CLANDESTINE MIGRATION AND CHILD TRAFFICKING IN THE GULF OF GUINEA IN THE 21ST CENTURY: INVENTORY, CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract: *Imagining new possibilities for liberating the planet from these multiple impasses in progress and from the criminal society at the dawn of this new century is a necessity for the community of existing people" to make a "reasonable humanity" with a view to fulfilling our mission to be in the world. In reality, the planet is a gift from everyone and every living being has rights no matter how small. However, the nursery of humanity, namely children, faces an illicit and criminal trade that violates their rights and their well-being through the phenomenon of illegal migration and their trafficking. It is in this perspective that the Gulf of Guinea constitutes a hub of this heavy tendency which until now remains weakly analyzed in this center of interest. Many circulation routes for this traffic are set up between West and Central Africa through a pyramid drawn up by investors, recruiters, transporters, and recruiters. These children, once they arrive in the different countries of destination, are exploited for domestic work, field work, shops, etc. This is an international violation of the rights and welfare of children. Because children deserve national and international protection. They are the future of humanity. Hence, local, and global order strategies are put in place to prevent and combat this alarming phenomenon of modern slavery. Nevertheless, local and international normative and security policies must reinvent themselves for effective and efficient international protection of children's rights and welfare.*

1. Introduction

The act of thinking about our contemporaneity invites us to reflect on the great upheavals and vulnerabilities that have rearticulated the international scene since the end of the Cold War in 1989 and its corollaries such as the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the dislocation of the superpower of the former USSR. In this perspective, he also encourages us to mobilize all the threads of the imagination as a "community of existing" and a "reasonable humanity" (Nancy, 2002) with a view to producing new intelligences and imagining new possibilities of liberating the planet from these multiple shifts in progress and precisely at the dawn of this new century. In an international context marked essentially by globalization and its geopolitical effects, both positive and negative; old risks have worsened, and transnational and multi-faceted threats have emerged in the international system. Among these post-bipolar security tensions and disorders that upset the interdependence between security, sovereignty, economy, democracy, and human rights. We can cite, without claiming to be exhaustive, the illicit trade in drugs and narcotics, illegal migration, pandemics, the Anthropocene, maritime piracy, Islamist terrorism, armed rebellions, civil wars, cross-border banditry, the phenomenon of child soldiers, human trafficking, etc. Among these major trends that weigh on the present and the future of the African continent, the major trend but until now poorly analyzed that emerges from the observation of these new transnational threats is that of illegal migration and child trafficking. It is a phenomenon in full expansion since the 20th century (Dush, 2002) and

consequently has consolidated itself as a form of international crime at the beginning of the 21st century.

The Gulf of Guinea, due to its geostrategic position and its permeable international borders, is a space of movements and circulations where clandestine migrations openly take place and children are trafficked silently. The aim of this study is to show, from an ethnographic and mainly socio-historical perspective, the various metamorphoses of illegal migration in the Gulf of Guinea and how the international networks of child traffickers have become professionalized in this geopolitical environment. It also aims to indicate the places of supply, transit of these children but also to attract the public authorities, the international organizations, NGOs and donors involved in issues of protection and well-being of children to develop a security, legal, economic and social architecture for the total protection of this social category. To better understand this thorny question, we will initially focus attention on theoretical discussions and a review of the international literature devoted to the phenomenon. E Next, we will shed light on the games and the challenges of the entrepreneurs of this criminal network which runs counter to the doctors' children's lives, emphasizing their places of transit, of destination, their interactions with the recruiters of these children. Finally, we will indicate the mechanisms for combating and preventing this international crime at the intersection of the local, sub-regional, continental and international.

2.State of play of the question, definitions and foundations of the establishment and circulation of this criminal and transnational network

Due to its geopolitical and geostrategic position, the Gulf of Guinea has always been an epistemological object that attracts the observation of many analysts in international research. Internationalist, legal, societal, historical, anthropological, culturalist and political issues have always been treated with great consideration to the detriment of certain issues that have remained marginal, little studied and therefore constitute blind spots in international research. on this geo-historical space. In reality, the issue of international migration in the Gulf of Guinea has been the subject of serious studies in West Africa, however, Central Africa is still a place of investigation to be cleared in this area, although some authors have distinguished themselves on the issue. Nevertheless, the issue of illegal migration connected to human trafficking and particularly of children in the Gulf of Guinea deserves special attention. What about the analytical and thematic tendencies of our predecessors who got involved in this discussion?

3.Conceptual approaches and inventory of the issue

Several apprehensions jostle and complement each other about the notion of trafficking in human beings. It is necessary to clarify what is called child trafficking in the context of clandestine migration and to know what is meant by trafficking or smuggling of children. Without claiming to be exhaustive, we will throw a beam of light to have a conceptual light on these different concepts in order to avoid any confusion.

Trafficking and smuggling, two terms often confused to refer to the problem of the movement of children for the purpose of exploitation. The concept of trafficking refers to the illicit trade, usually of goods across a border, often in reference to the illegal transfer of arms (arms trafficking) and more recently drug smuggling. However, since the year 2000, in international law the consecrated term is that of "traffic" of children, not that of "trafficking". The latter refers to the illegal transfer of migrants across borders as "smuggling of migrants" (Dottdrige, 2004: 17). The phrase "child trafficking" emphasizes how children are moved. But the trafficking of children or adults is closely associated with their subsequent exploitation by others in ways that violate their basic rights, usually by being forced to earn money by working, but in the case of trafficked babies for adoption or young women for marriage, to satisfy the demand of those who gain control over them (Dottdrige, 2004: 17). To understand what this implies, it is necessary to observe the forms of exploitation to which children are subjected. Children are used in different ways depending on their age and gender. Older children between

the ages of 15 and 17 are treated much like the exploitation of young adults and the degree of coercion required to keep them under control is identical.

Trafficking was first defined in international law by the Additional Protocol to the United Nations Organized Crime Convention to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000). Known as the "Palermo Protocol" or the "Trafficking Protocol", it gives the most widely accepted definition of trafficking and lays the groundwork for reform of national law (The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Additional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, 2000).

In the Palermo Protocol, the term "trafficking in persons" means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, through the threat of or use of force or other forms of constraint, by removingment, fraud, deception, abuse of authority or position of vulnerability, or by offering or accepting payments or benefits to obtain the consent of a person having authority over another for the purpose of operation. Exploitation includes, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or organ removal. The provisions emphasize that the trafficking of a child for the purpose of exploitation, by whatever means, must be considered an offense (The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Additional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, 2000).

Thus defined these epistemological prerequisites, it should be said that in the aftermath of the 1980s, the planet experienced several geopolitical shifts which profoundly upset its political and socio-economic balances which accentuated the intensity of the flow of movements, displacements and the circulation of people, goods, ideas and finances. It is this cultural phenomenon that the French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy called the "creation of the world" or globalization (Nancy, 2002). Contemporary African societies have not been on the margins of these many upheavals which have reshaped new configurations on the international chessboard (Foga Konefon, 2020: 34-49) and particularly the Gulf of Guinea. In terms of travel, it should be noted that African international mobility is mainly intracontinental. 21 million out of the 39.4 million migrants born in Africa (53.2%) lived on the continent in 2019 (Tsion Kebede Abebe, Mugabo: 151-160). These advanced figures are those of regular migration, however data on irregular international migration on the continent are almost impossible to find and even extremely rare. It is in this perspective that the largest volume of African international mobility in the continent and of course the criminal dynamics and mafia networks in the African international borders that escape state logics. The reasons that explain this illegality are the permeability of international borders and the failure of the African state to "supervise and "punish" to quote Michel Foucault. Many authors have focused on African international peripheries and the transactions that take place there (Igue, 1983: 29-51; 1995; Sindjoun, 2002; 2004; Bennafla, 2002; 2012); Dizambou, 2002; Foga Konefon, 2015: 145-162; Sourna, 2020; Minfegue, 2020).

In terms of clandestine circulation and trafficking of children, we note that the international scientific literature has devoted attention to this issue, however Africa and mainly the Gulf of Guinea, which are a hub of this bargaining and criminal network, occupies a marginal place. in empirical research on this phenomenon of our contemporaneity. To this end, it is important to specify that this is not a new phenomenon, it is a planetary and also African question. In the current state of our knowledge, some trends emerge in the production of work on the dynamics of clandestine immigration and the trafficking of children in the world. Initially, research already carried out is based on reports from international organizations and institutions (Report of theAfrican Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990; Report of the General Assembly of Interpol, 2001; UNICEF Innocenti Research Center Report, 2004; Report of the West and Central Africa Regional Office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020 THB LIBERI Project Report, 2021; African Union Report, 2021) to name them are

certainly edifying, but they do not take into consideration the different spatial scales in their analyses. The absence of serious local monographs constitute the handicap of the results of their observations and consequently do not allow to have precise ideas on the state of the situation in the chronological evolution.

Secondly, and without claiming to be exhaustive, certain works resulting from empirical research have addressed this questioning and its related problems in Africa and in certain countries of the Gulf of Guinea (Chevallier-Govers, 1999; Dush, 2002; Dizambou, 2002 Goudjo, 2004; Bimboudza, 2004; Abagha Megnet, 2006; Guardiola Lago, 2008: 405-436; Loungou, 2011: 485-505; Bamba Ladji, 2017: 187-202; Peyroux, 2020: 35-42). These works question the socio-history of the implementation of this clandestine and criminal network throughout the world, Africa and certain countries of the Gulf of Guinea. They indicate the repressive means put in place to stop this criminal market. It also emerges from this work that globalization, poverty, the absence of means of control and the weakening of the State in certain border peripheries are at the origin of the expansion of this phenomenon in the world. Their limits lie at the level where the destinations, the circuits of this traffic are evoked in a fragmented way and figures in data are absent to seize the fluctuations.

Overall, the finding that emerges from this modest literature review is that for all living things, this practice is shameful and requires political, philosophical, and humanitarian questioning. Therefore, it is urgent to think about the foundations of a policy of anticipation and reparation for the nursery of humanity which is in the nets of this transnational criminal market. What about the political economy of this traffic in the Gulf of Guinea?

4.The political economy of the establishment of illegal migration and child trafficking in the Gulf of Guinea: foundations, international networks and traffickers' circuits

In an international context accentuated by the proliferation of goods, services, exchanges and people linked to globalization and the evolution of technologies and means of communication, clandestine migration and child trafficking have intensified in the entire planet and particularly in the Gulf of Guinea. In this new environment, the "uncivil society" has professionalized itself by using all sorts of stratagems and logics of circumventing the barriers of State agents to set up, the trafficking of children, a "trade" which brings shame to Africa (Mfi, 1998: 4). Faced with such a tragedy, one is entitled to ask the question what is at the origin of such a practice? What are the grounds that justify the organizers and recruiters of such criminal activities?

5.The socio-cultural and economic foundations of illegal migration and child trafficking in human societies in the geopolitical space of the Gulf of Guinea

Culturally, the involvement of children for labor purposes in Africa is not a new reality. It predates colonial and even contemporary history. She was participating in a kind of initiation, training and learning about life. Among ancient Africans, the idea of making children work was a way of instilling in them that nothing is acquired, nothing is given, nothing is easy and that everything was acquired through work. It is in this perspective that in the process of formation and the transition from the stage of childhood to adulthood, the primary and secondary socialization of the child was done in a social category of work, namely: field work. household activities, etc. So, it was out of the question to consider a child who left his family nucleus with his consent to go to an uncle, an aunt, or a family in the perspective of helping them with domestic tasks as a form of slavery because the child had all its rights and duties. This participated in the African in his way of making humanity, his education but also in capitalizing inputs in terms of experience in the different cultural environments he would cross (Almeida Topor, 1992: 73; Loungou, 2011: 485- 505;Hodonou, 2001, p. 44-45).This philosophy quickly deteriorated with the advent of colonial mercantilism which had established a new social order to the point of upsetting the cultural and economic logic of traditional African societies.

With the setting up of major construction sites for public buildings and the development of agricultural land, the exploitation of children began to be visible, but it grew from of the 1960s, a period during which the first examples of child trafficking were observed, thus showing that their exploitation for economic purposes was becoming the main motive behind the operation. In Benin, we spoke of vidomégon in Benin, amegbonovi in Togo, year doom in Senegal or garibou in Burkina Faso (Loungou, 2011: 485-505). This phenomenon has been accentuated by material scarcity or poverty, which is a gangrene that is eating away at many societies on a continental and planetary scale. Many social strata are idle and plagued by unemployment in most Gulf of Guinea countries. They are at the mercy of calls from criminal entrepreneurs and traffic engineers. Another determining factor is the particular vulnerability of girls, which makes them easy prey for traffickers. In particular instability, oppression and discrimination increase the risks for women and children, and social and cultural prejudices as well as the prevalence of gender-based violence have added to the difficulty of protecting them from trafficking (Report from the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2004). It is following this situation of socio-economic vulnerability that many children transited clandestinely via networks of smugglers, criminal organizations from international borders to work for the purposes of economic and sexual exploitation. What are these clandestine, criminal migrant networks and what are the countries of origin and arrival of these children?

6. Clandestine migrant networks and criminal trafficking of children in the Gulf of Guinea: Profile of traffickers, operating methods and circulation routes of child trafficking

In view of certain works which have carried out studies on the cartography of clandestine migration and the trafficking of children in the world, the information coming from the Gulf of Guinea is very fragmentary and yet it constitutes a serious hub in the trafficking of children. and their operations. According to serious investigations on the issue, countries such as the Ivory Coast, Benin, Togo, Nigeria, Gabon, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, to name a few, are part of the circulation routes of this illicit trade. What should be remembered from this migratory traffic is that it is based on several organizational entities, namely: the organizers who are at the top of the pyramid; recruiters who serve as matchmakers between organizers and clients;(Dush, 2002). Like the chain of traffickers, child recruitment techniques are highly complex. This begins in the countries of origin with an effort to canvass target families and approach the children. The recruitment phase follows using two techniques: one direct, the other indirect. In the first case, the recruiting agents deal with the parents using in particular persuasion and deception. They thus succeed in persuading the families that they will ensure the education and training of the children, that they will find them well-paid work, and even, in the case of young girls, that they will marry them off to wealthy personalities as soon as they arrive. in Gabon (Adihou et al., 1999,:28-30). In order to remove the assent of the parents, it even happens that the recruiter pays them a sum of money, possibly accompanied by a few presents. However, it seems that deception is the basic principle of recruitment by playing on the ignorance, naivety and extreme poverty of parents. In the second case, recruiters prefer to make direct contact with children or sometimes kidnap them in peri-urban areas or even in the streets of the main cities of the country (Loungou, 2011: 485-505). After this step, another strong link in the chain that can be mentioned here: these are the carriers. They are actually the ones who generally take care of getting the children out of the territory. Generally, they do it by boats, canoes and less and less by cars and other means of transport. The reason given is that they fear being arrested by the police and prefer to take the dangerous sea routes. This is why they prefer to go through creeks, mangroves and of course through places of transit where vigilance is less rigorous. To this end, the Gabonese teacher-researcher illustrates the mechanisms for transferring children from West Africa to Gabon by writing this:

Travel first takes children from rural areas of origin, which are very poor, to the large coastal urban centres, political or economic capitals, which are relatively prosperous; or for

people from Benin, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo, the cities of Cotonou/Porto Novo, Accra, Lagos and Lomé where the "standardization" of identity papers and other documents takes place travel documents (...) From these coastal towns, two routes are possible. The first takes the children, embarked on ships, directly to Gabon where, after at least a week of travel, they are dropped off at sites near the city of Libreville (Cap Esterias, Cap Santa Clara, port of Owendo) where conniving Nigerian, Ghanaian, Togolese or Beninese fisherman take it upon themselves to lead them to agreed points on the coast where the traffickers come to take them over. (...) These then have the task of transporting them by cabotage, using ocean canoes equipped with outboard motors, approximately 15 to 20 m long and with a minimum carrying capacity of 100 people, as far as the Gabonese coast via strategic stopovers in Cameroon (Kribi) and/or Equatorial Guinea (Corisco and Elobey islands). It is there, in fact, that we can refuel the passengers, while inquiring about the weather conditions and the movements of the Gabonese coast guard. We then progress from block to block to the points landing sites that are the villages and other fishing camps scattered along the northern coast of Gabon where the traffickers come to take them in charge, before placing them in safe places (Loungou, 2011: 485-505).

At the occurrence of these means of transport, one still remembers the Nigerian boat Etireno, flying the Beninese flag which had transported 167 in April 2001 which had shown the complexity of this traffic (Boukongou, 2006: 97-108; Union, 2001: 3). In these writings, we notice that the last links in the chain are the smugglers who are the most violent members of the organization. They are involved in the dimension of negotiation procedures between recruiters, carriers and customers in the countries of departure and arrival. It is also observed that with regard to the traffic routes of trafficking of these children, the mode of transfer is quite complex. In reality, there are child-providing countries and child-receiving countries. Generally, child-providing countries are generally found in West Africa like Benin, Nigeria, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and in Central Africa, we can cite the Central African Republic, Chad and Cameroon according to several concordant sources. Like the receiving countries, we can mention Gabon, Cameroon, the Ivory Coast and other countries outside the continent.

Once they arrive in their various countries of destination, these children are exploited for domestic work, in plantations, shops, hardware stores, spare parts shops, etc. This very often in conditions of abuse and what constitutes a crime, a violation of the rights and well-being of children. Hence alternative strategies have been put in place to combat this traffic in the Gulf of Guinea.

7.National, sub-regional, continental, and international response strategies to combat child trafficking in the Gulf of Guinea

As we have indicated in our previous analyses, African issues are planetary and planetary issues are African. This is to say that the issue of illegal migration and the phenomenon of child trafficking is closely linked and therefore is a crime and a violation of international law. Because children are not only the nursery of humanity and the "creators of the future". Thus, faced with the scale and progression of this phenomenon, strategies developed by state actors and multilateral actors have been put in place to combat this continuing scourge. They are local and global in the Gulf of Guinea.

8.The United Nations, INTERPOL and the African Union in the face of child trafficking

Several initiatives have been undertaken by state and especially multilateral actors to combat this global scourge. In this case, the United Nations through several international and regional legal instruments are committed to taking measures to prevent and suppress child trafficking based on several conventions. To this end, one can mention theUnited Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989. Well before that date, they had organized a World Summit for Children in 1990. In the series of conventions, we can add the ILO Convention on

the Worst Forms child labor in 1999;Ia United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children in 2000 and the United Nations General Assembly Special Session in 2002 devoted to children on the theme: "A world fit for children".which was adopted by the United Nations at the beginning of the millennium in relation to child trafficking was the United Nations convention against transnational crime which was held in Palermo (Italy) in December 2000. The international community has shown its political will to address a global challenge through a global initiative. Thus Koffi Anan, the Secretary General of the United Nations at that time clearly gave the emphasis of the United Nations Organizations by indicating that:

...crime crosses borders, repression must cross them. If the rule of law is undermined not in one, but in many countries, then those who defend it cannot limit themselves to purely national means. If the enemies of progress and human rights seek to exploit the openness and opportunities offered by globalization for their own ends, then we must exploit those same opportunities to defend human rights and defeat the forces crime, corruption and human trafficking. One of the most striking contrasts in today's world is the chasm that separates the civil from the uncivil. By "civil", I mean civilisation: long centuries of learning on which we base our progress. By "civil", I also mean tolerance: pluralism and respect for the diversity of the peoples of the world, from which we draw our strength. And finally, I mean civil society: groups of citizens, companies, trade unions, teachers, journalists, political parties and so many others, which have an essential role to play in the conduct of any society. However, deployed against these constructive forces, in ever greater numbers and armed with ever more powerful weapons, are the forces of what I call "uncivil society". It is, among others, terrorists, criminals, drug traffickers, human traffickers, who are undoing the good work of civil society. They take advantage of open borders, free markets and technical advances that bring so many benefits to mankind. They thrive in countries with weak institutions and show no qualms about using intimidation or violence. Ruthless, they are the very antithesis of anything we consider civil. They are powerful, represent entrenched interests and have a global enterprise behind them worth billions of dollars, but they are not invincible (Koffi Anan, 2004: 4).

The signing of the Convention in Palermo, in December 2000, marked a turning point in the strengthening of the fight against this trafficking. The international institutions of a technical nature of the United Nations which were involved in the questions of migration and children, namely the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNICEF, the International Labor Organization (ILO), the International Commission Human Rights, United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention; INTERPOL, EUROPOL, EUROPOL, the Committee of Central African Police Chiefs (CCPAC), the West African Police Chiefs Committee (WAPCCO) and other security actors and deployed strongly in all spaces and terrains to stem this phenomenon. It is in this perspective that international police cooperation led by INTERPOL and its related partners have played a strategic and considerable role against this "uncivil society".76 children in Côte d'Ivoire believed to have been trafficked to West Africa for the purpose of illegal labor (Interpol International Report, 2014). In the same vein, in 2015 the Akoma operation of INTERPOL saved 48 children and arrested at the end of this operation 22 people involved in the exploitation of children. (Interpol International Report, 2015). In 2016, Operation Adwenpa II, a border security operation in West Africa resulted in the arrest of human traffickers, migrant smugglers as well as the seizure of drugs, stolen vehicles, money and counterfeit goods. More than 100 frontline police officers used INTERPOL's global policing capabilities to identify criminals, victims and illicit goods at 28 key border crossings in 14 countries (Interpol International Report, 2016). In 2017, an INTERPOL intervention named Operation Epervier 2017made an arrest of nearly500 victims of human trafficking, including 236 minors, were simultaneously rescued in Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal (Interpol International Report, 2017).

In the regime of thought of the defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU), she was aware that in the black continent, children were prey to violence and abuse many that fit into economic, socio-cultural and political contexts. The physical, sexual and psychological aggression suffered by children in situations of peace or war, in their family or community environment, constituted obstacles to their survival and harmonious development (Boukongou, 2006: 97-108). It is in this register that it adopted the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child at the Twenty-Sixth Conference of Heads of State and Government of the OAU in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in July 1990. By this charter, The African States members of the Organization of African Unity parties to this Charter entitled "African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child" considered that the Charter of the Organization of African Unity recognized the paramount importance of human rights and that the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights had proclaimed and agreed that everyone could avail himself of all the rights and freedoms recognized and guaranteed in the said Charter, without any distinction of race, ethnic group, color, sex, language, religion, political affiliation or other opinion, national and social origin, property, birth or other status (African Charter on the Rights and -being of the Child, 1990).

At the community level Economic Community of West African States, and the Economic Community of Central African States, strategies to fight against child trafficking have also been taken into consideration to eradicate this transnational and criminal commercial network.

9.ECOWAS and CEMAC in the fight against child trafficking

Given that these two sub-regions of the continent are aware that this trade in modern-day "slave traders" is active in these areas, they have mobilized through several sub-regional consultation forums, workshops and seminars on trafficking. cross-border movement of children for the purposes, essentially, of labor exploitation. Given the complexity and sensitivity of the issue, several ministerial departments, namely that of justice, the interior, the army, foreign affairs, the advancement of women and the family, social affairs and many also leaders of non-governmental and international organizations have always been involved in this work of reflection at the national level as well as at the sub-regional level reaffirming their commitment to international and regional legal instruments, in particular:
- Convention No. 29 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) concerning forced labour, 1930;
-   the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948;
-   the United Nations Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, 1956;
-   Convention No. 105 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) on the abolition of forced labour, 1957;
-   Convention No. 138 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) relating to the minimum age for admission to employment, 1973;
-   the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention on the Free Movement of Persons and Goods, 1975;
-   the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979;
-   the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 1981;
-   the Treaty establishing the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), 1983;
-   the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, and its optional protocol relating to the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography, 1989;
-   the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990; - the Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance between West African States adopted in Dakar, 1992;
-   the Treaty of the Community of West African States (ECOWAS), revised in 1993 and the Protocol relating to the freedom of movement of goods and persons;
-   the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, 1993;

-   the Convention on extradition between West African States adopted in Abuja, 1994; - Convention No. 182 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) on the worst forms of child labor and the action with a view to their elimination, 1999; - the Cooperation Agreement on Criminal Police between the States of Central Africa, 1999;
-   the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Additional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, 2000 (Palermo Protocol);
-   the Constitutive Act of the African Union, 2000;
-   the Cooperation Agreement on Criminal Police among the Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), 2003;
-   the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (known as the Maputo Protocol) 2003; - the Multilateral Cooperation Agreement in the fight against child trafficking in West Africa West, 2005.

And falling within the framework of the common action platform of Libreville 1 (2000) directives for the elaboration of a convention on child trafficking in West and Central Africa of Libreville 2 (2002) and the Libreville Declaration 3 (2003) relating to the harmonization of national legislation; the various countries belonging to these spaces have tied themselves to these various international legal instruments to take technical, normative, security, police and judicial training measures to prosecute and punish traffickers and their accomplices in this trade. However, their actions remain limited and therefore the African system for the protection of the rights of the child remains to be built. The access roads to this system can appear steep for many victims who will try to borrow them. Still, the system has the merit of existing. It is gradually contributing to the emergence and consolidation of regional protection of children's rights in Africa. The limitations and imperfections of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children can be overcome with a real will from the Member States of the African Union. Arguments once made about African cultures should be abandoned, because the universality of children's rights is not an obstacle to the diversity of cultures. But there are universal values on which no regression can be tolerated (Boukongou, 2006: 97-108).

10. Conclusion

Moreover, it was a question of diagnosing within the framework of this study, the inventory of fixtures of clandestine migrations and the trafficking of children in the Gulf of Guinea. It has to be noted at first that the sociology of contemporary migrations in Africa is quite complex, particularly clandestine migrations. With regard to migratory dynamics in the Gulf of Guinea, they are generally varied and characterized by the stamp of illegality, clandestinely and this is due to the porosity of international borders in land, lake, river and maritime spaces. These clandestine migrations contribute to defeating, to a certain extent, the state in its dream of "monitoring" the borders, of "punishing" outlaw migrants (Sindjoun, 2004: 5-15). In this perspective of infringement, many illicit transactions of a criminal nature have been structured, such as the trafficking of children, particularly in West Africa, the ramifications of which extend in several directions of the planet. It is a practical reality, and it is an international crime. If, according to the official reports of certain international organizations and certain police investigations, more than two million children in the world are tamed in these transnational criminal networks and the Gulf of Guinea is part of a plate turning point of this criminal network on the planet since the 1990s, as we mentioned in the previous analyses. Beyond, socio-cultural factors as explanatory data for this phenomenon in certain communities in West Africa, it should be emphasized that material scarcity or the accentuated impoverishment of social strata, wars, the growing market of crime and anarchic violence due to political instability; the absence of meticulous controls at the level of the national borders of the countries of destination of these children by the security services without forgetting the logics of corruption of the agents of the State to circumvent these controls and the lack of penalties and real and

practical sanctions against these entrepreneurs of this child trafficking market who promote the rise of these criminal and mercantilist networks which have found fertile ground for this illicit trade in the Gulf of Guinea. the Abidjan-Lagos trade corridor which crosses five countries namely Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria has been identified as an important route for these traffics in West Africa. In Africa Central, Gabon is also a pole and even one of the most important and least known of the clandestine trafficking of children from West African countries originally organized from Benin and Togo (Loungou, 2011: 485-505; Bimboudza, 2004; Abagha Megnet, 2006). These children sold on the black market are exploited for domestic work; to forms of forced labour; prostitution; to sexual slavery, etc.

Faced with the violation of international law and particularly of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of 1990, and the main positions of the Regional Economic Communities, namely the Action Plan adopted in Libreville in December 2000 on behalf of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) and the Plan of action adopted by the Economic Community of the States of West Africa (ECOWAS) in December 2001, and the Action Plan adopted in Libreville on strategies to combat child trafficking for the purpose of exploitation, The States of West and Central Africa who are in the Gulf of Guinea in collaboration with NGOs, international organizations and those of the United Nations involved in migration and childhood issues are making remarkable progress on the ground to curb this organized crime and criminal mafia networks of this heinous traffic.

Given the contemporaneity of this questioning in the Gulf of Guinea and in the whole of the planet, the big discussion is that of mutuality: what to do and how to do with others? Thereby, the "community of existing" must bring together its imagination, its security, normative interbreeding, preventive measures, strategies and concrete practices likely to allow the effective creation of conditions which fall within the crossroads of the local and the global, the national and the international community and which covers all aspects of social life, in particular the viability of national politico-economic frameworks, material and security safety, the proper institutional framework of fundamental freedoms for the protection of the well-being of children. To do so, it will have accomplished its mission to be in the world, to make the world and to be "a reasonable humanity" as indicated by the French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy (Nancy, 2002: 73).

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