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WORLD MARITIME UNIVERSITY
MALMÖ, Sweden

THE CONTRIBUTION OF MARITIME ACTIVITIES TO
THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAURITANIA

by

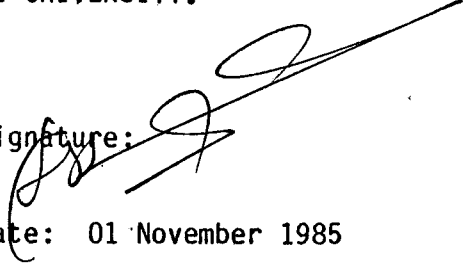
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Mauritania

November 1985

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the World Maritime University
in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the
GENERAL MARITIME ADMINISTRATION COURSE.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are
not necessarily endorsed by the UNIVERSITY.

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THE WORLD MARITIME UNIVERSITY

Malmö, SWEDEN

THE CONTRIBUTION OF MARITIME ACTIVITIES TO
THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAURITANIA

BY

SALL ALY SAMBA

This paper is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Science (MSc) in General Maritime Administration to the World Maritime University, Malmö.

December 1985.

In the name of ALLAH, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION	1.
CHAPTER ONE :	
MARITIME RESOURCES - INVENTORY -	
Ports : Port of Nouadhibou	4.
Port of Nouakchott	7.
Research Center	8.
CHAPTER TWO :	
PREVIOUS PRACTICES - PRESENT SITUATION.	12.
Fishing activities	13.
. Artisanal Sector	16.
. Industrial Sector	20.
. Present Situation	22.
CHAPTER THREE :	
BALANCE OF PAYMENTS	27.
. Foreign exchange.	29.
. Shipping activity - Maritime Transports	32.
CHAPTER FOUR :	
GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS	41.
1 - National Legislation	
2 - International Cooperation	43.
3 - Labour Force	47.
4 - Fishing Fleet - Structure	52.
5 - Research Programmes	53.
CONCLUSIONS	57.
BIBLIOGRAPHY	60.

INTRODUCTION.

Situated in West Africa, Mauritania has an area of 1,030,700 Sq.km (397,954 Sq.mi) an estimated population of 2 million habitants and belongs to the third world. Consequently she is confronted with the economic problems of development. The aim of this Thesis is to elaborate and to relate the solution which might be given to these problems hence the title :

" THE CONTRIBUTION OF MARITIME ACTIVITIES TO THE
DEVELOPMENT OF MAURITANIA " .

The total population is estimated at 2 million of whom great part is used to deal with agricultural activities mainly along the Senegal River and in oases in the North of the country. Overall agricultural development has been hampered not only unfavorable physical conditions but also by a complicated land-tenure system, inadequate transportation and the low priority placed on agriculture by most government development plans. The country's traditional dependence on food imports was heightened by the lack of rain for seven years.

Indeed, it should also be of interest to point out to the reader the circumstances existing in the country as this Thesis is being written. Nowadays, in Africa the most serious problem facing many countries is drought and the population of Mauritania composed by Maures, Halpulars, Soninkés and Wolofs bound together, deeply in their believes in Islam

which may explain their strenght about their behaviour in the following situation.

Indeed, no rain has fallen in this large area for seven years. So the desert is growing quickly and consequently rivers and lakes are drying up, landscapes are sadly disappearing and animals are finally dying out little by little.

As in all climates in desert areas the climate of Mauritania is dry and hot, hostile to animals and people. This makes agricultural activities unsactisfactory and have never exceeded national consumption even before the latest drought catastrophe. However, some years ago exception could be made for the Southern part of the country. Unfortunately today this area is also suffering. It is a difficult situation for many of the people of this country because of the resulting consequences. This situation remains anyhow troubled in several aspects.

In addition to some programmes which may be designed to develop a global approach for combating the catastrophe affecting my country, I would like in this Thesis to give some ideas that may contribute towards solving the development problem. In other words, as far as Mauritania is concerned I really, feel that the effects caused, by the drought should be terminated by the sea. This means that the maritime resources exploited rationally for Mauritania's needs will greatly participate in solving the economic development problems.

3.

How can we overcome this difficult situation or how can this challenge be controlled ? The answer may come from the following Chapters since it is the main goal of this study.

CHAPTER ONE :MARITIME RESOURCES - INVENTORY -

The coastal side of the country stretches from Senegal in the South to the Sahara waters in the North and because of the effects of the Gulf Stream and Canarian Cold Current along the African coast the country has waters full of fish of various kinds. They are among the most favorable and most important waters for fishing activities in the World.

Many studies which have been made in this area mention that an immense quantity of stocks of other maritime products such as crawfish, prawns, shrimps, squids are also available. Statistics below.

Besides this, the country has an 800 km Atlantic coast line which is a necessary factor for shipping activities between the country and any part of the World as far as International Shipping business is concerned. This fact could provide the scope for tourism industry promotion. On the other hand, by investing large sums of money in this sector, it may contribute considerably to the balance of payments.

PORTS.PORT OF NOUADHIBOU :

This port is the old port of Port-Etienne of former days which was built in 1905 and has always been a fishing port on the Atlantic coast. Today, because of its

efficiency a great deal of investment is being made in this port for growing maritime activities.

MINERAL PORT OF NOUADHIBOU.

This port belongs to the Company called SNIMSEM which deals with the extraction of Iron in the City of Zouérate. Therefore it is a specialized port for handling the raw material which requires high technology and skilled personnel as far as the port operations are concerned. So 50 people are employed in this port dealing with the maintenance and the exploitation of its installations such as the manning of the derricks, cranes, cargo handling, etc.

Here, again it can be obviously noticed that the activities of this port contribute positively to the economic aspect of the country. Once again, the sea plays its role fully well as can be expected according to the following figures.

PORT OF NOUADHIBOU :

Date of foundation : 1905

2 Quays : 1 for fishing activities
1 for shipping activities

STATISTICS 1983.

IMPORT.

101,022 Tons

EXPORT.

302,000 Tons

DETAILS :

Quantity of fresh fish unloaded by trawlers in
the port : 39,000 T

6.

Supplies of water and ice/refuelling :

Gas oil : 25,000 T

Water : 21,000 T

Ice : 6,000 T

STATISTICS 1982.

IMPORT.

116,000 T

EXPORT.

85,000 T

Ship to ship operations : 147,000 T

(transhipment)

DETAILS :

Quantity of fresh fish unloaded : 10,000 Tons

Supplies of water and ice/refuelling :

Gas oil : 16,000 T

Water : 14,000 T

Ice : 6,000 T

REMARKS :

It appears that a quantity of 21,000 Tons has been made as ship to ship operations (transhipment) between 1982 and 1983. This quantity may not be taken into consideration as flow of products by the port.

MINERAL PORT OF NOUADHIBOU.

Dealing especially with the handling of raw material (iron) extracted from Zouérate and shipped to Europe by specialized ships.

STATISTICS.

1982	!	1983	!	1984
7,653,000	!	7,402,000	!	9,530,000

Ports called within Europe by these ships.

Nouadhibou	-	Rotterdam
Nouadhibou	-	Port Talbot
"-	-	Anvers
"-	-	Tarente
"-	-	Dunkerque
"-	-	Fos Sur Mer
"-	-	Sagunto
"-	-	Japan
"-	-	Lusboa

REMARK : Average of 9 Million tons a year.

PORT OF NOUAKCHOTT :

Founded in the sixties, Nouakchott is the political Capital of the country and has for a long time been faced with a lot of problems related to supplies. That is why the Government has made great efforts at that time and built the wharf of Nouakchott in 1966 in order to solve this problem. With these modest facilities at that time Mauritanian shipping started within the Ministry of Equipment Administration.

Nowadays in order to resolve the problems related to supplies mentioned earlier particularly for Nouakchott-City but also for the country as a whole the Government

has decided to build a deep port at Nouakchott near the South of the former wharf of Nouakchott. This port is fully designed for international trade and shipping activities. This important task is being achieved with the co-operation of the People's Republic of China.

RESEARCH CENTER :

In any field, the aspect of research is the most complex and expensive.

Eventhough Mauritanian people seem unconcerned about all maritime activities, the Government has strengthened its approach. So an appropriate institution called "CENTRE NATIONAL DE RECHERCHES OCEANOGRAPHIQUES ET DES PECHES " was founded at Nouadhibou dealing with many aspects of marine research in the country. Its main goals are at the national level to promote, develop, manage and coordinate elements of the sea investigations. Despite the limitation of its financial resources the results of its activities which have been reached are for the time being acceptable. However, as far as this Institute is concerned something remains worrying in several aspects : That is to say, that eventhough the results of the Center are satisfactory it is not in the habit of the users to care about it, neither the nationals nor the foreign shipowners, while the goal of the Institute is to deal with research in order to inform the operators all about the sea such as the temperature, the catch, prohibited zones, the best places for fishing etc. On other words what is going on in the national

waters. I hope that also this attitude will disappear as soon as possible and all operators will discover the necessary tool for their business which is the Centre National de Recherches Oceanographiques et des Pêches (CNROP) of Nouadhibou.

Estimations :

Fishing resources estimated from zone to zone and by nature.

From zone North to Cap Blanc - Cap TIMIRIS

Cephalopodes	:	42,000 T
Fish	:	20,000 T

Cap TIMIRIS - N'DIAGO

Cephalopodes	:	10,000 T
Fish	:	50,000 T

Internal waters Banc d'Arguin	:	20,000 T
-------------------------------	---	----------

Pelagic resources :

Chinchard jaune	:	50,000 T
"- noire		250,000 T
Sardine	:	200,000 T
Maquereau	:	50,000 T
Others	:	100,000 T

Specialized Fisheries :

Crawfish	:	600 T
Shrimps	:	500 T
Thon	:	50,000 T
Merlu	:	30,000 T

All activities of the Institute are carried out by two (2) vessels N'Diago and Almoravide manned by reduced crews following the technical and scientific committee instructions. It should also be mentioned that a specialized Newspaper called "Bulletin de Recherche" is published dealing with all activities being carried out by the Institution for the information of the users.

So far it is possible to summarize maritime resources as follows :

- 800 km of coastline
- waters full of fish of various kinds
- efficient ports with relevant services in the right places.

It is easy to understand that problems related to economic development of any country cannot be overcome overnight. Therefore, adequate policies have to be taken in many fields at the same time because of the connections which might be involved resulting of their development. So, in some aspects, national legislation has to follow the experience of great maritime nations and International Conventions such as MARPOL, SOLAS, STCW, training equipment in ports, cargo handling etc.

Anyway, the gap existing between the country as developing nation and the developed countries has to be filled as soon as possible. This giant task can only be achieved by hard and permanent work, diligent and deeply thought for ourselves.

11.

This point leads of course, to what can be done, what has to be done, what should be done in the maritime field according to our own realities but also to the International requirements.

CHAPTER TWO :PREVIOUS PRACTICES - PRESENT SITUATION.

As it is mentioned earlier Mauritanian waters remain among the most important areas for fishing activities in the World. Despite this favorable factor the country faces a lot of problems related to supplies, foreign currencies limited budget just as in any developing country. I totally agree however, with the fact that it is quite impossible to establish any system of development without making a package of conditions that includes the building of roads, ports, bridges and transportation systems by land, air and sea. In other words communication facilities within the country should be connected to the same network of the same nature on the international level. It is a way of development leading of course, in some extent, to efforts which have to be given social interest at the national level. The question is how efficiently these objectives can be achieved in Mauritania through maritime economics ?

I would like to remind the reader of the fact that in the following text he/she might find the answer to this question by reading it carefully. It is anyway, the goal of this Thesis.

Earlier the Mauritanian State followed the policy of licences of fishing to foreign shipowners. This action had a single advantage which was to quickly contribute to the National Budget by earning foreign currency. At the

same time however those shipowners did not care much about national laws and regulations that prohibited fishing in certain zones. So they destroyed small fish and other products because they were led only by their own desire for profit. It was a bad experience intensified by the fact that the sea at that time had not any impact on the daily life of Mauritanian people. They were not at all interested in maritime activities. Most of them were dealing with agricultural activities and have never been involved in the maritime field. They have never even eaten fish and other maritime products according to their own tradition and culture. This situation, up to now remains troublesome because of the effects of the drought mentioned earlier in the introduction. They do know however that over 80% of our needs are imported goods and are introduced into the country by sea. I believe that their attitude should and can be changed little by little.

In order to make people aware of this phenomenon a national legislation for instance that motivates seafarers should be implemented. So many jobs, accommodations, centers of entertainment will be provided for them. Literature and arts are to be directed towards the sea life in this respect the media (Radio + TV newspapers can certainly help.

FISHING ACTIVITIES : - Previous practices.

Every human problem contains an easy solution. It is simple, plausible & false.

H.L.Mencken.

Fishing activity in Mauritania remains the backbone of the national economy, nowadays according to the present circumstances described earlier. This activity shows a worrying paradox. The country has indeed one of the most favorable fishing areas in the world but is still looking for the adequate management policy for these resources.

So far people have realised that the system of licences to the foreign shipowners has not been a success. They are sensitive about this old practice of management related to resources. Furthermore this system gave the country many difficulties related to the way for following strictly the legislation concerning the fishing field because of the fact that several citizens were involved in the role of brokers between the foreign interests and the Mauritanian State. Fortunately all Mauritanian businessmen concerned with fishing activities at that time were not involved in this business as such, because some of them have very often shown their honesty and fairness in business as far as their country was concerned. May they find here my regards.

But others, because of the involvement in the foreign interest have always succeeded in preventing Mauritanian seamen to attend the operations of fishing vessels

at sea in title of their status of national crews as stipulated in bilateral agreements. The Government has always wanted to develop, promote, encourage the profession of seafarers and the aim is to control what is connected to maritime activities. National seafarers don't always understand these measures but decide not physically to attend on board the ships by any means. They are trying to receive only their wages at the end of each month as national crews.

Besides this, the situation is troublesome very often because of several claims of this new population in the field. They do feel that they are not given their full rights in spite of the fact that they are not working on board the ships. This phenomenon of Mauritanian labour force at sea did last for a long time because no one wanted them on board. They do not want it either. The maritime administration however, made great efforts in many aspects, struggled hard in order to make people sensitive about this situation. The maritime Head Office of Nouadhibou played a big role as the representative of the Ministry of fishing and Merchant Marine.

This situation of Mauritanian seafarers described above has always been defective because of the lack of skill, training for most of the people involved, finally because of lack of capital and adequate legislation as in many developing countries.

We could easily say that the devil was controlling anything connected to the sea at that time in the

country. The same fact of lack of everything at all levels divided fishing activities in two (2) main sectors :

- . Artisanal Sector,
- . Industrial Sector.

ARTISANAL SECTOR :

This sector has always been carried out by Canarians (people from the Canary Islands) and nationals. Their capital and the means used by them have also been very limited and consequently their production has never exceeded the local consumption.

It has to be pointed out, however, that for the time being great efforts are being made in order to join the global approach for combating the catastrophe of the drought mentioned earlier. Here, the important decision taken by the military Government in 1979 related to the registration of seamen in MAURITANIA appears as well. So it has been decided to introduce some flexibility into the legislation in order to transform those who have always dealt with agricultural activities because of the loss of their drove, herds and so on, by the effects of the drought.

According to this important decision of the national authorities many people who have never been at sea became automatically seafarers at least in papers given to them by the maritime administration. So, for the period 1980-1982 a population of 1500 workers were added to the regular national list of seafarers. The decision by itself was meaningful, wise and helpful for these destitute people.

However some measures should have been taken and other packages of dispositions connected to the legal, financial and organizational aspects of the field beforehand but also to the training of all the people involved.

Unfortunately this precaution has not been fulfilled. That is why at the beginning a great deal of confusion was noticed due to the deteriorated healthy climate given by these new-comers of the field. They strongly believed in their rights of their new status given to them by the Administration of the country. This situation deeply affected the management of several national fishing companies as far as the labour force was concerned at that time.

Consequently, these companies went bankrupt or out of competition because of this phenomenon of the field. We have to learn from it and be able to choose in the future between the "hen and the eggs". In other words for the promotion the motivation, the blossoming of seamen we don't have to suffocate the national fishing companies which somehow are important links of the national economy. The skill in the choice of the employment of seafarers is required in these aspects :

- The artisanal sector has many characteristics which maintained it at the same level for a long time.

- The tools and other means used by these fishermen are old, quite often outmoded and don't necessarily follow the required modern technics. So they use gillnets, long-

line, small fishing vessels, even canoes as in the former days of mankind.

- They operate as full time, part time and bonafide fishermen.

- Besides this, the profession is always transmitted from father to son(s) and especially within the population of "Thiovallo" in the Southern part of the country and among the IMARAGUENS tribus along the coastal line between Nouadhibou and Nouakchott. These were the only people dealing with fishing activities in the country before the raging fire available nowadays in MAURITANIA.

It should be noticed that the production of this sector is consumed locally and very seldom exported. Nevertheless this situation has started to change gradually and nowadays people are struggling harder and harder to reach the international market.

Some products are available such as stock fish, smoked fish and salt fish. Because of the lack of capital, skill and the infrastructure mentioned earlier, people hesitate to enter the field and finally the strong competition of other operators in fishing elsewhere makes the artisanal sector very weak and uncertain.

Despite this fact described above we can say that Mauritania people are fishing no matter what level they are involved in. Very often they are led by foreign interests as brokers, intermediaries and the cycle cited above

which may start again. So far I do believe that the effects of the drought are the real cause of their new attitude for the time being as far as the sea is concerned. However, hope remains. The results are positive. Due to the great amount invested in fishing activities, people may be sufficiently aware of the importance of this sector in Mauritania economy. Up to now some 60 million U.S. Dollars 45,500 belong to the national privates. This may illustrate a bit how important their shares are in the business.

General view can be given more effectively by the following figures.

Cost infrastructure ashore : 55 million U.S. Dollars already invested from the total forecasted plan of 142,750,000 U.S. Dollars. The Government has invested 21 million U.S. Dollars in the port of Nouadhibou and so far this amount has generated very positive effects in terms of registered results in fishing economy. For the year 1983 alone, the total exportations represented 148 million U.S. Dollars for 316,653 tons of fish. From these figures the part of fishing activity represents 18.89% of Internal Brut Product which means that this activity is going very well and ought to be promoted. It has to be given the maximum attention by the national authorities as far as the exportations of the country are concerned.

However it is of interest to point out that these figures both belong to the artisanal and industrial sector

of the field of fishing activities.

Before starting with the industrial sector it has to be mentioned that nowadays the artisanal sector alone contains our hope for helping the country in solving the problem of starvation.

Indeed, looking at the production of this sector annually, 800,000 tons of fish commercialized in the domestic and international market, it may have found that remarkable efforts can be made to fill the gap of lack of protein generated by the drought.

Industrial Sector : This sector is the most complicated one because of the high costs required in its various operations. Great amounts of money are needed in order to reach satisfactory results but also to meet the requirements of the International market. So huge trawlers with sophisticated equipment are in operation all year round by multinationals or other governments through bilateral agreements.

The required capital for these operations is not available at the national level hence the introduction of some Mauritanian businessmen among foreign operators who have knitted all aspects of this field as a whole according to their own interest. Very often in the past these people could even be special advisers to Maritime Administration. This scope may explain to some extent the turmoil already noticed at that time in the history of the fishing field as such in this country. According to this system ma-

ny foreign operators or their intermediaries were deeply involved.

Many countries were operating in Mauritania at that time, some of them are as follows :

France, Soviet Union, Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Roumania, Poland, Holland, Germany and Japan.

We could say that the heart of the fishing world was situated in Mauritanian waters. This made the situation distressing and difficult to control because of the noticed piracy of several fishing vessels which were destroying small fish and operating without being allowed by the country within our national jurisdiction of 200 miles.

Because of the lack of means to control such a large area the State could not prevent these operators from damaging a lot of stocks of fish during many years.

The sector was mainly left in the hands of foreign shipowners and consequently about 15 billions of the national currency (Ouguiya) expected as a total revenue from the field, We believe that only one milliard was certainly joining the national budget in terms of taxes, costs of licences, penalties etc.

However 13,000 jobs were created for nationals in the fisheries and fish-processing industries. It appears that from this brief description the old policy related to the fisheries was not satisfactory. That is the reason why in 1979 the military Government took and published a new policy concerning all operations related to fishing matters.

Present Situation : As in many countries in the world, Mauritania has extended its jurisdiction (E.E.Z.) Economic Exclusive Zone up to 200 miles. According to many studies which have been done and related to this large area, it appeared that due to the conditions of waters the area is very favorable for the maritime life. That is why plenty of stocks of fish and other maritime products are available.

Some statistics have been published long time ago but they are still of great interest.

Pelagic species : 700,000 tons of stocks/year.

Groundfish : 400,000 tons of stocks/year.

Other products such as lobsters, shrimps are not mentioned anywhere despite their remarkable quantity within the national jurisdiction.

Anyway these stocks are not exploited as they should be. The great question raised for the Government is how to obtain the maximum for the Mauritanians need from these resources in order to get the most benefit from them ?

Being sensitive enough about this situation the Government has since 1979 established a new policy related to the field of fishing. So policy of licences described earlier does not exist any more and factory trawlers are not permitted to operate any longer in our Exclusive Economic Zone of 200 miles.

A package of conditions and rules are gathered within this new policy to be followed by shipowners in order

to be allowed to operate in MAURITANIA. Among these conditions a few can be as follows :

- Compulsory establishment of joint venture between foreign shipowners and Mauritanian citizens, as the first condition beforehand in order to operate in Mauritania.

- A program of investment has to be established before the settlement of each company for a given time.

- Production of certificate from a Mauritanian Bank which shows that such a company has put the Capital needed for its operations in Mauritania within one of the national banks.

- Wages of workers, insurance, taxes for the Government.

So it can be noticed that fortunately the situation concerning the attitude of people related to the sea described above started to change gradually. I ought to say that the drought contributed deeply to this fact. Nowadays people are highly sensitive about what is going on in the Ministry of fishing. For the time being the most reliable activity in the country is the fishing activity. It is worth adding in this connection that people have focussed all their efforts on fishing. Fishing at sea, fishing in mind, in dreams, everywhere which is not of course without danger. We may notice that the opposite phenomenon from the one described earlier as far as the attitude of people is concerned starts again.

For the national interests people have to learn how to do business in the maritime industry and must try to understand the experience of other maritime nations. They have in addition to this to undertake some projects in the field for their own interests and to be able to afford the price.

However it has to be remembered that such an activity has always been dangerous for mankind according to the risks involved such as those related to safety as such financial losses etc. Therefore many dispositions concerning legal aspects are needed but also those which may facilitate the flexibility by law of all operations for nationals in the artisanal sector as well. In order to achieve this aim a strong organization created by an adequate legislation is necessary. It seems obvious that the present Government has understood that so far and has undertaken all dispositions to manage this sector as it should be.

In this connection, it can be easily noticed that mainly at Nouadhibou a great deal of fishing plants are realised in respect of this new policy of fishing activity. Some heavy investments are being made in the port area concerning its equipment and its extension as well, several nationals have invested in this sector on their own, by acquisition of fishing vessels in the second hand market. The important point is that they started to change their mind regarding these matters which I find positive. However I must confess that this procedure of changes has to follow

a defined order for example by law to become successful.

The final aim of any operation is to reach the set objectives as far as the fishing field in Mauritania is concerned. It is obvious that some results have been achieved so far, by the present Government. And according to this fact our people have the right to hope more profit about it. New jobs are obtained from the operations of ships of these joint ventures already established under the auspice of this new policy. But, the unemployment in the field still exists because of the new definition of the seafarers discussed earlier. I believe that with some efforts in particular from the maritime Administration within the legal field this situation can be solved without great damage.

The policy related to the employment of Mauritians on board all ships that operate in the country should be strengthened. It is the best way for training them with the hope that one day they will be able to control this field without the necessary foreign assistance. This is the eternal fight indeed. Like the famous English statement which stipulates that "England expects everyone to do his duty"; Mauritania has also the hope that every individual will do his duty.

It is obvious that if the workers attend their jobs on board their ships, their wages will spread their positive effects all over the country. The impact of this capital of investment for wages from the employers will certainly affect the Mauritanian life positively.

The present case of the MAUSOV Company is a clear example. I wish we had only five companies of this importance operating in following our national legislation then the economic development needed for the country would start right away.

Unfortunately, as usual other factors have to be taken into consideration too. But whatever the available resources whatever their importance the best method of management is required in order to meet the set objectives. However, according to the results reached so far it is permitted to be optimistic despite the effects of the threatening drought. This is said because the payment of national wages alone would obviously replace the losses of the agricultural revenue of the country but in order to reach this situation any rest is allowed neither for workers nor for the Government. Watchfulness and meticulousness are strongly required in this field.

CHAPTER THREE : BALANCE OF PAYMENTS.

Mauritania, being a developing country has a trade characterized by the volume of imported goods higher than the one of the exported goods.

The country does not have efficient means of transportation, networks of shipping, rails, land transportation fleet etc and any organization or government aiming to achieve the task of development of such a country has to take this fact into consideration.

Though, the impact of Iron and Copper production in the North of the country has had positive results to the national economy for a long time. Nowadays, because of the crisis existing in the International Steel Industry the revenue from this sector decreased considerably while the only chance of economic development of the country was expected from it a few year back. It appeared then, that this hope obviously has been extinguished little by little in the minds of many Mauritians.

It is sadly noticed for the time being that the drought is strongly affecting the entire country on one hand, and on the other hand, the price of national products on which its fundamental needs in foreign exchange are based is decreasing on the international markets.

However, as we used to say in Mauritania "Allah does never close all doors tightly at once in life".

It remains therefore for us to look towards the ocean and to deal with the fishing field in order to improve

the Balance of Payments by its revenues. As far as the effects of the drought being so harmful, the crisis on the international markets for our main products is so strong that the only hope for survival remains for my country on the ocean and its floor. Furthermore, the competition within these markets of our major products are getting weaker and weaker.

The following illustrates what can be expected from the field of fishing.

As mentioned earlier, during the period 1972-1973 the revenue from the national production of Iron and Copper tended to decrease. So the total amount of our exportations started to fall in terms of both value and volume.

These items represented up to 80% of our exportation revenues in the past but decreased and represented only 42% in 1983.

The gap is clearly deep and wide because it is higher than 50% of the initial rate, therefore it is very hard to compensate in terms of economic management. Fortunately the wish connected to the maritime resources, their exportation and management appeared on the horizon. So the previous earnings from this field which were 10% in 1975 in terms of the share of the fishing field as a whole in the national incomes suddenly became 49.6% in 1983 almost 50% of our exportations. This phenomenon shows the considerable importance of the sector to the national economy.

Besides this, as far as the profits generated by

fishing activities are concerned it also proves that the fishing sector is really profitable from the expert managers point of view. In these regards two opinions have to be taken into account :

- the opinion of shipowners,
- the opinion of the State.

From the operators' point of view there is profit when the generated revenues are higher than the total cost spent on each operation while for the State the way of evaluating such profits is complicated because several other factors ought to be involved such as number of jobs created, taxes paid to the State, the real impact of wages given to the workers etc.

It has to be noticed that the key words are the profits reached by the operators, the only reason for any investment, but for the Government, the amount paid in terms of taxes may very often influence the establishment of any company.

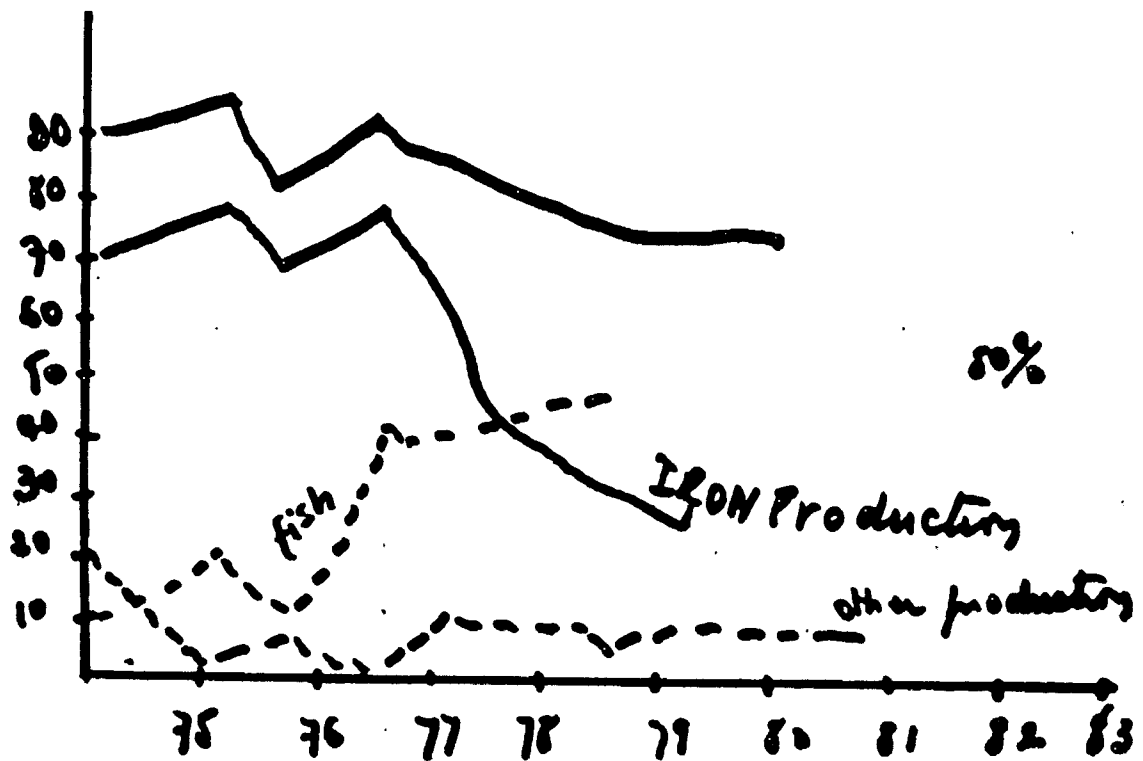
Foreign Exchange :

The management of the fishing sector would never be mentioned as a successful one if it had not generated a considerable flood of foreign currencies for the country. This impact on our Balance of Payments was extremely important to our national economy in 1982 and has also assumed the role of a salvage operation for the country at that time.

As in many developing countries the lack of these

foreign currencies considerably affects the growth of their means of production, because in order to improve the connected operations, new equipment, various appliances, tools in modern technology and know-how are needed. Therefore the Balance of Payments must function very well in order for these countries to be able to afford these items as they are essential components in their economic development.

The following table shows a worrying situation related to the effects of the decreased production of Iron ore of the country.



Fortunately for the time being the fishing field is sensibly improving the Balance of Payments. However this sector, being very close to shipping matters by the fact

that it is a very intensive industry, a highly competitive one it consequently needs sophisticated equipment, skilled personnel in the main steps of its operations.

So it requires great capital in foreign exchange and this difficult cycle starts again while the country is still facing financial constraints because of all the aspects described earlier.

Coming back to the detailed analysis of the impact of fishing activities to the Balance of Payments it is obvious that this could be positive when imported goods for the field on the national level (in terms of value are lower than the total amount of importations in terms of revenues added to the total amount of licences so far paid to the National Budget.

So in 1982 it was published that this impact was more than 45 million U.S. Dollars while the one of exportations for 1982 alone rose up to 175% and the cost ratio has then been higher than 54% in the same year, that is to illustrate how the impact of fishing activities has cost more than 50% of the total expenses of the country despite the status of beginners of the majority of the operators involved.

These figures show that the sector obtained positive results as far as the foreign currencies needed are concerned in 1982. It is also said by skilled experts involved in the field that the country has the right and is able to expect more from the sector because it is not yet

in the position of giving its optimum. Therefore once again, the hope remains on the maritime resources, on their various aspects. If some projects were achieved within the national planning they would certainly and considerably contribute to this fight for the foreign exchange. The salvage and the welfare of the country will probably suffer from the lack of these currencies.

- I am thinking especially about the strong and much needed control and watchkeeping of the exportation and importation price rate of goods of the country,

- About the promotion as soon as possible of the national flag of fishing and shipping as well, in order for nationals to be able to replace foreign shipowners in their usual operations,

- About, last and not least, the establishment of shiprepair centers in one of the ports available in the very near future.

Shipping activity - Maritime Transport :

As it is said, shipping being an intensive and highly competitive industry, implicates huge investments Capital from the country for its successful operations. The greater amounts of money are involved in this particular field, the higher the expected profits or the risks connected and losses to be faced. Consequently dealing with such a sector it is not always easy, and it requires maximum care from national Authorities due to these characteristics.

A developing country like Mauritania however, ought to do its best in order to save more and more foreign ex-

change for the needs of its population. In this connection the shipping field should not be automatically excluded, eventhough this area remains very risky but can be started with care by the State.

The need of a national shipping flag is raised more from the worry about the freedom and independence and even the prestige of the country or its sovereignty rather than from immediate results expected from profits by its management.

For instance, a Mauritanian businessman interested in a shipment of certain goods from Nouadhibou to Nouakchott for the time being, has to wait for any ship which may sail from Europe along the African coasts in order to achieve this operation because there is no way for him to move his goods to Nouakchott at sea by other means available at the national level. This case illustrates the constraints because of the lack of a national flag carrier. This lack of maritime means of transportation can strongly affect the economic relations between Mauritania and other countries as well.

According to the above mentioned, the creation of a national shipping flag is obviously justified even as an emergency operation, however it needs very careful and deep thoughts on several steps of preparations and studies beforehand.

People are never sufficiently aware of its implications. Consequently progressive steps in set objectives should be strictly observed as a general rule in such matters.

Perhaps that is why, so far the Government has understood this peculiar field of maritime transportation and started the operations of COMAUNAM Company which is a joint venture with the Algerian Government dealing with maritime transport. The company does not have ships on its own but operates by chartering foreign vessels. This step can be considered as very wise in starting any shipping operation because of what has been pointed out in the precedent.

However the general ideas for establishing a national flag would be the following :

- National flag shipping as such, by transporting cargoes to and from foreign countries and/or between foreign countries can certainly become both a foreign exchange earner and a foreign exchange saver, however increasing participation of a national flag shipping in the carriage of national foreign trade should by no means be regarded as resulting to earning and/or saving of foreign exchange equal to the value of freight rate receipts. The reason is that a significant sometimes the greater part of the freight rate receipts should be repaid abroad as to meet various parts of the total cost necessary for the production of the shipping services in question, when such payments are made to foreign firms having supplied any type of services needed by the national flag vessels.

- Maritime transport to be effected efficiently requires the availability of a great variety of services. For instance, apart from the need to be properly manned a vessel

needs maintenance and repair work she also needs fuel and all types of supplies, while availability of agency services and bank services is required in every port of calling and telecommunications services availability is a requisite for the modern operation of management. Also passenger transport services are equally needed for the transport of crew members between vessels and home country, the same applies with regard to management staff members movements as the need may arise. Last but not least, the availability of port and/or terminal including cargo handling facilities is also a requisite for the smooth operation of the maritime transport system.

On the other hand, the availability of external financing is a must if a shipping firm or a national merchant marine has to have reasonable chances of success and development. Similarly, the availability of well educated and/or trained management personnel, also of seagoing personnel is of crucial importance for a merchant marine. Unless domestically existed it has to be sought abroad to the great disadvantage of that merchant marine and also of the economy of the country concerned, since it should lead not only to outflow of foreign currency but also possibly to increased costs as well.

Finally if one recalls that Capital costs may account for at least 35% in the case of very large tankers to about 50% or even more in the case of certain specialized vessel types (while insurance costs also have to be added)

one would have a reasonably, fair picture of the importance of the problem.

As a conclusion to the above observations it could be stated that the magnitude of the net benefit enjoyed by a country, through the development of a merchant marine should be dependent on the ability of such a country to increase its freight earning capacity to the maximum by optimization the organization and the administration framework as well as by reducing the size, the type and the costs of services which have to be bought abroad and/or from foreign firms.

Therefore, the establishment or expansion of a national fleet is not limited, solely to economic factors. There is not a definite and precise formula for each country that can tell the "right" size of a national fleet. Each nation makes its own weighing based on various grounds when it comes to determining the destiny of its merchant marine.

According to the above mentioned, I would like to give my contribution to that point in order to fill the gap of lack of maritime transport within the national economy framework. Indeed, the creation of a domestic live of transport by sea between, first of all, the two ports of the country is greatly welcome because of the necessity existing the fact is that Nouadhibou being joined easily to Nouakchott only by air transport. This initiative will be of great interest to all our people. I would also even suggest a system of ferries between the two cities, the latter for calling

ports of neighboring countries such as Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, etc.

This company of navigation may easily be constituted by share holders such as the Central Bank of Mauritania SMAR - SNIM - SONIMEX.

The port of Nouakchott and finally the National Flight Company AIR MAURITANIE itself in order to control the competition between the two operators. This first trial ought to be dared as soon as possible because it can be a link among the chain of transportation at sea which has to thought of since all our efforts for economic development of our country have to be gathered in one way or another.

In the permanent struggle of finding the best way for the economic development of our country we have to look towards the experience of other nations in the World. So, some aspects of these findings introduced into the country may work very well such as technology used practices in business, ways of training, regulations for some specialized fields etc.

Another available resource at the national level is the Tourism industry, which needs to be firmly started, but this time, with more conviction in terms of Capital invested, as soon as possible.

We do have very clean beaches with sand of various colours along 800 km of coastal line. Besides this, several "Oasis" (fertil spot in desert) are scattered in many places

all over the country despite its climate. Their charm remains the life many times described in PARADISE by a couple of our poets.

Other places can also be of great interest for visitors because of their historical backgrounds such as the old cities of Chinguetti, Oualat Koumbi SALAH which certainly will excite all people very interested in the former days of this part of the African continent.

As mentioned earlier, this fight of looking for foreign currencies needed in our economic development, should never exclude any aspect since it is not prohibited by our Religion, laws and culture. So the fields of fishing, shipping and tourism have to be promoted with maximum care by the highest decision making center. This has to be quickly understood by all our people especially the aspects connected with these particular sectors.

However some cases fortunately show that our Authorities are working very hard as they are dealing with the great challenge relating to the underdevelopment of the country. In these regards has been created the company dealing with the exportation of national products of fish, caught within the Mauritania Exclusive Economic Zone in 1984 (10/7/84).

So, from that time on the company has been selling these products to International markets. Very good results have been reached so far because during a period of six months 19,470 tons of fish have been handled for 31,866,336

U.S. Dollars of value.

This new way of conducting business guarantees the State the integral payment of its taxes related to the exportation business. The fact that the company is managed mostly by civil servants contributed as far as taxes are concerned to this success. Around 20% in terms of taxes is registered. Other examples illustrate these efforts from the Government, these are as follows :

- Compulsory discharge of any catch of maritime products of fish from the mentioned area within the port of Nouadhibou.

This decision responds to the worry of control and statistics which have to be followed by the Administration. Furthermore it facilitates the work of the above mentioned company which deals with the exportations of all maritime products of the country as a whole.

- The strongest decision remains against the piracy of course, according to the Ordonnance N°84001/bis taken on 1er/1/1984 and which stipulates "Any foreign vessel guilty of operating within the national jurisdiction without being allowed to do so by Mauritania Government is automatically confiscated for the benefit of the State".

This new law related to the destruction of maritime resources by huge foreign trawlers without permission (piracy is very strict and does not open a dialogue between guilty-parties and the Administration as it was a few years ago. This position of the Government may lead the foreign shipowners to careful consideration before they venture into

operations in MAURITANIA without having authorization. By all these measures it is clear, as time goes by, that many decisions have been taken and examples have been given in order to control, to promote, to develop, to regulate, to protect and to coordinate all maritime activities for their successful surveys and best system of management because nowadays the salvage of the country depends upon it.

CHAPTER FOUR :GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS.1. NATIONAL LEGISLATION :

It is obvious that reading all that is described in the previous Chapters we may think that some suggestions ought to be made finally concerning our system of management related to the maritime resources. Indeed these will be focused particularly on the Mauritanian legislation concerned with the sea, on the labour force which is a fundamental item in the development of the field, on the fishing fleet, on the International co-operation and finally on the promotion of Research programs.

Indeed, we should be sufficiently aware of the present practices followed in business related to maritime activities all over the World such as how to acquire a second hand vessel on the international market or simply how to accurately follow the price of these maritime products on the international markets.

However it should be of great interest to point out that Mauritania is very young country like many others in Africa. Consequently the law in many fields does not cover all aspects. For instance in the maritime sector, the Code N°78043 of 28-2-1978 does not provide any requirements related to the pollution prevention or damage within our Exclusive Economic Zone. Despite this fact, it is obvious that geographically speaking our coasts remain the main routes for huge tankers to and from developed countries (EUROPE-

AMERICA). So any small failure made by these operators will surely be a disaster because of the enormous and harmful damages which might be the result caused to the wildlife which is the maritime resource.

Because of this situation, as soon as possible some dispositions have to be taken related to this issue in order to protect our waters not only from the usual international piracy but also from this potential danger which is threatening our national jurisdiction. This risk alone may at any time, destroy what is considered so far as the backbone of our national economy.

This urgently needed legislation should strengthen relations with other countries under the scope of international co-operation with international bodies such as IMO - ILO - UNCTAD etc in order to be aware of what is going on concerning some aspects in the field at an international level : The standardization of Certification of Seafarers (STCW), the Pollution Prevention (MARPOL) and the SOLAS Convention, the Code of Conduct etc. To brief, the main steps of the International maritime Law ought to be understood and strictly followed in order to be able to expect more profits and advantages from the implementation of these International Conventions. This, should be our attitude towards the International Agencies which, from relations of various kinds can provide important assistance in terms of technical and financial aspects or simply advice to our various projects of development. Therefore our maritime legislation should be amended. Doing so, our priorities among our present and

urgent needs should be taken into consideration. Hence, the worry about the great risk of pollution by huge tankers along our coasts can be decreased or even be avoided. This national legislation should as soon as possible strongly provide needed requirements for all the compensation in case of pollution damages within our jurisdiction of 200 miles.

That is why, the need of International assistance appears in terms of a system in implementing such regulations because the capital involved being very high in such matters. It is obvious that the necessity of being a member of the TOVALOP^{ALC} Organization is consequently confirmed and fully justified. It has to be recalled that it is the duty of the Administration to promote, to preserve, to protect, to develop and to manage this wildlife according to the high interests of the Nation. For the time being, according to the above described the fishing field is considered as the life jacket of the country in these difficult circumstances related to the situation of emergency caused by the drought. From this picture we may easily understand why MAURITANIA like ENGLAND in the past "is expecting that anyone will do this duty". Really nothing should be neglected as far as the protection of the fishing area is concerned.

2. INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION :

If I were asked to set up the needed legislation related to the maritime field, I would probably suggest the following steps on which it has to be focused.

- It would accurately deal with the attitude of the

country towards the International Organisations, Governments of other countries. I would clarify, identify, describe all relations with foreign interest taking into account our specific priorities and realities available in the country, as a general rule we do not belong to a special bloc or group of countries but we do belong to a given country which aims to be developed by any means with respect to our need of independence and freedom. To be able to reach this goal, relations with any Government, any Organisation or group of individuals and multi-nationals have to be clarified beforehand, in order to be strictly followed without mistakes by parties, for their mutual interests.

This legislation would also deal with the accurate description of an economic relation policy to be observed by both, the Government and individuals of all origin (foreign plus national interest). Here, some institutions would be necessarily involved such as CBM (The Central Bank of MAURITANIA) the Ministry of Finance, with the Customs Division for the implementation of such a legislation.

However it has to be mentioned that so far immense efforts have been made, many contacts established with several nations in this sensitive field. It has been thought that the International co-operation is one of the aspects on which, the country must base its permanent efforts in order to control its destiny. That is why, even through the new policy, introduced by the military Government in 1979, this attitude, towards the International Co-operation is carefully analysed and clearly focused in all relations with foreign interests

which should be carried out. It should be noticed nevertheless that a certain number of bilateral agreements have been contracted by the Mauritanian Government with the following countries before the implementation of the new policy related to the fishing field.

Some examples are as follows :

- Agreement with Algeria signed on the 19th of November 1973 under which the joint venture of ALMAP dealing with fishing activities was created,
- Agreement with the Soviet Union signed on the 28th of June 1978 under which the joint venture of MAUSOV was established dealing with fishing activities,
- Agreement with LIBYA signed in 1977 under which the joint venture called SALIMAUREM dealing with fishing was created,
- Agreement with ROMANIA signed on the 26th of June 1974 at Bucarest under which the joint venture of SIMAR dealing with the same activities like the precedent was founded.

In addition to this list, the Mauritanian State has contracted several other agreements and contracts with many organisations, groups of individuals and companies of various origin still in the field of fishing. These contracts concern foreign interests but also groups of nationals as well such as PARIMCO - SOMAUPA - SOFRIMA - COMIP - COMAR - SIGP, etc.

All these efforts are mentioned to show the combat for an economic development of a country is difficult and complicated. However, it is permitted to think that if all

efforts described above continue, with a management determined to succeed great risks of heavy burdens due to losses will be avoided for our national economy, then the country reaches the set objectives concerning the field of fishing activities. But before this stage, the main problem is of course, the questions such as how the country should deal with such a management policy so tightly connected to the relations with other nations? How can this be done, strictly with regards to its own interests, in respect of its freedom and independence? I have to confess that eventhough the international co-operation constitutes one of the fundamental principles of the International Law of development, the Theory of the New International Economic Order, certainly remains the most dangerous and delicate issue for a young country. Indeed this field never suffers from mistakes because if some were made, at some levels within the Administration it would without any doubt, take a very long time (very often a couple of years) before being rightly corrected. This is easily understood by the fact, that all commitments made by the State are written in bilateral agreements or contracts and are considered as rules and regulations by the parties concerned. It is not always easy to denounce such commitments at anytime without involving or even affecting or influencing political relations with neighboring countries or other nations as partners in various fields not necessarily in fishing matters.

Therefore, much care has to be provided before the establishment of any agreement or contract concerning national

interests as such. If these preliminary conditions are exactly provided in the fishing field the Mauritanian State will be able, in the very near future to proudly, feed its populations as it is possible to expect, this because of the maritime resources. They, then have to be rationally exploited managed and controlled before enabling the national authorities to face the great challenge of combating poverty. There is however still a long way to go, because the situation remains troubling due to the various forms and changes very often combined in the structure of underdevelopment of a country both levels, national and international are deeply involved.

It would never be of great interest for such a country to live separated from the experience of other nations, therefore our need for international co-operation is obvious. Here, we do not have any choice. We ought to find the best way to achieve success.

3. LABOUR FORCE :

In order to control, train and motivate the population of seafarers mentioned in the precedent Chapters immense efforts have to be undertaken through adequate legislation. These efforts are needed especially because of the peculiar behaviour and the low level of skills of this population therefore the management of the field starts from that point and the Administration ought to be aware of this priority.

As it is noticed earlier the lack of skilled management personnel greatly affects the economy of a country. I

would suggest in these regards the creation of several fishing villages along the coastal line between Nouadhibou and NDiago, the Southern point of the country.

The villages should be organised in small groups or cooperatives of 40 fishermen like the ones which exist so far at Nouadhibou and at Nouakchott. These villages will very quickly absorb a great number of these seafarers available in the unemployment Administration by recruitment. I would carefully suggest however, the establishment of only five villages (5) at the first step of the project which may lead to the following forecast. The existing Center for training seamen at Nouadhibou should be the adequate source from which this labour can be taken for testing the project. That is to say that after the first step at this Center the seafarer participates right away to the project as a member.

1 Cooperative	: 40 fishermen
1 village	: 10 cooperatives
1st step of the project	: 5 villages
Forecast	: $40 \times 10 \times 5 = 2000$ fishermen

The conditions of work have to be clearly specified, controlled and directed by the Administration before anything else. The fishermen being their own shipowners or own bosses, doing the job in their own interests will certainly leave out the usual game consisting of working today and being sick the next day. Any foreign interest should not be involved as such in the project. It ought to be national. Of course, it should be pointed out that all stages of studies

needed should be carried out by the Government. So the material needed for fishing will be provided for, in terms of efficiency and quality. Several contacts for assistance from international organisations should be obtained. Relations with FAO - UNDP - World Bank - EEC - IMO - SIDA - ACIDI and what have you will be strengthened and these bodies will be aware of the project and its expected success.

At the national level, bank facilities have to be provided for, but also motivating factors such as special rules concerned with insurance policies, favorable rates in loans for fishermen and many other advantages in social security for them as well. In addition to this, for the success of the project, a special selling market with interesting prices for their catch has to be provided for under the Government's protection. This material provided for by the State, in long terms will be reimbursed by the workers as loans in very favorable conditions for them. In order to improve their status in Social Security aspects, the foreign shipowners who also still operate in the same field could be asked to contribute financially to the project instead of employing a great number of Mauritanian crew. I am sure that they will not object to such a proposal. This may probably concern national shipowners only.

Besides this, the money received as a consequence to this disposition by the Ministry of Fishing will obviously participate to the great success of the project.

WHAT WOULD BE THE MAJOR ADVANTAGES OF SUCH AN OPERATION ?

- First of all, it will be the best way for following the directives of the military regime (military council) which were published in 1979 related to its concern shifting the traditional Mauritanian attitude to the maritime activities.

This aspect has been the main cause of the change of the registration of seafarers mentioned earlier. If we consider that the total number of seamen registered at the national level is around 4000, the said project would take 2000 and the remaining will be :

$$4000 - (40 \times 10 \times 5) = 2000.$$

This means, that a population of 2000 seafarers at present, is available in the Maritime Administration. This number seems to be easier to control and to train. It is also easy for the Government to follow all the different phases in terms of performances and skill ability. Furthermore this population of seamen moved into a quite new area would be easy to train and to educate as skilled personnel. From then fishing companies will not have as an excuse a lack of training at work in order to justify their losses due to a bad system of management.

Anyway, the phenomenon of the "explosion" of new seamen from the country side or without being trained at all should cease at once. If the project succeeds or reaches its optimum the behaviour of people in their desire to become employees of foreign shipowners on their huge trawlers will not exist any more because the real cause of this fact

will then be eliminated strongly in all aspects, then a new area connected with the mentioned artisanal sector will be started. That is the only way according to my point of view, to make them sensitive and motivated. They have to gain from it.

At the national level, the great advantage would be that the hope firmly remains at sea. Our people will control and manage the field according to our needs and right motivation is up to our people and this, may strengthen the impact of the fishing field to the national economy." We would then, discover the ocean and its benefits in a very good way for our interests and not in trial and error or in a absolute mess. The challenge is huge. It requires therefore gigantic means of Capital and human values. It is time to think about the statement made by the Doyen President Félix Houphouët Boigny who said a few years ago that "Now, AFRICA of Dance has to leave room for AFRICA of technology".

In this connection, in order to reach the set objectives, the rules of the game have to be clearly defined and then, all the decisions above mentioned will suddenly become meaningful. The situation of negligence and careless if any as far as the fishing is concerned would be over for ever. The Mauritanian Government is determined to take over the described challenge of poverty.

Finally, we have seen in the previous Chapters that in Mauritania some people have never eaten fish in their life neither other kinds of maritime products such as lobsters,

shrimps etc. However with this approach of management of our maritime resources in the artisanal sector the seafarers will be closer without any doubt to the fishing field and and then, the appetite may appear because of the said environment if the drought does not succeed, despite the burden to these populations. Whatever the situation, the lack of proteins from animals has to be compensated as soon as possible.

4. FISHING FLEET - STRUCTURE :

The fishing fleet probably reflects the level of skill of national operators in the field because, except from a few scarce cases, the majority of vessels are from the second hand market and very often, they are very old, non-competitive with out dated technology. This situation of disorder has to be stopped right away by adequate legislation in order to protect national interests. What would otherwise be the reason for such a fishing fleet if all its components are supposed to be an offer for the demolition market ? This situation should be analysed and then avoided, because these shipowners are led more by their position of pride or prestige by owning vessels, but are not aware enough of the risks being involved in such a description of the fishing fleet itself. This situation may lead to disaster sooner or later if some dispositions related to their protection are not taken quickly. In this respect, more economical, than the huge ones since the artisanal sector is officially declared as a national priority for our people

dealing with the fishing field.

Some projects concerning the construction of these small fishing boats can be started with the assistance of international bodies such as FAO - BIRD - UNDP etc. These projects may also create a great amount of foreign currencies dealing with such programmes. Without a doubt the very best can be expected from it.

In the long run, these small fishing boats will be able to operate with only Mauritanian crews and then the unemployment crisis noticed earlier, will be controlled in the maritime sector. However there is still a long way to go because once again, it is very difficult to introduce new ideas into this special field according to its specific nature, customs and human practices related to it, weather conditions and what have you.

Indeed, it may take many years, in order to accept, confirm new ways of operating new kinds of tools, new types of vessels and so forth, in this peculiar sector by a given population of fishermen. This shows to some extent the importance of the problems which are to be face and not always given to the Maritime Administration in terms of financial constraints but very often in terms of human factors.

5. RESEARCH PROGRAMMES :

Last and not least the module of research established at Nouadhibou should summarize the given priorities to be accurately defined in the maritime field. Indeed this task remains the most expensive one, due to the required operations

needed in sophisticated technology of research used by similar centers in the world. Here, we do not have a choice once again, what ever the costs are, we ought to deal with such programmes because in the long run, they remain the foundation of the entire system of management. Without them the set objectives related to control, protection, preservation and promotion of fisheries will unfortunately not be reached at all.

Nevertheless, in a developing country like MAURITANIA progress is seriously limited by the lack of scientists and technicians and by a shortage of scientific equipment and facilities. Commitments to marine research programmes, levels or categories of scientists and engineers involved in planning and leading research projects are very weak. Though, they should have access to good scientific equipment and be able to promote good services. The staff should be well trained and maintained in operating the equipment in order to produce data of high quality and to give liable services. No doubt that nowadays marine research assists countries that utilize the ocean and the related resources. Therefore maximum care and attention have to be given to such programmes of research by the highest decision making center in the country.

In order to achieve these objectives, in the field of research despite the level of investments involved, an appropriate institution such as CNROP of Nouadhibou is strongly needed in order to promote, develop, manage and

coordinate all stages of oceanographic investigations and reports.

In this connection, joint efforts on the pooling of resources in the regional cooperation among neighboring countries are recommended because of the lack of financial resources found at all levels. But the combined efforts among institutions within a country or within bodies of several countries can enable the effective progress of many research projects. Furthermore, the field of fishing constitutes the main area where the findings of biological oceanography can be applied. The major aims of research programmes concerned with fisheries should find out where new stocks of fish are located. This would occur in commercially exploitable concentrations in order to investigate all conditions related to the biological aspects, to improve and to promote the technology used for locating and capturing these stocks. Management models must be developed so that the fisheries can be effectively led in such a way as to give the optimum revenues. In this respect, the aims related to fishery research have so far been relatively successful.

Though, in Mauritania the greater part of exploitable stocks of fish has probably not been located yet, neither have the main profitable places for specialized fishing products such as lobsters, shrimps etc been found.

The center of research at Nouadhibou has to be able to provide commercial catches and specific samples used

for research and all the information in every biological aspect of many commercially exploited species. This has to be gathered and made available at the same time, covering various subjects such as life history, developmental biology, feeding patterns, migrations, behaviour of stocks related to all maritime products as such.

The goals are ambitious. The main questions which does need a quick answer is how, in the field of research, with skill or ability, to evaluate the stock in its dimension, quantity, size etc and how to provide liable information about the elements and limits of the exploitation ? Otherwise any efforts made as management may lead to their destruction. This management should, in order to be efficient, strictly follow basic elements of studied set programmes approved by a scientific body as such. However, whatever system is chosen in the field of research to them, and which have to be done by our institution, should be relevant, therefore they ought to be based on very reliable oceanographic investigations. In order to reach these objectives, an investment of great importance is needed and has to be found quickly. That is the price to be paid or the rules of the game to be followed because if there are no rules there won't be any game whatever the field we are dealing with. This has to be understood at all levels in order to achieve the set objectives on which all our hopes are located at the national level.

CONCLUSIONS :

In the history of mankind people have suffered from many terrible events all over the world. Among them wars of various kinds i.e. civil wars and wars related to religion or race, earthquakes, diseases and other terrible catastrophes are still threatening more accurately our lives.

Today MAURITANIA is facing the most dangerous challenge of its existence. Indeed, the drought has suffocated the economy of the country by decimating all human and material means. These damages are the destruction of our herds and fields, the drainage of the River Senegal, and our lakes and finally the increase of child mortality-rate, as they are the most vulnerable link of the chain in this hopeless situation.

In such a situation the requirements of the consumption of the population are strong and not flexible. Shortages tend to appear very often. Here, the struggle for economic development which is the goal of this study appears in its various aspects. Other reasons for concern are the lack of education in technical matters, the best way of managing the existing means, and finally the attitude of the people themselves concerning the evolution and the requirements of the world economy. This package of conditions related to the lack of capital, skilled personnel and a suitably healthy climate in the field of fishing, even the usual the practices still used by some operators, really constitute a public peril for the country.

Any organisation or Government at any levels has to show characteristics of endurance, of diligence and courage in their daily behaviour in order to set up a global approach to combat such a challenge. Though the ways to be taken for reaching these objectives are known, varied and in several colours, it is a matter of courage, of a quick choice of decisions and of responsibility, from the national Authorities.

It is said that if we cannot reject anything as far as the destiny of our people is concerned we have to be ready to accept everything from everywhere related to it. In such a case risks of damages and threats of different kinds will appear within the national economy. This will be the increase of losses to be suddenly faced in management and will remain more troubling than the drought itself. On the other hand, fortunately national assets added to other advantages in the country constitute moral, physical and material support and barriers against this horrible picture of possibility.

It is mentioned earlier that despite the various problems the country is facing she has tremendous strength which has been its belief in values and the virtues of ISLAM for hundreds of years (indeed Mauritania is one of the few countries in the World where Islam is the unique Religion for the country).

Consequently, the whole nation 100% believes in Allah and this, deeply assists the country in any feelings about

all the events faced and connected to the threat of its existence. This is a great support in a hostile and difficult environment.

With dignity, courage, faith in Allah, our people are painfully bearing the heaviest burden that few countries have ever experienced in the history of humanity. Indeed a balance-sheet formed by eight years of drought in any country would seem unbelievable but is really a fact in this present study.

However in the long run, due to all the above mentioned factors the optimism combined with the natural values of our people, are making the country sensitive about what is going to happen in the future in several stages of its development.

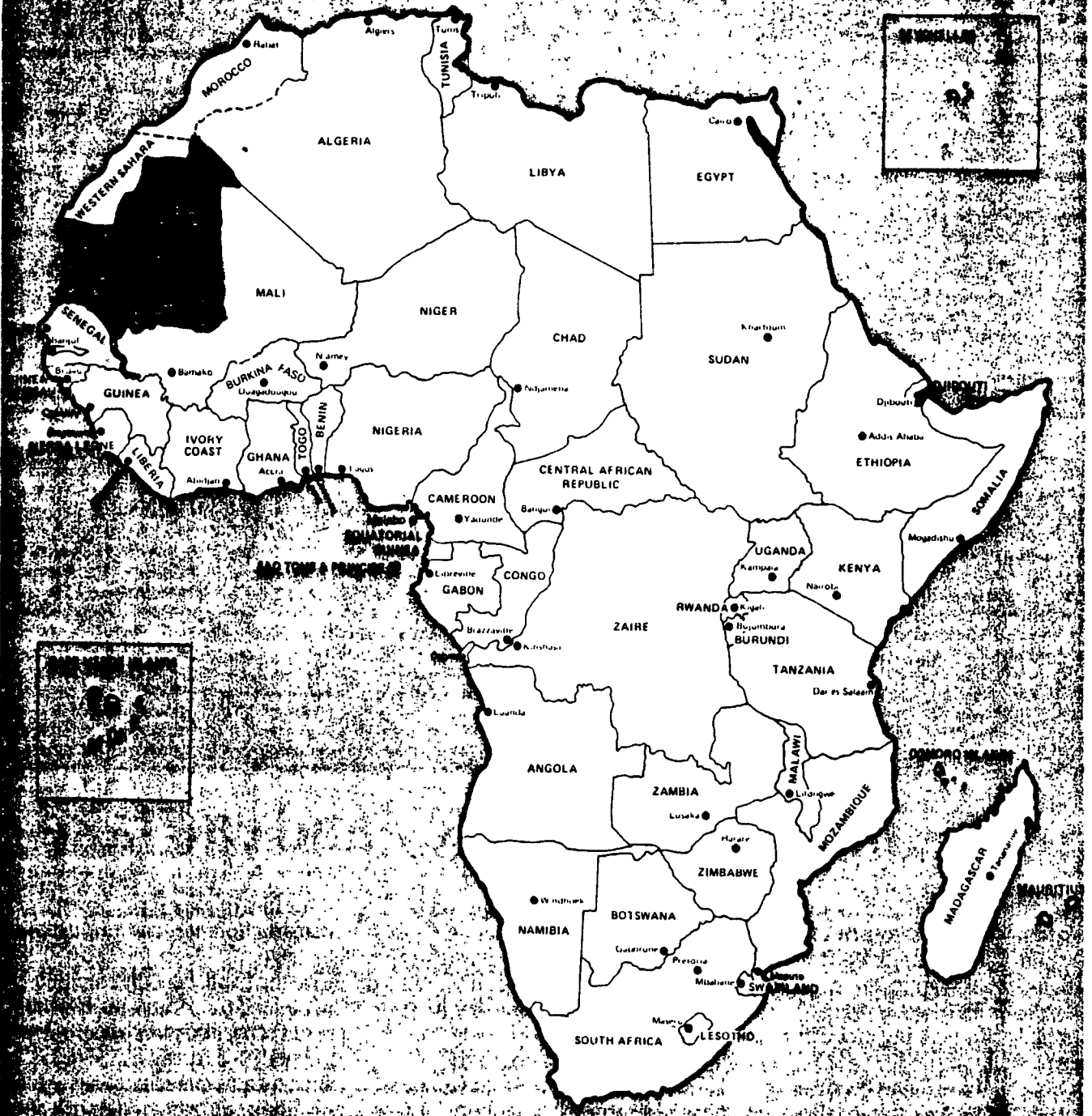
I do believe myself, in a united Mauritania finally released from its poverty and from its old deficiencies, when chimneys of factories and fishing plants spread along the coastal line illustrate our level of success in the industrial revolution. So the standard of life will be improved for the benefit of our people. Everything above mentioned can be obtained from maritime resources but beforehand, the best system of management is urgently needed.

In this respect complete trust is so far given to our national Authorities, because the responsibility for salvage rests with them, just for Master of a ship faces a difficult situation at sea. They have all the needed support from the population at their disposal, and without doubt they know that they represent and act on behalf of a people of warriors and heroes.

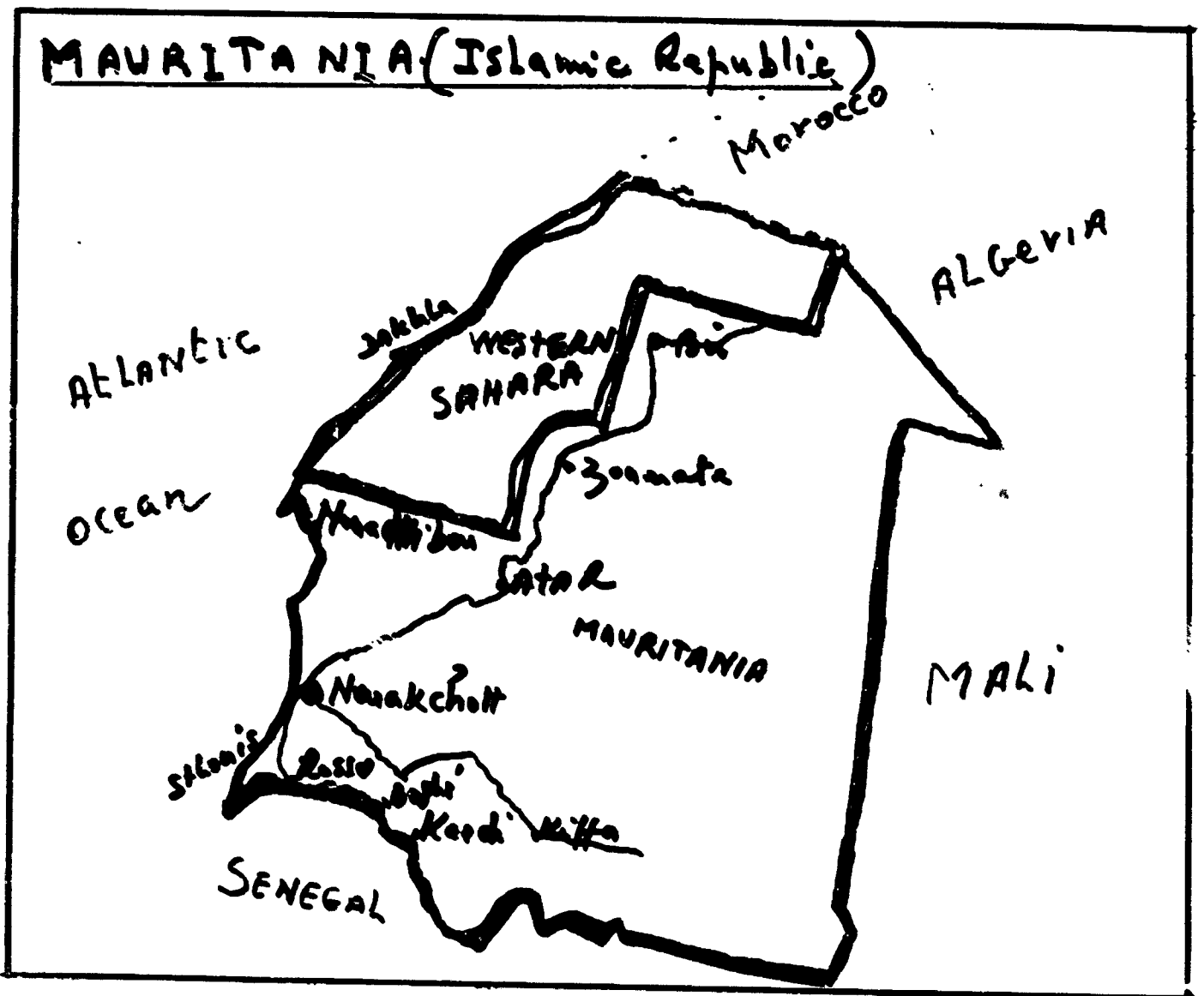
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Africa



MAURITANIA (Islamic Republic)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الجمهورية الإسلامية الموريتانية

République Islamique de Mauritanie

شرف - اخاء - عدالة

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Ministère des Pêches

et de l'Economie Maritime

وزارة الصيد
والاقتصاد البحري

N° / M.P.E.M / D.M.M

رقم / و.ص.ا.ب

NOTARIKHOTT. LE

19 DEC 1984

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الكاتب العام Le Secrétaire Général

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Monsieurs les Directeurs :

- COMAUNAM.
- CNROP
- SNIM.
- SAMNA.
- PAN.
- FORT AMITIE.
- Banque Centrale.

Au titre d'une partie du travail academique de sa formation Monsieur SALL ALY SAMBA eleve Administrateur des Affaires Maritimes entreprend une etude de son memoire necessitant l'accès aux données statistiques d'informations et de documents disponibles au niveau des sociétés, Administrations maritimes et autres institutions.

Il vous est demandé en conséquence de bien vouloir lui apporter votre concours pour l'accomplissement de cette mission.

- LEMRAHOTT SIDI CHEIKH AHMED. -

