

REALIGNMENT IN FOREIGN RELATIONS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ALLIANCE OF SAHEL STATES' FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS ECOWAS AND ITS ENGAGEMENT WITH GLOBAL POWERS

Muhammad Shehu and Ismail Aliu

Department of Political Science, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto

Corresponding Author's email: ismailaliu2@gmail.com



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Abstract

The formation of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES) brought about a departure in the foreign policies of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger motivated by the break from Western hegemony in favour of self-determination. This shift also brought about a change in regional politics in West Africa. This article critically examines the foreign policy realignment of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES) in the wake of shifting regional and international dynamics. It explores how recent political and security developments have influenced the Alliance of Sahel States' (AES) evolving relationship with the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS), particularly in light of tensions over democratic governance, counterterrorism, and sovereignty. Drawing on official statements, policy documents, and expert analyses, the research highlights the motivations behind the Alliance of Sahel States' (AES) foreign policy recalibration, the implications for regional integration in West Africa, and the potential consequences for the international order. The analysis shows that the AES's strategic realignment towards non-Western powers has brought about military and economic cooperation between the juntas and Russia as well as China. At the same time, the realignment has sparked regional disintegration leading to exit of the military regimes from the regional bloc of West Africa with which the alliance has severed ties. The paper thus recommends that there is the need for the military juntas to create an equilibrium in their foreign relations by balancing non-Western support with regional cooperation so as to achieve their objectives especially in the area of security.

Keywords: AES, ECOWAS, Foreign Policy, Global Powers, Realignment, West Africa.