

# FORUM ON WEST AFRICA'S FUTURE

## 1. Why the forum?

By 2050, the population of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) could reach 800 million. The population of West Africa at large could exceed one billion. While some analysts see it as gloomy and others as bright, the future of this crisis-torn region remains uncertain. Taking into account both the advantages to be had from open future-oriented studies relating to West Africa and the absence of such studies, Futuribles International wishes to stimulate such reflection, beginning with Western and Sahelian Africa. Futuribles International therefore proposes to establish a standing 'Foresight Forum' on the possible future of the West Africa and Sahel region.

This forum will catalyse existing reflections on West African futures: it aims to identify and analyse ongoing transformations, explore possible futures and support the design of inclusive, long-term sensitive decision-making processes.

Combining research, publications and debates, this forum aims to become the crucible of an open and action-oriented reflection on West African futures.

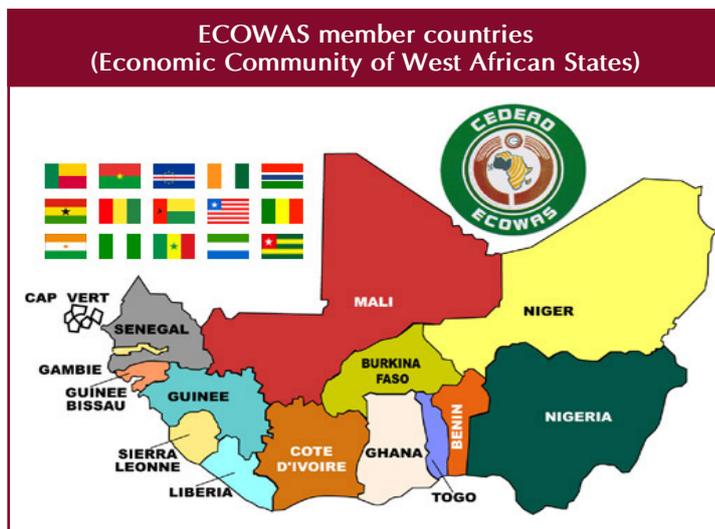
These strategic reflections may feed into projects run by governments and development partners, as well as the private sector and West African citizens.

Questions, objectives pursued and methods of realization			
QUESTIONS	OBJECTIVES PURSUED	METHODS OF REALIZATION	
Structural transformations for the future of the region to 2030/2050	Discerning and analysing the main transformations underway that will play a determining role in the future of the region.	Foresight horizon-scanning system on 7 to 8 topics	<b>FORESIGHT HORIZON-SCANNING AND ANALYSIS</b>
Visions for the future produced by actors at the international and local levels	Identifying and analysing how the actors involved conceive or imagine their destiny and the future of the ECOWAS region.	Horizon-scanning, analyses of products, interviews	
What futures can we conceive on specific or global issues?	Building thinking on different possible future configurations and debating these, to stimulate strategic reflection on the part of the actors. Discussing, debating and demonstrating possible futures on specific or global issues.	Foresight workshops	<b>FORESIGHT WORKSHOPS</b>
Actions to build the future and transform the present	Identifying and eliciting possible (total or partial) responses to specific or global challenges; promoting action on these.	Innovation-oriented foresight workshops: <i>Le Lab</i>	

## 2. What Boundaries?

In the first instance, the Forum will focus on West Africa, where the regional grouping, ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) provides a coherent framework for foresight analysis.

1. ECOWAS is one of the cornerstones of West African transformation dynamics.
  2. The territory covered by ECOWAS is immense and its borders are constantly evolving.
  3. ECOWAS countries enjoy a degree of regional integration that is as yet imperfect but improving.
  4. It is already the world's 17th largest economy.
  5. The ECOWAS area continues to face serious social vulnerabilities and a rapidly growing population.
  6. The entrenchment of trafficking and growing jihadism, and the effects of current development strategies are vectors of a highly uncertain evolution.
  7. Foresight studies produced in the ECOWAS region are few and far between, often segmented and often oriented by the framework in which they are conducted.
- ▮ ECOWAS cannot be artificially isolated from the international context and particularly from regional dynamics, which means that we must take into account developments that could arise particularly to the North (Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania) and to the East (primarily in Chad).



## 3. Activities

### FORESIGHT HORIZON-SCANNING AND ANALYSIS

#### Thematic Horizon-Scanning

1. Macroeconomic and financial stability.
2. Evolution of economies and activities.
3. Rural development.
4. Management and exploitation of natural resources.
5. Education and training.
6. Infrastructures, networks and mobility.
7. Political forms and governance.

#### Horizon-scanning on representations of the future

Representations of the future reveal the grids of analysis and often the preferences of the actors who produce them; when they are influential, they structure collective imagination and can also influence behaviour. Horizon-scanning on representations of the future will identify and analyse visions produced by a wide variety of actors: international or regional institutions, countries (emergence plans, etc.), companies, associations and civil society, intellectuals and academics, think tanks, artists, etc.

### FORESIGHT WORKSHOPS

Foresight workshops are moments of collaborative work that may have two (potentially combined) purposes: collectively to explore the possible futures of a zone, an organization, a problem, and/or collectively to devise solutions to problems identified in foresight work.

These workshops will be informed by foresight horizon-scanning studies, by contributions from the different participants and will draw on working methods from foresight studies, design and innovation.

### Products

#### Written products

- ▮ Thematic foresight diagnostics (2 per year to provide a broad overview on a particular topic)
- ▮ Foresight analyses on major issues (e.g. What prospects for the "middle classes"? or What scenarios for the CFA franc? etc.)
- ▮ Horizon-scanning notes on emergent phenomena or facts of significance for the future
- ▮ Key Players' Views to convey visions of the future or innovative projects

- ▶ "Critical analyses" on different representations of the future coming from private or public actors
- ▶ An annual consolidated report

### Events

- ▶ Annual presentation day, discussion, proposals
- ▶ Participatory Foresight Workshops

The events will most often be held in the countries concerned

### Community

- ▶ A website and space for discussion and debate online

### Dissemination, communication

- ▶ Most of our output will be freely accessible, will be widely communicated and will aim to fuel discussion and informed debate on the future of Western Africa and Sahel.
- ▶ Partner organizations will have priority access to meetings, debates and workshops.

## Governance of the Forum

The foresight forum has been developed by Futuribles International, under the auspices of its president and its board of directors. It comprises:

- ▶ An honorary chair: Alioune SALL
- ▶ An executive director: Thierry HOMMEL
- ▶ A scientific secretariat
- ▶ A team of experts from the area concerned, sector specialists or privileged witnesses of ongoing transformations. These experts will be regularly involved in the context of the horizon-scanning and foresight workshops.

- ▶ A scientific committee meeting at least once a year and evaluating the product, making recommendations on future work, and on experts to bring on board.
- ▶ A steering committee made up of representatives of the organizations that finance the initiative and a representative of Futuribles International. This committee meets twice a year and familiarizes itself with the work carried out and with the scientific committee's views, and makes recommendations for further work.

## Financing

- ▶ The forum is to be financed by private or public organizations, which will thus take part in reasoned foresight debate on the future of Africa and will potentially be able, through the steering committee, to play a part in the choice of priority topics for study. The identities of those financing the project will be clearly advertised.
- ▶ Futuribles International guarantees the independence of the thinking and debate conducted within the framework of the "Forum".



*Alioune Sall*

*Thierry Hommel*

## Contacts

**Thierry Hommel :**

[thierry.hommel@gmail.com](mailto:thierry.hommel@gmail.com)

+ 33 (0)1 64 97 89 54

**Laurie Grzesiak :**

[lgrzesiak@futuribles.com](mailto:lgrzesiak@futuribles.com)

+ 33 (0)1 53 67 37 74

# SUBSCRIPTION FORM FORUM ON WEST AFRICA'S FUTURE

To be returned to Aude Houguenague, Futuribles International,  
47, rue de Babylone – 75007 Paris – France. VAT no. FR 21.784314940  
Tél. + 33 (0)1 53 63 37 73 • Fax + 33 (0)1 42 22 65 54  
E-mail : [ahouguenague@futuribles.com](mailto:ahouguenague@futuribles.com) • [www.futuribles.com](http://www.futuribles.com)

Name and Forename .....  
Organization – Department .....  
Position within the organization .....  
Address .....  
City ..... Postcode .....  
Country ..... Tél. .... Fax .....  
E-mail ..... VAT number .....

## WISH TO SUBSCRIBE AND HEREBY PAY THE SUM OF

- Partner member of Futuribles International: 20,000 euros excluding tax,  
24,000 euros incl. tax
- Non-member of Futuribles International: 25,000 euros excluding tax,  
30,000 euros incl. tax

By cheque to Futuribles International, or

- by bank transfer: Banque Neuflyze OBC, F-75410, Paris cedex 08  
IBAN FR76 3078 8001 0710 2020 4120 024, BIC NSMBFRPPXXX
- by Visa     by American Express  
Card number..... Expiry date ..... Security code.....
- On receipt of an invoice

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Main Contact Person (if different from legal representative)

1. Name and Forename.....  
E-mail .....  
Function ..... Department .....  
Tél. .... Fax .....

### Other Contacts

2. Name and Forename .....E-mail .....  
3. Name and Forename .....E-mail .....  
4. Name and Forename.....E-mail .....

Signed at (place) ..... on (date) .....

Signature and stamp

- Tick this box if you do not wish your details to be available for use by third parties.  
(French Data Protection Act: right of access to and rectification of data at Futuribles International, 47, rue de Babylone,  
75007 Paris, France).

## **FUTURIBLES INTERNATIONAL**

Futuribles International was created in 1968 and is a centre for foresight thinking and studies. Its aim is to provide a horizon-scanning and forecasting function for future-oriented decision-making and action, and for policies and strategies designed to meet the major challenges ahead.

The association is committed to conducting its studies over the long term in association with its members and with the actors and experts most capable of informing them. It ensures that its thinking is disseminated and shared in such a way as to feed into public debate (through its website, events, Futuribles journal etc.). The association wishes in this way to contribute to decision-making and action that best incorporate an understanding of the issues it plays a part in elucidating.

The association has around two hundred members, individuals and organizations. It draws for its studies on a permanent team, some forty scientific advisers and a wide network of experts and professionals.

Futuribles has been involved for many years, directly or indirectly, in foresight thinking initiatives in Africa

The Association's studies are available on its website:  
[www.futuribles.com](http://www.futuribles.com)



**ASSOCIATION FUTURIBLES INTERNATIONAL**

47, rue de Babylone, 75007 Paris, France

Tél. + 33 (0)1 53 63 37 70 - Fax + 33 (0)1 42 22 65 54

E-mail : [croels@futuribles.com](mailto:croels@futuribles.com) - Site Internet : [www.futuribles.com](http://www.futuribles.com)