

France's Policy in Francophone African Countries: Its Former Colonies

MOHAMED SAID ASSOUMANI

*PhD in International Politics
Lecturer, the University of Comoros*

ABDALLAH MOURTADHOI

*Doctorate of Law
Lecturer, the University of Comoros*

Abstract

This research aimed to determine the France policy in francophone African countries (its former colonies). This research is focused on three key stages in the France policy in the African continent: the importance of the African continent in France, France interests in the African continent and finally the most important mechanisms of France policy in Africa. So France has revised his policy in Francophone African countries to testify his glow of the continuity of the "Françafrique" on its three pillars: policy (unfailing support to dictators friends), economic (predation organized of the resources of Africa) and military (with the eternal colonial justification of good causes that it claims to defend).

Keywords: Africa, France, policy, interests, former colonies, *Françafrique*

1. THE FRENCH POLICY IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN COUNTRIES (ITS FORMER COLONIES)

Our focus here is on three key stages in the France's policy in the African continent: the importance of the African continent in France, France interests in the African continent and finally the most important mechanisms of France policy in Africa. The details of the policies as follows;

1.1. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT TO FRANCE

The African continent is the second continent after continent of Asia in terms of size and population, its area is more than 30 million square kilometres, and with a population of 800 million inhabitants, and representing one-fifth of the world's space, and it includes 54 countries, and more than three-quarters of them are in the eastern hemisphere, the equator passes through its centre and divides it into semi-equal halves, and most of its parts are located

between the orbits of Capricorn and cancer, and is limited between latitude 21.37 degrees north and 51.34 degrees south, it also extends between a longitude 25.51 degrees east and 17.5 degrees west, and it is characterized by multiple climates, where the Mediterranean climate prevails in the north and south of the Mediterranean, while the Asian climate prevails over its centre, this has led to the diversification of its agricultural products and natural resources and as a result, they have increased their economic importance¹. (Refer to Appendix, figure (2) Africa's localization)

It suffices to mention here some numbers that clarify this meaning: Africa holds about 3% of the world's total oil reserves, 5% of gas reserves, and about one-third of its uranium reserves, and about 70% of phosphorus, 55% of gold, 87% of chromium, 57% of manganese, 42% of cobalt etc., without forgetting the richness of the continent in its most abundant natural resources, such as water and agricultural land².

All of the colonial powers (in Africa) have raised the slogan of political paternalism; that is, it came to Africa for special global mission of civilization among Africans³.

The colonization of Africa by European countries has started since the 15th century, when provided by these governments' fleets, and established commercial centres for the slave trade⁴.

As for the state of France in particular, "from the early colonial days of de Gaulle's fifth Republic, Africa has been a key instrument of France diplomacy"⁵ and France is interested in African continent, especially its ancient colonies in south of the Sahara, to spread its culture first and then change the Africans to French, where the easiest of filling their needs of those countries after independence⁶.

1.2. FRANCE INTERESTS IN THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

French interests were defined by the principals and mechanisms of French politics in Africa, for a long time, until the 1990s. These interests were closely linked to cover three main areas: economic, strategic and political⁷.

¹ Yasser Abu Hussein, 'African-French Relations', *Bureau of the Friends of Morocco*, (2013). (in Arabic) [translate mine]

² Ibid.

³ Abdel Rahman Hassan Hamdi, 'Policies of International Competition in Africa', <http://www.qiraatafrican.com>, (2013). (in Arabic) [translate mine] consulted 12/8/2016

⁴ Zahir Riad, 'Colonization of Africa', (Cairo: Institute of African Studies, 1965), (p. 7). (in Arabic) [translate mine]

⁵ Pierre Lellouche and Dominique Moisi, 'French Policy in Africa: A Lonely Battle against Destabilization', *International Security*, 3 (1979), 110.

⁶ Dominique Lejeune, 'Colonisation Et Décolonisation Françaises, De 1848 À 1988', (2011), 16-17.

⁷ Politics-dz, 'French Policy in Africa', (The Algerian Encyclopaedia of Strategic Political Studies, 2015). (in Arabic) [translate mine] consulted 15/11/2017

1.2.1. ECONOMIC INTERESTS

The France economic interests in the African continent focused on the search for markets for the disposal of France manufactured goods, and the primary resources for the development of France civil industries.

1.2.2. STRATEGIC INTERESTS

The France strategic interest in Africa focused on the following key elements:

- Researchers including Chuhan-Pole and others opined that access to the strategic natural resources of the African continent, which is necessary for the development of France heavy and nuclear industries, Such as hydrocarbons and uranium. It is known that the stock of these resources in the African continent is large compared to the global stock⁸. Thereby, in the early 1980s, France's rate of dependency on mineral imports from Africa ranged from 100 per cent for uranium (Gabon, Niger, South Africa, but the rate dropped to 40 per cent in 1986), to 90 per cent of bauxite (guinea), 76 per cent of manganese (Gabon, South Africa); and 59 per cent for cobalt (Zaire, Zambia). Almost 70 per cent of the oil extracted world-wide by the France state-owned company Elf during the 1980s came from Africa (Gabon, Cameroon, Angola, Congo)⁹.
- Controlling strategic locations on the continent, for example, the France military base in Djibouti gives France a general advantage, namely the control of the southern entrance of the red sea; it is a very important waterway at the strategic and trade level.
- To prevent the expansion of Soviet influence in the African continent in the 1970s and 1980s of the 19th century; after the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union, France has focused on resisting the great powers represented by the United States of America, and on the other hand she coordinates with it, according to the common interests in the African continent, and then to obstruct other new countries in the international arena¹⁰.

1.2.3. POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC INTERESTS

* Maintaining the stability of African regimes is a fundamental objective of France policy on the continent¹¹.

* At the diplomatic level, the strong multi-lateral relations between France and African countries provide France with broad diplomatic support for

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Punam Chuhan-Pole and others, 'Africa's Pulse: An Analysis of Issues Shaping Africa's Economic Future', *Banque mondiale*, http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Africa/Report/Africas-Pulsebrochure_Vol8.pdf, (2013).

¹⁰ Politics-dz.

¹¹ South Africa Foundation, *South Africa Foundation Review*, (South Africa Foundation, 1988), p. 13.

France in the United Nations, allowing it to retain its place in the Security Council as a permanent member of the Security Council. The state becomes a major political force when it reaches the international balance in its economic, military and diplomatic power; France was able to play this role in the cold War era, aided by its solid position on the African continent¹².

1.3. THE MOST IMPORTANT MECHANISMS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FRANCE POLICY IN AFRICA

1.3.1. MILITARY BASES

Under the so-called new world order, France was forced to develop its policy of military cooperation with Africa. In 1993, it adopted a modern plan based on the idea of establishing a rapid intervention force in southwestern France in several areas such as Toulouse, Nantes and Rennes. These forces intervened in a short time in all parts of the African continent, assisted by French troops in the remaining bases in Africa¹³. (Refer to Appendix, figure (3) France Military bases in Africa) “According to the France Ministry of Defence, in February 2013, of 10,025 military personnel deployed overseas, 4,610 were in West Africa, 2,180 in central Africa and 270 were involved in anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden”¹⁴, and the roles are distributed to military bases in France and in Africa, depending on the seriousness of the African crisis. If it is just a limited rebellion movement that does not affect political life in the country, France leaves its task of besieging national forces from the army and the police, France abandons this task for the benefit of the national forces of the army and police, if these forces failed in their mission, France forces in Africa intervene, for example, the France army intervened in Comoros in 1989 and 1995 and in the Rwanda crisis of 1994¹⁵.

1.3.2. MILITARY DEFENSE AGREEMENTS

The number of defence agreements that France had with African countries in the 1960s, until it reached only eight agreements with the following countries: Cameroon, Central Africa, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Gabon, Senegal and Togo¹⁶.

Indeed, bilateral agreements were signed between France and African leaders that in many ways guaranteed France to continue its military

¹² See: Tony Chafer, 'Franco-African Relations: No Longer So Exceptional?', *African Affairs*, 101 (2002).

¹³ Politics-dz.

¹⁴ Paul Melly and Vincent Darracq, *A New Way to Engage?: French Policy in Africa from Sarkozy to Hollande*, (Chatham House London, 2013), p. 4.

¹⁵ Politics-dz.

¹⁶ Ibid.

presence and influence the African continent¹⁷. The crucial importance of France security/military policy largely explains the endurance of French hegemony in sub-Saharan Africa¹⁸. The so-called 'military cooperation' authorized the permanent existence of military bases (originally in Senegal, Cote D'Ivoire, Chad, Djibouti, Gabon, Cameroon, and the Central African Republic), the presence of pre-positioned military forces, the presence of officers in the ranks of African armies, and the option for France to intervene swiftly almost anywhere¹⁹.

It should be noted that African countries, that have not signed agreements with France are allowed to request military assistance in crisis situation. For example, the governments of Chad and Zaire requested such assistance in 1996²⁰. Indeed, this applies to what former French President de Gaulle said to his Gabonese counterpart Léon M'Ba on July 5, 1960 that 'we give the independence provided that the State, once independent, undertakes to respect the cooperation agreements concluded. There are two systems that come into effect simultaneously: independence and cooperation agreements. One does not go without the other'²¹.

1.3.3. MILITARY COOPERATION AND MILITARY AID AGREEMENTS

These agreements cover several areas: military and technical assistance, direct assistance to the armies and African national police, military scholarships and training programs for African officers, these agreements may also include the field of public health, drilling of wells and building the infrastructure of roads and bridges²². The agreements include twenty-two African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Conakry, Guinea, Mauritius, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Chad, and Togo²³.

So, the most dangerous in these agreements is the result of the legality of the French intervention to protect existing African systems²⁴.

¹⁷ F.R. Willis, *The French Paradox: Understanding Contemporary France*, (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1982), p. 47.

¹⁸ See: Jerry Domatob, *Sub-Saharan Africa's Media and Neocolonialism*, (African Council on Communication Education, 1988).

¹⁹ Bruno Charbonneau, 'Dreams of Empire: France, Europe, and the New Interventionism in Africa', *Modern & Contemporary France*, 16 (2008).

²⁰ Politics-dz.

²¹ Priscille Guinant, 'La Politique De La France En Afrique Subsaharienne Apres Les Indépendances', *Université de Toulouse, goo.gl/fuHak8*, (2013), 9.

²² Politics-dz.

²³ Lellouche and Moisi; Philippe Leymarie, 'France-Africa: "New Generation" Military Agreements', (blog.mondediplo.net, 2009); Philippe Leymarie and Thierry Perret, *Les 100 Clés De L'Afrique*, (Fayard/Pluriel, 2006).

²⁴ Politics-dz.

According to the “expatica” website, France military forces intervened between 1960 to 2011 as following²⁵:

- 1- 1964, Gabon: France forces intervene to restore president after the coup.
- 2- 1968-1972, Chad: France troops intervene to put down northern rebellion.
- 3- 1978-80, Chad: France forces defend government against rebels.
- 4- 1978, Zaire: France and Belgian paratroops drop into the mineral-rich Katanga region of Zaire (today known as the Democratic Republic of Congo), where rebels are holding Europeans.
- 5- 1979, Central African Republic: France forces depose the eccentric Central African "emperor" Jean-Bedel Bokassa.
- 6- 1983-84, Chad: New France intervention in Chad, where the government is threatened by rebels backed by Colonel Moamer Kaddafi's Libya.
- 7- 1986, Chad: Further operation against Chadian rebels; mainly using aviation.
- 8- 1986, Togo: France reinforcements sent after the coup attempt, which fails.
- 9- 1989, Comoros: France forces go in when the president is assassinated and mercenaries headed by Bob Denard, also France, take power.
- 10- 1990, Gabon: France troops support the regime of President Omar Bongo; evacuate foreign nationals from cities hit by rioting.
- 11- 1990-1993, Rwanda: France soldiers help evacuates France and other Europeans after rebels invade the country.
- 12- 1991, Zaire: France troops deploy capital Kinshasa during riots against the regime of Mobutu Sese Seko.
- 13- 1992-94, Somalia: France intervenes alongside the US-led "Restore Hope" operation in Somalia.
- 14- 1994: Rwanda: Two separate France interventions follow the death in a plane crash of Rwandan president Juvenal Habyarimana, which sparks genocidal killings that leave some 800,000 people dead²⁶.

France's "Operation Turquoise", which also involves troops in neighboring Zaire, is later considered a disaster, and the Rwandan authorities accuse it of not only failing to stop the massacres but also of facilitating them.

- 1- 1995: Comoros: New France intervention to halt a coup, again led by the France mercenary Bob Denard.

²⁵ 'France-Africa: A Long History of Military Intervention', (www.expatica.com, 2011).

²⁶ Ibid.

- 2- 1996-1997: Central African Republic: Two France interventions to maintain order.
- 3- 1997: Republic of Congo: France troops intervene during civil war; help evacuate foreigners.
- 4- 1996: Cameroon: France provides military assistance to Cameroon, which is involved in a dispute with Nigeria over an oil-rich border area.
- 5- 1998: Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire): Intervention to evacuate foreigners from Kinshasa during unrest following the overthrow of the Mobutu regime by Laurent-Desire Kabila.
- 6- 2002-present: Ivory Coast: France mounts "Operation Licorne" after a military rebellion effectively cuts Ivory Coast in two. In 2004 they destroy Ivory Coast's small air force after government forces bomb a France base.
- 7- 2003: Democratic Republic of Congo: France provides most of the force for a UN operation to protect civilians in the northeastern Ituri region of the DRC.
- 8- 2008: Chad: New France intervention to bolster regime and evacuate foreigners during attacks by rebels from neighboring Sudan.
- 9- 2011: Libya: France takes the lead in bombing campaign against Libya, after the United Nations authorizes action to protect civilians during a civil war.
- 10- 2011: Ivory Coast: France forces of the "Licorne" operation act alongside UN forces during the civil war sparked by Laurent Gbagbo's refusal to leave power after losing an election²⁷.

As for military coups in Africa, in the last 50 years, a total of 67 coups have occurred in 26 countries in Africa, 16 of these countries are former French colonies, which means that 61% of coups in Africa were initiated in former France colonies²⁸.

Number of coups d'états in Africa by country

Table no (2) number of coups d'états in Africa.

Former France colonies		Other African countries	
Country	N° of coup d'état	Country	N° of coup d'états
Togo	1	Egypt	1
Tunisia	1	Libya	1
Ivory Coast	1	Equatorial Guinea	1
Madagascar	1	Guinea Bissau	2
Rwanda	1	Liberia	2
Algeria	2	Nigeria	3

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ See: Willis; E.J. Onche, *Goodluck Ebele Jonathan*, (Lulu.com), p. 72.

Mohamed Said Assoumani, Abdallah Mourtadhoi– **France’s Policy in Francophone African Countries: Its Former Colonies**

Congo – RDC	2	Ethiopia	3
Mali	2	Uganda	4
Guinea Conakry	2	Sudan	5
Congo	3	Total	22
Tchad	3		
Burundi	4		
Central Africa	4		
Niger	4		
Mauritania	4		
Burkina Faso	5		
Comoros	5		
Total	45		

Source: *www.mondialisation.ca*

As these figures demonstrate, France is quite desperate, but active in maintaining a strong hold on its former colonies, regardless of the price and way²⁹.

So the goal of France is clear, after independence, ‘France still needed Africa's natural resources, particularly its oil - and Africa needed France investment. This dependence allowed France to position itself as the guardian of its former colonies³⁰’

1.3.4. RECAMP PROGRAM³¹

France revised its military policy in Africa in recent years of the 1990s; this may be due to its successive failures in Rwanda and in the both Congo, and also, the International and African conditions are no longer ready for direct foreign military intervention³².

So, France has taken the commitment to a process of revision of the defense agreements with eight African States (Togo, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Côte-D'Ivoire, Djibouti, Gabon, Senegal), in the context of the renovation of France's policy towards Africa, as presented to the South African Parliament, in Cape Town, on February 28, 2008³³.

Then, in 1997, France established a program called Recamp³⁴. The main idea of this program is that France will help African countries, But by supporting the institutions of those regional countries, thus aiming at

²⁹ Aïcha Myriam Coulibaly, 'La Françafrique, Un Nouveau Visage?', (2017); Mawuna Remarque Koutonin, 'Le Saviez-Vous ? 14 Pays Africains Contraints Par La France À Payer L'impôt Colonial Pour Les « Avantages » De L'esclavage Et De La Colonisation', *www.mondialisation.ca*, (2014).

³⁰ Al-Jazeera, 'The French African Connection', in *Al Jazeera*, (2014). [consulted 25/10/2016]

³¹ The main objective of this program is to help African countries, but by supporting the institutions of these regional countries, thus aiming to stabilize the security of the continent.

³² Politics-dz.

³³ André Dumoulin, *La France Militaire Et L'Afrique*, (Complexe, 1997); SÉNAT, 'Cameroun : Partenariat De Défense Avec La France', in *Accord entre le Gouvernement de la République française et le Gouvernement de la République du Cameroun instituant un partenariat de défense*, (la Présidence du Sénat, 2010).

³⁴ Politics-dz.

stabilizing security on the continent, The reason is that the African military institutions formed on the continental or regional level, such as the peacekeeping forces of the Organization of African Unity or Economic Community of West African States Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), their capacity is still limited despite some successes in Sierra Leone and Liberia³⁵. In the framework of this program, France leads the training of African troops for peacekeeping and in response to disasters caused by war, with the help of civil society organizations³⁶. France has been allocated for this program 180 million French francs (27,440,821.1- The French Franc is obsolete. It was replaced by the Euro (EUR) on 1 January 1999. One EUR is equivalent to 6.55957 FRF.), representing 20% of the overall budget of the African French military cooperation³⁷.

The Recamp program had organized military exercises in Senegal in 1998 for the member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and in Gabon in 2000 for the member states of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and in Tanzania in 2002 for Southern African countries³⁸.

2. FRANCE ECONOMIC POLICY IN AFRICA

France economic policy with African countries is based on four main principles:

- 1- Bilateral trade between France and the majority of the countries of West and Central Africa, France is making persistent attempts to maintain these relations and to ensure the survival of its privileged status there³⁹. Indeed, in some "francophone" countries, France is still the first importer of raw materials and the first exporter of manufactured goods⁴⁰.

In general, France remains the main supplier of the continent, but is only its second customer with respectively 15% of the continent's imports and 10% of its exports (50 billion US dollars in 2005) [...] trade relations with Africa provide to France with a surplus comfortable trade - they contributed to this surplus of 3.2 billion euros in 2004, including 1.8 billion for sub-Saharan

³⁵ Melly and Darracq, p. 4; Koutonin.

³⁶ Politics-dz.

³⁷ Qiraafrika, 'French Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa', *www.qiraatafrican.com*, (2014). (in arabic) [translate mine]; Ndongo Samba Sylla, 'The Cfa Franc: French Monetary Imperialism in Africa', *Africa at LSE*, (2017).

³⁸ Qiraafrika.

³⁹ Politics-dz.

⁴⁰ Qiraafrika.

Africa⁴¹. But in the last years, France, which has lost half of its market in Africa in ten years to the benefit of China and the emerging countries, aims to "double in five years its trade" with the continent, said the former President François Holland⁴².

- 2- France investments in Africa : France capital remain one of the most important foreign investments in many Francophonie countries⁴³, For example Côte D'Ivoire and Gabon, as well as the sharing of France expertise, technology and funds in the establishment of two projects of vital economic importance to Senegal and Mauritania: A project of lands reform around the Senegal River, which is shared by Senegal, Mauritania and Mali, and the iron mining project in Mauritania⁴⁴.
- 3- The "CFA Franc"⁴⁵ Zone, Similarly, with respect to monetary cooperation emanates in the franc zone, beyond the economic issues in the fourteen African States concerned and for France companies active in these markets, the franc zone has always been thought of by France Governments as an additional way to perpetuate and institutionalize through an economic zone of France influence in Africa.

Sixteen countries of West and Central Africa are linked to the French franc zone (CFA zone), which allows 90 million African citizens to deal in France currency⁴⁶. (Refer to Appendix, figure (4) CFA zone). The CFA franc zone is based on four principles:

- 1- The exchange rate between the "CFA franc" and the French franc remains constant⁴⁷, since 1945 the franc Zone has known only two changes of parity, in 1948 and 1994 (devaluation of the CFA and Comorian respectively 50% and 33% as of January 12, 1994). In addition, conversions during the creation of the New France franc in 1960 and the entry into circulation of the euro in 1999. Since 1999: €1 = 655,957 FCFA and €1 = 491,968 KMF⁴⁸ in order to match its nominal value with its actual value in the market⁴⁹.

⁴¹ Philippe Hugon, 'La Politique Économique De La France En Afrique', *Politique africaine*, (2007), 56.

⁴² Agence Français de Press, 'Sommet Franco-Africain: Partenariat Économique Et Changement Climatique Au Menu', (le point international, 2013).

⁴³ Politics-dz.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ France Colonies of Africa" became "African Financial Community: the acronym of the FCFA does not change ... its role either!

⁴⁶ *West Africa*, (West Africa Publishing Company Limited, 1990), p. 107.

⁴⁷ Politics-dz.

⁴⁸ Patrick Guillaumont and Sylviane Guillaumont Jeanneney, 'Les Accords De Coopération Monétaire De La Zone Franc : Atouts Et Contraintes ', *fondation pour les études et recherches sur le développement international*, (2013); Greg Mills, 'French Policy-Making and Africa', *South African*

- 2- the division of the franc zone into three sub-regions: Agreements of monetary cooperation between the countries of the franc zone are based on three international treaties signed between the France and, respectively, the States of the West African Monetary Union (UMOA): Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea - Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo), the Member countries of Monetary Union of Central Africa (UMAC) : Gabon, Guinea Equatorial, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville and Cameroon) and the Union of the Comoros, as well as on account of operations agreements that they are attached. These agreements were supplemented by the treaties creating the Economic Union and monetary of West Africa (UEMOA) and the economic community and monetary of central Africa (CEMAC)⁵⁰.
- 3- Full freedom to transfer the currency of these countries to the French franc and through it to other global currencies⁵¹. Vis-a-vis this advantage, France requires African Central Banks to:
 - a) centralize their foreign exchange reserves with their central bank;
 - b) Deposit of 50% of these reserves (65% in the Comoros) with the France Treasury⁵².

It also ensures that some of the money that will lead to trade from other industrialized countries will be small and harmless to the France economic interests on the African continent⁵³. France is the only colonial country to stay tie to its currency to that of its former colonies until today; these former France colonies do not even have clean, independent France Treasury. In addition, at the time of independence, the former France colonies keep a single currency: the CFA franc is managed in the last resort by France, whose mission is to ensure parity between the two currencies, hence a real control of the French state on the African monetary policy⁵⁴. And the monetary institutions that are in Africa, like banks, are considered as symbols; only France requires them to send the annual report of the balance and reserve without the report, no money. Whatever it is the Secretary of the central banks of the ex-colonies, and the Secretary of the bi-annual meeting of

Journal of International Affairs, 6 (1998), 59; '40e Anniversaire Des Accords De Coopération Monétaire De La Zone Franc', *www.banque-france.fr*, (2016).

⁴⁹ Politics-dz.

⁵⁰ Béatrice Hibou, 'Politique Économique De La France En Zone Franc', *Politique africaine*, 58 (1995).

⁵¹ Politics-dz.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Odile Biyidi and others, 'La France Coloniale D'hier Et D'aujourd'hui', *Survie*, (2006).

Finance Ministers of the ex-colonies are done by the Central Bank France/Treasury⁵⁵.

To make things more tragic, the France imposes a ceiling on the amount of money that countries can borrow from the reserve. The ceiling is set at 20% of their revenue from the previous year. If countries need to borrow more than 20 percent of their own money, the France has a veto⁵⁶.

- 4- Free movement of capital from African countries to France and vice versa, and coordinate the exit of these funds out of France and African countries⁵⁷.

3. FRANCE CULTURAL POLICY TOWARDS THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

France's cultural policy in African countries depends on several elements:
The politics of civilization in Africa:

In the late January 1944, governors of the France territories of sub-Saharan Africa gathered in Brazzaville to discuss colonial administrative reform. The opening addresses by Pleven and De Gaulle emphasized the fond relationship between France and her Empire, and, in particular, the devotion of the colonial peoples to France and French civilization. The principal debate at the conference concerned the evolving nature of the die imperial relationship and whether it should continue to emphasize assimilation to France culture – (la mission civilisatrice), the civilizing mission - or acknowledge the need for accommodation to indigenous traditions⁵⁸.

Among the conference's recommendations were the abolition of forced labour systems and harsh colonial legal codes like the (indigenat). Additionally, improved educational and economic development schemes were proposed, along with the possibility of including colonial subjects in local government. For the first time France officials had considered the welfare of local populations in the drafting of colonial policies⁵⁹.

However, the concept of “mission civilisatrice” (civilizing mission) refers to the ethical presuppositions of the France colonial enterprise in Africa and other countries during the third Republic⁶⁰. It stipulates the superiority of France civilization on all other civilizations and assigns to the France task, or rather the “mission”, to bring these lower civilizations to the level of France

⁵⁵ Koutonin.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Politics-dz.

⁵⁸ Chris Bierwirth, 'French Interests in the Levant and Their Impact on French Immigrant Policy in West Africa', *Itinerario*, 26 (2002), 9.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 10.

⁶⁰ Pernille Røge and Marion Leclair, 'L'économie Politique En France Et Les Origines Intellectuelles De «La Mission Civilisatrice» En Afrique', *Dix-huitième siècle*, (2012), 117.

civilization⁶¹. This “mission civilisatrice” allowed France to justify its colonial expansion in the 19th and 20th centuries⁶².

It may be noted here that General de Gaulle's policy in Africa did not stop at this civilizing mission that led the colonized peoples to assimilate French civilization, but also the importance geopolitical of Africa by France. So, after 1946, the new Fourth Republic emphasized the role of Africa in rebuilding the Metropole as a great power. During the late 1940s and the 1950s, military presence in Africa continued to increase⁶³. De Gaulle, “the Man of Brazzaville”, believed that the new fifth Republic had to maintain its special influence in Africa, despite the process of decolonization. Once re-established, through decolonization and cooperation, the old Franco-African relationship could constitute one of the pillars of de Gaulle's global foreign policy ambitions⁶⁴.

So, de Gaulle recognized the importance of France’s influence in Africa to promote France power on the world stage. His idea of France meant grandeur, influence, and power for which colonies were paramount⁶⁵. To protect its culture in Africa, France uses the following:

3.1. COMMON LANGUAGE AND FRANCOPHONE

French is the predominant language in Western and Central African countries, in addition to Djibouti in the east, Madagascar and Comoros in the south-east; the number of French speakers in Africa is estimated at 11% of the continent's population. As the poet Leopold Sedar Senghor, first president of independent Senegal said about the French language that in “the ruins of colonialism, we found this wonderful tool, the French language”⁶⁶.

This formula reflects the will of the founding fathers of the institutional Francophonie (Senghor and his counterparts: the Tunisian Habib Bourguiba and the Nigerian Hamani Diori) to use the French language in the service of solidarity, development and bringing people together through the permanent dialogue of cultures and civilizations⁶⁷. This project resulted on 20 March 1970 to the signing of the Convention establishing the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (A.C.C.T.) by the representatives of twenty-one states and governments, including thirteen of sub-Saharan Africa, in Niamey (Niger)⁶⁸.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Lellouche and Moisi, p. 110.

⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 111.

⁶⁵ Charbonneau.

⁶⁶ Per Durst-Andersen and Elsebeth F Lange, *Mentality and Thought: North, South, East and West*, (Copenhagen Business School Press DK, 2010).

⁶⁷ Guinant, p. 14.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 15.

3.2. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

They are represented by France primary and secondary schools in African countries, including what relates to religious missions, and what is civilian, and in African universities, science is still taught in French and supervised by France specialists⁶⁹.

3.3. FRANCE CULTURAL CENTERS IN AFRICA

In the 1980s, there were 52 centres in the various parts of the continent; these centres play a key role in strengthening cultural and civilizational ties between France and African peoples⁷⁰. These centres do not depend on the France culture show only, but they are also keen to monitor local cultures, and display them in the form of publications or documentary films or art or archaeological exhibitions, it also translates some selected works from local languages into French⁷¹.

3.4. THE FRANCO-AFRICA SUMMITS

This tradition began in 1973 with the inauguration of George Pompidou for the first time in a Franco-Africa summit in November in Paris; these summits are held every two years in Paris or in one of the African capitals, and attended by the France President and African Presidents, the summit discusses Franco-African common issues in economic and diplomatic fields⁷².

3.5. DEVELOPMENT AID

In 1998, France was the continent's first partner, not only in terms of aid but also in terms of trade and military cooperation. Fifty per cent of French public aid is dedicated to sub-Saharan Africa, and amounted to 18 billion francs⁷³.

Since the 2000 Millennium Summit, overall aid to Africa continued to increase. The beginning of the century marked the end of a decade of decline in (ODA) flows to the continent. In 2003, the total net disbursements in favour of Africa rose to \$ 26.3 billion indicating the organization for cooperation and economic development (OCED) in its annual report published in development cooperation in April⁷⁴.

Nicolas Sarkozy promises a total financial commitment of EUR 10 billion over the next five years for sub-Saharan Africa. According to the OCED, France spent nearly 15 billion euros of ODA to Africa between 2002 and 2006. This announcement would therefore be a decrease in France

⁶⁹ Politics-dz.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Emeka Nwokedi, 'Franco-African Summits: A New Instrument for France's African Strategy?', *The World Today*, 38 (1982).

⁷³ Xavier Renou, 'A New French Policy for Africa?', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 20 (2002).

⁷⁴ Ernest Harsch, 'Focus Aid on Africa's Priorities', *www.un.org/africarenewal/fr*, (2005).

commitments of ODA to Africa⁷⁵. This would contradict the goal set by the France in 2005 alongside its partners to devote 0.7 percent of its national wealth to ODA by 2015⁷⁶.

Which, the development assistance represents on average 0.3 per cent of gross national income (GNI) among donors, as in 2014. The United States remains, however, by far the largest donor among developed countries, with more 31.08 billion dollars granted help in 2015. Then there are the United Kingdom, the Germany, the Japan and the France⁷⁷. But the latter reiterated, in a joint statement from the ministries of foreign affairs and finance, the Government's commitment to increase development aid to clear four billion euros by 2020 – whose the half will be devoted to climate change. This is an objective announced in September 2015 by President François Hollande, during his speech at the United Nations⁷⁸.

France is thus striven to write primarily its developmental action in an African field to maintain links with the continent. A continuity of financial support is long-standing in this region. Indeed, sub-Saharan Africa remains the majority destination of these aids. She has received more than 90 percent in the 1960s, 80% in the 1970s, 63% in 1995, 58% in 2005, and 55% in 2011. Even if over time the share of aid to Africa decreases, Africa remains the geographical priority of French cooperation⁷⁹.

France aid amounts in 2015 to about 10 billion euros per year, but donations to the 17 priority countries lay at 200 million. This aid continues to move mainly to sub-Saharan Africa (59% of the total) which half to LDCs. The France Development Agency (FDA) plays an increasing role with 30% of the aid disbursed, 84% of which are loans. More than 30% of France aid is multilateral⁸⁰.

In the end, the France policy of development assistance is defined by the Inter-ministerial Committee for international cooperation and development (ICICD). It goes through a financial institution, the France Development Agency (FDA)⁸¹.

⁷⁵ Guillaume Olivier and Saïdou Sidibé, *L'aide Publique Au Développement: Un Outil À Réinventer*, (ECLM, 2004).

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Joël Té-Léssia and Natacha Gorwitz, 'Aide Au Développement : Quels Sont Les Principaux Donateurs En 2015 ?', *Jeuneafrique*, (2016).

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Guinant.

⁸⁰ Philippe HUGON, 'La Politique Africaine De La France Entre Relations Complexes Et Complexées', in *Géopolitique de l'Europe de l'Atlantique à l'Oural*, ed. by Gérard-François DUMONT and Pierre VERLUISE (Diploweb, 2016).

⁸¹ Centre de Documentation Economic-Finance, 'Qu'est-Ce Que L'aide Publique Au Développement ?', (www.economie.gouv.fr, 2016).

3.6. THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF AFRICA

After the regime of General de Gaulle, France became a middle power⁸². Economically, it ranks fourth in the world. Politically, it has a seat in the United Nations Security Council, with a right of veto. It is also one of the two major contributors to the European dynamic of integration⁸³. Militarily, it is a nuclear power and is a member of security institutions such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), without being subordinated entirely to them or to the United States, the global hegemony⁸⁴. With this ability, France remains (even after independence) to the heart of Africa by its military, cultural, geopolitical presence but also its economic interests⁸⁵.

During the colonial period in Africa, the France neo-colonial system was based on a network of dictatorships more than on defence agreements allowing privileged access to raw materials, and financial control by the CFA Franc⁸⁶. In 1960 de Gaulle granted independence to all French colonies, except to so-called territories overseas, such as New Caledonia, but also to some strategic points of support as the Comoros and Djibouti⁸⁷.

After independence, France still needed Africa's natural resources, particularly its oil, and Africa needed France investment. This dependence allowed France to position itself as the guardian of its former colonies⁸⁸.

The majority of the former colonies, from official independence joined (yet) a zone of France influence, imposing its neo-colonial rules, and in particular in the choice of leaders. Among the 20 countries, 2 countries stood out and emerged from this zone of historic neo-colonial influence: Algeria because of the war of independence and hydrocarbon reserves, and to a lesser extent, Morocco, because of its national history and its monarchy⁸⁹.

In the early 1990s, under the Mitterrand regime, the France demanded to these former colonies because of the change which has seen the world, including the fall of the USSR and the monopolization of the United States of America in the international arena. Since then, 5 countries have sufficient democratic regimes to be considered as democracies among the 18 countries of the historic neo-colonial zone of influence⁹⁰:

⁸² Renou.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Philippe Hugon, 'Les Nouveaux Acteurs De La Coopération En Afrique', *International Development Policy | Revue internationale de politique de développement*, 1 (2010), 54.

⁸⁶ Régis Marzin, 'Relation Afrique-France : Démocratisation Et Indépendance Réelle Esquisse De Classement Des Régimes Des Ex-Colonies Françaises', *regardExcentrique*, (2012).

⁸⁷ Biyidi and others

⁸⁸ Al-Jazeera.

⁸⁹ Marzin.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

- 1- Senegal, since 1959 and by gradual maturation, despite the difficulties associated with corruption, with the presidents Léopold Sédar Senghor, Abdou Diouf, Abdoulaye Wade, and since 2012, Macky Sall,
- 2- Benin, since the presidential election in April 2006 that brought Boni Yayi in power,
- 3- The Comoros, which have seen changes of three presidents from the democratic elections since May 2006 until May 2016,
- 4- Niger, since January 2011 presidential and legislative which have put in power Issoufou and the Nigerien party for democracy and socialism,
- 5- Tunisia, despite the many difficulties, since the democratic transition in 2011, which has placed in power end 2011, Moncef Marzouki as president and Hamadi Jebali as Prime Minister⁹¹.

Plus, the 8 dictator countries, whose political regimes supported by the France state, form a hard core of the France neo-colonial system, even currently in crisis and weakened⁹²:

- 1- Togo where Faure Gnassingbé took power in 2005, but where his father had since 1967,
- 2- Gabon where Ali Bongo aggravates the dictatorship since 2009, and where his father had the power since 1967,
- 3- Congo-Brazzaville where Sassou N'Guesso has been in power for 17 years, from 1979 to 1991 and since 1997,
- 4- Cameroon where Paul Biya has the power since 1982,
- 5- Burkina Faso where Blaise Compaoré has held power since the assassination of Thomas Sankara in 1987,
- 6- Chad where Idriss Déby has been in power since 1990,
- 7- Djibouti where Omar Guelleh has been in power since 1999,
- 8- The Central African Republic, where François Bozizé has been in the power since 2003⁹³.

3.7. POLITICAL REFORM

However, in the early 1990s, and especially after the genocide in Rwanda, public awareness of the corrupt and questionable practices of Franco-African relations rapidly increased⁹⁴. Politicians such as Edouard Balladur, Alain Juppe, and Lionel Jospin were increasingly discussing the normalization of Franco-African dynamics⁹⁵. Coupled with these mounting domestic pressures

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Charbonneau.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

for change, international pressures from the end of the Cold War and the Bretton Woods institutions announced major transformations in France policy in Africa”⁹⁶. That was evident in Mitterrand's speech at the Summit, “Cancun” in Mexico, where he said: “we should be pay attention to the people of the under developing world, not just to their leaders”⁹⁷, Which means the immunity reserved for the “francophone” countries of the continent's leaders to keep abreast of changes in the era of globalization⁹⁸.

In his Cape Town speech of February 28, 2008, Sarkozy made four proposals to change his country's Africa policy: dialogue with African states to adapt old cooperation accords, re-creating bilateral relations on the principle of transparency, using the France military presence in Africa to help Africans build their own collective security system, and making Europe a major African partner in the matter of peace and security⁹⁹.

Maybe one of the reasons for France to change its policy towards its former colonies on the continent is the policy announced by Bush son: “You are either with us or against us”¹⁰⁰.

Therefore, as part of the renewal of France's policy towards Africa, Sarkozy announced in the South African Parliament, the commitment of a process of revision of the defense agreements linking France to eight African States (Togo, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Gabon, and Senegal)¹⁰¹.

This revision “testifies with glow of the continuity of the “Françafrique” on its three pillars: policy (unfailing support to dictator friends), economic (predation organized of the resources of Africa) and military (with the eternal colonial justification of good causes that it claims to defend)”¹⁰².

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Mohammed Al-Bashir, 'French-African Relations under Sarkozy to Where?!', (www.almoslim.net, 2007). (in Arabic) [translate mine] consulted 12/7/2017

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Melly and Darracq, p. 4.

¹⁰⁰ A. Tausch and P. Herrmann, *The West, Europe and the Muslim World*, (Nova Science Publishers, Incorporated, 2006), p. 122.

¹⁰¹ Ministère des affaires étrangères et européennes, 'Projet De Loi Autorisant L'approbation De L'accord Entre Le Gouvernement De La République Française Et Le Gouvernement De L'union Des Comores Instituant Un Partenariat De Défense', ed. by Ministère des affaires étrangères et européennes RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE (Ministère des affaires étrangères et européennes, 2010).

¹⁰² François Brun, 'Sommet Franco-Africain : Continuité À Tous Les Étages', (Hebdo L'Anticapitaliste, 2013).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Tausch and P. Herrmann, *The West, Europe and the Muslim World*, (Nova Science Publishers, Incorporated, 2006)
2. Abdel Rahman Hassan Hamdi, 'Policies of International Competition in Africa', <http://www.qiraatafrican.com>, (2013). (in Arabic) [translate mine] consulted 12/8/2016
3. Agence Française de Press, 'Sommet Franco-Africain: Partenariat Économique Et Changement Climatique Au Menu', (le point international, 2013).
4. Aïcha Myriam Coulibaly, 'La Françafrique, Un Nouveau Visage?', (2017); Mawuna Remarque Koutonin, 'Le Saviez-Vous ? 14 Pays Africains Contraints Par La France À Payer L'impôt Colonial Pour Les « Avantages » De L'esclavage Et De La Colonisation', www.mondialisation.ca, (2014).
5. Al-Jazeera, 'The French African Connection', in Al Jazeera, (2014). [consulted 25/10/2016]
6. André Dumoulin, *La France Militaire Et L'Afrique*, (Complexe, 1997); SÉNAT, 'Cameroun : Partenariat De Défense Avec La France', in Accord entre le Gouvernement de la République française et le Gouvernement de la République du Cameroun instituant un partenariat de défense, (la Présidence du Sénat, 2010).
7. Béatrice Hibou, 'Politique Économique De La France En Zone Franc', *Politique africaine*, 58 (1995).
8. Bruno Charbonneau, 'Dreams of Empire: France, Europe, and the New Interventionism in Africa', *Modern & Contemporary France*, 16 (2008).
9. Centre de Documentation Economic-Finance, 'Qu'est-Ce Que L'aide Publique Au Développement ?', (www.economie.gouv.fr, 2016).
10. Chris Bierwirth, 'French Interests in the Levant and Their Impact on French Immigrant Policy in West Africa', *Itinerario*, 26 (2002), 9.
11. Dominique Lejeune, 'Colonisation Et Décolonisation Françaises, De 1848 À 1988', (2011)
12. Emeka Nwokedi, 'Franco-African Summits: A New Instrument for France's African Strategy?', *The World Today*, 38 (1982).
13. Ernest Harsch, 'Focus Aid on Africa's Priorities', www.un.org/africarenewal/fr, (2005).
14. F.R. Willis, *The French Paradox: Understanding Contemporary France*, (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1982)
15. France Colonies of Africa" became "African Financial Community: the acronym of the FCFA does not change ... its role either!
16. 'France-Africa: A Long History of Military Intervention', (www.expatica.com, 2011).
17. François Brun, 'Sommet Franco-Africain : Continuité À Tous Les Étages', (Hebdo L'Anticapitaliste, 2013).
18. Guillaume Olivier and Saïdou Sidibé, *L'aide Publique Au Développement: Un Outil À Réinventer*, (ECLM, 2004).
19. Joël Té-Léssia and Natacha Gorwitz, 'Aide Au Développement : Quels Sont Les Principaux Donateurs En 2015 ?', *Jeuneafrique*, (2016).
20. Lellouche and Moisi; Philippe Leymarie, 'France-Africa: "New Generation" Military Agreements', (blog.mondediplo.net, 2009); Philippe Leymarie and Thierry Perret, *Les 100 Clés De L'Afrique*, (Fayard/Pluriel, 2006).
21. Mohammed Al-Bashir, 'French-African Relations under Sarkozy to Where?!', (www.almoslim.net, 2007). (in Arabic) [translate mine] consulted 12/7/2017
22. Odile Biyidi and others, 'La France Coloniale D'hier Et D'aujourd'hui', *Survie*, (2006).
23. Patrick Guillaumont and Sylviane Guillaumont Jeanneney, 'Les Accords De Coopération Monétaire De La Zone Franc : Atouts Et Contraintes ', *fondation pour les études et recherches sur le développement international*, (2013); Greg Mills, 'French Policy-Making and Africa', *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 6 (1998), 59; '40e Anniversaire Des Accords De Coopération Monétaire De La Zone Franc', www.banque-france.fr, (2016).
24. Paul Melly and Vincent Darracq, *A New Way to Engage?: French Policy in Africa from Sarkozy to Hollande*, (Chatham House London, 2013)
25. Per Durst-Andersen and Elsebeth F Lange, *Mentality and Thought: North, South, East and West*, (Copenhagen Business School Press DK, 2010).

Mohamed Said Assoumani, Abdallah Mourtadhoi– **France's Policy in Francophone African Countries: Its Former Colonies**

26. Pernille Røge and Marion Leclair, 'L'économie Politique En France Et Les Origines Intellectuelles De «La Mission Civilisatrice» En Afrique', Dix-huitième siècle, (2012)
27. Philippe HUGON, 'La Politique Africaine De La France Entre Relations Complexes Et Complexées', in Géopolitique de l'Europe de l'Atlantique à l'Oural, ed. by Gérard-François DUMONT and Pierre VERLUISE (Diploweb, 2016).
28. Philippe Hugon, 'La Politique Économique De La France En Afrique', Politique africaine, (2007)
29. Philippe Hugon, 'Les Nouveaux Acteurs De La Coopération En Afrique', International Development Policy | Revue internationale de politique de développement, 1 (2010)
30. Pierre Lellouche and Dominique Moisi, 'French Policy in Africa: A Lonely Battle against Destabilization', International Security, 3 (1979)
31. Politics-dz, 'French Policy in Africa', (The Algerian Encyclopaedia of Strategic Political Studies, 2015). (in Arabic) [translate mine] consulted 15/11/2017
32. Priscille Guinant, 'La Politique De La France En Afrique Subsaharienne Apres Les Indépendances', Université de Toulouse, goo. gl/fuHak8, (2013)
33. Punam Chuhan-Pole and others, 'Africa's Pulse: An Analysis of Issues Shaping Africa's Economic Future', Banque mondiale, http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Africa/Report/Africas-Pulsebrochure_Vol8.pdf, (2013).
34. Qiraafrika, 'French Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa', www.qiraatafrican.com, (2014). (in arabic) [translate mine]; Ndongo Samba Sylla, 'The Cfa Franc: French Monetary Imperialism in Africa', Africa at LSE, (2017).
35. Régis Marzin, 'Relation Afrique-France : Démocratisation Et Indépendance Réelle Esquisse De Classement Des Régimes Des Ex-Colonies Françaises', regardExcentrique, (2012).
36. See: Jerry Domatob, Sub-Saharan Africa's Media and Neocolonialism, (African Council on Communication Education, 1988).
37. Tony Chafer, 'Franco-African Relations: No Longer So Exceptional?', African Affairs, 101 (2002).
38. South Africa Foundation, South Africa Foundation Review, (South Africa Foundation, 1988)
39. West Africa, (West Africa Publishing Company Limited, 1990), p. 107.
40. Xavier Renou, 'A New French Policy for Africa?', Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 20 (2002).
41. Yasser Abu Hussein, 'African-French Relations', Bureau of the Friends of Morocco, (2013). (in Arabic) [translated by me]
42. Zahir Riad, 'Colonization of Africa', (Cairo: Institute of African Studies, 1965), (p. 7). (in Arabic) [translated by me]