

Diplomatic and Military Co-operations in Nigeria's Foreign Policy

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Abstract

The principle of non-intervention is part of customary international law; its foundation is based upon the concept of respect for the territorial sovereignty of states. It is against this backdrop that Nigeria from 1960 pursued modest foreign policy aims. Leaders were primarily concerned with internal consolidation of the new federal state. It was a period Nigeria held the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states as a creed; other principles such as the legal equality of states, and boundary inviolability were equally held sacrosanct. In Africa and particularly the West African sub-region, Nigeria gave preference to the policy of "good-neighborliness." But surprisingly, over time, the illegality of intervening in sovereign states has changed, as measured by changes in international law. In recent years, international law has adopted an increasingly permissive posture towards this form of coercive diplomacy. How did Nigeria respond to these changes? Why should sub-regional concerns lend to Nigeria's apparent willingness to violate its longstanding principle of non-interference in other African states' internal affairs. Why has Nigeria taken it as a rule to employ its armed forces in operations in total or limited war beyond its territorial borders? It is this attempt to examine Nigeria's application of diplomatic and military power- two instruments of its foreign policy - that necessitates this study.

The Unholy Wedlock of Diplomacy and Warfare

The relationship between the statesmen and the soldier is as old as the organized government. Yet, despite the timelessness of this relationship and the best intentions of individual men and women, the statesman and the soldier on many occasions fail fully to understand each other and, at times, even seem to work at cross-purposes. There is a complicated interaction of two very different tools of foreign policy. While the diplomat relies on his powers of negotiation and the art of compromise to achieve his objectives, his counterpart, the soldier, usually achieves objectives through the application or threatened use of force. Both know they need the other to succeed as Clausewitz postulated that war is a continuation of politics by other means. War or the threat to use force is a political activity intended to compel our opponent to fulfill our will. In this regard, the use of force is simply a brutal form of bargaining.¹

There is abundant literature in the fields of Political Science and International Relations, showing the existence of some sort of relationship between diplomacy and the use of force. These tools of foreign policy have enabled governments to press their agendas onto other states. As diplomacy plays a part in verbal communication, the military action aims to communicate to other nations that any resistance to proposed agendas would never be tolerated. That notwithstanding, it appears that the use of coercive diplomacy is no longer fashionable in contemporary global politics as most states now acknowledge the usefulness of dialogue and cooperation as actual sources of power in the new world order. Thus, diplomacy has come to be perceived as the peaceful alternative to the use of military force, though some scholars have continued to express divided opinions on whether the use of military force can actually be separated from diplomatic activities. A useful example in this

regard is the issue of humanitarian intervention which is still labeled as coercion² though its aim is to help molested civilians.

The use of force among states has intolerable consequences, as some states tend to coerce other states into acting in a way they would never do. This is evident in humanitarian interventions as well as wars against terrorism, where the sovereignty of a state is challenged by external forces. History is replete with examples of where this kind of diplomacy either created a new conflict or simply eliminated an existing one. Invariably, the relationship between diplomacy and the use of force is likely to continue as states will continue to be confronted with conflict management.

Therefore, to understand the shared responsibilities between diplomacy and the use of military force, and how they form effective relationships, this study will seek to answer the following questions: What are the guiding principles of Nigeria's foreign policy? How has Nigeria reacted to conflict within the West African sub-region? To what extent has Nigeria employed the use of force and diplomacy in the resolution of such conflicts? How has Nigeria engaged diplomacy and the use of force in protecting its interest around the globe, especially through UN-sponsored peacekeeping operations? Finding answers to these questions is the crux of this study which will begin with conceptual clarifications on foreign policy.

Conceptual Clarifications

Over the years, several different definitions of foreign policy have been forwarded by scholars, most of which acknowledge diplomacy and warfare as some of the tools of foreign policy. However, from the multiple definitions, a recurrent feature is the relationship between foreign policy and a course of action or set of principles adopted by a state towards realizing and protecting its national interest. Foreign policy may therefore be defined as the totality of objectives guiding the activities of a state in its relationship with other states. It concerns itself with the decisions and actions of a state with regards to its relationship with other states. A country's foreign policy may reflect broad national objectives or represent a narrow and specific response to a particular situation.

The main purpose of foreign policy is to further a state's interests; a state can achieve its foreign policy goals in several ways. It can use diplomacy which may involve peaceful negotiations as well as the imposition of economic sanctions which may involve the withdrawal of economic aids as well as restriction of trade; besides diplomacy, the state may also resort to the use of military force. It is therefore on this note that foreign policy concerns itself with strategies employed by states to guide their actions in the international system.

In this study, the focus is on how diplomacy and military options have guided Nigeria's foreign policy over the years. Diplomacy in this study is taken to mean the non-violent means through which a state advances its foreign policy objectives. It may however involve some elements of coercion, where it is backed by threats of the use of force or other punitive measures. The modern conception of diplomacy is expanded from its traditional view of inter-state relations to include: international conferences, inter-parliamentary relations, activities of multinational and sub-national entities, as well as the unofficial interaction of nongovernmental elements. The activities of international civil servants have also been acknowledged as part of diplomacy in the modern era.³

It must be appreciated that states take actions in international affairs for various reasons. Diplomats are appointed to positions, given instructions to foster the achievement of specific interests. Military forces are moved around and occasionally sent into the battlefield. Behind each of these actions are decisions by the state policy makers. These decisions in turn generally reflect the overall policies states have developed to govern relationships with other states. In all, diplomacy and military actions should be understood as basic instruments of the foreign policy process, targeted at realizing or protecting the interest of the state.

Whereas all states may nourish similar foreign policy goals, their ability to realize them will vary according to their military capabilities. Military capabilities limit a state's range of prudent policy choices. They act as a mediating factor on leaders' national security decisions, particularly in war-like situations.⁴ War may be simply defined as the state of openly declared hostility which involves the use of arms between states against each other. There is a symbiotic relationship between diplomacy and war to the extent that when diplomacy fails, war may ensue; however diplomacy is useful during the conduct of war. Yet, the larger problems of military policy, such as determination of the national policy it is to serve; the co-ordination of military preparation and action with diplomacy, policy, and government; the determination of specific war aims and peace terms lie as Wright aptly remarks in the realm of international politics and diplomacy. Yet the conduct of war is intricately related to these activities.⁵

The use of war and diplomacy in the conduct of international relations in post-World War II era is done under the auspices of the United Nations Organization (UN). Thus, the UN symbolizes the concept of multilateral conference diplomacy which affords it the responsibility to intervene in conflicts among states. This is particularly derived from Article. 33 of its founding Charter which requests conflicting parties to submit their differences to some established procedure for pacific settlement. These procedures usually range from bilateral negotiations to settlement through the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which is the UN's judicial organ.

Nigeria has been involved in various military and diplomatic activities since its independence. This does not however suggest that Nigeria has been a belligerent state, instead, the point to stress is that Nigeria since independence has been actively involved in peace-keeping missions under the auspices of the UN, the African Union (AU), as well the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In some cases, Nigeria has even militarily intervened in the internal conflicts of other countries especially within West Africa. The question then is what must have informed Nigeria's military exploits in these operations? A clue to the answer could be found in the principles underlying Nigeria's foreign policy.

Guiding Principles of Nigeria's Foreign Policy

Nigeria's foreign policy should obviously reflect the country's national interest. At the wake of independence in 1960, Nigeria's foreign policy was built on certain principles which were to guide its bilateral and multilateral relations. These principles were first outlined on October 7, 1960 when Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Nigeria's first Prime Minister, stated in his maiden address to the UN General Assembly that Nigeria's relations with the outside world would be guided by the following principles

- i. Maintenance of friendly relations with all nations, as well as active participation in the United Nations;
- ii. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of, and peaceful co-existence with all countries;
- iii. Development of cultural co-operation as a means of strengthening political ties with all African countries; and
- iv. Commitment to African peace, development and co-operation, decolonization and the fight against racism and apartheid.⁶

In spite of the several regime changes recorded in Nigeria since independence, it is interesting to note that the guiding principles of its foreign policy have remained largely intact. It is even remarkable that these principles are clearly enshrined in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which prescribes the following foreign policy objectives for Nigeria:

- a. Promotion and protection of the national interest;
- b. Promotion of African integration and support for African unity;
- c. Promotion of international cooperation, consolidation of peace, and elimination of discrimination in all its forms;
- d. Respect for international law and treaty obligations, as well seeking settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication; and
- e. Promotion of a just world economic order (Chapter 11, Section 19 (a-e) of the 1999 Constitution).

These principles and objectives are the ideals that today drive Nigeria's foreign policy. Government's fidelity to these constitutional obligations constitute an article of faith in Nigeria military and diplomatic engagement with the world. These principles of Nigeria's foreign policy therefore explain and account for the consistency and continuity in Nigeria's foreign policy since 1960. Nigeria has since emerged as a country built on the core values of neutrality and respect for the territorial integrity of other states.

Nigeria had from its independence consciously chosen soft power or cultural diplomacy as the goals of her foreign policy. Put differently, from independence, Nigeria was determined to follow a foreign policy pact that would foster common cultural ties with other African States. It was therefore in pursuance of these principles that Nigeria joined the international machinery for conflict resolution, management and prevention. To this end, between 1960 and 1964, Nigeria began its conflict resolution efforts by being actively involved in peacekeeping operations in Congo. Peacekeeping in Congo cost Nigeria an estimated 14.8 million pounds, in addition to the \$1million it contributed to the UN in order to defray the costs of the peacekeeping operation. Though peacekeeping in Congo represents Nigeria's first involvement in multilateral peacekeeping, it equally demonstrates the country's belief in enhancing both international security in the African continent and the world

at large. Presently, Nigeria is ranked as the fourth largest troops-contributing country in the world, after India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. All of these reveal Nigeria's commitment to "multilateral diplomacy."⁷

The civil war that had broken in 1960 had not completely resolved all the bitterness which had developed among the Congolese when the UN withdrew its troops in June 1964. This therefore saw to the continuation of internecine fighting in some major provinces in Congo, including Katanga, Kivu, Kwilu and Orientale. In the course of the conflict, Prime Minister C Adoula stepped down from office and was succeeded by Moise Tshombe who recruited several white mercenaries against his opponents. It was against this backdrop that the OAU on December 21, 1964, passed Resolution E CM/Res.7 (IV), appealing for the cessation of conflict, denouncing all forms of foreign intervention in the country's internal affairs. This Resolution followed the belief that foreign intervention was a major challenge to peace and security in Africa. Nigeria was central in the passage of this historic resolution.

Nigeria's Military Engagements

Since independence when Nigeria was admitted as a member-state of the United Nations in 1960, she has remained unequivocally committed to the UN's goals, principles and objectives. This is evident in the fact that Nigeria has consistently contributed towards promoting and maintaining international peace and security. Beginning with its peacekeeping mission in Congo, Nigerian troops have served in several other UN-backed peacekeeping missions across the globe. As at today, Nigeria has over 6,020 (Six thousand and twenty) troops serving under UN mandate in various theatres of conflicts.⁸ Nigeria's commitment to global peace, security and stability has been conducted at enormous costs, both in human and material terms, even when major powers may consider such contributions as politically toxic.⁹

Besides the initial Congo military peace keeping, Nigeria has spearheaded other robust military and diplomatic engagements to restore and maintain peace and stability in several African countries. For instance, while the defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU) lasted, Nigerian troops were deployed to Chad (1981/82) and Rwanda (1994). The OAU's first attempts at peacekeeping in Congo, alongside the peace mission in Chad (1981-82) have been reported as massive failures for the organization. Despite verbal pledges, Nigeria bore the costs of the operations, since the Organization managed to contribute only US\$400000 of the estimated US\$192 million budget.¹⁰ Nigeria regretted the huge expenses it incurred during the peace missions. This is evident in the comments of erstwhile President Shehu Shagari who complained of mounting bills that arose from participating in OAU's peacekeeping missions. In his words,

Our participation under the auspices of the OAU was entirely at our expense. The OAU up till today has not contributed anything towards our efforts in Chad although the peace-keeping force was supposed to be an OAU force. They asked us to continue maintaining our troops on the understanding that they would pay us back. Up till today, the OAU has not given us anything. Nigeria even had to assist the contingents from Senegal and Zaire with some logistics and food. So actually we maintained the OAU peace-keeping force all through and we could not afford to do so indefinitely.¹¹

Shagari's complaint was unjustifiable for a country that on different occasions pledged that "Nigeria will have a wonderful opportunity to speak for the African continent"¹²; and that the country was determined to fulfill her destiny as "the leader of the African continent".¹³

As OAU was transformed into African Union, the Constitutive Act of AU recognized the right to militarily intervene at least on humanitarian grounds.¹⁴ Under the auspices of AU, the contribution of Nigeria towards lasting sustainable peace in Sudan cannot be overemphasized. In fact, Nigeria was among the first countries to send troops to the troubled Western Region of Sudan. She had the largest troop contingent support to the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).¹⁵

Over the years, Nigeria has built an unmatched reputation within the West African sub-region as a regional leader, conciliator, and peace-builder. This is largely in view of her contributions to conflict resolution and peace-building as well as democracy promotion in such African states as Liberia and Sierra Leone, under the umbrella of ECOMOG (ECOWAS Monitoring Group). Nigeria remains steadfast to that commitment even as the demands on UN peacekeeping to contribute to international peace and security continue to grow.¹⁶ Further

inquiry is required as to what emboldened Nigeria to intervene militarily in the internal conflicts of countries. Liberia, Sierra Leone and now Mali will be examined, starting with Liberia. While the military exploits of Liberia and Sierra Leone took place during Nigeria's military rule that of Mali was under the democratically elected presidency of Goodluck Jonathan.

LIBERIA

In 1975, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established with the primary objectives of fostering economic integration and engendering development across the sub-region. By the next decade, precisely in 1989, Liberia was already enmeshed in a civil war which lasted till 1997. By 1990, troops loyal to Charles Taylor attacked the Nigerian embassy in the guise of finding Samuel Doe's soldiers who were believed to be training in the embassy. It was on this basis therefore that Nigeria and the ECOWAS as a whole were moved into military action in Liberia. In line with the recommendations of a Mediation Committee, ECOWAS on August 21, 1990, authorized the deployment of an ECOMOG contingent to Liberia. Many reasons have been advanced as to what led Nigeria into military intervention in Liberia. One of such is reasons is the personality of Nigeria's military president, General Ibrahim Babangida. Babangida's image of himself as a great leader that must keep a friend, Samuel Doe, in power is significant in committing Nigerian troops into Liberia.¹⁷ Besides this psycho-analytic factor, Babangida warned his West African compatriots that humanitarian intervention in Liberia was a necessity:

Nigeria has no territorial ambition in Liberia or anywhere else. We are in Liberia because events in the country have led to the massive destruction of property, the massacre by all the warring parties of thousands of innocent civilians including those foreign nations, women and children some of whom had sought sanctuary in the churches, mosques, diplomatic missions, hospitals and under Red Cross protection contrary to all recognized standard of civilized behavior and international ethics and decorum. To those involved in false historical comparisons, intellectual intoxication and phantom analysis, I ask, should Nigeria and all responsible countries in the sub-region stand and watch the whole of Liberia turned into one mass grave yard?¹⁸

In a more assertive role as a regional protector in the West African sub-region, Babaginda testified to Nigeria's preparedness to accept the military challenges, a commitment that made Nigeria to provide the bulk of the troops and 80% of the resources and virtually all the commanders:

Nigeria would continue to remain vigilant and concerned about events happening in our sub-region. Nigeria has no apology to make when we take it upon ourselves as our burden duty and solemn responsibility to help resolve the causes of instability in our sub-region. The rule of non-intervention is not to be used as an excuse for the abdication of responsibility for each other's welfare. We are proud Nigeria agreed to commit so much of her scarce human and material resources towards the ensuring of the return of peace and order to Liberia.¹⁹

The UN Security Council in its response to the Liberian crisis adopted about fifteen recommendations between January 1991 and November 1996, most of which commended the Nigerian-led ECOWAS for its efforts. The UNSC resolutions had also demanded the support of the international community for the ECOWAS. It is pertinent to note that while the rebel factions were at several cases reprimanded for violating the laws of war, there was no such condemnation of Nigeria or the ECOWAS for its involvement in the war. This was therefore an implicit endorsement of the legality of humanitarian interventions with or without the approval of the UN Security Council. The intervention of ECOWAS in Liberia may therefore be considered as a landmark event in the history of international peace enforcement and should be considered as the first authentic case of humanitarian intervention in the post-Cold War era.²⁰ Nigeria sent a division of its army into Liberia.²¹

SIERRA LEONE

Conflict in Sierra Leone began in March 1991 when members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUFF) began to attack government troops in order to overthrow the government in Sierra Leone. In the wake of the crisis, the ECOWAS Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) waded in to the conflict on the side of Sierra Leone's Army (SLA), trying to defend the government from RUFF insurgency. However, in the course of the war, the SLA overthrew the country's government. Another coup d'état was staged in May 1997, and a section of the SLA

army – the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), led a coup against the incumbent President Kabbah, who fled into exile. Nigerian-led ECOWAS intervened to terminate the coup d'état the same year. In 1998, ECOMOG intervened in the lingering Sierra Leonean conflict, where after a nine-day offensive, the Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces toppled the military junta and assumed control of Freetown on February 13, 1998. Earlier deposed President Kabbah was re-instated shortly.²² Nigeria's intrusion in Sierra Leone was the country's second military intervention in the guise of peacekeeping.²³

Nigeria's leading role in the ECOWAS intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone earned her an international recognition as a regional hegemon committed to preservation of constitutional order in the West African sub-region. Ironically however, Nigeria had executed these roles while she was still being ruled by corrupt and despotic military regimes which annulled the freest and most transparent election in the country's history, and imprisoned the winner of the election, Moshood Abiola. Further in its bid to retain power, Nigeria's military regimes have been notorious for imprisoning and torturing opposition leaders, members of civil society organizations and even journalists for their dissenting opinions. The execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni nine, as well as the assassination of Abiola's wife are testimonies of the despotic nature of Nigeria's military regimes at the time.

That notwithstanding, it is an incontrovertible fact that Nigeria has been largely instrumental in the transformation of ECOWAS into a "regional security vehicle". On this note, Nigeria has undoubtedly provided leadership for the sub-regional body especially in the area of promoting and enforcing peace and stability. It is instructive to note that at the peak of Nigeria's involvement in the Liberian and Sierra Leonean conflicts, she had contributed over 12,000 troops with a total of about US\$12 billion expenditure.²⁴

MALI

In 2012, Mali, a former French West African colony, was plunged into chaos after a military coup resulted in a power vacuum. The country which was hitherto described as an epitome of democracy and stability in Africa had indeed become a theatre of war as different armed groups literally took up arms against each other. Existing explanations for the conflict in Mali have mostly relied on the 2011 Libyan war as a trigger for the Malian crisis. It is believed that after Gadhafi's defeat in the hands of the Libyan rebels, his African recruits (a large proportion of whom were Malians) had to return to their home countries. On return, the recruits took along a massive arsenal of heavy weapons, which provided new strength to the rebel movement in northern Mali, led by Tuareg separatists and Islamist radicals. The Tuaregs are a historically disenfranchised minority ethnic group in Northern Mali that had sought for independence from Mali, particularly in 2012.

By April 2012, members of the Islamist terrorist group, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), had captured northern Mali, and had begun to record military victories against the Malian army and the independent Tuareg movement known as the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). The Islamist group therefore began to implement stringent Sharia laws in northern Mali. They have been noted to be brutal to women, who in some cases are sexually abused, raped, or forced into marriage and prostitution.²⁵ The Islamist group is noted to have established some close relations with the Boko Haram in Nigeria. The relationship between AQIM and Boko Haram is recorded to include the training of recruits as well as the sale of arms. According to Mohammed Bazoum, "one group has been received in AQIM bases here in the Sahel and another group got training, based on information we've gotten, with the Shabaabs in Somalia... Some of the bombers in Nigeria received training here in the Sahel".²⁶ Similarly, Pham observes that Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud, emir of al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), remarked that his group would provide Boko Haram with weapons, training, and other support in order to expand its own reach into Sub-Saharan Africa not only to gain "strategic depth," but also to "defend Muslims in Nigeria and stop the advance of a minority of Crusaders".²⁷

The relationship between AQIM and Boko Haram is also seen in the latter's adoption of new tactics, including suicide bombing, which is relatively strange in Nigeria. From 16 June 2011, Boko Haram adopted one of the deadliest instruments (suicide bombing) in the jihadist arsenal and had demonstrated that it was now capable of carrying out attacks far from its usual areas of operation.²⁸

There is a relationship between Boko Haram and AQIM a phenomenon that portends danger to Nigeria and

the West African sub-region. It is most worrisome that the two groups have the potentialities to share funds, training and explosive materials.²⁹

It is against the backdrop of this unholy alliance between Boko Haram and AQIM that Nigeria intervened militarily in Mali. Meanwhile, the Nigerian Senate gave its consent to the deployment of Nigerian troops to Mali in order to restore peace and stability in the country. This was contained in a response letter addressed to President Jonathan granting consent for the deployment of 1,200 Nigerian soldiers for peacekeeping operations in Mali. This was in line with the provision of the Nigerian Constitution which stipulates that the President reserves the right to engage the nations armed forces in combat operations outside the country, howbeit, with the consent of the Senate.³⁰

President Jonathan was poignantly convinced that he had satisfied himself that Nigeria's national security was under imminent threat of danger as a result of the crises in Northern Mali. He claimed that Nigeria was not acting unilaterally by sending combat troops to Mali, but was rather implementing the UN Security Council Resolution 2085 (2012) which recognized the need to combat with armed and terrorist groups including Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), operating in Northern Mali and beyond.³¹

It was therefore on account of the foregoing that Nigeria deployed its troops for peace-keeping operations in Mali. It should be noted that by January 2013, Nigeria had already committed about N7billion to peacekeeping in Mali.³² Expectedly, this figure had been multiplied by the end of Nigeria's military operations in Mali.

Nigeria's Diplomatic and Military Interventions: a Critique

There appears to be a consensus among statesmen that peace is a preferred alternative to conflict. This is in line with the acknowledgement that brute force, even in war, does not guarantee victory and peace. Examples of Vietnam, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq and the recent Arab uprising where known dictators had been sent packing attest to this fact. It is in this light therefore that diplomacy is considered as a crucial tool with which peace can be attained in the international system. However, the acknowledgement of the usefulness of diplomacy does not in any way suggest that military might has entirely lost its usefulness. Indeed, it must be noted even in a domestic setting, military force has proven to be a useful tool for ensuring the maintenance of law and order.

Consequently, Nigeria over the years has engaged the tools of diplomacy and military force in pursuing its foreign policy objectives. The deployment of these two foreign policy tools shows that Nigeria has come of age. Indeed, as war is understood by some military strategists as the continuation of politics by other means, diplomacy may equally be understood as a continuation of war by other means. This therefore reflects the symbiotic nature of relationship existing between diplomacy and military force. This discovery is more glaring following the post 9-11 diplomacy, which today is confronted with a reality that no state has monopoly of violence and that non-state actors, especially transnational terrorist organization like the Al Qaeda, al Shabaab and Taliban, have emerged as significant agents of terror.

Nigeria's insistence on peace and good neighbourliness in the African continent and more importantly the West African sub-region has placed Nigeria's core interests in jeopardy.³³ By placing Africa at the centre of its foreign policy, Nigeria, has unwittingly made a deliberate choice to pursue peace independent of the costs. Suffice to recall that even in the face of a heated boundary dispute with Cameroon, Nigeria opted to abide by the verdict of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and handed over Bakassi Peninsula (the disputed territory) to Cameroon in the spirit of good neighbourliness.³⁴ Nigeria's pursuit of peace has made Nigeria the world's fourth largest contributor of troops to the United Nations peace keeping force. Nigeria's fifty six years of existence has never experienced any lack of political will to assist other African states, even in the face of dwindling economic fortunes. More importantly, its notion of good neighbourliness has evidently been with no strings attached as it is yet to make any territorial or economic gain from its involvement in other African states.

In South Africa, Nigeria contributed significantly to the collapse of the Apartheid regime which institutionalized racism and white minority domination. Many South African blacks were offered scholarships to study in Nigerian schools.³⁵ Nigeria is also recorded to have worked assiduously towards ensuring self-government in such African states as Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, and Zimbabwe. Many Nigerian professionals had been sent to other African states on technical aids corps to enhance their human capital development. Even in difficult times, when national economies suffer recession, Nigeria is recorded to have continued to assist other African

countries. Worse still, in the face of an epileptic power supply characterized by incessant power outages, Nigeria has continued to supply uninterrupted energy to African countries such as the Republics of Niger and Benin. All of these demonstrate Nigeria's preparedness to assist sister African states, regardless of its internal challenges.³⁶

Politically, Nigeria has been instrumental in reversing military coups in Sao Tome and Principe, Guinea Bissau and Guinea; Its military adventures in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Mali speak volumes. In these efforts, Nigeria canvases within the UN for a new international economic order. But what has Nigeria gained in all these efforts? Nigeria's foreign policy has witnessed enormous costs without corresponding dividends. Nigeria has been a party to many peacekeeping operations at the sub-regional, continental and systemic levels without corresponding post-policy dividends from these military exercises. In comparative terms, when the United States of America invaded Iraq, American companies like Halliburton and the entire defence sector promptly prepared for a post conflict reconstruction in that country. In Nigeria's military interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone, there were no such post-conflict reconstruction engagements to benefit the Nigerian state, the private sector or any segment of the Nigerian civil society. This is a clear example of the fruitlessness of Nigeria's foreign policy within the context of the national interest.³⁷

Nevertheless, in spite of Nigeria's multiple contributions in Africa, many African states tend to be suspicious of Nigeria's intentions. Rather than support Nigeria and intensify the passion for Africa, Nigeria to them is a pariah nation with imperial ambition that must be stopped. There is some basis for this assertion. In Angola for instance, after investing huge sums for Angolan independence, the MPLA-led government rejected Nigeria's request for fishing rights in Angola's territorial waters. Also, Nigeria's request to extend the Nigerian Airways flight to Lusaka because the Lagos-Luanda route alone was not profitable was equally rejected.³⁸ Similarly, in 1977 most African states preferred Niger's candidature to Nigeria over the UN Security Council seat.³⁹ In South Africa, Nigerian journalists were denied visas to participate in the World Association of Newspapers Congress, while Nigeria's Nobel laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka was almost refused entrance into South Africa for being above 70 years old.⁴⁰

Nigeria has not conducted its interventionist policies in a principled manner, unlike other nations; moreover, the interventions have been carried out without the intention to yield immediate benefits for the country.⁴¹ In fact, in the face of ravaging poverty in the country it is questionable how huge resources are committed to Peace Support Operations (PSO). Nigeria has nothing to reap from the interventionist operations. This issue was brought home as the presidential request for the deployment of Nigerian troops was tabled before the Senate. Senator Chris Anyanwu from Imo state reminded her colleagues that Nigeria cannot continue to be father Christmas. She observed that China that contributed nothing to the restoration of peace in Liberia had taken over the country, saying such situation where Nigeria would fight to restore peace and order in a particular country only for another country to take over it in terms of business investment must stop. "We are not just sending troops but carrying the entire financial burden, we have young people looking for jobs, we must move with mindset in our foreign policy".⁴²

Nigeria's erstwhile Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Air Chief Marshal Paul Dike, has corroborated the claims that Nigeria's foreign military interventions are usually of no benefit to the country. Speaking in 2010 on a paper titled, "An Overview of the Nigerian Armed Forces' Participation in Peace Support Operations," the CDS regretted that in spite of the laudable and selfless sacrifice, Nigeria had mostly reaped the pains without getting the full benefits of the gains of her unparalleled contribution to the attainment of peace and security in the West African sub-region, and the world at large. Dike furthered that aside the huge economic implications of foreign military intervention, Nigeria has so far lost over 2,000 soldiers to international peacekeeping missions. Dike attributed this sad phenomenon to an absence of a national policy has made it difficult for strategic planning. This malaise is in place because Nigeria has no national policy on military interventions that defines the strategy of the nation's participation. Consequently, Nigeria has been participating in Peace-keeping Operations without clear political and economic objectives and without exit options.⁴³

On the other hand, Nigeria has been criticized by some analysts for intervening late in the conflict in Mali. This is blamed as the reason for France's intervention in the West African state, which is considered as an embarrassment for Nigeria as a sub-regional leader. To these analysts, Jonathan had failed to assert sufficient African independence against the French. But was this really weakness and compliance by Jonathan? Or did he simply discern a common interest with Western powers?⁴⁴

Conclusion

Nigeria from 1960 has deployed both diplomacy and military force as tools for achieving its foreign policy objectives. In West Africa and across the African continent as a whole, successive Nigerian governments have shown commitment to upholding the principle of good neighbourliness. As such, Nigeria's foreign policy engagements have over the years proven to be consistent with the doctrine of "territorial integrity" which discourages infringement on the sovereignty and physical boundaries of nation-states.⁴⁵ Thus, it is safe to assert that Nigeria in its foreign policy choices has implicitly endorsed Art 2(4) of the UN Charter which maintains that "all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat 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".

Indeed, keeping true to the foregoing UN statute may sufficiently explain Nigeria's traditional reluctance over the use of military force in the pursuit of its national interest abroad. In its dispute with Cameroon, for instance, Nigeria clearly demonstrated its willingness to implement the ICJ's verdict on the Nigeria-Cameroon dispute over Bakassi Peninsula, despite opposition from within. Acceptance of the ICJ ruling therefore serves as an evidence of Nigeria's commitment to international law and a belief in peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms. It is the height of Nigeria's recognition of systemic norms that in some instances run contrary to the country's core strategic interests. It is also on record that many states do not adhere to the principle of non-intervention in practice. It is in this context that analysts like Thomas Frank justifiably pronounced a death sentence on Article 2 (4).⁴⁶ The death sentence must have inspired Nigeria to militarily intervene in Mali. It is however doubtful whether the Nigerian soldiers are adequately trained in combatting terrorism.

Mali joins the list of other countries as Chad, Liberia and Sierra Leone, where Nigeria has previously intervened militarily. However, contradictions and domestic challenges in Nigeria make the military option a very costly exercise. This calls for caution at least in two dimensions. First, there must be an assured commitment of interests and an exit strategy—a commitment of interest which assumes that the potential benefit must justify the costs and sacrifice involved in military interventions. It is a call for the policy review of the country's peace support operations. The envisaged review would achieve a healthy melding of Nigeria's national interest and the humanitarian value of peacekeeping missions. Second, it has become pertinent for other African states to expand their efforts in the area of peacekeeping in Africa, so as to reduce Nigeria's burden of ensuring peace and stability across the African continent.

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