The Role of Nigeria

In

Restoring Peace

In

West Africa

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work.

Remmy Chuks Nweke
May 1, 2010, Lagos, Nigeria

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Dedication:

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To my parents; Ozo Sopuluchukwu Dominic Udegbunem Nweke and Ezinne Christiana Okwuchukwu Nweke, for giving birth to me and my dear wife, Nkemdilim Anthonia Nweke, who stood by me during the candle nights; Messrs Andy Ezeani, Ugo Onuoha, Ifeanyi Ubabukoh, Seyi Fasugba, Justus Nwakanma, Azeez Olaleye, Innocent Nwobodo, Emma Agu, Desmond Okoye and Mrs. Cordilia Onu of Champion Newspapers Limited, as well as Prof. Guy Berger of Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa, who encouraged my professionalism.

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	Acronyms:		Meanings:
1.	AD	-	Anno Domini; 2
2.	AEC	-	African Economic Community; 24, 28
3.	AFRICOM	-	African Military Command; 60, 71
4.	ALF	-	Africa Leadership Forum; 31
5.	AFL	-	Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL); 56
6.	ANC	–	African National Congress; 48
7.	APPA	–	African Petroleum Producers Association; 5
8.	APRM	-	African Peer Review Mechanism; 29
9.	APSTA	-	African Peace Support Trainers Association; 62
10.	AU	–	African Union; vi, xii, 5, 6, 23, 26, 27-35, 40, 42, 43, 46, 48 - 60, 63
11.	AU-UN	–	*African Union and United Nations; 39, 58*
12.	BBC	–	British Broadcasting Corporation; 55
13.	BC	–	Before Christ; 2
14.	CASS	-	Centre for Advanced Social Studies; 33
15.	CDRT	-	Centre for Democratic Research and Training; 33
16.	CTO	–	Commonwealth Telecommunication Organisation; 57
17.	CWG	–	Computer Warehouse Group; 25
18.	DRC	-	Democratic Republic of Congo; 28, 45
19.	ECOMOG	–	ECOWAS Monitoring Group; 2, 5, 10, 36, 37, 40, 43, 44, 54, 55, 63, 65.
20.	ECOWAS	–	Economic Community of West African States; 2, 5,6,8,9, 16, 17, 36-38, 40-44, 52-54, 61.
21.	EU	–	European Union; 25, 27
22.	FCT	–	Federal Capital Territory; 5, 50
23.	FEC	–	Federal Executive Council; 56, 57
24.	IBB	–	Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida; 16, 17, 25
25.	ICJ	-	International Court of Justice; 38, 55
26.	IAPTC	-	International Association for Peacekeeping Training Centres; 64
27.	ICT	–	*Information and Communications Technologies (ICT); 57*
28.	ICTJ	-	International Centre for Transitional Justice; 64
29.	IGSR	-	Institute for Governance and Social Research; 33
30.	ISS	-	Institute for Security Studies; 65
31.	JDA	-	Joint Development Authority; 59
32.	MDC	-	Movement for Democratic Change; 42
33.	MFA	–	Ministry of Foreign Affairs; 5, 8-10, 61
34.	MINORSO	-	*United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara; 49*
35.	MOU/MoU	-	Memorandum of Understanding; 31, 54

INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian nation is known as one, whose foreign policy is essentially tailored to reflect her commitment to the well-being of all African countries; particularly in the areas of peaceful co-existence, prevention of violent conflicts - at intra-national and international levels - restoration of peace where necessary; and maintenance of peace all over the world.

For the purpose of this thesis, it is necessary to attempt a search into the rationale behind Nigeria's decision to make Africa the cornerstone of her foreign policy, since, according to J.A. Price in his book *Political Institutions in West Africa,*[1] "the foreign policy of a State is liable to reflect the State's personality, but foreign policy cannot be developed in a completely arbitrary manner, since policy is bound to be affected by many considerations concerned with the circumstances and internal problems of the State."

So, some of the vital factors that gave rise to this kind of foreign policy are namely the symbiotic relationships, religious affiliations, economic affairs and historical background.

1. Symbiotic Relationship:

First, Nigeria is the most populated country in the West African sub-region, if not in the entire African continent. This would not have been of any significance but for the fact that millions of Nigerian nationals are permanently resident in all the neighbouring countries of Togo, Benin Republic, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Guinea, Cameroon and even countries to the north of the country like Chad and Niger Republics. Several other Nigerians based at home are itinerary traders; artisans and other unskilled workers make their living in these neighbouring countries, as well as Nigerian students now studying in these countries.

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[1] Price, J.H – Political Institutions in West Africa, Hutchinson of London, 1975, page 181.
ii.   Adeoshun, Oba S.A. in Elements of Democracy – Obasanjo Olusegun and Mabogunje Alain, ALF Publications, Abeokuta, Ogun State, South West Nigeria, 1992, p. 63.

The implication is that Nigeria cannot afford to be hostile to these other countries if only because a large number of her citizens benefit from the symbiotic relationships, just as nationals of these other nations reside and make a living in Nigeria.

2.   Religious Affiliations:

Nigeria is a secular state where freedom of religion is guaranteed. But then, the country has a predominance of Christians and Muslims; the two major religions. This is not to suggest that there are no other religious groups, but they are not as prominent as the Muslims and Christians. The preponderance of the two religious groups has serious implications for the nation's foreign policy, since any noticeable policy perceived to be unfavourable to any of the two religious blocs can create problem domestically.

For example, the nation's peace was relatively threatened when the federal government of Nigeria, during General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida (IBB)'s administration announcement that Nigeria was going to become a member of the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC). The southern Christian population saw the move as a betrayal in a country, whose constitution clearly declares a secular state. They also saw the military President, a Muslim, as using his position to drag the nation along to Islam, being the dominant religion of his people in the northern part of the country. There was uproar and widespread condemnation of the Babangida administration for this.

Therefore, even in deciding what relationships to maintain with other countries, the Nigerian government has a duty to weigh the implications of such decisions on the domestic front as policies tilting too closely to the side of countries professing either of the two religions could lead to disruption of peace within the country.

3.   Economic Affairs:

Even now that Nigeria is close to celebrating the 50th anniversary of her political independence, she is still far away from economic independence as the nation remains a raw materials producer for the manufacturing economies of the Western world and nowadays, the 'Asian Tigers.' The discovery of petroleum in large quantities, for instance, on the Nigerian soil in 1958 is a natural blessing, which ought to have changed the nation's economic situation for the better, but for lack of foresight by successive leaderships.

At the moment, over 90 per cent of the national budget is tied to revenue generated through sales of crude oil. What this means is that Nigeria cannot make policy decisions that may injure or

offend countries that buy her crude oil. If for reasons beyond her control she has to take injurious decisions affecting such countries, the aftermath will be a devastating economic crunch, which could cause serious threat to national peace and stability at home.

4.   Historical Perspective:

(a)   Affiliations:

Like any other nation in the world, Nigeria's foreign policy has a base in her historical affiliations and experiences. First, it is clear that many of the countries in the West African sub-region had similar experiences. For instance, all the British West African countries of Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone and the Gambia emerged as independent nations after years of foreign rule. Incidentally, all of them had been colonised by the same colonial master, Great Britain; therefore, they had gone through similar treatments and experiences in the hands of one and the same colonial authority.

As aptly documented by [Price, 1975] in *Political Institutions of West Africa,* each and all of the four countries had a similar "pattern of evolution from Crown Colony status;" that is, they were common 'property' of the king of England, administered as extensions of Britain on African soil by officials of the British Government.

As a result, the affinity created by similar colonial experiences had a pull on the subsisting subsequent relationships between the African countries, when they eventually became independent in quick succession in the late 50s and early 60s.

(b)   Nationalism:

Before the advent of independence from the colonial masters, certain things had happened to serve as gravitational pulls for many of the West African countries. Many of those who subsequently became national leaders in the West African sub-region had met in foreign countries where they studied. According to Price,[2] "the long time dream (of the Africans) was a self-governing federation of all British West African territories, a dream which faded when they realised the consequences of the fact that Nigeria was much more populous than the rest of British West Africa put together."

Price highlighted that "Nigeria would not join a federation in which her voice was not (to be) proportionate to her size; the other territories would not join a federation in which Nigeria would have a permanent majority." This clearly was the beginning of nationalism of "individual countries" of the West African sub-region and, indeed, all African countries.

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[2]   *Price, page 28.*

However, before the formation of sub-continental bodies, there were two 'power blocs; the Casablanca bloc and the Monrovia bloc. The two blocs were perceived to be representing different ideologies. The Casablanca Group, which had Ghana as its arrow head, was noted for radical approach to issues; while the Monrovia Group led by Nigeria, was known to be conservative in its approach to issues.

The two blocs operated along their 'leftist' and 'rightist' approaches until the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. Countries in the Casablanca group included Mali, Guinea and so on while the Monrovia group had Nigeria, Sierra Leone, the Gambia to name a few. It is to be noted, as recorded by Price[3] that "even when the groups had disbanded, attitudes remained generally the same as voting on issues in the OAU [now African Union (AU)]; reflected former bloc convictions and actions."

Happenings following the termination of the 2nd World War in 1945, thereafter, fanned the embers of nationalism, particularly among the nations of British West Africa. Thousands of able-bodied, young men from Nigeria, Gold Coast (now Ghana), Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Liberia were recruited to fight on the side of the Allied Forces, of which their colonial master, Britain, was one.

The young Africans, as soldiers, were mobilised to fight in East Africa, North Africa and South-East Asia. During training and subsequent war actions, the soldiers were taught that they were fighting for freedom and that good and comfortable resettlement awaited them whenever they returned to their respective countries at the end of the war. Moreover, fighting men in Asia were exposed to information through pamphlets circulated among them. The pamphlets, however, contained what demobilised British troops would get; and since the West African soldiers believed they qualified for the same entitlements, "they had high expectations only to be demobilised and abandoned on return to base in their respective countries" (Price, 1975).

Of course, the United Nations Organisation which replaced the League of Nations shortly after the 2nd World War had made reference to the "Freedom of colonial peoples" in its Treaty. That alone also created "a mental climate favourable to ideas of self-determination among West Africans of the era." The similarity of treatment under the colonialists engendered the series of constitutional developments which eventually led to the attainment of independence by many West African countries between 1957 and 1965.[4]

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[3] In page 126.
[4] Apart from Liberia that had operated its 1847 constitution ever since as a Republic, various constitutional changes culminated in the independence of Gold Coast (Ghana) on March 6,1957; Nigeria on October 1, 1960; Sierra Leone in 1961 and Gambia on February 18, 1965. All these countries assumed Republican status shortly after obtaining independence.

In summary, this shows that the commonality and similarity of experience in political, social and economic development of West African countries served as a binding force, which subsequently informed their foreign policy outlooks even after independence.

CHAPTER 1

NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY

IN THE LAST 50 YEARS

In the beginning …

Since 1960 when Nigeria got her political independence from the British colonial masters, notable about her diplomatic attitude has been the making of the African continent her focus, especially in the areas of enthronement of democracy and peace.

This philosophy is derived from the fact of an African adage, which says that when tears fall from the eyes, the nose responds by sneezing. Literally speaking, apart from the philosophy of the 'brother's keeper' which Nigeria has created for herself, it should also be noted that when any of her neighbouring countries, especially in the West African sub-region, has crisis, the Nigerian economy and political landscape are equally affected.

Instances of this can be found in the era of Ghana's economic down-turn in 1980's and within 10 years, the civil conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone; which resulted in the influx of a large number of refugees into Nigeria.

These, therefore, induced Nigeria's foreign policy formulators to see the need, not only to be steadfastly involved in policies aimed at maintaining peace and tranquility on the African continent in general, but in the West African sub-region in particular.

Geographical perspective of the Nigerian foreign policy:

Historically, (nigeriaworld.com, 2007) the nation is known as the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Located in West Africa, Nigeria is reputed for being the most populous country on the

continent. Nigeria shares common land borders with the Republic of Benin at the west, Chad and Cameroon at the east, Niger at the north, and the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Guinea, at the south.

Since December 12, 1991, her capital has been the centrally located city of Abuja. Hitherto, the Federal capital was the city of Lagos.[5]

With estimated 150 million population, Nigeria returned to democratic rule in 1999 after a 33-year military intrusion. From 1966 to 1999, Nigeria was ruled [except for the brief Second Republic which lasted between 1979 and 1983] by the military who seized power in coups d'état and counter-coups.

According to Okochi (1990), on accomplishing political independence Nigeria made the emancipation and renewal of the African dignity the centre-piece of her foreign policy, thus deciding to play a foremost role in the fight against apartheid in South Africa; Nigeria's foreign policy was tested in the 1970s after the country had emerged united, following a civil war which raged from 1967 to 1970.[6]

A founding member of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU); now the African Union (AU), Nigeria has tremendous influence in West Africa and Africa as a whole, and as such had previously pioneered several regional co-operative efforts on the continent, while simultaneously functioning as a standard-bearer of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

Background of MFA in Nigeria:

A discussion of the current state of Nigerian foreign policy will not be complete without a brief appraisal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the immediate former dispensation, led by Chief Ojo Maduekwe, and the two Ministers of State, namely Alhaji Tijjani Kaura and Ambassador Bagudu Hirse. But, with the March 17, 2010 dissolution of the Federal Executive Council FEC by acting president Goodluck Jonathan, Mr. Odein Ajumogobia became the incumbent.

Five decades of foreign ministration:

In 1960, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was known as the Ministry of External Affairs and was established officially in September 1957 as an External Affairs Division of the Office of the

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[5] *Nigeria has a rich history rooted in archaeological evidence that human occupation of the vicinity dates back to about 9000 BC. The Benue-Niger River area is noted to be the "original homeland" of the Bantu migrants who spread across most of central and southern Africa between the first millennium before the Birth of Christ (BC) and the second millennium, which is after the death of Christ (AD), otherwise known as Anno Domini (AD) in Latin.*
[6] *Nigeria re-dedicated itself to the then on-going liberation efforts in the Southern Africa sub-region soon after regaining peace at home.*

then Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, with the first Minister in-charge being Dr. Jaja A. Wachukwu.

Like any other government institutions, the ministry was created and charged with the statutory responsibilities of formulation, articulation and implementation of Nigeria's foreign policy and management of external relations.

Its functions focused on 14-basic points, encompassing the conduct of Nigeria's foreign policy and international relations; representation of Nigeria in foreign countries by way of High Commissions, Embassies and Consulates; Consular Matters including the protection of interests of Nigerians abroad; maintaining relationships with diplomatic corps and co-ordination of international conferences in the country as well as ensuring representation of Nigeria at international organisations such as the United Nations, ECOWAS, World Trade Organisation (WTO), the Commonwealth and the AU, to name a few.

Additionally, the ministry is charged with the responsibility of making certain pilgrimage arrangements for the citizens; executing Technical Assistance (TA) programmes or agreements with foreign countries, facilitating the repatriation of destitute Nigerians; issuance of diplomatic passports, travel certificates, merchant navy and seamen identity cards in foreign missions for the citizenry.[7]

The Ministry, above all, has its mission as;

"Dedicated to the vigorous pursuit of the vital national interests of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the promotion of African integration and unity, international co-operation for the consolidation of global peace, security, a just world economic order and democratic values, through the execution of statutory duties as it concerns Nigeria's foreign policy objectives for the benefit of Nigeria and her citizens, by building the capacity to be a major role player in world affairs, and earning the respect of the people of Africa, and the larger international community."

Similarly, the Ministry's vision statement implies that it has to build an efficient knowledge-based foreign bureau which should be technology driven in service delivery while pursuing Nigeria's foreign policy goals and objectives.

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[7] *It also sees to the organisation and arrangement of state protocol and ceremonies, accreditation of Nigerian envoys and consular representatives and official visits abroad by Nigerian dignitaries. It has responsibility for diplomatic privileges and immunities as well as handling of cultural agreements, and furnishing missions with daily news summary.*

At its headquarters in Abuja, the Ministry has a structure consisting of the minister (s) [purely political appointees who represent the organisation at the Federal Executive Council]. It has a leading minister who reports directly to the President with some assistants as Minister (s) of state, which, in this case are two as earlier mentioned.[8]

50 Years After Independence:

In the past 50 years of Nigeria's independence, the nation has maintained her foreign policy. Although, the approach depends largely on the government of the day, based on the circumstances of the time and style of leaderships; the substance is usually rooted in set objectives revolving around those principles which the nation had always held as her priorities in the conduct of foreign relations.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAF), Nigeria's foreign policy witnessed unreserved influence guided by a commitment of five principles as her own basic foreign policy objectives which comprise the placing of priorities on safeguarding national security through enhanced extra-territorial strategic arrangement, economic prosperity, defence of national honour, as well as maintenance of peace and security.

Second in the line-up of principles was Nigeria's commitment to the concept of legal equality of all States, irrespective of their sizes or capability.

The third principle is of "non-interference in the internal or domestic affairs of other nation states," (MFA, 3-23-08) while the fourth dwells on influences that guide Nigeria's foreign policy with complete loyalty to multi-lateral diplomacy as demonstrated by Nigeria's vigorous involvement in various international organisations among others.

As such, Nigeria prides herself as a "member of the United Nations Organisation (UNO), African Union (AU), Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), African Petroleum Producers Association (APPA), Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) and ECOWAS," (MFA March 19, 2007). Nigeria has a relative influence in all these international organisations as expected of a full sovereign nation.

The bottom-line is that Nigeria's foreign policy is known to be a dedication to Africa and Pan-Africanism and it is on this premise that successive Nigerian governments have encouraged

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[8] *Noteworthy is that following the coming on board of a new administration led by late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua in 2007, a directive was given for the merging of the Ministry of Co-operation and Integration in Africa with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.*

the unity of all African states, focusing the total political, economic, social and cultural liberation of Africa and Africans within and in the diaspora.

Therefore, it is apt to state that Nigeria, through the MFA, has achieved much in the areas of keeping the entity together, by way of contributing its quota to regional peace and maintaining its sovereign responsibilities to date.

As part of efforts to elevate Nigeria's position in the comity of nations, the Maduekwe-led MAF inaugurated the Foreign Ministers' Forum on Friday, April 4, 2008 in Abuja. This, the ministry explained, includes "former and current Foreign Affairs Ministers and is planned to serve as an informal advisory body on Nigeria's foreign policy and international relations. It is also intended to enhance the institutional memory of the foreign policy establishment." (Olukanni – Nigerian MFA – Accessed June 2008).[9]

In his address to herald the events that marked five decades of Nigerian foreign service, Maduekwe traced succinctly the origin of the Ministry to having been established in September 1957 as an External Affairs Division of the Office of the Prime Minister, adding that it is, indeed, auspicious after half a century for the Ministry to celebrate its achievements, reflect on its past, and rededicate itself to the tasks ahead.

Series of event, beginning with the press briefing and the opening of an exhibition of works of arts, were some of the activities lined up to mark the occasion. The exhibition comprised a pictorial presentation, depicting the activities of the Ministry from its early years to the present, including the work of its parastatals. (Nigerian MFA, Accessed June 2008).

However, dwelling on the theme of the celebration: "The Nigerian Foreign Service: Fifty Years of Serving the Nation at Home and Abroad," Maduekwe noted that such services had been rendered in the past through Nigerian embassies, high commissions, permanent missions and distinguished roles of diplomats in international organisations. He stressed that it is through such international bodies as the United Nations, African Union, the ECOWAS, the Commonwealth and so on that Nigeria's enduring interests have been promoted and defended over the years.[10]

"Specifically, we must mention the leadership role that Nigeria has continued to play in the West African sub-region, Africa and in the developing world," he asserted, emphasising that Nigeria's role in the de-colonisation struggle in Southern Africa remains a landmark. Such other

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[9] *This is widely believed to have been adopted from the United States Department of State and is regarded as a good omen for Nigeria.*

[10] *He stated unequivocally that it was the Ministry's astute diplomacy that mobilised and sensitised Africa and the rest of the world to support the unity and corporate existence of the Nigerian Federation during the country's political conflict of the mid and late 1960s.*

initiatives as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and its Peer Review Mechanism, the African Union and its predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The external debt and other challenges facing the developing world beyond the specific concerns of Africa have been largely successful because Nigeria provided the critical leadership needed at all times." *(Maduekwe – MFA.gov.ng. Accessed June 2008)*

The Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Lagos, as a credible policy think-tank of the nation, was elevated to a parastatal of the Ministry, without forgetting the roles of Nigeria in UN and other peace-keeping operations. Such was the record that Nigeria has been the chairman of the Special Political Committee (C34) which oversees UN peace-keeping operations in different parts of the world. Indeed, Nigeria was in February 2010, re-elected into this Committee.

In his words: "Of course, our role in ECOMOG and peace-keeping, peace-building and resolution in our sub-region also needs no telling. In all these areas, in co-operation with the gallant officers and men of the Nigerian Armed Forces, the Ministry, our past and present Foreign Ministers, Missions abroad, Ambassadors and diplomats have played very important roles. And of course, they continue to do so. Nigeria's peace-keeping experiences led to the establishment of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) in Abuja." *(Maduekwe – MFA.gov.ng. Accessed June 2008)*

On the Technical Aid Corps Scheme (TAC), for instance, the Minister pointed out that the creation of the scheme in 1987 was a major initiative of the Ministry, to coordinate Nigeria's technical assistance to developing countries in Africa, the Pacific and the Caribbean - known as the APC countries.[11]

Citizen Diplomacy:

Notably from inception, the Nigerian foreign service and the Ministry have been reputed for providing consular services to Nigerians abroad, promoting their welfare and rendering assistance to those in need, including facilitating links and communications with next of kin at home in Nigeria where relevant.

In line with the aforementioned, Maduekwe said, these services include issuance of passports, other travel documents, visas, authentication of documents "and since this administration came into office, the welfare of Nigerians at home and abroad has now been given greater emphasis through the policy of 'Citizen Diplomacy.'"

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[11] *There are currently 700 TAC volunteers serving in these countries, bringing the number of highly-skilled Nigerian professionals so far deployed to about 3000 from inception to date.*

Explaining that Citizen Diplomacy as a foreign policy thrust is aimed at re-branding Nigeria's foreign policy under which the Ministry and Missions abroad are totally committed to the welfare and rights of Nigerians at home and abroad, as well as becoming fully-grown development as a robust policy thrust in half a century.

Even where Nigerian nationals are alleged to have infringed on the laws of their countries of residence, the ministry ensures that they are still entitled to get what is referred to as "the international minimum standard of treatment."[12]

In this regard, the Ministry is directly involved in:

i. *"Bilateral discussions and negotiations;*

ii. *Negotiation, conclusion and implementation of international treaties, bilateral and multilateral agreements;*

iii. *Helping to organize and co-ordinate international meetings and conferences in Nigeria;*

iv. *Support of government programmes of attracting Foreign Direct Investment;*

v. *Trade promotion – sourcing for markets for Nigerian products abroad, especially in the non-oil sectors;*

vi. *Promoting the image of Nigeria in co-operation with other Ministries and agencies of Government, including the promotion of Nigerian culture and dissemination of information on Nigeria;*

vii. *Promoting the interests and welfare of Nigerian students abroad, including assistance in remittance of fees and other education support services;*

viii. *Co-ordinating Christians and Muslim Pilgrimage activities in co-operation with the State Governments and other agencies and arms of government and ensuring their welfare in the Holy Lands."*

The Presidency: Bedrock of foreign policy decisions

In Nigeria, the fact is that several high-level decisions are taken at different centres and locations despite the existence of certain structures like ministries in-charge of core issues at stake. Foreign policy decisions do not elude the Presidency, the centre of government in Nigeria; be it military or civilian administration.

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[12] *In addition, like other Foreign Ministries the world over, other functions of the MAF cuts across the provision of services such as liaison between foreign governments and home ministries as well as government departments; both at home and abroad, including the convening of conferences and meetings.*

Alluding to this fact, Olusanya et al (1990) stated that, owing to the expansion in foreign policy conducts invariably facilitated by the proliferation of issues and the emergence of new ones, issues which would have imperatively required both bilateral and multilateral international engagements in finding the root or cure have been resolved without stress.

Elucidating this, Olusanya et al, noted that in planning the Nigerian Constitution, in 1979 and 1989, the government of the day did not see any limitation to foreign policy making, and did not limit itself to just political and diplomatic relations between the country and the rest of the world. But rather, it saw foreign policy "as the totality of transactions – economic, trade, cultural, financial, political and diplomatic …." (Asobie, 1990, p.5).

This position, therefore, makes it possible, for instance, for the Ministry of Trade which handles external trade for the country to become an integral part of the foreign policy. Crude oil sales undertaken on behalf of the government by the Ministry of Petroleum Resources is a major element in Nigeria's international business transactions, similarly makes the Ministry's activities a major factor in foreign policy decisions.

Hub of foreign policy in Nigeria:

Concluding this chapter with the postulation that the Presidency, especially in Nigeria, is the bedrock of foreign policy decision-making, therefore, may be in order, especially considering some uniqueness about the various governments at different periods of governance in Nigeria since independence.

These indicated that some were during the Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa's regime; who became the first Prime Minister in 1957, while his actual leadership role commenced three years later, when Nigeria attained independence. Given that Nigeria practised a parliamentary system at that time, all members of the government were parliamentarians, hence, the Prime Minister being the real head of government then, was making foreign policy decisions on the nation's behalf.[13]

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[13]   *(Inamete 2001, pgs 20-26; Aluko 1993, pgs 82-84; Idang 1973, pgs 6, 48-49, Ofoegbu 1990, pgs 999-100, Ojo 1980, pgs 574-75). Even as there are some key ministries to form the nucleus of formulating foreign policies, the office of the Head of State, which by the First Republic was under the Prime Minister, otherwise known in the present day Nigerian government as presidency, in addition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministries of Defence, Finance, Economic Development, Commerce and Industry, Information, Education and then the Parliament.*

Balewa's government assembled the first crop of Nigerians to rule the country, and his administration formulated what is known today as the focus of Nigerian foreign policy, which has the African continent as its cornerstone.

For that reason, according to (Inamete 2001), Balewa's administration has been largely portrayed as moderate, calm, placating attitudes embodied in his relationship with other political leaders in formulation of foreign policies alongside his cabinet crew.

CHAPTER 2

AFRICA, CENTRE OF NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

In the past 50 years of Nigeria's independence, some imperatives have been discovered as necessitating the position of Africa as the centre of the country's foreign policy. Above all is the country's commitment to the continent in spite of various attributes which largely depend on the situation at any given time - the kind and style of leadership coupled with the real substance of its foreign policy as laid down by the founding fathers.

In examining the features of Nigerian foreign policy, it is worthy to note that the principal considerations of Nigerian international relations are the defence and self-protection which are focused on her territorial integrity and sovereignty. (Obiozor et al, 1991: p. 103).

Ring countries and Nigeria's foreign policy:

Another factor raised as part of the features of Nigerian foreign policy is the so-called 'ring countries,' evident in Nigeria's behaviour to these neighbouring countries, which has been consistent in developing a pattern and relentless effort at making certain optimistic diplomatic co-existence.

Obiozor et al observed that Nigeria may as well be one of the countries on the continent with less number of border clashes with her immediate neighbours, based on her policies, which emphasises tranquility, good relations and highest possible co-operation with more of these features envisioned as natural democratic characters.

Nigeria's most important neighbours:

Nigeria is a country with the geographical landmass of 923,768 square kilometres (sq kms), with Benin Republic at the West, Niger and Chad in the North, while Cameroon is at the South. Interestingly, Nigeria through the Gulf of Guinea borders the Benin Republic and Equatorial Guinea.

The creation or delineation of these countries in West Africa sub-region have been largely linked to the colonial era, but the most interesting thing has been the kind of neighbourliness that

have existed over the decades, although it may not be said to be all rosy. Whereas Nigeria is a nation colonised by the Britons, most of her neighbours were colonised by the French.[14]

Therefore, in ensuring good neighbourliness some of the budding issues, included language, trade, culture and economic developments. Some parts of Nigeria's neighbours share similarities in languages and traditional foods and culture, depending on the side of the country the boundary is linked.

For instance, Nigeria is largely bordered in the South by Cameroon, which has similarities with some Nigerian villages. Yaounde is a name of town in the Nigeria's border communities and same name is today given to the capital city of Cameroon, even as they share the same language as well as trade, especially in agricultural products, therefore adding value to the socio-economic upliftment of the two countries based on the good and harmonious relationship between them.

As a result, this relationship has been surrounded with ups and downs that characterised associations, but most importantly, for the co-existence of the two nations, it has devoid of rancor that can culminate into full-blown conflict.

It is believed that the various bilateral engagements with Nigeria's neighbours were majorly sustained in recent times with a view to thwarting any atom of unrest, such as the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission over the Bakassi Peninsula.

One of these bilateral engagements was the GreenTree agreement between the Republic of Cameroon and the Federal Republic of Nigeria over the modalities of withdrawal and transfer of authority in the Bakassi Peninsula in 2006.

Nigeria and Cameroon:

Nigeria has developed series of bilateral relationship with Cameroon, the most important aspect being the need to bring to a conclusion the issue of 1,600-kilometre land boundary, which had lingered, particularly the 1,000 square-kilometre oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula.

The disagreement escalated into military clash in 1993, and based on the outcome of the 1994 International Court of Justice (ICJ) adjudication with regards to the agreement consummated by United Kingdom and Germany in the 20th century, Cameroon was awarded the right to some of the disputed territories, as Nigeria reportedly did not lose out entirely as a result of the ruling.

To ensure that the ICJ ruling was implemented to the letter, the United Nations Secretary-General, then, Dr. Kofi Annan, invited President Paul Biya of Cameroon and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria to Geneva for a two-day meeting in 2005 and the fourth since the setting up of the mixed commission to re-evaluate progress in the implementation of maritime and land boundary between the two nations.

This joint commission, according to the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), was made up of the official government delegations from both countries. While the Cameroonian team was headed by Mr. Amadou Ali, the Nigerian counterpart was presided over by the former

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[14] *Out of 923,768 square kilometres of landmass, Cameroon seem to occupy a bigger portion of Nigeria's neighbours with 1,690 kilometers followed by Niger with 1,497 km, then, Benin with 773 km and Chad with 87 km; totaling about 4047 km round the country, while the Gulf of Guinea and Bight of Benin covered the rest of waterlogged boundary space.*

Justice Minister, Prince Bola Ajibola. The Commission was linked to having resolved several issues of concern for the two parties, namely the demilitarisation of zones, economic diplomacy, strategies to protect rights of the populace and reinstating of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, which had been in comatose for years.

Though, an estimated USD$18,000,000 (about N2,686,050,104) was spent by the commission, it was credited to have expertly realised most of its objectives, including the phased demarcation of the Lake Chad area in December 2003; with a number of 33 rural communities sharing neighbourhood affiliation with Doron Liman, Darack, Naga'a and Tchika areas; were successfully handed over to Cameroon. Similarly, Damboré community was deposited in the care of Nigeria.

Additionally, the cross-border Enugu-Abakiliki-Mamfe-Mutengene road project began in mid- 2005, whereas the final maps of the no-longer-disputed boundary were officially released in March 2005 and eventual transfer of authority took place at Bakassi Peninsula in 2006.

This was not the first time Nigeria and Cameroon have tried to amend their relationships, as it was discovered that Cameroon was not a party to ECOWAS protocol on free movement of its citizens, a situation which posed a lot of tensions at the borders between Nigeria and Cameroon.

Another instance was in 1981, when five Nigerian soldiers were reportedly killed and three others wounded during an attack by a Cameroonian patrol boat on a Nigerian vessel off the Rio del Rey area. This came soon after the attack by Beninoise troops, thus provoking public debate in Nigeria for reparation and disciplinary steps to be taken either by Nigeria as an affected country or through the ECOWAS so as to avert war.

In spite of this, the difficult position was resolved amicably, but border tensions among these countries continued. Yet, in May 1987 Cameroonian officials took over the 16 border communities in Borno State, inducing a resistance by the Nigerian army units, until President Babangida's visit to Cameroon in December same year.

Two years after, as shown by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress, four Nigerian officials of Customs' unit were abducted in October and eight months later, skirmishes were reported between both countries.

Notable steps by Nigeria to maintain peaceful co-existence with neighbours included the decision to fence its international borders in 1981, to further safeguard its officials from undue molestation from neighbours, especially Cameroon.

Nigeria and Cameroon have had several bilateral agreements including the one on Exchange of Money Orders on June 7, 1965; Cultural, Social and Technical Co-operation on June 18, 1965, while a Bilateral Co-operation agreement was entered on July 26, all signed in Lagos. A Telecommunications agreement was concluded in Lagos on June 7, 1965 in addition to the Extradition Treaty of June 18, 1965. [Obiozor, 1991].

Nigeria and Niger Republic:

The relationship between the Republic of Niger and Nigeria as a neighbour has not been rosy given the number of skirmishes at the borders of the two countries. Nigeria and Niger had on

March 3, 1971 entered a convention on Joint Commission for Co-operation. Another convention was consummated between the countries for the Establishment of Common Customs Stations on May 18, 1965. [Obiozor et al, 1991]; just as in December 1977, Nigeria and Niger Republic agreed on Road Transport modalities between them.

In 1962, the Union of African Railways recommended 20 linkages through the Permanent Way and Inter-Connections Committee; three of these were very vital to Nigeria in all facets, namely, the Nigeria-Chad-Sudan, Nigeria-Niger and Nigeria – Dahomey [Ibe N.A. Okochi, 1990 pg. 136-137].

IBB on Nigeria's foreign policy allegiance:

Succinctly, the former military President of Nigeria, Gen. Babangida is on record to have said "Nigeria believes that crisis of any sort in those 'ring countries' definitely will have a spill-over effect on the peace and co-existence in Nigeria." Therefore, all the successive governments in the country, including his, saw the need for entrenching national good neighbourliness policies, explaining that the factor encouraged the facilitation and restoration of peace in Chad during his regime.

Babangida in his foreword to Obiozor et al, attributed this to the making of Africa the cornerstone of Nigeria's foreign policy and, as such, "the ECOWAS region completes what has been termed the three concentric circles governing Nigerian foreign and defence policies." In addition, the aforementioned three fundamentals formed the realistic primary concerns of the nation's security.

What this implies is the level of commitment Nigeria has continuously shown to Africa as the centre of her foreign policy. This reality was elucidated by General Babangida in Abuja at the foundation-laying ceremony of ECOWAS secretariat.

The then former Minister of External Affairs, Senator Ike Nwachukwu, was in tandem with this fact in his contribution on the dynamics of regional integration, when he stated that Nigeria's vision, based on African co-existence, is an effort at a holistic commitment to the development of the continent and that IBB had taken a cue from his predecessors as depicted in his exclusive interest in the affairs of the region and the African continent as a whole, adding that this was not a surprise to Nigerian diplomatic scholars.

Nwachukwu did not mince words when he stated that the obvious that integration would only proceed well, where member states are prepared to make sacrifices at several levels.

Five principles of Nigeria's foreign policy:

An affirmation of Africa as the centre of Nigeria's foreign policy was reflected in what (Akinyemi, 1989, p. 17) described as "policy of self-determination." According to Akinyemi, when Nigeria became independent in 1960, the nation adopted five guiding principles for her African policy, which include:

1. *"Acceptance of the sovereign equality of all African states;*
2. *Respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of every African state;*
3. *Non-interference in the internal affairs of other African countries;*
4. *Commitment to functional co-operation as a means of promoting African unity; and*
5. *Total eradication of racism and colonialism from Africa."*

Successive Nigerian governments, have been faithful to these principles, although, it was not until 1976 that the details of the nation's interest at the international level, could be said to have been proclaimed by the Federal Government, based on the counsel of the Prof. Adebayo Adedeji-led Nigeria's Foreign Policy Review Panel, which came up with what experts declared as yet, another five main objectives of the nation's external policy, namely:

1. *"The defence of our sovereignty and territorial integrity;*
2. *The creation of the necessary political and economic conditions in Africa and the rest of the world which will facilitate defence of the independence and territorial integrity of all African countries, while at the same time fostering national self-reliance and rapid economic development;*
3. *The promotion of equality and self-reliance in Africa and the rest of the developing world;*
4. *The promotion and defence of justice and respect for human dignity, especially the dignity of the black man; and*
5. *The defence and promotion of world peace." (Adedeji et al, 1976, p.5)*

Afro-centric policies:

It is reasonable to posit that Nigeria's policy on Africa had reflated some measure of consistency and attracted unprecedented domestic support, despite a few dissenting voices on its foreign policy decisions concerning Africa.

This fact is confirmed by the nation's commitment to the decolonisation of Africa and the right of Africans to self-determination, with abundant national resources put at the disposal of implementors of policies of the government.

Oyediran et al, (1966: pgs 150-168) stated, for instance, that Nigeria deployed her diplomatic prowess through global support such as direct bilateral financial and material aids to the Liberation Movements across the continent. Typical of this, was the role Nigeria played in the liberation of Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe], Sao Tome and Principe, Cape Verde, Angola and South Africa.

Another classic example of this 'Afrocentric' policy of Nigeria by Oyediran was demonstrated in Nigeria's recognition of the then Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola

(MPLA) regime in 1976. This was against the advice of the United States government among others. This was evident again in the acknowledgement of Nigeria as a fore-runner State in the interventions for the emancipation of Namibia and the elimination of apartheid in South Africa.

Nigeria was undoubtedly a prevailing force on the then OAU, in the recognition of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic sovereignty, thus signifying its loyalty to the right of Africans to self-determination; the attendant dismay expressed by some African governments and others notwithstanding.

Dissenting voices on Nigeria's foreign policy on Africa:

Reviewing the concept of Nigeria's African policy in a study of its role in the African unification movement by Okochi[15], it was made clear that not all Nigerians supported the policy, although it could be said that those in support have consistently been in the majority and have always found their ways into governance and government of the day.

Okochi was quick to state that the leader of the third political party in the first democratic era - Action Group – among those that formed the independent elite in the First Republic, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, was not optimistic about the concept, hence he wondered what basis could be the essence of the African policy by Nigeria, if not to establish the "United States of Africa – USA."

While addressing the sixth yearly congress of the party, Awolowo opined that to labour for this kind of classical State would create distrust among the adjoining States, especially when the cultural differences still exist. He cited the instance of the location of Egypt in Africa with her heart in the Arab world, which he argued would make both political union and co-operation impossible.[16]

Legislative Support for Pan-African Policies:

During the First Republic, a member representing the Orlu South East constituency from the ruling NPC-NCNC coalition government, Mr. E.C. Akwiwu, in the Lower House of the National Assembly, proposed a Ministry of Pan-African Affairs in consonance with the belief of the ruling elite that Nigeria should assume a leading role on the continent.

The ministry, as proposed, would be independent of the then Ministry of External Affairs because, according to him, it has become "absolutely important that something special should be done to see that our government is well advised and plays its due part in matters relating to Africa." (Okochi, 1990).

Buttressing his proposal, Akwiwu said that a conference of African people earlier held in Ghana tallied with his position, adding that the new ministry would go a long way in strengthening the position of the Nigerian government as being the master of a situation literally imposed on it by the world as far as the continent is concerned.

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[15]   (Okochi, 1990).
[16]   Awolowo's stand was further elucidated in the outcome of the general election that took place in Nigeria in December 1959 as no single political party won the overall majority during the exercise, because the three key political elements then were ethnically biased across the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani. The Action Group had its root in the West as a supposedly Yoruba party, the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon (NCNC) had its weight in the East, the Igbo heartland, and the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) had its supremacy in the north, an enclave for the Hausa-Fulani.

Okochi states that Akwiwu's motion was seconded on the floor of the House by a member representing Bende East and also from the same governing coalition party, Dr. Kalu Ezera, who in supporting the motion gave two reasons, viz:

i. *"There is a crying and urgent need for Nigeria to project her personality adequately into the scheme of things relating to the destiny of Africa. Hitherto, we had given the ugly impression of being isolationists and of aiding and abetting imperialist designs on the continent of Africa;*

ii. *There is a powerful force sweeping through Africa today and that force is movement of Pan-Africanism. The whole historical future of black Africa and, indeed, of the peace of the world depends on the success or failure of this movement. Nigeria must, therefore, lend its full support to it if it cannot lead it ...."* (Okochi 1990, p. 44)

African Affairs Bureau:

So, it was not surprising that the then Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, in response to the proposal, assured the nation that the Ministry of External Affairs would be created soon after independence on October 1, 1960, with a section entirely dedicated to African affairs.

"... The countries in Africa will really have a very good coverage .... The Federal Government will see that in all countries in Africa which are independent, Nigeria will be represented either by Ambassadors or Commissioners or by Consul-Generals," Abubakar said (Okochi 1990, p. 44), pledging that after the proclamation of independence, Nigeria would also come up with a delegation to visit some of these countries in order to forge relevant understanding and develop closer ties.

Therefore, Nigeria's delegation led by Hon. Y.M. Sule to the second Conference of Independent African States (CIAS) in Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, a few months later was like a dream come true.[17] He went on to reinforce this position, saying that Africans must eschew sentiments and remain realistic.

In his last parliamentary speech to the House of Representatives, prior to independence in 1960, Sir Balewa made it abundantly clear that Nigeria was resolute in its decision to give confidence to the development of common relationship with all the States on the continent. (Okochi 1990, p. 45)[18]

Relationships with African countries:

Significantly, Nigeria's relationships with other African countries could be said to be ever consistent. This fact revolves around co-operation at the bilateral level, beginning with the understanding of what co-operation is, especially at this level of discussion, which involves

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[17]   *"Pan-Africanism is the only solution to our problems in Africa, no matter what kind of problems they are. No one in Africa doubts the need to promote Pan-Africanism ... the world today is in such a state that whatever may be our differences of opinion here in Africa, we must close our ranks and file and move together as one people irrespective of nationality, creed or religion," Sule asserted at the conference.*

[18]   *"The difficulties, which will confront us in promoting the friendly association of independent countries in Africa are fully appreciated, but we believe they can be overcome if a start is made by emphasising and building upon the cultural and economic links which already existed. This, however, will be followed by a policy of securing an agreed plan for the improvement of inter-territorial communications among others," (Okochi 1990, p. 45).*

relations between two countries only; whether geographically aligned or distanced from each other.

For instance, Okochi (1990, p. 57) wrote that in line with the directive of the first Prime Minister, the Nigerian government as at January 1966; had instituted foreign missions in about 20 nations. These included Algeria, Cameroon, Congo-Leopoldville, Benin Republic, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Chad, and Togo.[19]

Nigeria, with other near-by countries, reached an agreement on the abolition of visa for their citizens to use in travelling across the West African sub-region as a mark of good neighbourliness and as part of 'diplomatic relations.' By 1964, Nigeria had this kind of agreement with six countries including Cameroon, Dahomey, Niger, Chad, Togo and Morocco, while that of Guinea was formalised a year later, in 1965.[20]

Some of Nigeria's bilateral agreements:

Nigeria has bilateral agreements on co-operation, meetings on Joint Commission and Treaties of Friendship and Co-operation, especially with those African nations that it had 'abolition of visa deal' with.

Okochi equally claimed that Nigeria's bilateral co-operation with Cameroon, for instance, compelled immigrants or emigrant nationals to remain within the relevant laws of their respective lands in granting nationals of friendly countries the freedom to set up "commercial, professional and cultural organisations" in accordance with the laws establishing the agreements. (1990, p. 58)[21]

For instance, the joint meeting of the Commission between Nigeria and Niger paved way for the establishment of a combined Nigeria-Niger Co-operation Commission (NNCC) charged with the responsibilities of identifying various ways of bringing together the economies of the two countries with the thrust to work towards nurturing more effective co-operation among these countries, as well as proposing to the governments of the participating States relevant methods and schemes, with the ability to motivate the co-existence of both countries.

The Commission, accordingly, was charged with the duty of maximising development very rapidly, while governments of both countries were expected to provide the Commission with applicable information to aid its assignments.

A protocol of amendments affixed by the conference in December 1973 provided the establishment of three principal organs of the commission, namely: the high authority made up of the two Heads of State; the Council of Ministers, comprising equal representation of the two governments and the make-up of the permanent secretariat.

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[19]   It is on record that seven years later, December 1973 precisely, Nigeria had official foreign presence in all independent African States except Mauritius and Swaziland, with Consulates in Buea – Cameroon and in Port Sudan.

[20]   Generally, the agreements avail nationals of the affected countries to enter Nigeria without a visa and vice versa. Essentially, these agreements relate to only those visiting or travelling out from Nigeria, are allowed for a stay up to 90 days,   while nationals of those countries in agreement with Nigeria, or Nigerians intending to work, must submit to the specific country's Immigration Act.

[21]   These agreements basically contained negotiable protocols on how to move these countries forward jointly, most especially on issues concerning economies, financial and customs matters, frontier exchanges, free movement of persons and goods, cultural and technical matters, rights of establishment as well as judicial and legal assistance conferences, to mention a few.

Another addendum to the convention document stated, among others, that the two countries must declare that they had created the Commission "with the full understanding that its activities shall be complementary to existing national, regional and international institutions already engaged in various fields of co-operation."

1973 Addendum:

In addition, an addendum to the December 1973 meeting between the two countries stated that the Commission was formed with the full understanding that its activities "shall be complementary."

Okochi outlined the degree of co-operation as elaborated in the full guidelines to take account of:

(i) *collection, evaluation and dissemination of information on proposals made by member States;*

(ii) *promotion and co-ordination of joint research projects and programmes aimed at the development of the resources of the two contracting parties;*

(iii) *liaison with the contracting parties on joint efforts and*

(iv) *examination of complaints and promotion of the settlement of disputes referred to it through conciliation or mediation."* (1990, p. 59)

The permanent secretariat had been structured to have the full status of an international organisation, and employees given the relevant privileges by member States, which include such privileges and immunities as were listed and accorded to officials of international organisations of comparable status.

Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation:

At this juncture, it is noteworthy to look into the treaty of friendship and co-operation Nigeria entered into with the Central African Republic in June 1971, which was aimed at creating an effective bilateral co-existence for the two nations. Practically, this was based on respect for national sovereignty of every individual country and non-interference in its internal affairs and eventually to "promote the unity and solidarity of the African states, with a view to maintaining international peace and security."

As contained in the summit report, the two parties were bound to promote co-operation nationally, socio-economically and culturally. Cultural institutions, women and youth organisations were conceptualised to give impetus to exchange programmes and enable participants share

experiences and information in addition to technical and scientific co-operation that are of use to both parties - through provision of technical experiments, documentation, communication of developmental techniques and experiments in areas not limited to but inclusive of agriculture, industry, transport, education and health.

It was also agreed between Nigeria and Central African Republic that, in order to realise the facilitation of the programme as outlined in the Joint Commission Convention, representatives made up of government officials and experts from both countries were set up and charged with the duty of continuous review of the agreement. Thus, the treaty, which was intended for a specified limited period; initially targeted to be 12 months, pending when either of the parties would decide to end the agreement, was signed.

Similarly, joint meetings between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and some other countries within the West African region were held and conventions on the establishment of common Customs posts across neighbouring borders were instituted.

An example was the agreement for the establishment of customs posts between Nigeria and her close neighbours, namely Dahomey, Chad, Niger and Cameroon within the first six months of Nigeria's independence.

In May 1964, a historic step was taken in the capital of the Federal Republic of Nigeria between the country and Niger Republic. It was agreed, in part, that the two countries should "take appropriate measures … to facilitate and accelerate the crossing of the border" by their citizenry. It was also agreed, among other things, to:

(i) *build offices and control posts side by side along the border*

(ii) *permit the proper officers of each 'high contracting party' to exercise their functions in the territory of the other party and*

(iii) *establish, transfer, modify or close such posts and approve routes on which control is to be exercised, via mutual agreement of capable authorities from the two nations. (Okochi, 1990, p. 60)*

However, nothing in the meeting stipulated the prevention of any of the parties from embarking on initiatives as may be deemed necessary for the national security of both countries, particularly in a state of war, siege, time of emergency or general mobilisation.

On the other hand, either of the party was given freedom to call it quits or condemn any part or whole of the convention agreement, which must be 'strictly' by notice in writing for the intent targeted at the other nation and is expected to take effect 12 months after receipt of the written notice has been confirmed by the partnering country.

Movement of persons and goods:

Another cogent aspect of the summit report was the part governing the movement of persons and goods, which was stated publicly on July 26, 1962 in Lagos, between the government of Nigeria and Cameroon.

The agreement stipulated that the governments of Nigeria and Cameroon have found it sufficient for immigration or emigration purposes and subject to the laws of each party's 'territory' to include that *"National passport with no compulsory visas; Laissez-passer or travel certificate and official permit issued by the police or the department responsible for immigration and/or emigration and confirming the nationality of the bearer,"* (Okochi, 1990, p. 60).

These conditions were introduced to curtail smuggling across the common borders of the two countries and to reduce the number of incidents. Consequently, a joint Nigerian and Cameroonian patrol was agreed upon to implement anti-smuggling checks across the water ways. The patrol functionaries were mandated to take into custody suspects.

Right of Establishment:

Another important component of the treaty is the 'Right of Establishment' which provides that citizens of both countries should have the fundamental right to own real estates and fixed assets consisting of commercial and industrial installations and their accessories; freehold and leasehold land, plants and machines among other accessories, as well as working capital.

Evidence of this has since resulted in the increasing number of Nigerian private and corporate entities having establishments in the neighbouring countries of West Africa and Africa at large. For instance, Zinox Technologies Limited, a Nigerian brand has extended its business to far away Gambia, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Similarly, Omatek Ventures Plc, Computer Warehouse Group (CWG), Zenith Bank International Plc and Oceanic Bank Plc are some of the beneficiaries of the protocol concluded between Nigeria and Cameroon on June 18, 1965, among other African countries.

Usually, this type of meeting accommodates protocol, cautioning against any expropriation by any of the parties – countries, of property owned by a national of the other country to form part of subject of fair compensation payable in local currency within a given time frame. But this clause is assumed to be in force after due consideration and ratification by both parties, notice of which must be given in writing.

Conclusion:

It is relevant to note that the choice of Africa as the centre piece of Nigerian foreign policies, in the long run, was not a misguided step; as the decision was not intended to overrun smaller countries and assume a super-power status on the continent.

In line with the vision of Balewa's administration from the First Republic of Nigeria till date, (up to President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua), it is very crucial for any government in power in the country to keep the flag flying for the benefit of the African race as re-affirmed by the recent past Nigerian Foreign Minister, Chief Ojo Maduekwe.

So, be it military or civilian government, as explained by former President Babangida, there is a need to sustain the tempo to encourage the kind of unified economic system currently seen and enjoyed in Europe as part of the European Union's (EU) vision of integration, in order to build upon the progress made so far. Above all, the unique saying that there is tremendous strength in unity should be emphasised and followed continuously.

CHAPTER *3*

NIGERIA'S ROLE IN AFRICAN UNION (AU)

Barely three years after independence, Nigeria had become a force to reckon with on the African continent. Her role in the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now African Union (AU) in the unification of the continent cannot be over-emphasised.

This positive force was made clearer at the meeting of the continental Foreign Ministers held in January 1962 in Lagos, the nation's former capital city, where it was reported that two opposing camps, namely, the Monrovia Group and the Casablanca Group had emerged.

While the Monrovia group, was busy consolidating its opposition, the Casablanca group's focus was on the need to have a united African continent. Out of the 32 independent African countries as at May 25, 1963, when OAU was formed; Nigeria led 24 other countries as conservatives, the Monrovia Group, whereas the Casablanca bloc led by Ghana, Guinea and Mali strongly showed that they believed in the urgency of an immediate political union for the continent. This group was later joined by Egypt, Algeria Transitional Government and Morocco to constitute the Casabalanca League, (Akinsanya, 2005, p. 99).

Metamorphosis of OAU:

Founded on July 9, 2002, the African Union was a transformation by name of the earlier African Economic Community (AEC) and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), with its headquarters in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia.

The objectives of AU revolve around the acceleration of political and socio-economic integration of the continent; promotion and defence of Africa's common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its people in order to achieve peace and security on the continent; and to promote democratic institutions, good governance and human rights.

The former Nigerian Minister of Justice and a legal icon, Dr. Teslim Elias, led the delegation from Nigeria during the preliminary sessions of preparing the AU Charter and was actively involved in the team that worked late nights through mornings to ensure that African leaders have the relevant papers to endorse on May 25, 1963.

CHAPTER THREE – NIGERIA'S ROLE IN AFRICAN UNION (AU)

At the 1963 meeting of African foreign ministers held in the third quarter of the year, Nigeria had proposed alongside Senegal, which seconded, that the issue of where the OAU would be headquartered be settled before the main agenda of the conference was drafted. When the issue was brought before the conference, Nigeria was reportedly the first to offer its then capital, Lagos, to host the headquarters of the organisation. As soon as that proposal was made, Senegal and Zaire equally presented their respective capital cities as prospective headquarters. At the same time, the Guinean delegation, led by the Foreign Minister, Mr. Ishmael Toure, came up with the choice of Ethiopia, reminding participants of the role of Ethiopia in the emancipation of Africa and its peoples.

Following the stalemate to decide on the choice of OAU headquarters, four countries – Nigeria, Senegal, Zaire and Ethiopia - were required to go into consultation and come up with a solution, which was not forthcoming before Nigeria's Foreign Affairs Minister, Dr. Jaja Wachuku, suggested a fact-finding mission to the four contesting countries to determine the most suitable capital to host the headquarters, prior to a secret ballot that was to be held to resolve the issue. At the end, Ethiopia was favoured.

According to the *Act* establishing AU, its objectives comprised, among other things, to:

a.   *"achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa;*

b.   *defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its member states;*

c.   *accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;*

d.   *promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;*

e.   *encourage international co-operation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;*

f.   *promote peace, security, and stability on the continent;*

g.   *promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance;*

h.   *promote and protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;*

i.   *establish the necessary conditions which would enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations;*

j.   *promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;*

k.   *promote co-operation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples;*

l.   *co-ordinate and harmonise the policies between the existing and future Regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union;*

m.   *advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular science and technology; and*

n.   *work with relevant international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent." (AU site: Accessed July 2008)*

The Coming of AU and Its Working Organs:

On July 9, 2002, a total of 53 countries on the continent endorsed the transformation by name; from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to African Union (AU), a decision many African political and foreign policy analysts believed was taken to kick-start the needed change through adoption of AU as an acronym of the African Union in order to afford the continent the embedded psychology to structure the organisation after the celebrated European Union (EU). (AU, accessed June, 2008)

Till date, AU operates through eight organs following the Constitutive Act of the African Union, adopted at the 36th ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments on July 11, 2000 in Lome, Togo. The organs are the Assembly of the Union, Executive Council, Pan-African Parliament, Court of Justice, Commission, Permanent Representatives Committee, Specialised Technical Committee, Economic, Social and Cultural Council and Financial Institutions, with room for establishment of other organs as the Assembly may decide in the near future.

Those who endorsed the change:

Some of the 53 Heads of States and Governments of the then member states of the OAU who physically adopted the change included the Presidents of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, and Federal Republic of Nigeria.[22]

Others are Rwanda, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Togolese Republic, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

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[22] *The 53 Heads of State and Governments of the then member states of the OAU who physically adopted the change were Presidents of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Djibouti, Arab Republic of Egypt, State of Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabonese Republic. Alongside were the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Liberia and the Leader of the 1st of September Revolution of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mamman Gaddafi.*
Others present at the endorsement were Presidents of the Republic of Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Rwanda, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Togolese Republic, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

In addition were the Prime Ministers of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Mauritius and Lesotho as well as the King of Swaziland who were in Durban, South Africa, to endorse on behalf of their respective countries.

Nigeria's Role in African Union:

Putting forward the facts on the leadership role of Nigeria in the evolution of African Union, the Nigerian ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti and the permanent representative to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Ambassador Olusegun Akinsanya, pointed out that Nigeria, ever since the inception of OAU, has remained an active participant. (Akinterinwa, 2005, p. 100)

As a matter of fact, Nigeria has been part of all the meetings and negotiations that led to the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity as well as the transformation processes that led to the emergence of African Union. Nigeria played an active part in the initial Monrovia Group that assumed the gradualist approach to the birth of African unity.

At the conference of African foreign ministers which opened on May 15, 1963, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to streamline sketches for the charter on the future of the organisation, Nigeria was noted as one of the key participants representing the Monrovia Group with the position that formed the basis for the deliberations, although Ghana also presented the draft of the Casablanca Group at the meeting. Ethiopia presented the third draft, which summed up the position of the two groups, and was eventually taken as the working document of the conference.

Transformation of AU:

As at the time the draft Constitutive Act was submitted to the Heads of States and Governments at the extra-ordinary summit in Sirte, Libya, Akinterinwa opined (2005) that the particular nature of the proposed OAU transformation to AU was unknown. This was largely because some of the member States opined that African Union should emerge as a federal or, at most, a confederal continental government. Another school of thought among the States and diplomats, states Akinterinwa, was of the opinion that Africa had become a continent extensively divided by political and economic disparities; therefore, an instant political union may not be a veritable option.

It took the political prowess of President Olusegun Obasanjo under the provision of the Sirte Declaration of September 9, 1999 to clarify the various ambiguities surrounding the intention for the transformation of OAU to AU, as he made it clear that it's a means to pursue the socio-economic integration of Africa first and necessary steps towards achieving both political and socio-economic liberation be taken later.

Aggressive involvement:

Not deterred by the loss of the hosting-right of the headquarters, Nigeria continued to participate energetically in the affairs of OAU, which paved the way for the provision of a high-level personnel in the portfolio of Assistant Secretary-General of AU until 2004. Those who served

in this capacity before now include Ambassadors Peter Onu, Brownson N. Dede and Lawrence Agubuzu.

In October 1980, (precisely from 28 to 29), Nigeria hosted the first ever OAU Economic Summit, where far-reaching decisions were endorsed and an economic blueprint for the continent tagged the "Lagos Plan of Action" was evolved, (Akinterinwa, 2005, p. 101). This became the foundation for the emancipation of the region in an effort to integrate Africa socio-economically.

This summit also gave birth to the treaty on African Economic Community (AEC) aimed at making certain the rapid socio-economic and cultural integration of the continent, promotion of collective, accelerated, self-reliant and self-sustaining development of member States, as it was adopted as a resolution by the Heads of State, during the Lagos summit. Therefore, it was apt for Nigeria to host the signing of AEC, which took place between June 3 and 5 as part of the schedule for the 27th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments held in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Nigeria's participation in NEPAD:

Another remarkable contribution by Nigeria is in the areas of formulation and implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). A strategic framework document, evolved from a mandate given to the five initiating Heads of States - Nigeria, Algeria, Egypt, Senegal, and South Africa - by OAU to develop a system that has in-built socio-economic development framework for the continent. This framework document was formally adopted at the 37th Summit of the OAU in July 2001 in Lusaka, Zambia.

Fundamentally, foreign policy observers see NEPAD as a merger of two plans for the economic renaissance of the continent, that is to say, the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP), led by President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and the immediate past President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, his counterpart from Algeria, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, and the OMEGA Plan for Africa developed by President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal.

Akinterinwa (2005, p. 104) states that four months after the deal was sealed and all parties agreed on the merger, precisely in July 2001, the OAU Assembly of Heads of States and Governments meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, accepted the document under the name of the New African Initiative (NAI). Thereby, the Heads of States and Governments Implementation Committee (HSGIC) for the project completed the policy framework and named it the New Partnership for Africa's Development on October 23, 2001.

Ever since then, NEPAD has become a programme of the African Union, which replaced the OAU in 2002, with its secretariat located in South Africa to co-ordinate and implement its programmes. Obasanjo was chairman of HSGIC at inception.

While addressing the steering committee of AU during a meeting held in Dakar, Senegal in August 2001, President Obasanjo of Nigeria told the gathering that NEPAD was a programme of AU, describing it as Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa (CSSDCA). The trio of initiatives, the AU, NEPAD and CSSDCA; contain the indispensable ingredients for widespread actualisation of Africa's development process.

The four cardinal objectives of NEPAD, include to:

(i)   *"eradicate poverty,*

(ii)   *promote sustainable growth and development,*

(iii)   *integrate Africa in the world economy, and*

(iv)   *accelerate the empowerment of women, which is based on underlying principles of a commitment to good governance, democracy, human rights and conflict resolution; and the recognition that maintenance of these standards is fundamental to the creation of an environment conducive to investment and long-term economic growth."*

Consequently, NEPAD looks forward to attracting increased investment, capital flow and funding. In view of that the organisation provides an African owned framework for development as the foundation for partnership at regional and international levels. For (Akinterinwa, p. 105), the major input of Nigeria to the development of Africa was in the adoption of an African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM); which was set up to ensure compliance with NEPAD programmes and objectives, as agreed to by African leaders in their various domains, crowning it all with the appointment of the members of the Eminent Persons Panel.

APRM declaration:

The Durban, South Africa's summit of the African Union (AU) held in July 2002, was generally seen as complementing NEPAD's declaration on democracy and political, economic and corporate governance. As such, African leaders believe *" … in just, honest, transparent, accountable and participatory government and probity in public life,"* embarked on to work with renewed determination to enforce among other things, *"the rule of law, equality of all citizens before the law, individual and collective freedom, right to participate in free, credible and democratic political processes, and adherence to the separation of powers,"* (APRM.org) as well as protecting the independence of the judiciary and the effectiveness of parliaments on the continent.

This declaration, therefore, laid the foundation for concrete commitment needed for the establishment by participating AU states, via the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), which followed an adoption of a document outlining the steps of peer review and related principles, which these states ought to abide with.

The Abuja MOU for APRM:

So, at the NEPAD Heads of States and Governments Implementation Committee meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, in March 2003, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the APRM to facilitate effective operations of the treaty was adopted and it came into immediate effect with the

accord reached by six countries to be subjected to its provisions. As at 2005, 23 other African leaders had endorsed the mechanism with a pledge to hold one another accountable in making sure that they comply with the principles establishing the machinery.

The Abuja meeting also agreed to a set of "objectives, standards, criteria and indicators for the APRM in addition to the establishment of APRM secretariat and appointment of a seven-man 'panel of eminent persons' to oversee the conduct of the APRM process and ensure its integrity" (APRM.org).

APRM support mission & its purpose:

Two years later, exactly between March 21 and 24, 2005, a team of APRM support mission paid a working visit to Nigeria. The team led by an eminent member and Vice-Chairperson of the APRM panel, Amb. Bethuel Kiplagat, included the Executive Director, Dr. Bernard Kouassi and a member of the Eminent Panel, Prof. Adebayo Adedeji, resident in Nigeria, was also part of the mission.[23]

The purpose of the support mission, according to their leader, was to assess the procedure and apparatus on ground in Nigeria to facilitate self-assessment and afterwards draft its Programme of Action. Essentially, the delegation was also to wrap up negotiations and sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Technical Assessment Missions (TAM).

The team also briefed the National Focal Point, including the then Secretary to the Federal Government of Nigeria, Chief Ufot J. Ekaette, on APRM concerns on Nigeria. The team was educated on the structures and processes underway for the support mission, underscoring the commitment of government of Nigeria under President Olusegun Obasanjo's leadership, in the implementation of NEPAD and the APRM at country level.

The National Focal Point, Nigeria, had a national APRM Co-ordinator, in the person of Amb. Isaac Aluko-Olokun. Besides, a National Working Group (NWG) comprising key stakeholder groups; an equivalent to the National Commission, prescribed in the APRM core documents and a Steering Committee had also been inaugurated prior to the visit with a fully equipped and functional secretariat to provide logistic backstopping to national level APRM activities.

Accordingly, Nigeria made some efforts to sensitise stakeholders through workshops, the media and other modes of information dissemination, including the launching of a website, for the APRM in Nigeria. (NEPAD.org, accessed August, 2008)

Commenting during the visit, leader of the delegation, Ambassador Kiplagat, appreciated the Nigerian government for the warm welcome extended to his team and noted the comprehensiveness of the support mission programme, which, he said, was unprecedented. Particularly, he acknowledged the frontline role of Nigeria in the establishment and evolution of NEPAD and the APRM.

Amb. Kiplagat used the opportunity to highlight the fact that the APRM, as a voluntary mechanism, should not be seen as a scorecard or aid conditionality for countries. He reiterated

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[23]   *Other members of the team were the APRM Co-ordinator for Corporate Governance, Ms. Evelynne Change, and experts from the Strategic Partner Institutions who were part of the team included the Senior Financial Sector Advisor, NEPAD Support Unit, African Development Bank (AfDB), Mr. Michael Mah'moud, Senior Programme Coordinator, AU-NEPAD Support Unit, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for Africa, Ms. Zemenay Lakew, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Dr. Emile Ahohe, and the Development Management Officer at UNECA, Dr. Kojo Busia.*

the principles of national ownership and broad-based participation for the successful implementation of the APRM.

Similarly, during a courtesy visit to President Obasanjo as part of the schedule, Amb. Kiplagat praised the interest and commitment of the President and attributed the progress made so far, both nationally and continentally to him. He observed that a great sense of ownership had been exhibited by the country, as Nigeria had great human and technical capacity, which could benefit the entire process. He commended the President's role in the resolution of the recent crisis in Togo, which was in the spirit of the APRM.

President Obasanjo, in his response, noted some key changes on the continent's political landscape, which provided the momentum to move in the right direction, asserting that in the past 10 months, prior to the visit, at least, six African countries had held successful democratic elections, just as elections were being expected then in Togo, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

Evolution of NWG session:

The outcome of the meeting was a deal sealed for the expansion of the National Working Group (NWG) to include more civil society groups with a non-state functionary to be appointed as chairperson. Afterward, a working session was held with the 10 Technical Research Institutes (TRIs) across the six geo-political zones in the country that were selected to spearhead the self-assessment exercise.

The participating institutes covered each of the four APRM thematic areas as follows: Democracy and Good Political Governance [Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) Ota, Centre for Democratic Research and Training (CDRT), Kano, Institute for Governance and Social Research (IGSR), Jos]; Economic Governance and Management [Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER), Ibadan (in collaboration with the Centre for Social and Economic Research, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria]; Corporate Governance [National Economc Summit Group (in collaboration with Centre for Public-Private Co-operation, Ibadan]; and Socio-Economic Development [Nigerian Institute for International Affairs, Victoria Island, (NIIA) Lagos, Centre for Advanced Social Studies (CASS), Port Harcourt, and Shehu Shagari Institute, Sokoto].

And, in recognition of Nigeria's role in AU, during its summit of APR panel held in July 2007 in Accra, Ghana, the participating Heads of States and Governments appointed a Nigerian, Professor Adebayo Adedeji, as the new chairperson of the APR Panel. This decision was taken in conformity with the principle of rotation of the APR Panel chairperson's position. Prof. Adedeji took over from Prof. Dorothy Njeuma, who steered the Panel in 2006/2007. Adedeji served for a period of one year, with effect from 1st July 2007.

So, it was not unexpected that Nigeria would become the chairman of AU, through the unanimous election of President Obasanjo at the 3rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments of the African Union, which took place in Addis Ababa between July 6 and 8, 2004, two years after AU was inaugurated.

Noteworthy is the fact that the chairmanship of the AU bestowed on Obasanjo in 2004 came with enormous responsibilities and challenges, especially in the area of conflict resolution on the continent. With a holistic involvement of his personality, Nigeria's intervention, through

active involvement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs who often went to the extent of deploying special envoys to tackle various problems as they occurred in the region and continent in general.

Conclusion:

It was the former Vice President of Ghana and presidential candidate of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in the approaching general election in Ghana later in the year, (December 2008), Prof. Evans Atta Mills, who captured the Nigerian strength of mind during his recent political and spiritual rebirth visit to Nigeria. He expressed firm belief that there have been success stories in Africa and a change in the past 40 years.

As reported by Okachie, Mills states there are now new dimensions to governance in Africa, through the introduction of AU, NEPAD as well as APRM. So, things have not remained the same again as so much concepts have emerged which are helping to ensure the way governance is conducted on the continent, and the roles of Nigeria in this regard cannot be wished away, he contended.

Above all, and from all indications, Nigeria has become the heart of Africa and organisations with continental flavour, such as the AU, NEPAD or even APRM. These bodies could be confidently said to rest on Nigeria. Adjudged as the most populous nation, Nigeria, which prides itself as the giant of Africa in the minds of many Nigerians and Africans, is doing everything humanly possible to live up to the acclaimed position either directly or indirectly. Nigeria, by way of deploying her abundant natural resources for the services of the continent and for the good of all Africans has invariably justified the position of "giant of Africa."

CHAPTER 4

CONCEPT OF PEACE-BUILDING AS NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

In the world today, one social malaise added to the worrisome global issues of poverty, HIV/AIDS and others, is the recurrence of social conflicts, which often escalates into 'war'. Therefore, the need for proactive peace-building becomes imperative, just as it is important to distinguish between peace-keeping, peace-making and peace-building.

Peace Keeping:

At present, there is no consensus about the core definition of peace-keeping, although the United Nations (UN) describes it as a "unique and dynamic instrument developed by the organisation as a way of helping countries torn by conflict to create the conditions for lasting peace." It is for this reason, that the first UN peace-keeping mission was set up 62 years ago, precisely in 1948; endorsed by the Security Council, the deployment of UN military observers to the Middle East to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbours, soon took a centre stage. Cumulatively, about 63 UN peace-keeping ventures have been undertaken globally.

Although the term 'peace-keeping' has become a challenge to the UN Think Tank on peace, basically for the inability to properly define it, it has continued to elude the United Nations Charter, therefore, precipitating the former second UN Secretary-General, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld,[24] assertion and classification that it fits into 'Chapter Six and a Half' of the Charter. This, UN observers, identified as being located amid the "traditional methods of resolving disputes peacefully, such as negotiation and mediation under Chapter VI, and more forceful action as authorised under Chapter VII."

Notable is that over the years, UN peace-keeping modules have changed to become an end to the demands of various conflict zones and changing political sphere. Bonn-Germany, was until after the cold war a frequently handicapped zone for the Security Council, when UN peace-keeping goals were primarily limited to maintaining ceasefires and stabilising situations on the

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[24]   *Mr. Hammarskjold, July 29, 1905 and September 18, 1961.*

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ground, so that efforts could be made at the political level to resolve the conflict by peaceful means. Those missions consisted military observers and lightly armed troops charged with monitoring, reporting and confidence-building roles in support of ceasefires and limited peace agreements, can confidently be said to be peace-keeping efforts.

Nowadays, peace-keepers take active part in complex tasks, be it mere assistance in ensuring sustainable institutions of governance on ground, to human rights monitoring, security reforms, demobilization, disarmament and re-integration of hitherto warring parties. Thus, peace keeping, entails the methodologies to make certain that citizens or nations avoid undue attacks on one another, thereby introducing relevant measures as deemed appropriate to achieve peace, which typically involves soldiers who simply endeavour to keep two opposing sides apart from attacking each other, at least, for a specified period in any conflict.

Peace-making:

The process of peace-making is primarily a strategy for settling differences of opinion between a given warring parties. This could be effectively implemented directly by a third-party mediator, usually accepted in that capacity by the two warring parties to assist with the processes of reconciliation and invariably charged to bring the two parties to a round-table in order to come up with a draft peace pact.

In foreign affairs, negotiators or mediators are drawn from a crop of diplomatic circles in addition to notable peace-loving citizens of repute. This model does not allow the mediators to have the final say on the subject matter, hence, in most cases, peace-making centres on "citizen diplomacy," from where it could advance to involvement of experts now put the final touches appropriately, thereby it require simultaneous followed up with peace building methods.

Peace-building:

Peace-building has been defined as a strategic move to ensure that disagreements of any kind; armed conflict or any other crisis capable of creating unrest, is not allowed to manifest, especially to engulf a given community or state. And, in a situation where it has erupted, it is nipped in the bud, through relevant measures.

Peace-building could be described as the commencement of a long term journey for the realisation of the set agenda – peace; by way of returning turbulent situations to normalcy through mediation and reconciliation of different parties. Techniques for achieving this objective varies, but must be aligned with the "negotiation, mediation, official and unofficial, or 'track two' diplomacy" to name a few.

Peace-building term became pronounced in 1992, after the then Secretary General of the United Nations, proclaimed his 'Agenda for Peace.' Although the term seems to be misrepresented or misinterpreted in most cases, Catherine Morris [2000] in trying to properly redefine peace building stated that it has since transcended from mere crisis intervention to assume a long term position through building of failed governance structures and institutions, mostly during conflicts. Likewise, it now encompasses building capacity for non-governmental

organisations (NGOs), which in this instance comprises religious and secular institutions for the purpose of peace-making and eventually achieving peace-building.

Morris further posited that peace-building must have a "full range of approaches, processes and stages needed for transformation towards more sustainable, peaceful relationships and governance modes and structures."

In other words, peace-building captures other schemes towards establishing a lasting peace in any given community, state or region, including legal and human rights institutions so as to ensure just and efficient governance, embellished with dispute resolution mechanisms for sustainable reconciliation beyond immediate post-conflict era.

Importance of peace-building:

The concept of peace-building has become crucial, especially in Africa owing to what Luc Reychler says borders on three core characteristics: the absence of relevant field experience, which, in other words, is the inability to forge close co-operation among professionals and researchers, that is, between the supposed 'think-tanks' and 'doers'. Secondly, a one-way concept of achieving qualitative peace-building, which means only one-sided documentation of negative aspects of well thought-out initiatives; and thirdly, the 'toolbox' approach, which involves peace-building initiatives having various proposals, without the discovery of the importance of sustainable peace-building.

Therefore, there is need for ideological considerations to sustain peace-building procedures, emphasising the identification of vital pre-conditions suitable for various kinds of conflicts. This, in turn, is hoped to shorten the period of learning process through relative analysis and assessment of conflict situations, with the likelihood of giving greater attention to the role of peace planners, planning and results.

Equally essential is the human cost of conflicts in terms of loss of lives, high scale level of diseases, socio-economic anomalies, including poverty, gender inequality, decline in education, increased unemployment and a host of others, thus making the proactive prevention of conflicts inevitable.

Ideology of peace-building:

Described as a combination of science and art by Reychler, peace-building architecture depicts creativity as a vital feature of achieving an acceptable procedure. It should thereby highlight the need for synergy between professionals working on peace-building projects, based on the six known ideologies.

These include:

1.   *"The need for a clear and convincing definition of the 'Peace' to be developed, which identifies on the need of the owners, that is, directly affected citizens and concerned stakeholders.*

2.   *Comprehensive assessment of the available options for the peace-building capacity with requisite inquiries on the requirement for achieving the set goal of creating a sustainable peace-building course of action.*

3.   *Arranging an articulated peace plan with appropriate management and collaboration among the diverse interests at all stages of peace making no matter the levels, domains and layers of the conflict. Level in this case involves global, regional, sub-regional, national, elite, middle and local; domains include diplomatic, political, economic, humanitarian, education, information and military; while layers encompass the public, their behaviours and opinions.*

4.   *In effect, there should be a functional peace plan that must involve the commitment of all parties to the peace accord, especially from the leadership of all concerned.*

5.   *Inclusion of the common people's representation and of those who commissioned or brokered the peace process.*

6.   *Finally, recognition and alienation of the various emotions that form obstacle to peace-building initiatives." (Reychler)*

Nigeria's efforts at peace-building:

Based on the aforementioned, the essence of peace-building cannot be wished away. Nigeria's interest, therefore, in deploying essentials of peace-building to make a sustained development viable over the years among West African nations and Africa in general, cannot be over-looked; more so, after tasting the 'conflict waters' just seven years after attaining independence in 1960.

For instance, the influx of refugees from neighbouring West African countries of Sierra Leone and Liberia in the past two decades when they were engulfed in wars, was a reflection of the typical nature of a nation like Nigeria, evidently with a 'large heart,' using peace-building as a diplomatic tool to achieve peace in the region.

Precisely, following the outbreak of civil war in neighbouring Liberia in 1989, and with its attendant human disaster, Nigeria needed an urgent and radical approach to the issues at hand. So, in 1990, it took the setting up of a 'standing mediation committee' by ECOWAS members, Nigeria inclusive, to find a way out of the life-consuming conflict. Working to its mandate, the committee established the cease-fire monitoring group, otherwise known as the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). The monitoring group took the mantle, playing the role of peace enforcer and keeper in the then war-torn Liberia, and subsequently in other conflict zones like the Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau.

This led to the adoption of the ECOWAS mechanism for conflict prevention as contained in the protocol relating to conflict prevention, management, resolution, peace keeping and security on December 10, 1999. The adoption made it imperative that member States have to ensure

promotion and strengthening of co-operation in their domains as a method of preventive diplomacy; they were also under obligation to share relevant information in form of early warning signals.

As such, ECOMOG has since transformed into a multi-purpose, functional mechanism which observes, monitors and peace-keeps. It also provides humanitarian interventions, with "an early warning regional observatory network" (Chambas, 2004) established in Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia and Liberia. A central observatory was as well located within the ECOWAS Secretariat in Abuja.

In the efforts to reduce tension in the West African sub-region, there was a need for countries within the area to work collaboratively with the ECOWAS as a body. The Southern African Development Community (SADC), Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the East African Community (EAC) also work together with ECOWAS for the sole purpose of concertedly enhancing the capacity worthiness of conflict management in Africa.

Between 2000 and 2003:

It is on record that between July 2000 and June 2003, African countries, Nigeria in particular, made efforts at strengthening their positions at helping different regions on the continent to conceptualise, build and establish inter-regional security mechanisms as a prelude to the steps for entrenching peace among all African nations.

The obvious part played by Nigeria in this arrangement can be seen in the hosting of the September 2001 ECOWAS seminar organised by the International Peace Academy (IPA) in Abuja, its capital, where issues bordering on economic integration; small arms and light weapons; security sector reform, conflict management role of civil society actors; governance and democratisation were top on the agenda.

Proactive Nigeria:

In the spirit of proactive decision to end the lingering civil war in Liberia for peace to take root, and against the popular wish represented by the Nigerian media, the government, under the leadership of former President Olusegun Obasanjo, accepted to grant asylum to former 'warlord' in the Liberian crisis, Mr. Charles Taylor, in August 2003.

Several Nigerians died in Liberia, including two journalists, who were in the conflict zone to report on the events and developments. They were killed and reported to have been fed to Charles Taylor's crocodiles! His group was alleged to have taken offence in the Nigerian government's initial intervention and efforts to quell the conflict. Some Nigerians got the gift of being amputated, killed or maimed. Others had their property looted.

The above scenario did not deter the government of the day, led by Obasanjo, from living up to the dream of the African leadership role in kind, cash and actions, as Taylor was accommodated in a luxury apartment in Cross River State in the southern part of Nigeria. Subsequent developments, however, led into his being handed over to his country, which eventually sent him to the International Court of Justice to face charges of crime against humanity by the same Obasanjo.

The fact then was that Taylor was ordered to leave Liberia, if efforts by African leaders at restoring peace in that country were to be fruitful. Having been rejected by Southern and some West African countries, Nigeria, in its large-heartedness and in playing the big brother's role, accepted to host him, of course, under some conditions.

West Africa: A thorn in Nigeria's flesh?

Before now, most researchers and international political analysts strongly contend that the West African region, over the last two decades, has been enmeshed in various conflicts and as such has become the most unstable region in the world and Africa, in particular. Despite that the 15-member countries of ECOWAS, that is to say Nigeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Mali, Senegal, Togo and Sierra Leone ranked among the poorest countries, according to World Bank economic index. They were also notorious for most of the military coups d'etat on the African continent. It is on record that over half of the successful military coups d'etat in Africa since 1960, when most of the States on the continent got independence, took place in this part of the world.

Wang (1998, pp 659-675) states that a survey in 35 sub-Saharan African States were independent prior to the end of 1970, revealed that 267 coups occurred between 1960-1990, amounting to an average of nine (9) of such actions annually.

These exclude the internal conflicts which occurred in almost all the ECOWAS member States, including Nigeria; if it is not Ishekiri today, it is the Urhobo or the Igbo versus Hausa (in the north), or Yoruba in the west. Meanwhile, the Niger Delta crisis had lingered for long and had metamorphosed into series of kidnapping of expatriates and indigenes including government officials.

In spite of her internal wranglings, Nigeria did not withdraw her diplomatic contributions towards ensuring peace and stability in the West African sub-region, particularly during the last eight years of the return of democracy to Nigeria.

For instance, Nigeria was concerned about the long-drawn battle for power in Liberia (1990) and Sierra Leone (1998), neither was Nigeria nonchalant over the Guinea Bissau conflict between 1998 and 1999. The country also worked assiduously in terms of living to expectations by curtailing the excesses of Casamance separatists in Senegal and the Tuareg conflicts that boiled in Mali and Niger through detachment of military peace keeping troops and aids for affected civilians; The same thing applied during the Guinea and Liberia cross-border confrontations, despite Nigeria and Cameroon being at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) over Bakassi Pennisula. Cross-border attacks were also rampant as Cote d'Ivoire lost its peace to internal conflicts in the last quarter of 2002 with the crisis in Western Darfur, Sudan. Nigeria never went to sleep over these regional upheavals.

Specifics of Nigeria's Involvement and Contributions to Peace Keeping Efforts

Nigeria, as a foundation member of the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU), later re-christened African Union (AU), is an important signatory to the continental body's treaty formally signed and sealed in 1963. Similarly, Nigeria was at the Monrovia (Liberia) meeting in August 1964 where the issue of the formation of a sub-regional body for West African States was discussed.

Although, the name, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) ordinarily portrays it as a purely economic body, some provisions of its Articles of Association clearly reflected the need for the respective member States to come to the aid of any member, whose stability is being threatened either locally or internationally. The provisions made the constitution of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) easy, when the need arose to intervene in the political crises, which eventually snowballed into years of suicidal war in Liberia; and subsequently in Sierra-Leone.

Nigeria in ECOMOG Operations:

Nigeria's involvement and contributions to the restoration of peace in Liberia and Sierra Leone are so massive that it is virtually difficult, if not impossible, to quantify. This assertion is buttressed by the fact that available figures, as given by Nigerian leaders, are inconclusive.

For instance, former military president Babangida, during whose tenure, the Liberian war broke out, claimed that Nigeria had spent "over USD$2 billion within the first two years" of the war. In the estimation of Babangida's successor in office, the late General Sani Abacha, Nigeria had spent "about USD$4 billion" on the struggle to restore peace to Liberia. When President Olusegun Obasanjo assumed office in 1999, he also disclosed that Nigeria's cumulative expenditure on ECOMOG operations in the sub-region "was in excess of USD$12 billion."

The foregoing assertions tally with the view of an observer who wrote: "The scope of Nigeria's involvement as the leading nation that virtually spearheaded the entire ECOMOG operations was enormous. It meant that Nigeria had to expend much of her resources to see the operation through. The exact operational cost to Nigeria has been estimated to run into billions of US dollars. " (Adebajo et al, 2004, pg 241)[25]

Also experts at the International Peace Academy who recorded happenings during the Liberian and Sierra Leonian wars aptly observed that Nigeria spent huge sums of money, materials and human resources.

An extract from their notes stated: *"It is now very clear that the Nigerian Government did not have a definite economic agenda in mind when it deployed NIGCON (the Nigerian Contingent) troops in the two operations. Nigeria spent in excess of 10 billion dollars. The cost of aerial support alone, including cost of munitions expended in Operation Liberty, has been put at $22,674,013. This is aside from the cost of material as well as human losses, which cannot be quantified."* (Adebajo, pg. 252)

If the foregoing still do not pin down Nigeria's contributions to the peace-keeping and peace enforcement efforts adequately, the following specifics would definitely reflect the reality of massive, unmatched commitment on Nigeria's part.

First, the ECOMOG was to take off with an initial troops mobilisation of 3,000; and out of the number, Nigeria alone provided 1,375 officers and men, that is, over 35 per cent of the total. The country provided the ECOMOG Field Commander and subsequently the Force Commander after the death in action of Master-Sergeant Samuel Doe of Liberia on September 1, 1991. All the

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[25]   *West Africa's Security Challenges – building Peace in a Troubled Region. A project of International Peace Academy and edited by Adekeye Adebayo & Ismail Rashid, 2004. Published by Lynne Reinner Publishers Inc. 2004.*

Force Commanders till the end of the civil war were Nigerian officers. It is also on record that Nigeria provided all the Brigade Commanders and 90 per cent of the Principal staff officers at the ECOMOG headquarters. Nigeria was also said to have had more than 70 per cent of the entire work force in ECOMOG.

In addition to providing the dominance of men and officers, Nigeria availed ECOMOG of the largest number of vehicles and equipment and above all, supplied all Petroleum Oil and Lubricants (POL) requirement for all contingents in the Force from the beginning to the end of the operations, which cannot be quantified because it is a 'classified information' by the military.

Again, apart from Ghana that provided for its own contingent's needs in terms of maintenance and repairs, the Nigerian contingent's workshop repaired and maintained the vehicles and equipment of all other contingents deployed for the operations.

Before the necessity to expand ECOMOG came up, the Nigerian contingent (NIGCON), took the lead in providing communication gadgets, equipment and field engineering services for all the contingents that made up the ECOMOG. Of course, the situation remained the same until the United States of America came to the aid of the expanded ECOMOG Force with a large consignment of static and mobile communication equipment, which, according to Adebajo et al, remarkably improved performance.

Another key contribution of Nigeria towards the successful restoration of peace to Liberia was the establishment of two field hospitals at the ECOMOG Headquarters in the heat of the war. The hospitals served as sanctuaries for injured soldiers, retired military men and even civilians before areas liberated by the ECOMOG Forces became accessible to International Relief Organisations and other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The medical facilities provided by the Nigerian contingent served as an incentive to fighting men, whose morale would have sagged if there were no such 'life support' facilities.

Along the line, Nigeria had carried another morale-boosting responsibility of the ECOMOG by paying operational allowances to the contingents from Niger Republic, Benin Republic and Sierra Leone, in addition to her own contingent; the reason being that those countries could not carry the financial burden as a result of inadequate resources.

A look at the ECOMOG operations in Sierra Leone would reflect a similar pattern of massive contributions by Nigeria; the only difference being that the ECOMOG made a more aggressive move to ensure that peace was restored to the country within the shortest possible time.

While Operation Liberty[26] was maintained throughout in the fierce fighting that eventually brought peace back to Liberia, there were three operations, differently code-named in the case of Sierra Leone. They were Operation Tiger head, Operation Tiger tail and Operation Sandstorm.

As was the case in Liberia, Nigeria again took the lead in the provision of men and officers, logistics, equipment, vehicles, maintenance, supplies and other necessities, both at the rear and the war fronts. Perhaps, the massive support was occasioned by Nigeria's will to put the Sierra Leonian crisis in check so that it did not consume time, energy and resources as was the

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[26]   *Operation Liberty was the codename for ECOMOG operations in Liberia.*

case in Liberia. So, it was not surprising that barely three years after the outbreak of war in Sierra Leone, ECOMOG was able to put out the fire of hostilities in the country.

For the purpose of confirming Nigeria's outstanding role in the peace-building, peace-making and peace-keeping efforts in the sub-region, it is pertinent to document the fact that, out of the 11 ECOMOG Commanders who led the operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone, 10 were Nigerian military officers.

The first ECOMOG Force Commander, Lt. General A. Quainoo, a Ghanaian, led the force from August 1990 to September 1, 1990. Thereafter, the command of the Force fell on Nigerian officers as follows:

1. Major-General Joshua Dogoyaro – September 1990 to February 1991
2. Major-General R. M. Kupolati – February 1991 to September 1991
3. Major-General J.I. Bakut – September 1991 to October 1992
4. Major-General I.A. Olurin – October 1992 to October 1993
5. Major-General J.N. Shagaya – October 1993 to December 1993
6. Major-General J. M. Inienger – December 1993 to August 1996
7. Major-General Victor S.L. Malu – August 1996 to January 1998

Action, however, shifted from Liberia to Sierra Leone when the civil war broke out early in 1998. The ECOMOG moved into the country with Major-General Timothy Mai Shelpidi as Force Commander. He held fort from Janaury 1998 till March 1999, when Major-General Felix A. Mujakperuo took over from him. The new Force Commander led the assault against the rebels till July 1999, when he handed the baton of leadership over to Major-General G.A. Kpamber, who eventually led the ECOMOG Force till May 2000.

In conclusion, it is significant to note that, despite all the foregoing contributions, Nigeria, using the ECOMOG platform, did not relent. She showed that it was not enough to broker peace without providing the avenue for sustenance and preservation of peace in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. For instance, it was recorded that Nigeria provided over 90 per cent of troops and logistic back-up during Liberia's 'Special election' which restored democracy to that country. This, no doubt, built the foundation of sustainable peace, which Liberia has been enjoying from the end of its civil war to date.

Darfur conflict in Sudan:

As at August 19, 2004, the Nigerian Senate had approved a request by President Olusegun Obasanjo to send an initial 1,500 Nigerian troops to Sudan's troubled Darfur region to serve in an African Union (AU) security force. (IRIN, 2004)

The military commitment by Nigeria, according to the proposal to the National Assembly, was predicated on the possibility of a 2,000-strong AU peace-keeping force for the region by member States, for which Nigeria had promised to send nothing less than two battalions. Nigeria deployed this number in phases beginning with a company of 120 soldiers and subsequently increased the number as demanded by President Obasanjo as the need arose.

This position was not far-fetched given Nigeria's resolve to fly her regional 'superpower' flag in Africa at all times as part of its international efforts to find solution or practically end the hostility in Sudan's Western Darfur province.

Nigeria, under the leadership of Obasanjo on Monday, August 16, 2004, in addition to being the chairman of AU, played host to a fresh round of peace talks in Abuja between the Sudanese government and the two rebel movements in Darfur as part of efforts to ensure that peace returns to Darfur district and Sudan as a nation.

Part of the letter of proposal sent to the Senate by Obasanjo, read in part:

"Given our pre-eminent place in the continent, the seriousness of the situation in Darfur, our historical contribution to peacemaking, peace-building and reconciliation processes in Africa, this is one more chance for us to show leadership and provide hope for millions of our brothers and sisters in the Sudan."

With the clear interest shown in making sure that peace returns to Darfur, a remarkable import of the proposal was that the projected two battalions of troops for Darfur from Nigeria amounted to three-quarter of the 2,000-strong AU peace-keeping force for the Sudanese region. And 48 hours after the deadlock of the Abuja Peace Talk, the Sudanese Foreign Minister, Dr. Mustafa Osman, led a government delegation to Aso Rock, the seat of power in Nigeria, to confirm preparations for the deployment of Nigerian troops in Darfur and to prepare for the following week's round of peace talks in the Nigerian capital.

Although, Sudan expressed reservations about the AU's plans to deploy a full-scale peace-keeping force in Darfur, with a mandate to protect civilians as well as AU ceasefire monitors, the Sudanese government did not reject the plan completely.

Eventually, a Nigerian Commander was appointed for AU-UN hybrid peace-keeping force in Darfur, by name General Martin Agwai, not-minding the death toll of Nigerian soldiers, including the returnee 46 that died in an auto-crash on Wednesday May 21, 2008, along Kari-Potiskum-Maiduguri Road. The soldiers were on their way to base in Monguno, Borno State; after serving six months as members of the United Nations and African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

Some rampaging returnee soldiers demonstrated in Akure, Ondo State capital, over alleged unpaid entitlements on July 5, 2008. The soldiers from across the country, quartered at the Owena Barracks of the 323 Artillery Regiment of the Nigerian Army, were reported to have held the Commanding Officer (CO), Lieutenant Colonel Gabriel Umelo, and other senior officers hostage in their offices. They alleged being short-changed in Liberia's peace-keeping allowance of $1,228 USD monthly, which was approved by the global body, the UN. They accused the Nigerian Army of paying them only 3,000 USD for the six-month period. (ThisDay, July 5, 2008).

Decentralising diplomatic peace building:

Nigeria has not lost sight of her diplomatic obligations to ensuring peace in the region. This role by Nigeria was seen as timely, considering the statement by the former United Nations

(UN) Secretary General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali in 1992 titled "An Agenda for Peace" in which he made a case for regional security arrangements so as to lighten the burden of building global peace, solely on the shoulders of UN through regionalization.

At the end of the Cold War, France seemingly reduced its presence in West Africa, not considering Nigeria as its rival in terms of high-profile military role in the region. Between 1960 and 1990, France was known to be a 'principal obstacle' to the accomplishment of Nigeria's ambition to become a dominant force in the West African region. Some scholars opined that Nigeria's championing of the creation of ECOWAS was not merely for economic reasons, but indirectly to reduce the French influence militarily in the region. And according to (Adebayo et al, 2004, p. 6), it was hinged on the French backing for the Biafran secession bid during the three-year Nigeria's civil war between 1967 and 1970.

The inability of the French to intervene in the December 1999 coup against the former president, Henri Konan Bedie, of Cote d'Ivoire was upheld by many political analysts in the region as paving the way for Nigeria to assume military leadership after the much speculated French disengagement from the Francophone States. This brought Nigeria and some of the Francophone States into closer security ties, with an invitation extended to President Olusegun Obasanjo in March 2000 by Togo as the host to the all-francophone Conseil de l'Entente, which deliberated on security issues.

In a bid to achieve this historical feat, Nigeria, since the commencement of ECOMOG as a security and peace-keeping outfit for the sub-region, provided the greater part of the triple 'M' - *men, money and material* - especially in Sierra Leone and Liberia. There is no doubt, therefore, that Nigeria is a dominant force in the sub-region. The willingliness and political zeal to continue pursuing the leadership role despite the severe losses suffered by the country during the Liberian and Sierra Leonian crises affirmed Nigeria's commitment to peace in the sub-region.

Economic value of peace building:

Peace-building will be meaningless without the economic value attached. Thus, it is important to examine the pre-ECOWAS initiative, which began with the launch of the Nigeria-Togo Initiative early in 1972. A crucial aspect of this initiative was that the two parties involved were from opposing colonial backgrounds; one from the Anglophone, the other from the francophone. While Nigeria stood out as a dominant State in terms of economic influence and population, Togo was the opposite, with a small population, less economic weight, but influential within the Francophone countries of West Africa.

At the end of a crucial meeting between the then Nigerian leader, General Yakabu Gowon and his Togolese counterpart, General Gnassingbe Eyadema, in Lome in April 1972, two ministers, Messrs Adebayo Adedeji of Nigeria and Henri Dogo of Togo were mandated to set up a body to foster co-operation that would transverse all the West African independent states without colonial influence and language barriers. This mandate was followed up soon by meetings between the two ministers and their officials in Lagos and Lome.

The meetings, later tagged the Nigeria-Togo joint ministerial consultation afterwards, embarked on a joint ministerial delegation to 12 other countries within the region, where they were

overwhelmingly received by Heads of States and Governments and meetings held at ministerial and technical levels. The exception of Senegalese President, Leopold Senghor, and his Guinean counterpart, Sekou Toure, were overtly opposed to the proposal initially. Even, Senghor was insistent that Zaire, a central African country, be incorporated into the integration processes. This was in addition to his request that English and French be made 'compulsory' subjects in schools so as to enable citizens to be fluent in them before the idea of an economic integration could be discussed among African nations, or at the regional levels.

The Arusha Meeting:

The session of the African Union (AU) held from May 22 to 23, 2008 in Arusha, Tanzania, was to strengthen the initial summit of African Heads of States and Governments that took place in Accra in 2007, where the issue of a vision for an African Union Government was played up. The session paved the way for the setting up of a 12-man Committee of Heads of States, (including Nigeria) to further deliberate on the ways of speeding up the process of economic and political integration on the continent.

President Umaru Yar'Adua made several vital contributions at the AU session. Most notable of his contributions include the following, among others:

1. *Regional Integration remains a critical pathway to attainment of continental economic and political union;*
2. *Regional Economic Communities such as ECOWAS, SADC and COMESSA should be the building blocks for the ultimate economic and political integration of the continent;*
3. *The time frame for the creation of the African Union Government (AUG) would depend on conditions created by Africa, rather than fixing arbitrary dates for the government to take off. (Yar'Adua, July 2007).*

The decision, therefore, on the time frame for the actualisation of the Union's Government and eventual emergence of the United States of Africa (USA), must be made on the basis of the progress recorded on the approved 'accelerators' and 'benchmarks.'

These 'accelerators' Yar'Adua stated, consist of free movement of people across the borders, development of inter-regional infrastructure like energy, transportation, communications and the establishment of continental financial institutions such as the African Central Bank (to be hosted by Nigeria). The 'benchmarks' include coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of institutional frameworks, popularisation and internationalisation of core values of the union by mobilising the populace on the continent for unity and integration.

Apparently concerned by the manner in which the election in Zimbabwe was conducted, Nigeria added its voice to that of other African states as one of the first among AU member States to denounce the purported re-election of Robert Mugabe. Nigeria also called for a return to *status quo ante.*

Nigeria on Friday, July 3, 2007, in Abuja, officially expressed 'strong displeasure' over the Zimbabwe run-off election held on June 27 and its outcome. Nigeria disagreed with the proposal

that the run-off should be a starting point for moving the country forward, insisting that talks should go ahead "without any reference" (VOA, 2007) to the run-off election.

At this point, it is remarkable to note that many African countries had avoided strong criticism of the run-off, which many observers and Western countries dismissed as a smokescreen, while Mugabe on Friday, July 4, 2007, stood his ground that opponents must accept him as president if they want talks to end Zimbabwe's political crisis. The opposition, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), also shunned talks called by the South African president, alleging that 103 of its supporters have been killed in election-related violence and that some 5,000 others were missing. The ruling party, Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), on the other hand, had over and over denied claims of a crackdown on the opposition. The only voice coming soon after Nigeria's 'rejection' of Mugabe's re-election was that of Botswana, which urged the Southern African Development Community (SADC) not to accord Mugabe's purported re-election any recognition.

Military interventions, regional organisation and peace-building:

Over the years, there have been various levels of sanctions adopted by the United Nations and even the regional organisations for upholding peace, security and integrity of various member states, in accordance with the provisions of Charter VII of the United Nations schedule. Nigeria is not only a member of the UN, but is eagerly looking forward to becoming a member of its Security Council.

According to the Charter, the Security Council has to make military interventions in case of failure (by peaceful means) in a given conflict. The involvement of the UN in such cases is aimed at restoring peace, preventing breach of peace, threat to peace and acts of aggression internationally. This function is conferred on the UN Security Council by Article 42 of the Charter. Article 43 of the Charter also tasks the member States of UN to make available their military forces, assistance and facilities to the Security Council for the purposes contained in Article 42, both on an ad hoc and on a permanent basis.

Similarly, the United Nations' Charter in Article 21 makes it clear that regional organisations could be constituted by some States to deal with matters relating to the quelling of conflicts and restoration of peace and stability in a given region as may be deemed necessary.

Therefore, the formation of ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) spearheaded by Nigeria is not only symbolic of preventive diplomacy but also an instrument for peace making, peace keeping and post-conflict reconciliation as outlined in the ECOWAS protocol on setting up ECOMOG as a regional force.

This step, experts have described as timely, given the time UN Security Council received the report of the Secretary General on the agenda for peace, as an impetus for the inauguration of ECOMOG by West African states.

ECOWAS Protocol on Peace-building:

The Chapter 9 of the ECOWAS protocol on ECOMOG with respect to the mechanism for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peace keeping and security, dwelt specifically on peace-building.

Due to the community's desire to consolidate on the achievements made in the resolution of conflicts through the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group, (otherwise known as ECOMOG) and following a decision adopted in October, 1998 in Abuja on "ECOWAS mechanism for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peace-keeping and security," the protocol was endorsed.

For that reason, the treaty adopted on December 10, 1999 in Lome, Togo, stated that the community's adoption of the process should be seen as a graduated strategy for peace-building which has got to be implemented as a continuum.

Therefore, Article 42 of Chapter 9 was particularly on ECOWAS' institutional capacity for peace-building to curtail social and political disturbances. It provides that:

(i) *"ECOWAS shall be involved in the preparation, organisation and supervision of elections in member states;*

(ii) *ECOWAS shall also monitor and actively support the development of democratic institutions of member states.*

(iii) *ECOWAS shall endeavour to assist member states emerging from conflicts to increase their capacity for national, social, economic and cultural reconstruction.*

(iv) *In this regard, all ECOWAS financial institutions shall develop policies to facilitate funding for reintegration and reconstruction programmes."*

Article 43 on 'Peace-Building During Hostilities' states that in a zone of relative peace, priority must be given to the implementation of policies intended to lessen the dreadful conditions of social and economic deprivations arising from such conflicts. Also, Article 44 which centres on 'Peace-building at the End of Hostilities' is anticipated to assist member States that have been adversely affected by violent conflicts, while ECOWAS community members are expected to take upon themselves specific activities, though not limited to the following:

(a) *"consolidation of the peace that has been negotiated;*

(b) *establishment of conditions for the political, social and economic reconstruction of the society and governmental institutions;*

(c) *implementation of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes including those for child soldiers;*

(d) *resettlement and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons; and*

(e) *assistance to vulnerable persons, including children, the elderly, women and other traumatised groups in the society." (ECOWAS,* Article 44)

In addition, the protocol's Article 45 is particular on restoration of political power where government authority is absent or seriously battered. ECOWAS, therefore, has the mandate to support the implementation of processes towards the restoration of political authority.

This support comprises:

"... *the preparation, organisation, monitoring and management of the electoral process, with the co-operation of relevant regional and international organisations. The restoration of political authority plans must be carried out at the same time as the advances in terms of respect for human rights, enhancement of the rule of law and the judiciary,"* (ECOWAS Article 45) are initiated.

Peace-building as Nigeria's diplomatic tool:

As soon as peace returned to the war-torn Sierra Leone, Nigeria, in continuation of her role in peace-building as a diplomatic tool, volunteered her former ECOMOG commander in that country, Brigadier General Mitikishe Maxwell Khobe, to preside over the Republic of Sierra Leone Army as its Chief of Defence Staff.

Since her independence in 1960, Nigeria has taken part in several peace keeping missions around the world with various functions, which included preventive diplomacy, peace-making and peace-keeping.

Record has it that between 1960, when Nigeria attained independence and 2008, the Nigerian Army has participated in over 35 intervention missions across the globe. As at July 2008, an estimated 63 United Nations Peacekeeping Missions have been recorded, with 25 on the continent of Africa (currently on eight [8] while 17 have since been concluded). Nigeria is on record to have participated actively in over 75 per cent of these missions globally and in all the 25 such missions in Africa, amidst other continents.[27]

For instance, in the first quarter of 2005, UN-led missions were actively involved in seven peace operations in Africa, namely Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia/Eritrea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Western Sahara, with the eighth still on in Sudan, three years after. Also (Henry L. Stimson Centre, July 2008) reports that as at the period under review, about 65,000 peace keepers have been involved in the UN missions with 50,000 stationed in Africa.

A break down showed that the Nigerian Army, then 'Queen's Own Nigerian Regiment' took part in the Congo, under the auspices of the United Nations between 1960 and 1964. Also Nigeria's contingent was in Tanzania under UN in 1964 and aligned with the UNIPOM, they went to Indo-Pakistan border between 1965 and 1966.

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[27] *Other continents, according to UN, include the Americas which before now had recorded 8 missions, Asia 8, Europe 7 and Middle East 6.*

Others were:

"1.   Lebanon under the United Nations (UNIFIL) in 1978;

2.   Chad, under the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Peacekeeping Force in Chad 1981 - 1982;

3.   Iran-Iraqi Boarder as a team of the UN, 1988 - 1991;

4.   Angola under the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNVEM I, II & III) in 1989;

5.   Nambia, under the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) 1989 – 1990;

6.   Western Sahara, under the United Nations, 1991;

7.   Somalia, under the United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) 1992 -1995; among others, and following the successful restoration of peace in Sierra Leone where Nigeria had over five battalions. (Oni, 2002, pgs 10-11)[28]

The place of Nigeria in the United Nations military intervention plan:

The Congo crisis in the 60s was ignited by some key ethnic groups based on the geo-political divides and the natural resources which include diamond, iron ore and uranium. The mode of the mission under the United Nations was an intervention force. This became necessary on the request made by the then Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba before the United Nations Security Council on July 13, 1960.

The force had the mandate to keep the tranquillity of the country, to facilitate the stabilisation of the new government, (because Congo had just got her independence from the Belgium colonial masters on June 30, 1960). This means that in less than a month of her independence, Congo had crisis in her hands and needed all the support she could get for stability. And given that Nigeria was already operating the parliamentary system and its resolve for African renaissance, the country sent a military contingent to that mission in response to the call by the United Nations became inevitable.

Another instance was Nigeria's participation in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) following insurgences from the Palestinian freedom fighters based in the southern part of the country. This gave rise to the launching of an attack on them by the Israeli Defence Force in the first quarter of 1978. This particular intervention was rooted in two Resolutions: 425 and 426 passed by the Security Council of UN.

Resolution 425 demanded an immediate ceasefire by the Israeli military against the Lebanese through withdrawal of forces, while the second, Resolution (426), was to legitimise the UN response and presence so as to ensure immediate return of peace and security in the conflict area.

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[28]   *Also, Nigeria took park in Mozambique, under United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ) 1992; Yugoslavia (UNIPROFOR) 1992 - 1994; Western Sahara under the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINORSO) 1991 – 1996; Iraqi-Kuwait, under the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM); Rwanda, under the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) 1994."*

Apart from not wasting time in commissioning UNIFIL, the United Nations was prompt in insisting on restoration of peace, thus outlining the modules for achieving peace among the warring nations, specifically giving three circumstances upon which the body intended to effectively ensure:

(a)   *"Full confidence and backing of the Security Council;*

(b)   *Full co-operation of all the parties concerned; and*

(c)   *Ability of UNIFIL to function as an integrated and efficient military unit."*

Notably, Nigeria's participation in this mission, more or less served as a 'retaliation' of Israel's support for the secessionist attempt of the Biafrans during the Nigerian civil war between 1967 and 1970.

From Lebanon to Chad:

While UNIFIL intervention in Lebanon was going on, a conflict broke out at a place some observers described as Nigeria's backyard - Chad. Nigeria, under the auspices of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Peace Keeping Force, sent troops to Chad to mediate in the crisis between the northern and southern regions of that country. The Nigerian government was aware that failure to curb the crisis could lead to a spill-over in northern Nigeria and eventually the country as a whole. Chad like Nigeria, has a multi-ethnic environment. Chad has as much as 192 ethnic groups, while Nigeria has above 250 with over 500 dialects.

Using Force in Peace-building:

It is necessary to examine the aspect of the use of force in peace-building, within the context of the United Nations and relevant international jurisprudence.

Accordingly, the law of armed conflict, *durante ad bellum,* is known to be moderately forceful with the level of changes that may occur. And, like in diplomatic law where the legally accepted "wisdom" as cited in *Mighel v Sultan of Jahore* in 1893, is quite at variance with what was in the 1952 letter from the office of the acting Legal Adviser of the United States' Department of State to the Attorney General. This is in respect of reservation of sovereign protection, as in the law of the sea where the 18th Century opinions of Galiani, quantified the territorial waters by cannon range.

In June 26, 1945, for instance, the United Nations introduced a regime in Article 2, paragraph 4, 5 and Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, which read as follows:

"4.   *All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat of, or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.*

> *"5.   All Members shall give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter, and shall refrain from giving assistance to any state against which the United Nations is taking preventive or enforcement action."*

This part of the Charter contrasts with the early 20th Century options, when the prominent feature of the 19th Century Webster's Customary International Law regulations on self-defence in the use of force reigned, and States were not encouraged to use or deploy force(s) as a solution to conflicts, even when good judgment suggests that such a step is crucial to national well-being of a State under threat.

Of note here is the preceding era and the establishment of the United Nations. It appeared States took pleasure in "unrestricted rights" in the execution of their international relations, based on "forceful exuberance." Therefore, these 'rights' were common within the natural law and consequent upon the Customary International Law. In a similar vein, the rights presumably unrestricted within the context of the Customary International Law made rooms for preventive rights otherwise known as "anticipatory rights."

However, both natural and customary law rights to aggressive retaliation, dealing with tension over time, have been attested to by their absolute linkage to wars and allied armed conflict situations.

Following the formation of the United Nations, Article 2, paragraph 4 of the Charter was done away with for the purported random application of force by a given federation. So, Article 51,[29] seems to be the opposite of Article 2, paragraph 4, above; which invariably allow states to apply the use of force, particularly in self-defence.

Nowadays, Article 51 has become a fundamental issue in the framework for the assessment and explanation of Articles 2 (paragraph 4) and 51 of the UN Charter, which experts say has significantly enabled the juxtaposition of how States exercise this 'right', arguing that it has afforded some States the opportunity to take advantage, by not paying much attention to normal processes. With the obligations required in Articles 2 (4) and 51 of the Charter, especially some relationship standardized between judgment of the law and State practice as demanded in Article 51 of the Charter, the law is categorical about the right of individual and collective self-defence and how it could be applied if armed attack occurs and persists.

Conclusion:

In laying the foundations for sustainable peace-building, there is a need for an effective system of communication, consultation and negotiation at different levels, which must cut across the political and economic spheres to enhance the consolidation of democratic and economic norms.

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[29]   *Article 51, for instance, reads: "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security."*

Commitment to human rights, and a thorough understanding of the sensibilities of the minority; (be it ethnic, religious, social or linguistic), within the comity of nations are the bedrocks of protection for marginalised States. Globalisation and nationalism should not be viewed as trends in opposite directions, but recognised as a movement to encourage mutual peaceful co-existence across the world.

Above all, democratic values must be seen as being upheld by individual member States of the United Nations like Nigeria, in their various regions, anchored on the realisation that constant responsibilities rest on the ability to defend the integrity of one state to another while searching for a balanced blueprint for all to co-exist. It is highly recommended that attitudinal change take root within nationalism concepts.

CHAPTER 5

OUTCOME OF NIGERIA's FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVE IN WEST AFRICA

Nigeria's foreign policy thrust on the African continent, and particularly in the West African sub-region, rests squarely on the initial perception that Africa should be the corner stone and ever since, the dream has been kept alive by successive Nigerian governments till date. Nigeria hinges on this thrust to ensure that an acceptable level of peace is maintained in the sub-region, no matter the social and economic costs to the nation.

Paramount role:

Nigeria's role of restoring, maintaining and sustaining peace in West Africa becomes paramount and cannot be over-emphasised. It is in this bid that the executives of all the governments that have ruled in Nigeria in the past 50 years of her independence have it as the bedrock of the country's foreign policy. So, Nigeria sees herself [and should be seen, too] as having a duty to tackle any anti-peace drive or activities in the sub-region as of utmost importance, bearing in mind that escalation of violence cannot occur without Nigeria having its own share of refugees and related negative experiences. This tally with the African adage that says, *"when the rain falls, it doesn't exempt anybody's house."*

As such, the choice of Africa as the centre piece of Nigeria's foreign policy in the past 50 years, obviously cannot be said to be a misguided resolve by the leaderships of Nigeria's government throughout the years under review.[30]

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[30] *To many international observers and analysts, the stance has remained a plus for Nigeria, in spite the enormous challenges faced so far and more likely to occur in the future, if the dream is to be sustained.*

CHAPTER FIVE – OUTCOME OF NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVE IN WEST AFRICA

The Sir Tafawa Balewa administration in Nigeria and its foreign policy initiative cannot but continue to be eulogised for laying the foundation, which can be described as a strategic foundation.

Restoring peace in a community:

Sinclair (2004 posits that any community, society or country, which senses the probability of conflict, no matter how minute, is compelled to put in place pre-conflict precautions before the outbreak of the conflict itself. By the same token, the same community, society or country, in its consciousness, designs plans to cope with the conflict whenever it breaks out and the aftermath – which is the crucial stage of reconciliation of parties to the conflict and restoration of peace to the environment.

Of course, experience has shown that whenever a serious conflict engulfs a given geographical entity [inhabited by human beings], destruction and afflictions of various dimensions take their toll.[31]

It is, therefore, instructive that Nigeria's foreign policy initiative, which makes the West African sub-region in particular and Africa in general its centre piece, could not have arisen out of mere ego considerations. The initiative is more of a passion for peace and peaceful co-existence among African nations, after years of subservience to colonial masters under different guises. A systematic study of steps, taken by Nigeria in line with its foreign policy objectives in the past 50 years of independence, would show that the trauma of deprivations suffered in colonial times conditioned the contemporary approach to international politics in modern day West Africa and the whole of the African continent.

Keeping faith with ECOWAS protocol:

That Nigeria keeps faith with the ECOWAS protocol should not surprise anybody. Nigeria's foreign policy thrust emerged out of the avowed commitment of the founding fathers to peace and peaceful co-existence of the people of Africa. Nigeria was a founding member of the ECOWAS; not only that, the country was, and still remains, a major financier of the sub-regional body in all ramifications.

Therefore, as a foundation ECOWAS member that subscribed to the ideals and programmes of the body from inception and being an integral part of ECOWAS, Nigeria cannot but continuously keep faith with the organisation's protocol.

Some of the vital provisions of the ECOWAS protocol, which tally with Nigeria's foreign policy aspirations, can be found in Chapter IX and Articles 42 and 45.

While Chapter IX generally deals with adaptation of peace-building strategies within the sub-region, Article 42 specifically prescribes measures aimed at stemming the tide of social and political upheavals in the West African sub-region.

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[31]   *For instance, women are turned widows overnight, men turned widowers and helpless children made orphans for reasons they cannot readily comprehend. Apart from these, those lucky to escape the carnage are reduced to sub-human status – no food, no shelter, no clothing, nothing! Women are subjected to sexual abuse by the dominant, victorious group; innocent children are often turned to child soldiers and the entire society becomes a breeding ground for a variety of life-threatening diseases.*

CHAPTER FIVE – OUTCOME OF NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVE IN WEST AFRICA

Article 45 of the protocol dwells on another very important aspect of conflict resolution – Restoration of Political Authority. This becomes applicable in situations where conflicts result in dislocation or outright destruction of political authority in a country or society. To appreciate the depth and significance of the Article, it is pertinent to reproduce a relevant section which reads in part:

> *"In situations where the authority of government is absent or has been seriously eroded, ECOWAS shall support processes towards the restoration of political authority. Such support may include the preparation, organisation, monitoring and management of the electoral process, with the co-operation of relevant regional and international organisations. The restoration of political authority shall be undertaken at the same time as the development of respect for human rights, enhancement of the rule of law and the judiciary."*

Nigeria's leadership in Africa incontrovertible:

The assertion that Nigeria's leadership in Africa is incontrovertible was attested to by the Liberian President, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, for instance, on Tuesday, September 23, 2008 in New York, at the 63rd session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. She affirmed the fact of Nigeria's immense contributions to end the recent war in her country. She was emphatic that Nigeria's military effort was instrumental to stabilising Liberia and noted, with excitement, that the leadership displayed by Nigeria during that chaotic period was unparalleled in history.

A year earlier, Liberia's Vice President, Joseph N. Boakai, had similarly commended Nigeria for the solidarity it demonstrated by standing with Liberia during the 14-year civil conflict. "'Nigeria spent millions of dollars and lost scores of her troops just to stop Liberians from killing each other. Nigeria is truly a 'Big Brother'," he asserted, adding that in the spirit of Pan Africanism, "Nigeria was behind the formation of the ECOWAS Peace Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in 1990, which helped to prevent a bloodbath worse than we saw from 1990 up to 1997." (AllAfrica.com) Boakai recalled that when the war was resumed by the rebels from the defunct Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) camp in 2003, Nigeria was the first country to send the vanguard ECOMIL force that helped to end the war eventually.

Nigerian and Liberian governments also in 2007 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which afforded 220 personnel of the new Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) the opportunity to undergo training in various military tactics at the Nigerian Armed Forces Staff College in Jaji, Plateau State in North-Central Nigeria, according to the Liberia's Defence Minister, Brownie Samukai in Abuja. Nigeria's immediate past Defence Minister, Alhaji Yayale Ahmed and Samukai signed the pact on behalf of their respective countries.

Prior to this, a Tripartite Agreement had been signed in June 2005, between representatives of the Governments of Nigeria, Liberia and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Abuja, Nigeria's capital city; spelling out, among other things, the rights of Liberian refugees to freely choose to repatriate and the modalities of the repatriation movement.

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From the time of the launch of the UNHCR repatriation exercise, which began soon after the signing, over 1000 out of about 6,000 registered Liberian refugees in Nigeria have been assisted to go back home mainly by commercial flights.

On the other hand, based on the agreement, Liberian refugees, who may decide to stay back in Nigeria, are free to do so, especially when such people have cogent reasons like children's schooling and possession of means of sustenance, such as gainful employment.

Sierra Leone:

The restoration of peace in Sierra Leone was of great importance to Nigeria's late military ruler, General Sani Abacha. Abacha knew the significance of pursuing the peace initiative in Sierra Leone to boost his government's democratic credentials with the rest of the world, at a time Nigeria faced international isolation because of military dictatorship. This, experts say, was a show of enormous commitment to regional peace by Nigeria.

Following the failure of Sierra Leoneans to come to a roundtable, Nigeria, being the predominant force behind the military defence of the government – ECOMOG - threatened to withdraw its troops after the 1999 presidential elections. This threat, of course, forced the Sierra Leonean government and other stakeholders to find a negotiating stand or face a return to further outbreak of hostility in the capital.

But owing to the importance Nigeria attached to the return of peace in Sierra Leone, as well as in the sub-region, former President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, was personally involved in the processes that led to the signing of the peace agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the rebels, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL) in Lome, Togo, from May 25 1999 to July 7, 1999.

Reaffirming this, the Nigerian Ambassador Extraordinary to the United Nations, Aminu Bashir Wali, recalled in his submission to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) meeting to mark the publication of Report of Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, that Nigeria was delighted to see its modest contribution to peace and security in Sierra Leone come into fruition, after it supported the Commission in the belief that it would help heal past wounds caused by the war, reiterating Nigeria's commitment to peace and security in Sierra Leone, while urging the people to continue to sustain the peace process by way of forgiving the pains of the past and looking forward to a brighter future.

Bakassi Peninsula:

In the wake of the handing over of Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon on August 15, 2008, in compliance with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) judgment of October 10, 2002, over the oil-rich island, which had been a cause of dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon for over two decades, Nigeria signed an agreement with the country on June 12, 2006.

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An estimated 100,000 Nigerians were displaced from Bakassi. Consequently, the Federal Government had voted over US$7 million from the federal funds to resettle the affected Bakassi indigenes, beginning with the provision of makeshift shelter camps spread over 10 kilometres in Akwa Ibom State, through the Nigerian National Boundary Commission.

Welcoming the Cameroonian Vice Prime Minister, Mr. Amadou Ali, who was in Abuja recently as a Special Envoy of President Paul Biya, to seek Nigeria's support to contest in the upcoming elections to a vacant United Nation's position, late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua on September 9, 2008, gave an indication that Nigeria would consider Cameroon's request for support in her bid.

While describing the recent Bakassi handover as a demonstration of good neighbourliness, President Yar'Adua said by the peaceful resolution of the Bakassi Peninsula crisis between Nigeria and Cameroon, both countries have demonstrated good neighbourliness and example of how nations could resolve their differences, without necessarily going to war.

He assured of Nigeria's resolve to see to the full implementation of the Green-Tree Accord on the Bakassi Peninsula signed in August in New York, stressing that Nigeria and Cameroon had laid down an example of peaceful resolution of diversity that is commendable and worthy of emulation by other nations in similar situation.[32]

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Nigeria's legacy in Sudan:

Noteworthy in history is what analysts see as one of the remarkable legacies of Nigeria through the former President, Olusegun Obasanjo in 2006, when he urged the full implementation of the peace accord in Sudan, while receiving in audience, a special envoy of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, Mr. Lam Akol, stressing the need for putting into action, the peace accord, which gave birth to the formation of a government of national unity. (AP, 2006)

Describing the accord as "one of the greatest events in recent times in Africa," Obasanjo who was then the immediate past chairman of the African Union (AU), said that the removal of all impediments to the accord would make Sudan realise its prospect "to be a great African country."

Though, Akol in his response, attributed the slow implementation of the agreement to the non-passage of the necessary Acts of parliament and non-fulfillment of financial pledges by donor countries, he commended Nigeria for hosting the Sudanese peace talks all along.

Nigeria, Sao Tome & Principe in economic collaboration:

Prior to the setting up of the Joint Development Authority (JDA) between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Islands of São Tomé and Príncipe, border conflicts were rife. The JDA was created to regulate the activities of exploitation and exploration of oil and gas and other related economic activities in the Joint Development Zone.

The Joint Development Zone is an area between Nigeria and the Islands of Sao Tome & Principe, speculated to be rich in oil and gas reserves. None of the two countries can individually

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[32]   Late President Yar'Adua further assured the envoy of continuous cordial relationship between both countries, and his government's keenness to offer positive consideration to Cameroon's request for Nigeria's support for her candidature in up-coming elections to a vacant United Nations position

explore the resources in the zone without interfering in the maritime boundary of the other country. This fact necessitated the two countries to come up with the idea of a JDA for the purposes of developing the economic potentials of the zone.

The location of the authority's head office in Abuja, Nigeria, goes to confirm Nigeria's readiness to absorb emergency-related issues quickly, especially when it has to do with the foreign policy of the federal government.

FGN committed to peace keeping:

The government of Nigeria in reiterating her commitment to peace-keeping on the continent, recently said she would not be deterred from playing leading roles in peace keeping in Africa and the world, according to the former Minister of State, Foreign Affairs, Alhaji Bagudu Hirse.[33]

Also applauding Nigeria, on peace keeping, the former Head of State and the Patron, African Peace Support Trainers Association (APSTA), Gen. Abdusalami Abubakar, commended Nigeria's efforts in peace keeping operations.

"The notable efforts of Nigeria, has paid off; no wonder the country is chosen to host this international conference (for APSTA) and Nigeria is being recommended for the next leadership of International Association for Peace-keeping Training Centres (IAPTC)," [NAN/Daily Champion, 2008]. Abubakar added that the Niger Delta crisis should not be regarded as a barrier because nearly every country had its own pocket of internal crisis.

Conclusion:

And as Sirleaf remarked, the contributions of Nigeria has remained unparalleled in the West African sub-region and African continent in general, when it comes to peace-keeping. All these are clear manifestations of consistency in the pursuit of a clear vision of commitment to Pan-African ideals, planted by Nigeria's founding fathers almost half a century ago.

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[33]   *``Nigeria will continue to play the leading role in prevention of conflicts and conflict resolutions in Africa and the world,'' former Minister of State, Foreign Affairs, Alhaji Bagudu Hirse was quoted as saying.*

CONCLUSION

Based on the consistency of pronouncements on Nigeria's foreign policy in the past 49 years, it can be reasoned that Nigeria as a nation has lived up to herself defined goals, especially in keeping with her African philosophy otherwise referred to as 'big brother' posture to all African States and their citizens whenever such need arises.

When the first batch of leaders who served the immediate post-independence Nigeria from the 1st of October, 1960, opted for a foreign policy that makes Africa, in general and the West Africa sub-region, in particular the focus, they demonstrated a rare foresight.

They foresaw the ideal of Nigeria providing the much-needed peace, where there is a break-down of order; not only within the West African sub-region, but also on the entire black African continent.

For instance, Nigeria's intervention during Ghana's economic down-turn in the 1980s and in the civil conflicts resulting from change of government and power tussles in Liberia and Sierra Leone, have since become part of history in favour of Nigeria's contribution and sacrifices resulting from her foreign policy decisions in particular.

Though the commitment to the initial ideal has continuously cost Nigeria so much in terms of money, men and materials, the focus has kept the nation in a class of its own when peace-keeping and promotion of peace in Africa is the issue. Specifically, one aspect that Nigeria has excelled unarguably has been in its activities and contributions to the establishment of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), with the nation's Armed Forces have continued to play lead roles in peace-keeping functional bodies like ECOMOG and others.

A spectacular aspect of it all is the consistency of successive governments in upholding the foreign policy initiative, which places Africa as the nation's priority in its foreign affairs. The consistency is impressive because of Nigeria's own problem of 'internal upsets,' occasioned by 'frequent' military incursions into the country's administration; beginning with the first military coup on January 15, 1966, followed by the second one in July of the same year and several others, thereafter.

Each successive military government suspended the country's Constitution, but respected international treaties and agreements to which Nigeria had been a party. This singular feature of the country's adherence and commitment to subsisting international agreements by successive governments – military and civilian – has sustained the initial foreign policy objective for close to half a century.

At intervals, some Nigerians had questioned the rationale behind Nigeria's heavy investments in the assorted trouble spots. But the truth is that tangible returns may not be visible;

nevertheless, the gains of a peaceful sub-continental and continental environment, which the foreign policy initiative has brought about, cannot be quantified in monetary or material terms.

One other feature of the Nigerian foreign policy in the last 49 years, has been the impact of the Presidency in ensuring sustained positive drive among Nigerian leadership, no matter their inclination, be it military, civilian or even democratically elected, there is continuity - they all work towards the same goal as if they were there at the inception when the founding fathers of Nigeria came up with that ideology.

Another characteristic in recent times in Nigerian foreign policy administration is the involvement of previous occupants of senior positions, be they political appointees or career diplomats and tapping their wealth of experience, in furtherance of putting forward the acclaimed 'Citizen Diplomacy' into practice.

Africa, over the years, has not ceased to be the centre of Nigeria's foreign policy; from the pre-independence era of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa to the present dispensation of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan; the focus has remained the same. Hence it was not surprising to foreign policy analysts that late Yar'Adua's government took the stand of returning to a people-oriented government in Guinea Bissau, following the murder of its president, Joao Bernado 'Nino' Vieira, on March 1, 2009 by suspected soldiers in noticeable reprisal, hours after the country's army chief was purportedly killed in a bomb attack, notwithstanding the Guinean Army's allegiance to democratic institutions.

For the fact that Nigeria retains its foreign policy thrust, the prospect of preservation of peace internationally, particularly within the African continent, remains unlimited; and since peace is the ultimate goal of the universe for the promotion of fruitful co-existence of all peoples of the world, Nigeria's foreign policy will continue to be relevant.

Noteworthy, are the five essential principles of Nigeria's foreign policy and to this end, the role of Nigeria in restoring peace in West Africa, is not anticipated to change in the nearest future.

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