mode, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and especially Cameroon which marks the national context.

[5]Hans BOUTELLIER, *The utopia of security. Contemporary ambivalences on crime and punishment* ,

important social issues in today's world. For a word to be capable of definition, both the reality it expresses and the scope and effects attached to it must be known, which supposes, according to Jean Louis BERGEL, that it does not " *express that a concept whose substance is established that it be the object of definition* [6]*"* . The notion of security receives various meanings which differ according to the authors and the nature. This plurality of definitions testifies to the fact that the conflict manifests itself in several forms. We can at this level cite the various areas according to the UNDP [7].

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translated   by AW ANITA CONCAS, Brussels, Larcier, 2008, p. 57

[6]Jean Louis BERGEL, *General Theory of Law* , 5th [ed] , Dalloz, 2012, p256

[7]- defense: it brings together all the political, legal, economic, physical and human activities and means which contribute to preventing and opposing offensive and defensive, active and passive, military or non-military countermeasures against threats of any kind , declared or proven with respect to a State.

- legal certainty: It is the guarantee of rights. Since the law is called upon to govern social relations, its rules must therefore provide a normative and institutional framework that is sufficiently secure for individual and collective relations. These are then the methods which aim to protect citizens against the negative secondary effects of laws, and which affect the coherence of codes, laws and regulations within the law and legal structure of a State.

- civil security: it consists in guaranteeing the security of legal and natural persons against natural risks or against various threats that may endanger their security as well as that of their property or their activities.

- internal security: it is the set of instruments that a State designs and implements to guarantee the security of the Nation: institutions, doctrine, legal instruments and procedures, operational means.

- private security: this activity includes guarding, surveillance, transportation of funds or physical protection at the request and for the benefit of individuals or companies.

- the safety of firearms: it is the device preventing the accidental departure of the shot.

- the security of persons: this traditional concern remains central because the law remains largely a body of rules drawn up by men for the well-being and their personal security.

- the security of goods and exchanges: the security of persons has as its corollary that of the goods and property relations that are established between natural or legal persons, both nationally and internationally.

- public safety: the peace of the city is an essential condition for the survival of peoples and their social

As for the Dictionary "Le petit Robert", security is defined as " *the confident and calm state of mind of a person who believes himself to be safe from danger.* [8]". Security can also mean that one is not under the weight of fear or terror. In the Dictionary of Strategy, Dominique David understands security " *in the broadest sense of the term, as the state of a subject who considers himself not threatened by such and such a danger or thinks he has the means to respond to it. if this danger becomes actual* [9]". For this author, security is an absence of threat. Security is tranquility. It is simply the absence of fear or threat [10]. In short, safety is all at once: knowing and planning [11]. The definition is excessively broad and its contours are fleeting due to its heterogeneous character. This concept with variable geometry then raises a multitude of questions as to the attacks that could be brought to it. Security in the context of our research could be defined as a construction carried out by the actors and materialized by collective strategies, with a view to establishing mutual agreement in relations and fostering cooperation.

Like the great transformations in international relations, the notions of criminality and borders have been upset in their studies by the proliferation of activities qualified as terrorist in many places in the world. Crime is accompanied by insecurity which is defined as a lack of security; anxiety caused by the possibility of danger [12]. Crime refers to all illegal, tortious and criminal acts committed in a given environment, at a given time. It takes many forms. And among the elements perceived as a cause of insecurity, there are issues of delinquency, political instability, legal arbitrariness and warfare [13]. Criminality can come from various levels, in particular political crises that may arise during or after an election, thus creating a regime derogating from the rule of law and in some cases creating a context of illicit arms despite the fact that in Central Africa the

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structures. All its forms of security refer generally to human security, which is distinguished by the fact that threats can come from outside as well as from within States.

[8]Dictionary of the French language, *Le petit Robert* , 1999, see Security, p.2062.

[9]Charles-Philippe DAVID and Jean-Jacques ROCHE, *Theories of security: Definition, approaches and concept of international security* , Paris, Montchrestien, 2002, p. 41.

[10]Dario BATISTELLA, *Theory of international relations* , 5th update and expanded, Les presses Science Po, July 2015, p. 525.

[11]Bernard PACTEAU, *Legal certainty, a principle that we lack* ?, AJDA 1995, p. 151 , spec. p. 154

[12]Mounir LALDJI, "The threats of transnational criminal entities on the internal security of States", *Global Security* , n° 6, February 2016, p. 48

[13] Augustin Jérémie DOUI WAWAYE, *Security, the foundation of the Central African State: contribution to the search for the rule of law, op. cit* ., p 29.

recourse made is the creation of steering committees for the " *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration* [14]" program, the misuse of light weapons when they are not well regulated by law, the problem becomes crucial when these weapons are transferred or delivered non-state groups and even rebel factions; inadequate training of the FMO [15], the defense forces and the security forces whose fundamental mission is to ensure in all circumstances and against all forms of aggression, the security of persons and property as well as the integrity of the territory.

All scientific work is focused around a question [16]. This appears as the whole built around a main question, research hypotheses and signs that will make it possible to treat the subject [17]. On the issue of risks, the problem selected is one that could be said to be fundamental. Therefore, the question that arises is: What are the risks of Cameroon in the face of the phenomenon of cross-border crime in Central Africa? Anyone who has been confronted with research knows that the realization of a scientific work is not easy, even more so when the subject matter is rich, complex and, a priori, off-putting [18]like constitutional law, hence the contribution of working method [19]. There remains an irrational use to which it is rational to conform, in particular the use of a binary plan [20]. It seems necessary to mention the politico-security and socio-humanitarian risks (I) and the economic-political, anthropological, diplomatic-strategic and geostrategic risks (II).

I- POLITICO-SECURITY AND SOCIO-HUMANITARIAN RISKS

Cross-border crime is a crisis in the general sense of the term. However, wars have not produced the same state everywhere and the contribution of warriors, bandits and bureaucrats to the formation of the state depends on specific configurations [21]and the cases of other states would refer us to states condemned to live at the expense of others at best, at the expense of emergency humanitarian aid which is sometimes provoked by the rulers in place. [22]To carry out this part, it will be a question for us of studying the political, security (A) and socio-humanitarian (B) risks.

A- Politico-security risks

Cameroon has been the scene of multiple sub-national or intra-national conflicts for more than a decade now. The state of near-endemic and permanent border crime in the Cameroon-Chad-Central African border area, the development of highway robbers in Adamaoua, Boko Haram in the far north and separatist conflicts in the regions of the North-West and South-West of Cameroon therefore actively participate in the erosion of the stability of the State, contributing to the loss of its hegemony or to making it "soft" [23]; anything that over time exposes the State to the emergence of terrorist movements, considerably increasing its potential for insecurity and fragility.

The survival of threats related to border crime in Cameroon generates for the State a state of structural and functional depression leading the latter to no longer fully assume its responsibilities. To this end, therefore, the State, guarantor of security, is gradually being discredited and delegitimized by its populations who, victims of this lack of security that the State should bring them, feel abandoned. However, the modern State is essentially defined by its sovereignty and its power, that is to say, its legal and political capacity to maintain order and to exercise control over its territorial space as the sole authority or legal power and legitimate [24]. This loss of territorial sovereignty is

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[14]DDR. We saw it in Cameroon

[15]Law Enforcement Forces. They represent the unity of the state.

[16]The problem appears as the central question to which we try to answer throughout the work.

[17]BEAUD Michel, *The art of the thesis* , new edition, 2006, p. 55.

[18]DAMAREY (S.), *Public Finances* , 2nd [edition] , Paris, Gualino, lextenso editions, 2008, p. 15.

[19]As a framework for analysis, we will call upon realism and constructivism. In its postulates, realism considers that security is the primary determinant of the conduct of States and international politics is above all a struggle for power [19]. This analytical approach has as fundamental concepts the balance of power, national interest, foreign policy, power and sovereignty. Putting constructivism into practice in the analysis of cross-border crime in Central Africa means first highlighting the determinants of this phenomenon in the geostrategic environment studied. It is in fact a question of going to see how this phenomenon was built, the structuring of the fight against it. It will also lead us to study the representations, the perceptions, the culture, the identity of the populations living in the border areas in order to see whether the local culture of the border communities constitutes a driving force or an explanatory determinant of the phenomenon studied.

[20]BARRAUD Boris, "The use of the plan in two parts in the faculties of French law", *op.cit.,* pp. 807 et seq.

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[21]BARKEY (K.), *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* , Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1994.

[22]Humanitarian aid, also referred to as emergency humanitarian aid, is a form of assistance that offers immediate and vital relief to people affected by a natural disaster or conflict.

[23] *Same* .

[24]Barraud Boris, "State sovereignty and state power", *Journal of Legal Research – Prospective Law* , no [165] , 2017.

favored on the one hand, by the failures of the post-colonial African state perceived as a fragile state

Security within the State is generally ensured by FMO (law enforcement forces) which crisscross the entire territorial space in order to protect property and people against possible threats. The purpose of security is thus " *to ensure at all times, in all circumstances and against all forms of aggression, the security and integrity of the territory as well as the lives of populations* " [25]. Seen from this angle, the security devices appear as structural elements making it possible to guarantee the security of goods within the State but also at the borders.

As for the inability of the security forces to curb crime at the borders, this manifests itself in the State's virtual military impotence in the face of occasional and targeted attacks by terrorists and the inability to ensure the security in certain localities, because of the occupation of the land by terrorist bands, irredentist warlords, highwaymen. This impotence of the security systems is also explained by the immensity of the border areas extending over several hundred kilometers, their porosity and their fluidity and the cross-border solidarities in cultural areas which transcend the limits of the States of the sub-region. and which make possible the uncontrolled movement of people and various goods, legal or illegal [26].

A veritable "economy of insecurity" [27] often develops in areas perceived as insecure where state security interests intertwine with the private interests of state law enforcement agents, the business world, groups private individuals operating in organized crime. It is a question of allowing a legal or illegal informal economy to prosper, which is done outside of any official control and any regulations in force, while benefiting from the economic spin-offs resulting from these transactions, especially since all the State or non-State actors in interactions in these areas most often belong to the same ethnic, tribal or clan groups [28]. All this reveals implicitly the compromise and corruption, in areas of insecurity, of the law enforcement forces and the ambivalence of the role of traditional chiefs who, according to Issa SAIBOU, protect the perpetrators of raids in return for sharing the spoils. with them because they are a kind of "bandit-noble" [29], are all factors that generate or aggravate insecurity at the Cameroonian borders and therefore, which weaken its sovereignty.

The loss of sovereignty by the State over its territorial space because of the protean crime, inside or at the borders, which develops there is also reflected in what is agreed to be called the "disintegration of the 'State', creating more immediate dangers for the local population [30]. This disintegration of the State, transforming it into a "weak State" is manifested by the existence *of "an increasingly disjointed territory, depriving the State of control of its space and the majority of the inhabitants of access to basic social services* " [31]. To this end, the progressive or brutal disintegration or decomposition of the state thus leaves room for a constellation of "oligopolies of violence" [32], both destroyers and producers of security, instead of the state monopoly of violence [33].

The disintegration of the state as a consequence of the weak or soft state generates a panoply of actors "locally differentiated, with in turn roles of producers or destroyers of security in overlapping spaces of domination" [34]. The state's absence or vacuum in terms of security creates parallel non-state "para" or "proto-state" circles of power, linked to insecurity, which provide state security services. We are then witnessing an " *archipelization* " of the national space [35] where a set of economic activities or enterprises of violence or organized crime develops affecting the confines of the territory of the State which it undergoes more than it does not control.

The proliferation of criminal niches on the fringes of State authority thus responds to the need for these to want to set themselves up as autonomous entities of

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[25] Fogue Tedom (2009) quoted by Ngodi Etanislas, "Central Africa facing the security challenges of the 21st century", pp. 79-80.

[26] NGASSAM Nana Rodrigue, "Insecurity at the borders of Cameroon", *Studies,* no [3], p. 9.

[27] Jourde Cédric, "Decoding the multiple layers of insecurity in the Sahel: the Mauritanian case", *African Security Bulletin* , no [15], 2011.

[28] Jourde C., architect,

[29] Saibou Issa, "The embuscade on the roads around Lake Chad", in *African Policy* , No. [94] , June 2004. As children of the village, the Zarguina enjoy solidarity, the protection of

their community as well as their complicity by the law of silence, in the face of justice according to Cyril Musila. Musila C., "Cross-border insecurity in Cameroon and the Lake Chad Basin", Note de l'Ifri "Sub-Saharan Africa Program", July 2012.

[30] Andreas Mehler, Stéphanie Bauer, "The Oligopolies of Violence in West Africa", *Foreign Policy* , No. [3] (Autumn), 2006, pp 557-568.

[31] Roland POURTIER, "Rebuilding the territory to rebuild the State: the DRC at the crossroads", *Contemporary Africa* , no [227] (3), 2008, pp. 23-52.

[32] Oligopoly is an economic concept meaning that on a market coexist, for a specific product (here security), a very small number of suppliers (sellers) and a large number of applicants. Andreas Mehler, Stéphanie Bauer, "The Oligopolies of Violence in West Africa", *Foreign Policy* , No. [3] (Autumn), 2006, art.cit., pp. 560-561.

[33] Mehler A. and Bauer S., "The oligopolies of violence…", art.cit.

[34] Mehler A. and Bauer S., "The oligopolies of violence…", art.cit

[35] Roland Pourtier, "Rebuilding the territory to rebuild the State: the DRC …", art.cit., p. 23.

power in areas not vested in its control and regulation, often perceptible by "the weakness, even the disappearance of the police, army and justice forces guaranteeing respect for civil and political rights" [36]. The case of "trans-ethnic professional rural banditry" commonly called *zarguina* or rebel groups and armed gangs organized as "highway robbers" [37] is a perfect illustration of this lack of regulation or control of certain plots of territory by the State. . This proliferation of non-state actors producing or destroying security contributes to destabilizing the state's situation.

The humanitarian crisis and conflict-related crime in the Central African Republic have revealed a particular type of security threat in the East region of Cameroon, carried out by armed and well-structured groups qualified as militias in view of the abuses committed by these last. Like other threats raised, the insecurity orchestrated by these paramilitary groups results in violence inflicted on people, massive and recurring movements of refugees and displaced persons, or even a significant risk of destabilization of States and their institutions.

B- Socio-humanitarian risks

Cross-border crime in Central Africa remains a major socio-humanitarian concern for Cameroon. In this vein, socio-political, socio-economic and environmental conflicts and crises produce perverse effects on Cameroon, in particular the accentuation of the invasion of refugees or even a disorganization or even a destabilization of border communities. Cameroon has ratified, like many others, several conventions and treaties on refugees [38]. Adherence to these international conventions and the maximum reception of refugees, undoubtedly make Cameroon a hospitable country and concerned about the humanitarian cause, thus honoring the ideals of the United Nations. It is up to us in turn to study the sociology of security crises in neighboring countries and the challenges of welcoming refugees.

Commonly called the *Central African Republic* because of its axial position in Africa, the Central African Republic (CAR) has been an independent state from France since December 1, 1960. [Thus,] since March 24, 2013, the date of the Seleka coup , the

CAR is plunged into chaos. Presented as a *failed trellis state* , a *phantom state* or a *cannon state* [39] in the throes of *Somalization* [40] or pre-genocide, the CAR has summoned to its bedside, for more than a decade, several political organizations [41]

The causes and factors of conflict in the CAR are diverse and varied [42]. We therefore observe that certain community groups oppose the government of Bangui while others recognize its legitimacy. They maintain either a relationship of proximity or a relationship of hostility depending on their interests. Note that the Anti-balaka were close to François Bozizé [43].

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[36] P. Hugon, "armed conflicts, insecurity and poverty traps in Africa", art.cit., p. 33.

[37] Musila C., "Cross-border insecurity in Cameroon and in the Lake Chad Basin", art.cit., p. 7.

[38] The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (signed on October 23, 1961), the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (Cameroon acceded to it on September 19, 1967), the OAU Convention of September 1969 governing the specific to the problems of refugees in Africa. In addition, Cameroon adopted in July 2005 a law defining the legal framework for the protection of refugees, which entered into force in November 2011.

[39] A. _ Z. Tamekamta, "Central Africa: From phantom state to canon state", *Brief* from GRIP (Brussels), March 26, 2013, available at http/ www.grip.org

[40] Remarks by the European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva, and the French President, François Hollande, during meetings at the UN in September 2013, taken up by Cristina Barrios, "Central African Republic: Humanitarian, Political and Security Challenges", *Brief Issue* , no [37] , October 2013, p.1.

[41] (CEMAC, ECCAS, AU, EU, UN) and humanitarian organizations (*Human Rights Watch* , UNICEF, etc.)

[42] The fragility of state institutions; the Central African State is a Ghost State because it has known for several decades a decline of public institutions generally active in Bangui as the popular expression says "the State stops at PK12" in other words the Central African public authorities no longer have of authority beyond 12 km from Bangui. This expression, although outrageous, sufficiently translates a shocking reality where the weakness of the State is known to all citizens.

The failure of democratization efforts

The exploitation and instrumentalization of ethnic differences; the Sudanese and the Fulani have been marginalized by the various administrations of the country since the country's independence. And the intransigence and lack of flexibility of social and political actors generate frustrations that lead to the formation of rebel groups and self-defence groups for community rights. Example the Seleka.

[43] The proliferation of armed groups and small arms; the absence of the state in most regions has given rise to warlords in almost all regions of the country. In addition, the proximity of the CAR to countries at war such as Chad, Sudan and South Sudan facilitates the circulation and trafficking of firearms. The lack of dialogue and cooperation between power and the opposition. Wage arrears and/or non-payment of wages in arrears. The excessive accumulation of salary arrears and the regular non-payment of current salaries have contributed to the destitution of civil servants and other State agents;

This economically and culturally imposing neighboring giant is the scene of several decades of violence and insecurity in certain parts of its territory. The three armed conflicts in Nigeria which will give rise to serious humanitarian crises and a massive displacement of refugees in Cameroon are linked to the issue of ethnic and religious competition, the poor distribution of the oil windfall and the desire to impose a dominant cultural ideology far from Abuja standards.

The Far North region of Cameroon could not escape the contagion of the jihadist insurgency of Boko Haram. Geographically, the Far North neighbors the Nigerian state of Borno, the birthplace of Boko Haram. It is a region that shares common cultural traits (language, religion) and economic activities (trade in basic necessities, livestock, agriculture, etc.) with the populations of northeastern Nigeria. It is also one of the poorest regions of Cameroon and the one with the lowest school enrollment rate (20.53%) [44]and the highest fertility rate (5.9 children/woman) [45]. The combination of a weak national integration of the Far North with the historical neglect of the border areas by the State has made this region a space very permeable to criminal activities. Thus, Boko Haram was able to exploit these vulnerabilities to make the Far North a rear and logistical base, a fallback zone, a recruitment pool, a supply granary and a ramp for its international projection through a series of attacks as spectacular as bloody.

Several reasons indeed justify the mobility of refugees on Cameroonian soil. The first and not least reason is the fact that Cameroon remained until 2017 the only country that did not experience a civil war in the sub-region. An attractive argument that will make Cameroon the epicenter of the massive settlement of Nigerian, Central African, Chadian and Congolese refugees. The second argument is geographical. Cameroon shares 1,690 km of border with Nigeria, 800 km of border with CAR and 1,094 km of border with Chad, whose capital Ndjamena, the country's largest metropolis, is a stone's throw from Maroua.

In the communities that host refugees in eastern Cameroon, the natives mainly belong to the "Gbaya" ethnic group, while the refugee populations are "Bororos" or "Peuhls". There are great cultural differences between these two communities and this is a factor of friction between them. We can mention as an illustration the opposition at the level of the modes of burial of the dead. Refugee populations do not dig deep to bury their dead. This practice worries the indigenous people who find it dangerous not to dig deep enough to bury a person, by the possibility that this process may cause diseases or even epidemics within the indigenous populations.

II- ECONOMIC-POLITICAL, ANTHROPOLOGICAL, DIPLOMATIC-STRATEGIC AND GEOSTRATEGIC RISKS

Risk designates all the factors linked to a State's structural and global environment [46]. These may be elements such as cross-border crime, attacks, conflicts, insurgencies, social anger, economic crises, political instability, natural disasters and others [47].

Since then, criminality has installed violence and crime in the economic-political environment (A). In addition, the proliferation of rebel and terrorist movements within and on the borders of Cameroonian territory now calls into question the slogans of "welcoming land" and "country of prosperity", having enjoyed relative stability for decades. Becoming "a country at risk", Cameroon is now very sensitive to cross-border insecurity. Because the current security threats considerably weaken its anthropological, diplomatico-strategic and geostrategic positioning (B).

A- Economic and political risks

crime remains linked to the internal stability of Cameroon and has consequences on economic and political balances. It requires the implementation of security devices with more or less success. Rebel and terrorist groups rely on cross-border areas [48].

This chapter focuses on the economic and political risks of cross-border insecurity in Cameroon. This suggests a probable annihilation of the cross-border dynamic, the consequences of which may augur a possible loss of Cameroon's economic leadership in the Central African region.

As part of local networks, cross-border crime has consequences that go beyond the national framework alone and affect populations on both sides of borders. Involving actors of various kinds, it weakens the cross-border dynamic through a set of criminal activities. In this, we are witnessing a connection with international criminal networks, which gives activities stemming from cross-border crime a global scope.

Poverty and misery the impoverishment of a large part of the population, insofar as, in the CAR, civil servants are the only support for their respective families taken in their broadest sense. Poverty is therefore considered to be one of the main causes of the Central African crisis, but also one of the fundamental reasons for its perpetuation.

[44]Central Bureau of Censuses and Population Studies, "Thematic analysis-Summary schooling-literacy-instruction", 2005, bucrep.cm/index.php/fr

[45]Ministry of Public Health, "Complete analytical profile: Far North", 2016, onsp.minsante.cm/profil.(IFRI- boko haram in the Far North region of Cameroon: the tree that hides the forest , page 13)

[46] See Barbara LOYER, *Geopolitics: methods and concepts* , Paris, Armand Colin, 2019, pp. 193-217.

[47]Ibid.

[48]In this context, security cooperation between Cameroon and the other States of the region remains relatively effective. The presence of Boko Haram, cross-border and separatist armed gangs promotes the development of other forms of insecurity and crime. A situation that can create gray spaces and uncontrollable criminal dynamics.

The border areas of Cameroon are regularly marked by sporadic instability linked to the existence of numerous armed gangs and even terrorist groups, led by Boko Haram, resulting from situations of repetitive unrest in the CAR, Chad and in the North-East of Nigeria.

A criminal activity widely prized by "coupeurs de route" [49], organized cross-border banditry includes elements of the regular armed forces who have deserted and combatants who are part of "politico-military groups" [50]. Operating in the Lake Chad Basin and along the border triptych between Cameroon, CAR and Chad, these cross-border criminals are characterized by cross-border mobility and transhumance, coming and going between state borders. Initially, with the group segmentation strategy as their mode of movement, they are later reconstituted into a team grouped together on the operational field. To this end, the modus operandi is defined by looting, armed attacks, hostage-taking, ambushes and robberies [51].

As transnational phenomena, terrorism and cross-border organized crime infiltrate and cross Cameroon's borders. These are criminal dynamics that escape the material border of the State, either by exploiting local identities against the internal political order, or by terrorizing populations. This situation results particularly from the colonial cutting of the borders which was done arbitrarily[52].

Thus, cross-border crime coupled with the illegal trafficking of natural resources allow a sedentary presence of armed criminal groups, which pose threats to local populations. This insecurity hardly diminishes and criminals generally invade the villages to find water and food there, indulging in looting. For the State, this poses the challenge of finding sufficient means to deal with it. From this point of view, the State must reinstate strong local State structures, set up border control backed by a cross-border security network integrating a major role for local authorities, and lead an inclusive dialogue. The attraction offered by cross-border crime through access to criminal income contributes to the proliferation of armed groups on Cameroon's borders.

The weakness of public institutions, the artificiality of borders, the social exclusion of minority groups and the identity ties between border communities have largely facilitated the proliferation of armed groups in border areas. In addition, these groups benefit from local and foreign support, to maintain tensions and insecurity in order to facilitate their territorial expansion. It is a dynamic extension and relocation of conflicts. The objective being to strengthen the prebendary criminal positions and to preserve local interests. A dynamic specific to armed groups that escapes the control of the State.

Today, these criminal phenomena are undermining Cameroon's stability and development trajectory, particularly since 2013 [53].

Obviously, the proliferation of armed groups increases violence and criminality in Cameroon through the terrorist attacks in the Far North and the separatist conflict in the English-speaking regions of the country. To this end, there is a link between the proliferation of armed groups, the resurgence of crime and the rise of insecurity [54].

With neighboring States, Cameroon is collaborating in the fight against armed groups. This collaboration should be intensified, especially given the permanence of Boko Haram terrorism in the Lake Chad basin. The Multinational Joint Force (MMF) is a perfect example. This force fights against terrorist intrusions in the national spaces of Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad [55]. The porosity of the borders through the existence of the paths making it possible to cross the States, hampers the control of the tracks by the forces of defense and security. There are similar passages leading from the Nigerian federated states of Bornou and Adamawa to Cameroon.

[49]Issa SAÏBOU, "The taking of hostages on the borders of Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Chad. A new modality of transmigrating banditry", *Polis. Cameroonian Journal of Political Science* , 2007.

[50]Cf. Edouard Epiphane YOGO, "Politico-military groups in Central Africa: between deconstruction and reconstruction of the State", *Doctoral thesis in Political Science* , University of Yaoundé II-Soa, Academic year 2014-2015.

[51]Issa SAÏBOU, "The taking of hostages on the borders of Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Chad. A new modality of transmigrating banditry", op. cit.

[52]Michel FOUCHER, *Borders of Africa: to put an end to a myth* , Paris, National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), 2014.

[53]By diversifying its targets, Boko Haram expanded its area of activity to the Lake Chad Basin and pledged allegiance to the Organization of the Islamic State to strengthen its nuisance capacity in 2015. Whether Boko Haram or armed groups separatists, the latter regularly cross the long and porous Cameroonian borders, while sporadically clashing with the Cameroonian defense and security forces. While accentuating human insecurity, the violence resulting from these clashes has caused the death of thousands of civilians and multiplied the number of internally displaced persons and refugees. In addition, young people are recruited by armed groups to reinforce their numbers, carry out kidnappings, attacks and assassinations. This is all the more true in the two English-speaking regions, the North-West and the South-West, which are experiencing a permanent separatist insurgency. In the same way, the multiplication of Boko Haram attacks in the Far North is also a consequence.

[54] Cf. Philippe HUGON and Charles-Albert MICHALET (dir.), *The new regulations of the world economy* , Paris, Karthala, 2005

[55]See Léon KOUNGOU, *Boko Haram-Leaving to Last* , Paris, L'Harmattan, 2016.

The wandering of armed groups generally presents a means of subsistence in the context of an austere capitalist economy. In this regard, the economic-political hierarchy becomes highly elevated and speculative, while reinforcing inequalities as the roots of the militarization of certain communities or groups. To maintain their survival, these groups arm themselves, contribute to the trafficking of small arms and the increase in violence. They ensure the mobility of their abuses, control territories and perpetuate their criminal economy. By accentuating the degradation of the rule of law, they ensure the control of cross-border corridors, with the major consequence of the development of illegal and criminal activities.

The massive circulation of illegal products paradoxically denotes an economic weight for the employment of young people as carriers or couriers. From this point of view, illegal trafficking is generally considered as a source of income and employment for local populations. This would contribute to socially stabilizing certain localities where young people have little or no economic alternative. Without being institutionalized, this traffic sometimes flourishes away from security checks.

Under these conditions, it is up to the State of Cameroon to acquire the means and resources to contain cross-border insecurity. These means must be both material and human in order to improve border surveillance and intelligence. This means also fighting against corruption and the inaction of State representatives. With regard to illegal arms trafficking, in 2018 Cameroon hosted the first conference of States Parties to the Central African Convention on the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons. This is a first laudable solution to limit the illicit flow of arms on its territory. On the question, the action of the FMM in the fight against Boko Haram cannot respond sufficiently to the operational constraints of the fight against arms trafficking.

The artificiality of the borders favors the development of organized crime, associated with the trafficking of various kinds which swarm the Cameroonian borders. This crime is concomitant with the free movement of persons and goods and the development of the illegal trading market. In Cameroon, highway robbers and pirates participate in the deployment of the underground criminal economy [56]. This economy maintains hotbeds of all kinds of tensions with the presence of the terrorist threat Boko Haram and armed separatist groups.

Modern raiding practices such as kidnappings and cross-border banditry have determined economic crime in its socio-cultural dimensions to this day. Indeed, cross-border crime in the northern regions is dominated by my family networks occupying the border areas. In these regions, the communities are developing their own responses to bandits and cross-border criminals, by doing themselves justice through raids. However, abuses such as settling scores are generally observed in attacks against opposing communities. This situation is favored by the vagrancy of soldiers and armed gangs on both sides of the borders. With the involvement of armed gangs, transhumant communities, especially herders, have become prime targets for bandits and thieves.

Moreover, there is a logic of alliances, collusion, transactions and interactions between the different criminal groups. In reality, these groups often benefit from the logistical and financial support of other more powerful groups, such as terrorist groups. The goal is to facilitate the perpetration of kidnappings for ransom and the looting of villages for the purpose of financing activities. In this way, arms trafficking as an additional factor, frequent looting of goods and resources are part of their modus operandi.

It goes without saying that organized crime allows the entrepreneurs of disorder to profit from conflicts, by aggravating armed violence and developing smuggling with the aim of exacerbating insecurity. Overall, the situation in Cameroon today arouses a lot of interest, when we realize that organized crime is used to finance armed separatist groups in the North-West and South-West and Boko Haram in the Far North. In its 2011 report, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2011 notes that organized crime of minerals, wildlife , drugs and other products constitutes the main risk of conflict [57]. Thus, organized crime represents a considerable source of revenue and wealth for armed groups and other entrepreneurs of disorder [58].

In addition, organized crime and armed conflicts aggravate tensions over climate change, demographic pressure and the displacement of populations. This also leads to the multiplication of inter-community conflicts and the aggravation of violence due to the pastoral activities of certain communities. A situation that generally increases the risk of reprisals and confrontation between ethnic groups in the context of rural conflicts. This type of bush conflict or local conflict within the internal conflict aggravates the displacement of populations by forcing communities to flee their localities to other regions of the country.

Since 2013, Cameroon has been experiencing major economic disruptions in its territorial triangle. Thus, like most of the States of the Lake Chad Basin and of Central Africa, Cameroon is simultaneously facing the terrorist and rebel threat. However, the most prominent are those of Boko Haram and "Ambazonian" separatist armed groups. They emerge in a context of liberal global economy which structures the world between profiteers and excluded.

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[56] See Joseph Vincent NTUDA EBODE (dir.), *Terrorism and Piracy: New Security Challenges in Central Africa* , Yaoundé, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2010.

[57] UNODC, 2011, *Organized Crime and Instability in Central Africa: A Threat Assessment*, UNODC, 2011, available at https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-andanalysis/Studies/BOOK_Central_Africa_Report_French_web.pdf .

[58] Ibid.

Cross-border crime contributes to the increase in the country's socio-economic vulnerability rate. It is at the root of multidimensional poverty in the regions affected by the conflict, in particular that of the Far North. In this region, crime provides jobs in a context where poverty facilitates the recruitment of young people [59]. The looting of villages and the displacement of people further impoverish the populations. The criminal groups also attack the agricultural and fishing resources and the livestock of the populations, in addition to the destruction of the basic local infrastructures (schools and hospitals). In this respect, cross-border insecurity reinforces food poverty and weakens the resilience of populations in the face of bad climatic conditions.

In addition, access to basic services and essential food resources is limited. The destruction of livelihoods is generalizing poverty in the region [60]. While the English-speaking regions, for their part, do not cruelly lack basic socio-economic infrastructure and training and education opportunities, the fact remains that the populations of these regions have few economic opportunities, especially among young people. This socio-economic fragility is associated with a relative presence of the State in the Far North, in the East and with a degeneration of violence in the English-speaking regions in a context of poor governance. Because, in these different regions, the rate of literacy and schooling is variable.

However, the education situation in these regions devastated by cross-border insecurity remains disastrous due to deliberate attacks by armed groups against schools. Indeed, the school is perceived by these groups as a threat to their objectives.

Furthermore, the destruction of infrastructure presents considerable economic losses for the State. Added to this is the cost of additional efforts in terms of security. Moreover , cross-border insecurity and the escalation of violence it induces significantly disrupts cross-border trade, agriculture, social peace and the functioning of the State. By negatively affecting State revenues, it aggravates poverty in the disaster-stricken regions. The closure of schools and the destruction of health centers contribute to making populations more precarious.

From the outset, cross-border crime feeds above all an economic interest because it is interested in areas abounding in enormous natural resources. To this end, the border appears as a crossroads of economic and commercial transit between States, offering opportunities for criminal enrichment. The north is the geographical area which presents a great activity of cross-border insecurity and where criminal groups are most active. The most attractive region of the country [61], the north is experiencing an influx of tourists and immigrants, mainly because of its enormous natural wealth. It is also a crossroads for cross-border exchanges. Due to its proximity to the Lake Chad basin and its borders with three neighboring states of Cameroon, the north makes it possible to connect West Africa to Central Africa, going from Nigeria to the CAR via Chad.

This geographical space has always been at the center of the economic and strategic desires of highway robbers, organized crime, rebel and terrorist groups [62], who maintain cross-border insecurity there, with the aim of controlling this region or part of it. Since 2013, cross-border insecurity has had a severe impact on the Cameroonian economy. It manifests itself in modern economic sectors such as tourism and the hotel industry [63]. In its 2014 report on the impact of the security crisis at the borders on the Cameroonian economy, the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development presents the north as the region alone hosting more 13% of the country's tourist sites with 7% of the country's hotel accommodation capacity [64].

To this, we can add the fall in tax revenues in the north with an impact on the execution of budgets and the collection of taxes and duties in the region [65]. The demobilization of businesses is also caused by cross-border insecurity. Indeed, the fear of terrorist and rebel attacks against factories and their workers is growing. Furthermore, the fall in the tax potential of the north has led the Cameroonian authorities to reduce tax controls in order to avoid the exacerbation of social anger [66].

According to the Groupement Inter-patronal du Cameroun, cross-border crime in the English-speaking regions has affected "more than 88% of businesses; regardless of their size and location [67].

In the North-West and South-West regions, agriculture plays a central role in economic activity. According to GICAM, "the South-West represents in

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[59]Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), "The Boko Haram crisis and its repercussions on development in the Far North region of Cameroon", Addis Ababa, Report, 2018, *p* . 19, available at https://repository.uneca.org/bitstream/handle/10855/24346/b11889494.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y .

[60] Ibid., p. 20.

[61]Christian OWONA EYENGA, "Game and strategic-economic challenge of new security threats in Central Africa: the case of Cameroon, Chad, CAR and DRC", p. 2, available at https://hal.science/hal-02398922/document ., consulted on 04/20/2023 at 1:31 p.m.

[62] *Ibid* ., p. 3.

[63] *Ibid* .

[64]Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT), "Impact of the border security crisis on the Cameroonian economy", Report, December *2014* , p 4.

[65]Christian OWONA EYENGA, "Game and strategic-economic challenge of new security threats in Central Africa: the case of Cameroon, Chad, CAR and DRC", op. cit., p. 4.

[66] Ibid., p. 5.

[67] Ibid.

particular 45% of the national cocoa production while the North-West is the main Arabica coffee production basin with more than 70% of the national production" [68]. However, this economic activity is particularly impacted by the cross-border insecurity that rages in the two regions through the presence of armed separatist groups. As major areas for the cultivation and production of tea, oil palm and especially cocoa and coffee, these regions are suffering the effects of cross-border insecurity, which are reducing the production of these sectors. Combined with the displacement of populations, cross-border crime is harmful to agricultural activity and the maintenance of plantations.

A situation that weakens Cameroon's position as a pivotal state for food security in Central Africa in general and in CEMAC in particular. Furthermore, cross-border insecurity has also proven to be more harmful in the collection and transport of products such as cocoa in NOSO. Indeed, armed separatist groups often set up clandestine checkpoints on the roads, either to extort transport vehicles or to destroy products and transport equipment. This criminal practice is characterized by repeated blockages of road traffic; the destruction of storage warehouses; the confiscation and destruction of trucks and pick-ups; kidnappings of drivers, followed by ransom demands; the destruction of processing facilities, such as dryers [69].

By extension, cross-border insecurity therefore affects major economic sectors, which can be at the root of the affirmation of Cameroon's economic leadership in Central Africa.

Average production of good quality crude oil [70], having the second largest forest area, and the second hydroelectric potential of the continent after the DRC [71], Cameroon has economic sectors likely not only to meet its own needs but also those of other African countries. central. To this end, Cameroon is destined to play the role of pivotal State, relying on the dominant economic sectors, in the new dynamics of regional integration. In addition, its agricultural performance predestines the country to be the regional food hub. By increasing the rate of food exports to Central African countries and elsewhere, Cameroon can increase and maintain their dependence on its food products [72].

However, cross-border crime adversely affects these major economic sectors. The reluctance of mostly foreign investors creates considerable tax and customs losses for the country [73].

However, in the North-West and South-West regions, the major economic sectors particularly affected by cross-border crime are the large agro-industrial companies [74].

Ultimately, the economic-political risks of cross-border crime in Cameroon, the main avatars of which are Boko Haram, armed groups, armed separatists and cross-border organized crime, have been shaking the country's borders for many decades. Socio-economic and political fragilities combined with porous borders have created a geopolitical chessboard of actors with divergent interests. In view of the evolution of the security context, this configuration of interests seems to predict permanent cross-border insecurity. Indeed, cross-border threats, although sometimes weakened, do not miss an opportunity to show their vitality on Cameroonian territory.

This can be explained by shortcomings or inadequacies in the security response to these threats. Extremist armed groups and cross-border criminals continue to find fertile ground for recruitment among mostly poor local populations. This supports the thesis of a lasting entrenchment of cross-border insecurity in a region like the north. This insecurity also impacts on the Cameroonian economy as a second variable in the security equation in the face of cross-border crime. The North-West and South-West regions with strong economic potential for Cameroon's economic leadership are today unstable because of identity claims that have gradually mutated into a latent conflict with disastrous economic consequences.

In this context, the responses of the State must be global and inclusive for all the actors, in order to bring the entrepreneurs of the war to abandon violence and criminal activities. If only at the local level. In the short and medium term, solutions must be found to restore the economic viability of the various regions affected by cross-border crime.

B- Anthropological, diplomatico-strategic and geostrategic risks

Considered for a long time, a land of welcome, a country of prosperity where life is good, as a haven of peace, Cameroon seems today a victim of its hospitality. The anthropological, diplomatic-strategic and geostrategic positioning of the country makes it sensitive to a set of security threats. While the sub-region is facing a wave of violence, the humanitarian situation on Cameroon's borders with Nigeria and the

[68]GICAM, "Insecurity in the South-West and North-West regions: Economic consequences and impacts on business activity", op. cit., p. 4.

[69] Ibid., p. 5.

[70]Michel KOUNOU, ""Paradoxes and miseries of African oil", *Issues* , n° 36, July 2008, p. 11.

[71]Célestine Laure DJIRARO MANGUE, Mathurin NNA and Jean GONONDO, "Cameroon in the CEMAC: between socio-economic potential and the exercise of sub-regional leadership", op. cit., p. 193.

[72]Ibid., p. 194.

[73] Christian OWONA EYENGA, "Game and strategic-economic challenge of new security threats in Central Africa: the case of Cameroon, Chad, CAR and DRC", op. cit., p. 5.

[74]GICAM, *The industrial imperative of Cameroon, The White Book of the Cameroonian economy* , op. cit., p. 90.

Central African Republic is deteriorating day by day. The inevitable erosion of Cameroon's sub-regional diplomatic and strategic influence leads to a threat of implosion of the sub-region via the heart of Central Africa and identity upheavals that are difficult to control.

Rightly or wrongly considered since the independence of the countries of the sub-region as the locomotive of the Central African zone, Cameroon has seen its preponderance crumble over the days to the benefit of neighboring countries more inclined to a diplomatic offensive and military or even geostrategic. Cameroon is, with Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, the Central African Republic and Chad, one of the six States which form the Economic Community of Central African States (CEMAC): Located in the heart of the Gulf of Guinea, the Cameroon is the only country to share a common land border with five other neighboring states. Because of the happy combinations of chance, Cameroon is the junction between West Africa and Central Africa. To the West, the coast gives it about 300 km of opening on the Gulf of Guinea and on the Atlantic Ocean. Thus constituting at the same time, the exit door which overlooks the Atlantic Ocean for most of these States. In addition, it is this country which is considered as the nourishing breast of the sub-region thanks to its high human density and the strength of its arms. It is therefore these assets that have enabled Cameroon to position itself as the locomotive of the Central African region for several decades.

Like all the other States of the sub-region, Cameroon is a founding member of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa born from the ashes of UDEAC [75]. Its potential in relation to the States of the sub-region are strategic, geopolitical and economic.

On the geopolitical level, if Cameroon does not occupy the first place in the sub-region in terms of area, it occupies an enviable geographical position. Indeed, Cameroon is the only CEMAC country that shares a border with all member states. In this context, it can be emphasized that Cameroon maintains privileged relations with Chad, with which it forms a real diplomatic alliance [76]. Cameroon/Nigeria relations, this last neighboring country, the undisputed leader of the ECOWAS community, are very turbulent for historical and security reasons. Cameroon and Gabon in rivalry for the leader of the CEMAC, even if their weights differ, creates misunderstandings and hidden oppositions. Ideological differences have distanced Cameroon from the Congo and a lukewarm proximity exists with the Central African Republic, while Cameroon constitutes an outlet on the Atlantic,

vital for its trade with the rest of the world. With Equatorial Guinea, relations have become more complex because of the strong Cameroonian community present in the country and the claims of destabilization of the country. The future of the region greatly depends on Cameroon's will and its ability to create or re-establish bonds of trust between key populations, institutions and organizations through regional dynamics and concrete cross-border actions, a prerequisite to regional stability.

Commercially, Cameroon has a preferential advantage in the sub-region. In addition to its openness to the sea, it is the only CEMAC country bordering all the others. This natural advantage allows Cameroon to serve the landlocked states of the sub-region, namely the Central African Republic and Chad, thanks to specific trade agreements. Indeed, the commercial exchanges of these two States are 80% dependent on Cameroon [77].

Cameroon is endowed with large deposits of raw materials which occupy an important part of its economy. The country also has the second largest forest area in Africa after the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It also has the second largest hydroelectric potential on the continent after the DRC and Ethiopia. Developing its hydroelectric potential would enable it to meet not only its own electricity needs but also the needs of other countries in the sub-region. Frank Ebogo [78] underlines in this sense that: " *by its middle position on the African hydropolitical chessboard, Cameroon is finally called upon to play the role of pivotal state in the new dynamic of hydropolitical integration* ". All these natural resources constitute an important lever of the Cameroonian economy.

In addition, Cameroon, a country which moreover has the best agricultural performance in CEMAC, exports foodstuffs to each of the countries in the sub-region. Some CEMAC states are highly dependent on imports of certain food products from Cameroon. It is the nourishing breast of the sub-region and the cornerstone of sub-regional and inter-regional exchanges. It is in this sense that Cameroon-Equatorial Guinea essentially engage in local exchanges. These are, on the one hand, food products, whether local agricultural products or imported products such as frozen fish and chicken from Brazil and landed in Bata, and, on the other hand, products commonly used industrial products that circulate from one country to another depending on their availability and price differentials. Between Cameroon and Gabon, trade is much greater because

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[75]UDEAC (customs union of Central African States) was born on December 8, 1964 in Brazzaville and was replaced by CEMAC on March 16, 1994 in Ndjamena

[76]While waiting to see the continuation of the Savana energy crisis.

[77]National Institute of Statistics (2014), Survey on cross-border trade in goods in Cameroon: methodological assessment and results, Yaoundé-Cameroon. page 19

[78]Ebogo Frank (January 2015), "Cameroon: Pivotal State in the new hydropolitical dynamics of integration in Africa", in Enjeux, n° 50.

Cameroonian agricultural products, mainly from the West and North-West, use this route to supply Libreville.

Cameroon, which has many assets to be the leader of CEMAC, only plays its role timidly and discreetly. With the persistence of socio-political problems, the country is struggling to define a clear and precise sub-regional policy. Pr. Narcisse MOUELLE KOMBI notes in this regard that the objective elements of power held by Cameroon are not systematically reinforced by the subjective ingredient which is " *the will to dominate or hegemony* " [79]. He goes on to note that: "in a surge of modesty and moderation, President Biya today, like Ahmadou Ahidjo yesterday, seems to refuse any ostentatious and exuberant promotion of his country's diplomatic assets. Moreover, Yaoundé has no doctrine in terms of the sub-regional sphere of influence" [80]. It would seem that this diplomatic choice is closely linked to the personality of the President of the Republic of Cameroon, Paul Biya, whose absenteeism, silences and distance vis-à-vis the national or international political arena have the appearance of indifference [81].

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[79]MOUELLE KOMBI Narcisse *The foreign policy of Cameroon* , Paris, L'Harmattan, 1996,

[80] *Ibid* .

[81]In addition, the reduction of Cameroon's involvement in the management of community institutions In recent years, there has been a considerable reduction in senior Cameroonian executives at the level of sub-regional and even continental bodies. With the vast program of institutional reforms initiated in CEMAC in 2006, Cameroon will lose the privileged status it enjoyed during the application of the Fort-Lamy Consensus. This consensus, which was adopted in 1975, is an unwritten conventional agreement, considered as a custom. Concerning the distribution of positions at the level of community institutions, this agreement stipulated that Cameroon, which hosts the headquarters of the Bank of Central African States (BEAC), could not aspire to the management of this institution, which fell to a Gabonese to a renewable term of seven years. A Congolese national should be at the head of the Development Bank of Central African States (BDEAC), and the Executive Secretariat of CEMAC (which will become a Commission in 2007) went to a Cameroonian while the headquarters would find in Bangui in CAR. The breaking of this consensus during the tenth ordinary session of the Conference of Heads of State of the CEMAC, will lead to the questioning by Equatorial Guinea of the previous balance of power and the establishment of a new configuration of power. in the sub-region Indeed, the Conference will decide to "institute the principle of rotation, in alphabetical order of the Member States, at the level of all the Institutions, Organs and Specialized Institutions of the Community, thus putting an

end to the Consensus of Fort Lamy". At the end of the eleventh ordinary session of the Conference of Heads of State of CEMAC held in Brazzaville on July 25, 2012, the distribution of posts by country will exclude Cameroon from the management of strategic community institutions. Thus, after 46 years at the head of the CEMAC Commission (and of the General Secretariat of the former UDEAC), Cameroon will lose the monopoly of the institution. This position was successively held by Charles Onana Awana (1964-1970), Pierre Tchanké (1970-1977), Vincent Efon (1977-1982), Ambroise Foalem (1982-1991), Thomas Dakayi Kamga (1991-1999), Jean Nkueté (1999-2006) and finally Antoine Ntsimi (2007-2012) (Zozime Tamekemta, 2011). A few years earlier, it was Gabon, also considered one of the giants of the sub-region because of the comparative advantages of its oil revenue and its role as a relay for Françafrique (Awoumou, 2008: 53-55 , which lost the management monopoly of the BEAC. The BEAC was successively led by the Gabonese Casimir Oye Mba (March 1, 1978-July 24, 1990), Jean-Félix Mamalepot (July 24, 1990-April 25, 2007) and Philibert Andzembe (June 20, 2007- June 25, 2008. It should be added that the scarcity of official visits by the Cameroonian President to the sub-region accentuates this weak involvement of Cameroon on the sub-regional and even regional scene.

The absences of the Cameroonian President, His Excellency Paul Biya at the various CEMAC summits are one of the causes of the decline in the legitimacy of Cameroonian leadership in the sub-region. These absences of the Head of State at the various summits have led to a certain loss of influence and prestige of Cameroon on the sub-regional scene. A diplomacy of absence which is not very appreciated by the other Heads of State of the sub-region. Indeed, President Omar Bongo even went so far as to boycott certain sub-regional summits held in Cameroon in response to President Paul Biya's repeated absences from the various summits that took place on Gabonese territory. The allocation of the headquarters of the Stock Exchange of Central Africa to the city of Libreville in Gabon would also have taken place during a Conference of Heads of State of CEMAC marked by the absence of the Cameroonian President. Indeed, during the second Conference of CEMAC Heads of State held in N'Djamena on December 14, 2000, the CEMAC Heads of State decided to establish the headquarters of the stock exchange of Central Africa (BVMC) in Libreville while the city of Douala in Cameroon held many more assets to house the headquarters of this institution. While the other Heads of State of the sub-region shine by their attendance at sub-regional meetings, the President of the Republic of Cameroon is generally represented by the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Economic and Social Council, the President of the National Assembly, etc. A review of the Final

Political instability refers to the propensity of a country to collapse, constitutionally or not, following a long systemic degeneration. 82It is due to destabilizing events that remove any capacity for resilience and undermine any sustainable development. Generally associated with "the crisis of state legitimacy and its decay" as Achille Mbembé points out 83. It is distinguished in Cameroon by the existence of crisogenic factors in the north, in the eastern region as well as in the so-called English-speaking regions. The war that the State of Cameroon is waging against terrorism in the north and the fight against banditry and rebel incursions in the east of the country constitute the first explanatory backbone of political instability. Indeed, which appeared in 2003 in North-East Nigeria, the terrorist group Boko Haram today poses a major security challenge to the Cameroonian State and, to a certain extent, also to neighboring countries around the basin. of Lake Chad. The theories of political development and political decline are generally advanced to describe the situation of a country either because of the loss of its capacity to fulfill its sovereign functions, or because it manages to (re)seize it [84]. As part of the second perspective, like any State that aspires to sustainable development, Cameroon has put in place a number of mechanisms to escape the threat of fragility and maintain its dynamic of emergence. These national actions are mainly based on socio-economic and security measures.

On the socio-economic level, many actions are implemented with a view to energizing the levers of emergence. One will fundamentally note Cameroon's redefinition of its socio-economic development policy as soon as it left the HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries) initiative [85]. Its new social and economic development policy is now based, and has been since 2007, on a new state financial regime [86]and on what is known as the "2035 vision" [87]. The latter is gradually being implemented through the implementation of the measures contained in the Strategy Document for Growth and Employment (DSCE) [88]. This document is a concentrate of issues and challenges that come together through a tool for steering and guiding state public action in terms of short-term national prosperity (2020). Through these tools, the intention of the public authorities seems to be clearly displayed: that of truly putting Cameroon on the path to emergence by 2035.

Conclusion

In sum, current cross-border crime is part of the history of the socio-political and economic dynamics of this region where Cameroon shares the area with its peers. The rise in power of certain groups of the Islamic State leads to the creation of links with the other forms of insecurity identified. Cross-border crime in the context of our studies appears as a set of criminal acts whose perpetrators, victims and repercussions go beyond state borders and are part of the networks and wakes of all movements. All of them organize a set of dangerous activities including ambushes on the roads to rob travellers, arms trafficking, human beings, drug trafficking, bank robbery, to name but a few.

Cameroon, a country of Central Africa and a major player in security, cannot remain indifferent to the rise in crime which is accompanied by all its perverse effects. It is a truism that the State can only guarantee its own security by threatening that of others: this is

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Communiqués of the various Ordinary Sessions of the Conference of Heads of State of CEMAC reveals that the Cameroonian President was absent during the second Conference of Heads of State (N'Djamena, December 14, 2000), the fifth Conference of Heads of State (Brazzaville, January 28, 2004), the sixth Conference of Heads of State (Libreville, February 11, 2005), the eighth Conference of Heads of State (N'Djamena, April 25, 2007), the twelfth Conference of Heads of State (Libreville, May 06, 2015), the thirteenth Conference of Heads of State (Djibloho, February 17, 2017), and the fourteenth Conference of Heads of State (N'djaména, March 24, 2019).

82 Zartman, William (ed.). 1997. *The Collapse of the State. Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Power* . Paris New horizons

83 Mbembe, Achilles. 1993. Crisis of legitimacy, authoritarian restoration and state collapse. In Peter Geschiere and Piet Konings (eds.), *Routes of accumulation in Cameroon* (p. 345-375). Paris: Karthala

84 Huntington, Samuel Phillips. 1965. Political development and political Decay. *World Politics* , 17, p. 382-395

85This is an initiative of the *Bretton Woods institutions* (International Monetary Fund and World Bank) launched with a view to providing assistance to the poorest countries in the world in order to guarantee the sustainability of their external debt.

86 Law No. 2007/006 of December 26, 2007 on the financial regime of the State. This mechanism includes program budgeting and results-based management with a view to improving the quality of public expenditure.

87 Developed in 2009 and implemented since 2011, the "vision 2015" is the document that formulates the long-term development vision of the State of Cameroon, in particular by 2035.

88 It is the document-repertoire of national strategic orientations for the long-term vision, that of making the State of Cameroon an emerging country united in its diversity. In other words, it is the reference framework for government action for the period from 2010 to 2020. Developed in August 2009, it is a revised and corrected version of the first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) written in 2003. Among other objectives, it is to accelerate economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction for the well-being of the populations

the dilemma of security. The risks incurred are enormous both on the socio-economic [89], anthropological, politico-security level and on the socio-humanitarian diplomatic-strategic and geostrategic risks.

The founders of ECCAS use the platform of the economy to set up a sub-regional architecture of peace and security. Indeed, all the ECCAS States are, to different degrees, in the democratic transition phase and all subscribe to democratic governance programs. To preserve their respective security, defense and military cooperation assistance and logistical support agreements, established before 1960 [90], link them with the former metropolises. However, wars and violent conflicts have continued to irradiate the sub-region [91]. It should be emphasized that this insecurity thrives thanks to regional dynamics and that the players most often benefit from cross-border networks [92].

It appears that it is the historical, socio-economic and political dynamics that structure cross-border crime in Central Africa, a region to which Cameroon naturally belongs. This insecurity has its origins in the violence of armed gangs, ethnic groups and the development of a criminal economy. In this context, serious rural banditry and criminal clandestinity are favored by cross-border community solidarity. In a context of globalization, this situation seems to make the risk of cross-border crime inevitable despite the presence of repressive measures. Situations of calm are constantly broken by the emergence of cross-border organized crime, the illicit circulation of weapons of war and the eruption of terrorist groups.

The practice of guerrilla warfare by armed groups transforms cross-border insecurity in its capacity for nuisance and criminal organization.

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[89]From an economic point of view, violence contributes to isolating the spaces it affects, regional flows turn away from violent spaces and reorient themselves towards contiguous spaces with more peaceful political situations. We are witnessing the emergence of mafia-like, parallel economies that are disrupting traditional economic circuits. On this subject, read: BENNAFLA, *Border trade in Central Africa, actor, practical spaces* , Paris, Karthala, 2002.

[90]The majority of countries were not yet independent. The colonial powers to ensure their survival in foreign territory, were obliged to submit certain military agreements which were not necessarily favorable to the future States.

[91]Jean BASSO, " *The cooperation agreements between France and the French-speaking African States: their relations and their consequences with regard to African independence (1960-1970*)" in Charles Robert Ageron, Marc Michel (under the DIR.), L'Afrique black French: the hour of independence, Aix en Provence, CNRS Editions, 1990.

[92]Emmanuel CHAUVIN and Gérard MAGRIN, *Regional integration in the world, violence and regionalization in Central Africa, op.cit* ., p.17.