

Nigeria Niger Joint Commission for Cooperation (NNJCC): A Model for the Cross Border Cooperation Initiative of the African Union Border Programme

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Abstract

Promoting trans-border cooperation for economic and social progress of borderland dwellers has always been at the fore front of the African Union Border Programme (AUPB) primarily aimed at unity and integrating Africa through borders thereby forging bridges of peace, development and security. The Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) initiative does not only enhance good neighbourliness, through the provision of infrastructure among other things, but also serve as a mechanism for peaceful and negotiated settlement of border conflicts. Accordingly, this paper discusses the Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission for Cooperation (NNJCC) in line with the CBC initiative as exemplified in the integration module. It also proffers viable options for the transformation of border areas into zones of exchange and cooperation for peaceful co-existence and trans-national development. The paper also posits that to successfully promote CBC and prevent boundary disputes across international boundaries, there is need for other African countries to key into the CBC initiative of the AUPB and replicate the feat archived by Nigeria and Niger under the aegis of the NNJCC

Keywords: *Border, Cooperation, Development, Integration, Resource.*

Introduction

One of the most remarkable developments in decolonization has been the commitment of several African politically independent states to the idea of settlement of border disputes and promotion of cooperation and development along the common border. NNJCC, a model for the CBC initiative of the AUPB is significant not only as a Joint Commission involving the two independent States of Nigeria and Niger Republic, but also as an innovative strategy to achieve sustainable development through border community development and regional integration.

The paper discusses two key issues. The first is the examination of the concept of CBC as a trans-border regional initiative of the AUPB while the second is an examination of the NNJCC in terms of achievements in regional cooperation and its attendant example for other African States. Accordingly, the study is structured into twelve overlapping sections, which concludes with a discussion recommending NNJCC as a model for the CBC initiative in Africa.

African Borders and Borderlands

Borders are not new phenomena to human beings. From early times, human beings are known to organize themselves into socio political units with more or less an understanding of limits primarily for the protection of their perceived common interest. A border according to Asiwaju (1984) refers more commonly to the boundaries between politically sovereign territorial entities and therefore is viewed as the line that demarcates one country from another. Borders define geographical boundaries and legal jurisdictions of political entities such as Sovereign States, federal States, and Sub-national entities. It is generally regarded as the representation of people's culture and historical background.

Broadly speaking, therefore, borders are critical factors in the promotion of good neighbourliness, peace, integration, development, transnational crimes prevention and security of a nation-state. Border can also be used as barriers or bridges reflecting the degree of understanding and accommodation by the two or more nation-states involved. The concept of borderland refers to what has been aptly defined by Asiwaju (1993) as "sub-national areas whose economic and social life is directly and significantly affected by the proximity to an international boundary". Asiwaju further pointed out that since such localities are more often than not, areas of coherent cultures: borderlands are generally partitioned homelands of distinct ethnic groups. Also while the various parts may be viewed and treated in the context of the particular national states in which they have been located, the hallmark of partitioned culture areas is in the status of the inhabitants as "transborder peoples". Indeed, given the nature of borderlanders as "transborder peoples", and the nature of borderlands as inherently internationalised localities, there are perhaps no other human situations that so compel the need for intervention at both national and, more importantly, international levels

In line with the basic philosophy of the concept of borderlands, Bonchuck (2014) noted that most governments in Africa and the sub-region are confronted with the challenge of good governance and maintenance of climate of peaceful coexistence. The concept of cross border areas which is a geographical area that overlap between two or more neighbouring states and whose populations are linked by cultural and economic bonds recognises the existence of a border between countries but refers to a dynamic community united by socioeconomic and cultural realities. Therefore, border regions are of particular interest because they are areas where internationality meets with locality, it is an area of administrative and jurisdictional competence of States and of interdigitating and overlapping cultures. Bonchuck (2003) further notes that it is impossible to draw a line of separation particularly where related ethnic groups are involved.

Over the years, numerous obstacles and constraints have appeared to hinder West African Cooperation and Integration efforts despite existing protocols on free movement of goods and persons and the right to establishment. These zones also suffer the consequences of the disparities between national economic policies and are often marginalised in the implementation of sectoral policies. With the enormous potential of the region, its development has been hindered due to cross border situation lapses.

Background to Nigeria-Niger Borderlands

The Nigeria-Niger international boundary as it is presently known today evolved out of a series of agreements, treaties and conventions between Britain and France in the late 19th and 20th century with respect to their spheres of influence in the West Africa sub-region (Alo, 1989). The boundary, which is approximately 1,500 km long, extends from the Nigeria/Niger/Benin tripoint on the median of the River Niger to the Nigeria/Niger/Chad tripoint in the Lake Chad at Latitude 13, 42', 29" featuring land, river and Lake (NBC, 2005). On the Nigerian side, the boundary defines the Northern limit of Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Jigawa, Yobe and Borno States while on the Niger side, there are five administrative regions namely: Dosso, Tahoua, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa. On both sides of the boundary are people who share a common language, culture religion and economic activities which in the word of Anene (1970) provide "irreversible linkages" as "history and geography has thrown the two countries irrevocably together.

The boundary is defined by the instrument spelt out in Treaty Series No. 1 of 1912 i.e. "Agreement between the United Kingdom and France respecting the delimitation of the Frontier between the British and the French Possessions East of the Niger". The boundary is divided into three main sectors:

- ❖ The Land Sector from the tripoint on River Niger to the Komadugu Yobe River

- ❖ The Komadugu River
- ❖ Lake Chad Sector from the mouth of Komadugu Yobe River to the tripoint in the Lake Chad.

The long border between Niger to the north and Nigeria to the south cuts through one of the most densely populated areas of both nations. Culturally, the central and west of this border bisects the northern section of the Hausa's and prior to the turn of the 20th century, there was no formal border here, but the current line is roughly the northern reach of the 19th century Sokoto Caliphate. The expansion of French and British imperialism in the period 1890-1905 demarcated the line, which later became the modern Niger-Nigeria boundary Sanusi (1989).

According to Anene (1970), Prescott (1971), Thom (1970), Collins (1976), Miles (1994), Nigeria-Niger border is one of the best researched in Africa. The boundary is like other international boundaries in the region, ordinarily, an innocuous spatial line of demarcation (Asiwaju, 2002). Geographically speaking, the area is a natural continuity of Northern Nigeria with the trans-border belt, which traverses barren land of extreme ethnic and cultural diffusion. The trans-boundary area exhibits high spatial variability in natural resources of mosaic features and ecosystems, which the combined effect results in high temporal as well as spatial variability in biomass production. Rural livelihoods are mainly based on transhumance pastoralism and small-scale agriculture. The transhumance cattle routes follow traditional patterns that cut across national borders.

National Boundary Commission and the Trans- Border Cooperation Policy

The main tool that Nigeria has created for defining and executing its boundaries and borderland policies is the National Boundary Commission (NBC). Nigeria share boundaries with five countries, Benin to the West and Niger to the North, both, like Nigeria herself, are member states of the ECOWAS, while Chad, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea to the north east, and south east are all member states of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

The establishment of NBC by Decree No.38 of 17th December, 1987 was aptly described as one of the most imaginative of border problem solving mechanisms to be put in place in any independent African State. (Asiwaju, 1996). The Commission was intended as a specialised border problem-solving institution that would work to not only settle the ever-increasing disputes and conflicts peacefully, but also systematically promote transborder cooperation between member states. In recent years, the Commission has promoted definite institutional frameworks for transborder cooperation, policy-making and implementation with each of Nigeria's neighbours.

The mandate of the NBC is to intervene, determine and deal with any boundary disputes that may arise among states, local government areas, communities in the Federation or between Nigeria and any of her neighbours with a view to settling them. NBC, over the years has put in place mechanisms and programmes for the prevention of border conflicts and the promotion of CBC. The Cross Border Cooperation CBC is seen as priority in the Enabling Act which inter alia empowers the Commission to set up committees to deal with matters affecting Nigeria's borders with neighbouring countries on political, economic, legal affairs or issues relating to development and security of border regions.

The NBC, which has the jurisdiction over the internal and international boundaries of the nation with the responsibility of settlement of disputes, prevention of conflicts, confidence building through transborder cooperation endeavours and border policy coordination, is exemplified in a transborder cooperation agreement on the model of the European Outline Convention on Transborder Cooperation between Territorial Authorities or Communities. While the perspective of special development focus on borderlands was

national to begin with, the Commission was ultimately aware of transborder planning and development. Since the foremost development problems of the areas are inaccessibility and welfare, the planning focus in the early stages of the Commission was on development of access roads, rural electrification as well as rural health and educational facilities across the nation's border communities (NBC Records, 2005).

As pointed out by Asiwaju (1996), the NBC, in its four years, from 1988-1992 left the Nigerian public and the wider international community in no doubt as to the seriousness of the government's commitment to the creation of cooperation rather than a conflictual border regime in Nigeria and between Nigeria and each of its neighbours. With regard to the CBC initiative, the NBC actively organised and successfully hosted series of bilateral consultative workshops with each of the limitrophe countries of Benin, Cameroon, Niger and Equatorial Guinea. Nigeria's decisions to systematically promote CBC with proximate neighbours in the late 1980s and early 1990s were facilitated by a wider context of interrelated foreign and domestic policy initiatives being taken at the same time. On the foreign policy front, there was a rededication to the course of regional and sub-regional integration in Africa as evidenced by the huge investments in human and material resources to projects of the OAU and ECOWAS among others.

Furthermore, ECOWAS Report (2005) opined that of particular importance has been the phenomenal increase in the initiative and drive on the part of the Nigeria Border States' to establish cooperative working relationship with their counterpart of territorial authorities in respective limitrophe countries. A growing practice of formalised cooperative linkages was imminent along the Nigeria-Niger border which constitute the subject of this study, where within the framework of the NNJCC based in Niamey, the pioneering initiatives have been mounted by the Sokoto State government through the adjacent Nigerien departments of Dosso, Tahoua; and Katsina State government with the neighbouring Nigerien departments of Maradi and Zinder respectively.

But critical as international cooperation is to the resolution of borderland problems, is the stability of the states concerned. A state torn by civil war or other forms of internal strife may not be able to negotiate an international cooperation agreement especially one focusing on the factors of shared borders and borderlands (Asiwaju, 1996). With particular reference to the general adverse effects on border relations, their solution creates the right type of conditions and environment that facilitate effective tackling of problems more directly connected with transborder cooperation. Asiwaju (1996) has pointed out that transborder cooperation policy is at its very rudimentary stage of development. Bonchuck (2014) also opined that the prospects for transborder cooperation and integration between states are irresistibly driven by some interlocking variables. These include border areas, history, background, ethnic groups, common contiguous territory, trade, natural resources, regional integration and local culture.

AUPB and Cross-Border Cooperation:

Since African countries attained independence, the borders drawn in the wake of 19th century colonialism have been a recurrent source of conflicts and disputes on the continent. Most of the borders are poorly defined, approximately two third of the 83, 000 kilometres of African boundaries are neither clearly delimited nor demarcated (AUPB, 2007). The location of strategic natural resources and non-demarcated boundaries in cross border areas poses additional challenges between States and local populations thereby constituting a threat to peace and security on the African continent. At both the continental and sub-regional levels, as represented by the African Union and ECOWAS Commission, African boundaries inherited at independence have been accepted as *fait accompli*. But the tasks do not end there as there was need to reduce the weight of the boundaries and to ensure peaceful relationships

amongst African countries as well as maintain the socio-cultural linkages of the hitherto divided peoples.

Encouraged by the West African experience, the Commission of the AUBP began working on CBC at the end of 2006. Following a consultation process with member States, a Ministerial Meeting was held in Addis Ababa, at which the programme was approved with the following objectives:

- ❖ Facilitating and supporting the delimitation and demarcation of African boundaries where such exercise has not yet taken place;
- ❖ Reinforcing the integration process, within the framework of the RECs and other large-scale cooperation initiatives;
- ❖ Developing, within the framework of the RECs and other regional integration initiatives, local cross-border cooperation;
- ❖ Building the capacities of member states in border management, as well as in border studies and research;
- ❖ Advising the Commission and other organs of the African Union on border-related matters;
- ❖ Create and maintain sustainable regional funds committed to cross-border initiatives;
- ❖ Increase awareness of the AUBP and its work;
- ❖ Increase awareness of and sensitivity for border issues;
- ❖ Increase formal partnerships with relevant stakeholders; and
- ❖ Increase funding commitments for the AUBP projects.

AUBP Mission and Focus Areas

The AUBP is implemented through three overlapping focus areas:

- ❖ *Delimitation and Demarcation of borders*, where this has not been done, re-affirmation where existing demarcation so requires, and densification in places where visibility on the ground has not been achieved;
- ❖ *Promotion of Cross-border Cooperation*, including mutual confidence building through joint planning and development of cross-border areas and wider infrastructural facilities for regional integration, especially those facilities relating to transportation and communication; and
- ❖ *Capacity Building*, notably training and research activities, the development of infrastructure and specialised institutions in support of pragmatic border management and regional integration activities.

In view of the poor resources at the disposal of the AU Commission and the economic situation of most AU Member States, Resources Mobilization becomes a supportive focus area in the implementation of AUBP. The AUBP is a vital factor in improving and modernizing the continent's border regimes. The delimitation and demarcation initiatives of AUBP meet three imperative needs:

- ❖ The geopolitical concern for peace, security and stability that derive from conflict prevention. The programme does not aim for a new 'Balkanization' rather, it is a way to reinforce state territorial sovereignty that brings with it the freedom to open up and integrate.
- ❖ The geo-economic; consideration on a visible, well —managed border which encourages trade and;
- ❖ The socio-economic factor, as local cross-border cooperation initiatives between committed neighbouring communities can be supported.

An excellent example of the CBC initiative is the Kano-Katsina-Maradi (K2M) initiative, which is a part of the macro- regional framework promoted by ECOWAS member States. The initiative was borne out of the need to accelerate and promote cooperation, development and integration between Nigeria and Niger in the areas of food security and cross border trade. The initiative was launched in a workshop held in Katsina, Nigeria under the auspices of the NNJCC and within the ECOWAS Cross-Border Initiatives programme (CIP). The K2M area is the heart of the "Kasar Hausa" which extends over 83,000 km² between Nigeria and Niger and has a population of over 50 million. The three towns make up one of the oldest trade corridors, open for centuries to the Gulf of Guinea, North Africa and Middle East. The area illustrates the polarisation of the Nigerian economy by Nigeria along the 1,500 km common border (ECOWAS, 2005).

The CBC is the heart of the AUPB because the main objective is to:

- ❖ Deepen the regional integration process by ensuring the prevention of intra and especially inter African conflicts;
- ❖ Stem the atmosphere of insecurity;
- ❖ Eliminate trans-border crimes and criminality; and
- ❖ Development of the usually structurally disadvantaged border regions and more particularly 'Cross Border Areas'.

The AUPB is a direct response to the challenge of existing and potential border disputes in Africa and operate in conformity with the principles of subsidiarity and respect for the intangibility of the African borders, as they existed upon attainment of independence. AUPB is one of the components of the AU for conflict Prevention and Regional Integration, and is domiciled in the Peace and Security department of the African Union Commission.

CBC is an initiative that aims at strengthening and developing good neighbourliness between border communities, territorial administrations, economic operators and higher authorities in two or more States through the creation of feasible Joint projects paving way for the exploration and exploitation of shared border resources that provides socioeconomic development and enhances Peace, Security and Stability. CBC is a necessary mechanism for the transformation of border areas into zones of exchange and cooperation that can accelerate integration and enhance prospects for peaceful resolution of border disputes between neighbouring States.

Ahmad (2015) states that CBC is a concrete illustration of West Africa regional integration. Over the last several years, ECOWAS have encouraged the development of CBC by providing and supporting pilot operations within the programme. Three operations have been launched since 2005 in the Sikasso-Bobo Dioulasso areas on the Burkina Faso, Mali and Cote d'Ivoire borders; in Sene-Gambie Meridionale on the borders of Gambia, Senegal and Guinea Bissau; in the Karakoro basin between Mauritania and Mali. The Nigeria-Niger border area which is a platform for commercial, cultural and economic activities along three new corridors namely Kano-Katsina- Maradi (K2M); Zamfara-Kebbi-Sokoto-Tahoua; and Kano-Jigawa-Zinder constitutes the fourth pilot operation officially launched by (ECOWAS).

As a bilateral cooperation body between Nigeria and Niger, the NNJCC has existed for a long time and have demonstrated the willingness to be concretely engaged in CBC. Further, both countries have a specialised CBC structure:

- ❖ The National Boundary Commission of Nigeria
- ❖ La Commission Nationale des Frontieres du Niger

Since the adoption of AUPB in June 2007 and the onset of CBC systematic implementation shortly after in 2008, it has become the standard practice to link discussion of border governance in any member State to regional integration. The principle of the respect

of borders existing at the attainment of independence, also known as the principle of In-alignability (intangibility) of Borders, is enshrined in both the Charter of the OAU (Resolution AHR/R.S.16 (1)) and the Constitutive Act (Article 4b) of the AU, and subsequent political and legal actions of the two bodies are designed to reduce the conflictual characteristics of Africa's borders.

The Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission for Cooperation

The Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of Niger are two friendly and sister neighbouring countries with sound relations and an exemplary cooperation in the West African sub-region. The two countries realizing the need for a peaceful and harmonious co-existence among these people have formulated a policy of joint Commission called "Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission for Cooperation (NNJCC)". The policy constitutes not only an important recognition of the imperatives of cooperation, but also represents an instrument for the strengthening of relationships. The NNJCC was created after two summit meetings in November; 1970 in Nigeria and March 1971 in Niamey, Niger Republic between Presidents, Diori Hamani of Republic of Niger and General Yakubu Gowon of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The two Heads of State steered their governments towards setting up a permanent legal framework by ensuring effective and sustainable cooperation as well as promotion and implementation of concrete integration initiatives between the two countries. NNJCC, a bilateral government agency provides institutional anchorage and political support for regional initiatives between the two countries. The communities of Niger of the Dosso, Tahoua, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa region living along the 1,500 km border cannot be dissociated from the neighbouring Nigerian States of Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Jigawa, Yobe and Borno. The statues of the Commission signed on the 22ndDecember, 1973 in Niamey, define the objectives of the Commission and the role the Permanent Secretariat is expected to play in achieving these objectives. Article 4 of the statue stipulates that NNJCC is responsible for the following:

- ❖ To formulate policies which will facilitate full application of the principles set out in the Convention;
- ❖ To collect, evaluate and disseminate information on proposals made by member states;
- ❖ To promote and coordinate joint research projects and programmes aimed at developing the resources of the two countries;
- ❖ To examine complaints and promote settlement of disputes through reconciliation and mediation;
- ❖ To draw up common rules regarding matters within its component;
- ❖ To examine complaints and promote the settlement of disputes referred to it through conciliation and mediation;
- ❖ To liaise with contracting parties on joint efforts and to follow the progress of the execution of survey work as envisaged in the convention among others.

Furthermore, the government of Niger Republic and Nigeria signed a protocol on 22nd December, 1973 amending the 1971 Convention thereby instituting the following three main organs to direct the affairs of the Joint Commission:

- ❖ The High Authority, which is the supreme body of the Commission and is composed of the Heads of State of the member states, is expected to meet at least once a year;
- ❖ The Council of Ministers, which is responsible to the High Authority and is made up of equal number of representatives of the two governments of analogous status. It is also expected to meet at least once a year; and

- ❖ The Permanent Secretary is responsible for the daily functioning of the Commission and carrying out the decisions of the High Authority.

The aim and objectives of the NNJC are in conformity with the principles stated in the Charter of both the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). It is therefore worthwhile emphasising that the NNJCC is neither in competition nor at variance with the aims and objectives of other sub-regional and intergovernmental organisations in West Africa (Bolouvi, 2005). It is created by Nigeria and Niger to enable the two States formalise, broaden and consolidate cooperation between them in all fields of endeavour.

In fact, the workings of the NNJCC goes beyond the framework of simple economic relations, its integrity remains concrete in the promotion of joint development of the two countries by implementing local projects, designing financing strategies and accompanying political decisions in order to facilitate their implementation. The NNJCC's achievements are closely linked to its mission of developing bilateral and cross border trade in the following vital sectors: transport, telecommunications network, trade, environment, management and promotion of livestock breeding, joint rural programmes, energy, industry, health, management of aquatic resources, combating cultural enemies, security and border management among others.

NNJCC as Model for CBC

The NNJCC is today an important organisation with diplomatic status. It is known for the coordination, promotion and facilitation of trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic, and is an example of CBC that goes beyond the traditional agreements because it was based on intrinsically linked communities. Its creation enabled populations of both countries to live in the border area paying no heed to official borders to preserve their specific connection that are usually linked to communities on the continent and also in the West African sub-region. In this regard, the NNJCC recognises over 36 years of expansion and strengthening cooperation between the two countries in all areas of human activity.

The NNJCC provide support on harmonisation over colonial balkanisation in the area of history and geography, the two countries have moulded their commitment to the future. A large part of this territory and its population were part of the successive empires in West Africa and in particular, the Mali, Songhay, Kanem, Bornu, the Hausa state (Wikipedia). Even today, it is difficult to separate the communities living along the 1,500 kilometres border of Niger: Dosso, Tahoua, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa departments from their neighbouring Nigeria States of Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Jigawa, Yobe and Bornu. NNJCC is thus a bilateral cooperation body that had been in existence for a long time.

Furthermore, both countries have a specialised CBC structure that further strengthens CBC initiatives: The NBC and Le Commission Nationale des Frontiers du Niger. The CBC policy success is inherently based on peace and stability between the two States. The policy's spectacular success is based on a common platform of democratic norms, trust, shared respect for human rights, good governance, public security, shared relations/ cultural bonds etc. In this respect, Nigeria's experience at exploring peace and development potential of boundaries and borderlands with its immediate neighbour of Niger may be used as a roadmap and guidelines for future successes. In spite of the little challenges encountered occasioned by insecurity along some sectors of the boundary, the Nigeria- Niger experience through the NNJCC should be used as essential guide for other African states towards archiving sustainable development and regional integration.

The CBC initiative of AUPB is designed to highlight integration through services located on either side of the boundary, for use by Border Communities of both countries regardless of national boundaries (AUBP). These may include managing certain common

resources as Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea have done with oil fields in the Gulf of Guinea, under the aegis of the JDA, and Nigeria and Niger in the case of managing cross-border resources. In this respect, the NNJCC is a working model for repositioning settlement patterns and regional infrastructural development initiatives, it also a symbol of south-south cooperation and may be used as a roadmap/guidelines towards achieving further sustainable development and regional integration.

Milestone Achievements of the NNJCC

Provision of electricity to the Republic of Niger by the Federal Republic of Nigeria
Development of connecting roads paving way for a main international road between the two countries.

- ❖ Promotion of telecommunication networks
- ❖ Setting up of a rapid exchange of information system on the sanitary situation in both countries principally to manage contagious diseases and epidemics at the regional border.
- ❖ Improvement in the age long tradition of commercial trade between both countries.
- ❖ Carrying out pre -feasibility and feasibility studies at the beginning of 1980 with assistance from UNIDO, UNDP for an industrial millet and sorghum-processing unit set up in Zinder and Kano; the village mills manufacturing unit set up in Maradi; and the glassworks factory in Kano.
- ❖ The creation of a framework for livestock health at the common border designed to combat epizootic disease.
- ❖ Management of aquatic resources etc.

Challenges

Insecurity occasioned by the activities of Boko Haram and other Insurgency groups
Inability of the NNJCC to attract sufficient funding from donor agencies
Perception of people about border

Conclusion

NNJCC represents one of the best examples of international cooperation in the West African Sub-region. NNJCC has provided a perfect model of CBC initiative of the AUPB. Even though it is a precursor to the CBC initiative, it is seen as a framework of solidarity and social bond between Nigeria and Niger. This solidarity is primarily economic, but based on socio-cultural bonds. The solidarity forged in cross border areas between regions and among communities stem from border disputes and provide appropriate conditions for sustainable development. In order to successfully promote Trans-Border Cooperation (TBC) and prevent inter boundary disputes across international boundaries, there is need for other African countries to key into the CBC initiative of the AUPB by replicating the feat archived by Nigeria and Niger under the aegis of the NNJC as a model to further address and develop the usually disadvantaged border regions in Africa.

Recommendations

- In appreciation of the workings of the NNJCC, it is accordingly recommended:
- ❖ States should commit to executing joint projects to substantiate their desire for regional integration as contained in the integrative module of AUPB.
 - ❖ Other African countries should draw lessons from NNJCC by keying into the CBC policy initiative of the AUPB for regional cooperation through joint utilization of resources. *

- ❖ As a matter of urgency, the Governments of Nigeria and Niger Republic should carry out Needs Assessment of the border communities with a view to ascertain their priority Needs. This should be done in collaboration with the local authorities on either side of the border.
- ❖ In the areas of further joint projects, emphasis should be placed on local issues and government policies should be targeted on such projects that directly affect the border communities.

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