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NIGERIA AND THE UNFINISHED QUEST FOR PERMANENT SEAT IN UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

Sani Sani Ibrahim

Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Kaduna State University, Kaduna, Nigeria

Abstract

It is an irony that in the 21st Century, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) still remains undemocratic and dominated by five permanent members. The UNSC composition reflects the dictatorship of few against many. Today's realities dictate the need for the expansion and democratization of UNSC to accommodate new members based on the principles of sovereign equally of all member states as enshrined in the UN Charter. In her quest for permanent seat, the Nigerian Government set up 28-member committee saddle with the responsibility to wins African support for her desire to become a permanent member in the UNSC. The study examined Nigerian's potentials to represent African in the UNSC permanent Seat, using qualitative Secondary sources. The study was situated within power theory to analyze the power potential available to Nigeria in her struggle for UNSC permanent seat. The findings show the conceptual framework of Nigeria's greatness and potentials to pursue her desire to represent Africa in the United Nations Security Council Permanent Seat (UNSC). The study recommends structural reforms of United Nations to reflect the 21st century reality to accommodate Nigeria as African representative in UNSC. There is the need for Nigeria to transform its security architecture to do away with any threats that undermine the security of the nation. The study contributed in advancing the discussion of power theory to the understanding of Nigeria's quest for UNSC permanent seat.

Keywords: Democracy, United Nations, Security Council, Nigeria and Africa.

Introduction

The Security Council is the highest ruling body of the United Nations organization, comprising of fifteen members; (five permanents and ten non-permanent members). The five veto members are United States, Britain, France, Russia and China. They decide on which country of the world need peace keeping force, relief materials or which government is not in consistence with internationally acceptable mandate. As well define what acceptable conduct is and what is not in the international arena. The power of the Security Council is almost unlimited. The five permanent members have an additional advantage over the Non-Permanent members in the Council, because the elected members serve a two-year term and cannot according to the Charter be immediately re-elected. It takes elected representative more than a year to get a sense of the

working of the Council and by the time they become fully effective their time is virtually up. The Council however, are often accused of inadequacies, selfish, unrepresentative and unreflective to the contemporary global reality. It is an irony that in the 21st Century, the Security Council still remains undemocratic and dominated by five permanent members, whose decisions and resolution stands unchallenged and binding on all UN member counties. The current UN Security Council composition reflects the dictatorship of few against many.

Today's realities dictate the need for the expansion and democratization of Security Council to accommodate new members based on the principles of sovereign equally of all member states as enshrined in the UN Charter. Hence, there was an advocacy for the structural reform and expansion of the Security Council membership. In response, perhaps, to the pressure for

broadening the membership of the council, there was a move by the former United Nations (UN) Secretary General, late Kofi Annan, to undertake a comprehensive reform of the Organization, with a view to making it more responsive to the challenges of the 21-century. A panel was set up by late Kofi Annan. The Panel consists of former Head of states, foreign Ministers, diplomats and Security Chiefs. The panel did not specifically name any new country to join the elite Security Council, but proposed that its membership be expanded from fifteen to twenty-four. That is to add six new permanent members and three non-permanent members (for two-year term), two each of the six permanent members will come from Africa and Asia/Pacific, while one each will be from America and Europe (UNAC 1993). It presented its report entitled “A MORE SECURE WORLD AND OUR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY” Annan commented on the panel’s report that:

“...I wholly endorse its core argument for a more comprehensive system of collective security, one that tackles both new and old threats and addresses the security concerns of all states- rich and poor, weak and strong. The report offers the United Nations a unique opportunity to refashion and renew our institution and will be sent to the General Assembly for consideration and action ...” (Adebo, 17)

The United Nations reform agenda especially the expansion of Security Council has become a popular subject of discussion worldwide. Since the announcement of the proposed expansion of the number of seats of United Nations Security Council, based on geo-strategic representation, it has resulted to intensive debates on how to re-position the Council among various continents On October 31st 2005 African Union. (AU) took a decision to reject any United Nations Security reform which may award the continent permanent seats without the all-important veto power, enjoyed by the current occupants of the permanent seats. (Weekly Trust; 2005:10). The African Union (AU) session which was held at its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, considered the report of ten African Head of states, led by President Tejan Kabba of

Sierra-Leone, instituted to promote African consensus on the continent’s candidature for the crucial organ of the world body. The Addis Ababa meeting, which was attended by nine heads of state from Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Sierra-Leone, Lesotho, Libya, Egypt, South Africa and Djibouti, had other member states of African Union (A.U) represented by their foreign ministers. The meeting viewed the conferment of permanent seats at the United Nations Security Council without veto power as an affront and therefore rejected it in totality. With the adoption of a common African consensus, it is now the question of which African countries is most qualified for African slots?

Nigeria joined the United Nations Organization as 99th member of the organization just seven days after independence in 1960. Consequently, the country’s desire for democratization and expansion of UN Security Council is not new phenomenon, and her position in this regard was well known when the Prime-Minister Late Sir, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa had pointed out in the United Nations, ‘... The whole structure of the United Nations needs to be re-examined and the Security Council should be composed in such a way that the new independent African countries can have an effective voice’ (Izah, 1991). In a related development Nigeria’s former President Olusegun Obasanjo at United Nations General Assembly restated Nigeria’s conviction that, what is needed in United Nations is a fundamental reform to democratize and reposition the Security Council to enable it respond to issues of international peace and Security in a comprehensive and satisfactory manner. Furthermore, Nigerian Government under former President Olusegun Obasanjo set up 28-member committee on National Awareness on the United Nations Reforms under General Abdulsalam Abubakar rtd, and Chief Emeka Anyaoku, saddled with the responsibility to wins African support in her desire to become a permanent member in the Security Council (Kwenu, 2001:36). The 28-member committee in various fora advocated that the reform of the Council must be based on the principle of sovereign equality of all the member states of the United Nations, as stated in Article 2 of the Charter. Security Council expansion must focus on

addressing imbalances in regional representation, particularly the inadequate representation of African countries, because Africa was the most underrepresented region in the Council and should be given highest priority. Therefore, this paper examined Nigeria's potential to represent African in the Security Council.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The United Nations debate on the reform agenda, especially the expansion and democratization of the Security Council is dominated by two polarized scholarships. (The Proponents and Opponents) Scholars. Proponents' scholarship is primarily concerned with democratization and equal representation in UN Security Council. The most prominent group within this scholarship is Global Policy Forum, International (NGO) Network in Global Government, Pan African Group, Raymond (1996), Farley (2000), Isma'il (2001) and others have produced extensive literature supporting their views. The key argument in their analysis was that the council is deeply-flawed instrument for promoting peace and collective Security, and they called for far-reaching changes in the council membership and its method of work (Farley, 2000). They argued that the council must become more democratic, consistent, accountable, and that it must function less as a geo-political instrument of few major powers. They raised serious questions about the current council's capacity to be credible or legitimate source of international peace and security. The Council according to proponents scholars was undemocratic, unrepresentative, unreflective to the contemporary reality, as well the equality of states are not guarantee. However today's reality dictates that developing countries has the rights be represented. They called for renewed efforts at restructuring the United Nations and its agencies as the panacea for permanent peace in the world (Isma'il, 2009).

Meanwhile, the president of Pan African Group Martin Kassongor (1998) said the continued existence of veto power and the domination of permanent members in the Security Council will never make peace a reality. This scholarship further urged that

democratization of the United Nations and its agencies to what they termed "One Man-One Vote" status and advocating for the review of United Nations Charter. The Proponents scholars stressed that veto power is a form of slavery against humanity. Therefore, they called for the total decolonization of United Nations and its agencies for worldwide peace (Daily Trust, 2005:14). Similarly, Isma'il (2009) argued that it is time to reject collectively the idea of an elite group of states deciding in critical question of peace and Security. He said

"... An Agenda for peace cannot be implemented with a Security Council which does not enjoy the confidence of the majority of United Nations member states and which does not adequately reflect the composition of the United Nations (Isma'il, 2009).

In addition, Liden (2005) said, a reformed Security Council was one of the most important tasks and that the composition, size and working-method of the Council need to reflect today's realities in order to be perceived as relevant and legitimate. Therefore, a decision for that is urgent to be taken and non-action is not an option. "We need concrete reform decisions, with timetable as appropriate, in all four areas under discussion; development, Security, human rights and institutional reform" (Liden, 2005). Furthermore, the Proponent group stressed that after the charter was adopted 1945, a number of countries, including Africa, Asia and Latin America has emerged as independent, these countries should be given a role in the work of the council, reflecting their importance and contribution to the United Nations (Raymond, 1996; Farley, 2002; Liden, 2003).

On the contrary, the opponent's scholarship, the prominent among this scholarship are Shown (1990); Rhoda, (2006); John, (2003). The opponents group proposed a number of reforms at the United Nations, which consist largely of administrative or other inconsequential reforms, which is America's alibi for rejecting any meaningful reforms of the world body. They claimed that the Security Council was never designed to represent the United Nations membership geographically, but was intended to be a concert of

great powers, who has the power to make major decision by virtue of the fact that they held economic and military powers (Shown, 1990). This argument was supported by the then British Prime Minister, who said,

“...the council was built on the assumption that the great powers would unite any time, they see a threat to international peace and security and was not meant to be truly representatives, but it was meant to compose of countries with the ability to maintain international order...(Shown, 1990)”

In defense of veto, The Group of four “G4” countries campaigning for permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council have dropped their demand for veto power. The countries, Japan, Germany, Brazil and India revised a draft General Assembly resolution that would increase the size of Security Council from 15-25 members. An earlier draft called for six new permanent members with the same veto rights as the United States, France, Britain, Russia and China. But in the revised version, the candidate countries said they drop veto demand. And one of the permanent members France had agreed to co-sponsor the enlargement measure after the veto demand was withdrawn. India revisit its position and insisted that the draft should give new permanent members the same veto rights but Japan and Germany were reluctant to insist on the same veto rights out of concern that doing so would increase opposition to the expansion of the permanent five (Rhoda, 2006). However, United State, Britain, France and few other countries have argued in favor of a “MINIMALIST APPROACH” to expansion, on the ground that a large council is awkward and “Inefficient”. They favor adding Japan and Germany as the means to lessen their financial obligations. The former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the United States has not decided which nations to back for the seats, except for Japan (Rhoda:2006).

This study is situated within the constructivists theory of international relation, the theory posit that the international system exists when states are conscious of certain common interests, conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of values in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common

institutions (Barka, 2000: 83). The constructivist theory is considered in this study because Nigeria as members of the United Nations Organization is conscious of the principle of sovereign equality of all member state and their common interest of promoting global peace and security. Therefore, the exercise of veto power by the five permanent members is contrary to the realities of the 21st century and principles of sovereign equality of all members as enshrined in the UN charter. Nigeria has contributed toward achieving the common goals of UN, the country was ranked 7th for peace keeping operation and the participated in more than 29 peacekeeping operations around the world.,

Methodology

In carrying out this study secondary course was used to collect. Corbetta (2003) highlights the merit of using secondary source in qualitative study over other method of data collection: (1) “It is a non-reactive method where information get from the document is not subject to possible distortion and interpolation, as the result of interaction between the interviewer and the interviewees (2) Document is cost effective because it has already been produced. And (3) it helps the researcher to study the past. In this regard data was available through review of the existing relevant text materials and also the assembling of data was through government policy documents, Journals, published books, seminar presentations, unpublished materials, Newspapers and relevant materials were sourced from Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nigeria’s Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) and others were retrieved from the website. In this situation, the study adopted Creswell (2007) proposed a guideline for obtaining the document in qualitative studies. These include: Identify the relevant documents, seek permission to use the identified documents and examine its merit in terms of accuracy and completeness in answering the research questions. Therefore, Qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the data because the method requires the examination of every single part of the materials that is in any way relevant to the research purpose (Margrit, 2014).

Result and Discussions

Based on the analysis, five major findings emerged and served as the conceptual framework that

portray the basis for the country's greatness, potentials and qualifications for a permanent seat in United Nations Security Council. (See the figure 1)

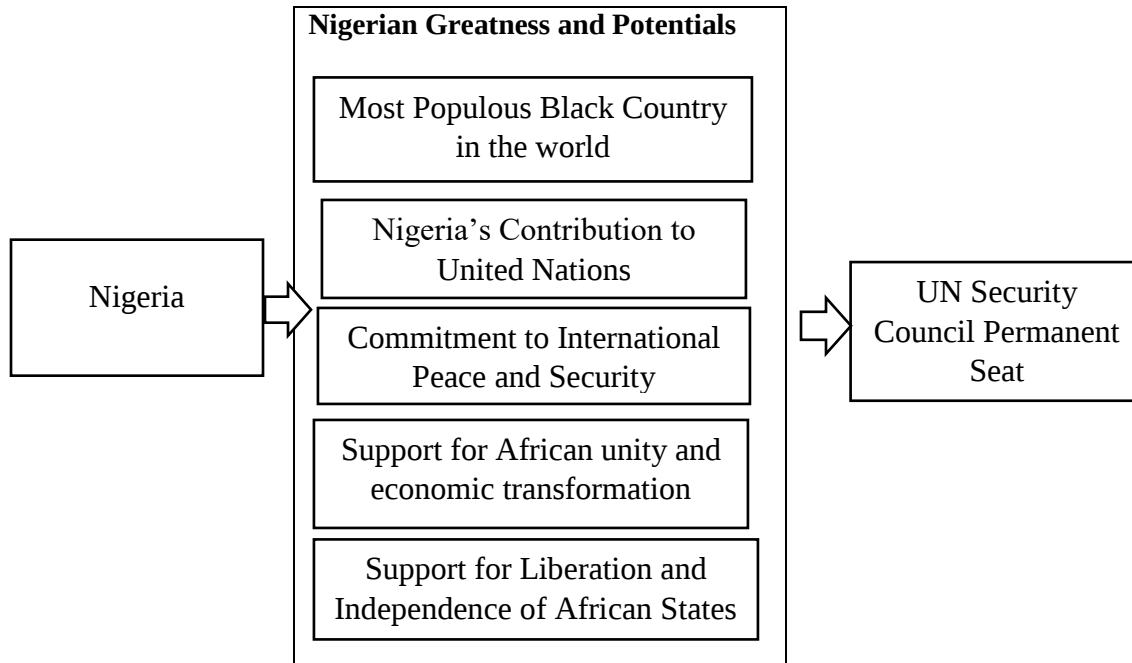


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Nigeria Greatness and Potentials for UN Security Council Permanent Seat

The diagram (Figure 1) shows the conceptual framework of the findings, it provides the platform to view the Nigeria's greatness and potentials and the framework defines the scope of the study by focusing on (a) Nigeria most populous Black Country in the world (b) Nigeria's Contribution to United Nations (c) Commitment to International Peace and Security (d) Support for African unity and economic transformation and (e) Support for Liberation and Independence of African States. The following section discusses the first finding

Nigeria Most Populous Black Country in the world

Population constitutes an important indicator of a country's power potential and a country with high population is capable of mobilizing its human resources to champion its interest than smaller countries. World Population Review, (2022) Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and is a home of

200,963,600 people (See table 1). According to World Population Review, (2022) Africa is a continent of 1.3 billion people and Nigeria represents 20% of the entire population of the continent and equal to 28 Countries in Africa, that is to say 30% of Africans are Nigerians. Nigeria is the seventh most populous country worldwide, representing 2.64% of the world population, and the most populous black nation on Earth. It means one out of every four black in the world is a Nigerian (World Population Review, 2022) Therefore, if a country (Nigeria) constitutes one-sixth of the population of a continent and the most populous Black Country in the world. It is an automatic conferment of leadership and the country is in a better position to represent the interest of Africa and black race. The Prime Minister late Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa 1963 had said in the parliament:

"Because of Nigeria's human and materials potentials, Nigeria will have a wonderful opportunity to speak for the continent of Africa and has a duty to rescue the

Black Africans from destruction, oppression and repression” (Garba, 1976).

Fasehu (2005) added that:

“...Population is an indicator of power potential... so whenever you talk of representation in UN Security Council, Nigeria has that potentials, first as the most populous black nation in the world, representing the black race and second as the most populous African country, representing Africa...”

Bala (2002) says:

“Looking at the composition of UN Security Council it reflected or exposed racial discrimination..., who would speak for black race and protect Africa’s interest? In fact, Nigeria is qualify for the black race and Africa as a continent to have a sense of belonging in UN Security Council...Even though Egypt and South Africa are also eyeing for the UN Security Council permanent seat to represent the continent but both countries are not purely comprised of black Africans. Nigeria is qualified ahead of South Africa and Egypt in views of its status as the most populous nation in Africa.

Table 1: The most populated countries in Africa

S/N	Countries	Population
1	Nigeria	200,963,600
2	Ethiopia	112, 078,730
3	Egypt	100,388,070
4	The Democratic Republic of Congo	86,790,570
5	South Africa	58,558,270
6	Tanzania	58,005,460
7	Kenya	52,573,970
8	Uganda	44,269,590
9	Algeria	43,053,050
10	Sudan	42,813,240

Source: World Population Review 2022

Comparatively, Nigeria's population was twice that of Egypt, three times that of South Africa and Tanzania, Nigeria is more than Kenya, Uganda, Algeria and Sudan combined together. Nigeria population is more than Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo put together. The country alone constitutes 25% of the total African population. The country is roughly equivalent to France, Italy, Belgium and Holland put together. From Lagos, a city in the South-west, to Maiduguri a state capital in the North-east is equivalent to the distance between London and Warsaw in Poland. These imply how strategic Nigeria occupies in Africa (Garba, 1976).

Nigeria’s contribution to United Nations

Nigeria has been a member of UN since when the country gained her independence in 1960 and she has made immense contributions towards the survival,

substances and effective functioning of the organization. Nigeria is known to have shown great respect and obedience to the United Nations principles as enshrined in its Charter. Besides, she has great respect for international law, which forms the integral part of the United Nations system. Nigeria is also committed to its obligations to the United Nations. In this respect, she has been paying her dues promptly as a demonstration of her respect and commitment to the objectives of the world body. Emeh (2005:11) stated that apart from Nigeria being one of the financiers of the United Nations up to the tune of 0.70 percent, Nigeria makes substantial contributions in form of financial aid to various agencies of the United Nations. These include UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, UNHCR etc. it also gives both political and diplomatic support for these agencies that operate in the country. The country has demonstrated immutable commitments to

international obligations, including the United Nations Charter of 1945.

Nigerian nationals have also occupied strategic positions in UN and UN peacekeeping. Such as Amina Ibrahim UN Deputy Secretary General, Prof. Tijjani Bande former president of United Nations General Assembly, Prof. Ibrahim Gambari (Joint AU-UN Special Representative and Head of the UN Mission in Darfur [UNAMID]), Olu Adeniji (Central African Republic (CAR) and Sierra Leone), and Margaret Vogt (CAR), have served as Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General. In addition, six Nigerians have served as UN force commanders: Major General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi (ONUC Congo), Major General Chris Garuba (Angola), Lt. Gen. Isaac Obiakor (UNMIL Liberia), Major General Joseph Owonibi (Liberia), Gen. Martin Luther Agwai (UNAMID Darfur), and Maj. Gen. Moses Obi (UNMIS South Sudan). Generals Obiakor and Agwai also served as Chief Military Adviser and Deputy Military Adviser at UN Headquarters respectively (Adeniyi, 2015). Nigeria has not only actively participated in the activities of many United Nations' Committees, but has chaired some of these committees. For examples, a Nigerian, Major General Joseph Garba was the chairman of the United Nations Committee against Apartheid (UNCAA). Nigeria is known to have made high level intellectual contribution which undoubtedly has helped to shape the policy of the United Nations. Eminent Nigerians such as the late Dr. Teslim Elias was President of International Court of Justice, while two others Daddy Onyeama and Bola Ajibola serves on the World Court. Joseph Garba was President of the 44th Session of General Assembly. The Presidency of the Security Council was occupied, a number of times by Nigeria's Permanent Representatives to the United Nations. Scholars such as Professors Bolaji Akinyemi and Dr. Ibrahim Gambari have served the United Nations in various capacities made valuable contribution in terms of ideas which have helped to shape the policy of the world body (Arowolo, 2008; Ogwu, 2005; Fasehu, 2005).

Nigeria's commitment to International Peace and Security

The primary role of United Nations is to maintain international peace and security, Nigerian has contributed towards the maintenance of global peace and security in the last 63 years ago. It is an established fact that Nigeria is a constant participant of countries for UN peace-keeping missions. The country has participated in not less than thirty-eight peace-keeping missions since it attained independent in 1960. Twenty-nine of these missions are carried out under the United Nations sponsorship peace keeping missions, These include the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) 1949; United Nations Yemen Observation Mission (UNYOM) 1963-64; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) 1978; United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP); United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) 1989; United Nations Transition Assistance Group in Namibia (UNTAG) 1989-1990; UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) 1999; and UN Transition Authority in East Timor (UNTAET); United Nation Iraq – Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) Iran-Iraq (UNIMOG) 1988-1991; Namibia (UNITAG) 1989-1990; Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) 1992-1996, Somalia (UNOSOM) 1993-95; Mozambique (ONUMOZ) 1992; Rwanda (UNAMIC) 1993; Serria Leone (UNAMSIL) 1999 and Darfur (UNAMID) 2003). Nigeria has been an outstanding role player in the global and continental peace-keeping mission. And the leading African States in terms of the number of mission the country has been involved in. The country is also among the top bracket in global ranking; and of 130 that have contributed military and civilian police personnel to UN peacekeeping missions, Nigeria is among the first 10 main troop contributing countries (Imobighe, 2005:370-371)

In the United Nations assessment for contribution for peace support operation. Nigeria is ranked 7th, South – Africa is 10th, Senegal 12th, Kenya 13th and Egypt 49th Algeria 81st and Angola not ranked among 106 countries. (Obiozo, 2005:10). In recognition

of her participation in more than 29 peacekeeping operations around the world, has been given the opportunity to head the peace keeping committee of the world body for years. Wali, (2005) disclosure: "...the recurrent armed conflicts in West African Nations has cost Nigeria more than \$14 billion...thousands of Nigerian soldiers and civilians have also died in many affected Countries and Nigeria continues to provide sanctuary for refugees fleeing from these conflicts at enormous cost to the Federal Government" (Wali, 2005).

In keeping with her passion in search for international peace and Security, Nigeria has thrown her weight behind the international disarmament and arms control. In this connection, the country is irrevocable committed to elimination of Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Weapons, seen as weapons of mass murder and destruction. To this end, Nigeria is a signatory to Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1968, the Pelindaba Treaty on Nuclear Free zone in Africa initiated by the former Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1980s. The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) of 1973, and the Chemical Weapons Convention(CWC) of 1989. The country has also identified with various international communities to stem the tide of illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons(Chinedu,2004:6-7) Nigeria is In a frontline in the adoption of the code of conduct of ECOWAS moratoriums on the importation, exportation and manufacture of small arms and light weapon (1999) and the OAU Bamako declaration on developing an Africa common position on illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms 2000.(Okechuku,2005:6)

Nigeria's Support of African Unity and Economic Development

African unity and economic development constitute the two major aspects of Nigerian Afro-centric foreign policy. The country developed and supported implementable policies that led to African unity and economic integration. With regard to how the African continental organization should be. By 1962, *three main divisions* had developed in Africa with different

views of what the continental organization should be. The *radical Casablanca Group* stood for immediate political union of all African countries and the establishment of an African High Command to prosecute the anti-colonial struggle. The *Brazzaville Group*, made up exclusively of ex- French colonies, was concerned with maintaining the French influence. For Nigeria, this fundamental division of Africa into two main divisions represented a serious blow to the envisaged goal of African unity. Therefore, in the effort to bridge the gap between the two diametrically opposing groups, Nigeria took the initiative which led to sponsoring the *Monrovia Conference* of six African states, considered as moderate, on May 8, 1961 and which led to the formation of the Monrovia Group. The *Monrovia Group* advocated functional cooperation, equality of states, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, as well as opposition to forced political union of the continent. These were principles enunciated by Nigeria's Prime Minister at independence. Even though the meeting was *boycotted* by the radical Casablanca Group, *Nigeria did not give up* and made another effort in Lagos in January 1962 at uniting the Groups. This unsuccessful effort was due primarily to the intransigence of the Casablanca Group.

The Lagos meeting however presented the reconciliation forum for these divergent views on African or continental unity and, happily led to the adoption of the Lagos Charter. Interestingly, it was this charter that subsequently defined the Organization of African Unity (OAU) agenda as the promotion of African unity and solidarity, the eradication of all forms of colonialism and the defence of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of member states. These were clearly Nigeria's views. The Lagos Charter was subsequently adopted as the OAU Charter in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 25 May 1963. In effect, Nigeria dictated the agenda for the then young organization (Ashiru and George, 2013). Nigeria's continued recognition of Africa as the centre-piece of her foreign policy, which also reflected in President Obasanjo's support for and key role in the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to the African Union (AU), an initiative of the Libyan leader,

Muammar Gaddafi. Obasanjo who was the first chairman of the Union embarked upon the duty of bringing the pitiable condition of Africa to the attention of the outside world which eventually attracted debt pardon from the foreign loaners such as the IMF, Paris Club and the London Club (Nwanolue, and Victor, 2012). Due to the nation's African policy, Nigeria as founding member of the OAU was a major driving force behind the formation of the African Union in 2002 (Al-Hassan, 2016).

The country was in forefront in terms of African economic transformation. Nigeria played significant role that culminated in the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action and the African Economic Community (AEC). It was Nigeria's diplomats, under the late Ambassador Gabriel Ijewere, who crafted the documents that eventually led to its adoption and which today provides the continent with the direction it follows. Indeed, in promoting the view of functional cooperation, Nigeria, along with Togo, gave leadership to the formation of the West African Economic Community (ECOWAS) in 1975, which aims at promoting economic integration of the sub-region, economic development and to reduce the members' dependency on former colonial powers (Ashiru and George, 2013). Nigeria, under the leadership of General Yakubu Gowon spearheaded the formation of a 16-member regional integration body of ECOWAS - the treaty of which was signed on May 28, 1975

Nigeria continued the recognition of Africa as the centre-piece of her foreign policy. In fact, Nigeria demonstrated a strong determination towards the success of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). Though the initiative for NEPAD has been attributed to Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Obasanjo of Nigeria, and Bouteflika of Algeria, but it has been observed that NEPAD is not entirely an African initiative. According to him, the Millennium Action Plan for African Recovery (later named NEPAD), was a response by Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, who said he would want to see a comprehensive development scheme for Africa by Africa themselves. Consequent upon this, Mbeki with Obasanjo and created a team that developed the plan

which was approved by the OAU Summit at Lusaka, Zambia in July 2001, and subsequently presented to the G-8 at their Genoa, Italy Summit by Presidents Thabo Mbeki and Obasanjo on behalf of Africa. However, as the chairman of NEPAD Implementation Committee of Heads of States, President Obasanjo has constantly been in touch with the 'New Partners' of Africa towards the successful implementation of the scheme (Nwanolue, and Victor, 2012).

It is therefore essential to note that the phenomenal contributions made by Nigeria in the two organizations mentioned above have greatly contributed to the economic prosperity and political independence of many African countries. It could therefore be noted that Nigeria's role and initiative in drawing up the Constitutive Act of African Union (AU), The New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism have greatly engrossed the country even more deeply in African Affairs. Also under NEPAD, Nigeria initiated Joint Africa/G8 plan to enhance Africa capability to undertake Peace Support Operations (Al-Hassan, 2016).

Support of African Liberation and Independence

Nigeria was committed to the promotion and the defense of justice and respect for human dignity, especially the dignity of the black man. In his address to the United Nations General Assembly just a few days after independence, the Prime-Minister Sir, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa declared the determination of Nigeria to work in collaboration with other states to achieve independence for the remaining territories, On the 26th July 1961 he told the United States Congress that; *"Nigeria is emphatically opposed to the attitude of those colonial powers which refused to accept the principle of self-determination for all people. And our freedom can only have meaning to the extent that we utilize our efforts and good will to achieve the same for all Africans"* (Izah, 1991:58)

The question of Apartheid and racial discrimination in South- Africa and Rhodesia also received serious attention from the Nigerian government. Nigeria took an active role in the United Nations to see that pressure

was put on apartheid South Africa to change its policy. The then Nigeria's Foreign Minister Wachuku (1963) declared that:

"It is no longer a question of the nationalist leaders of South-West Africa and Rhodesia, coming here asking for somebody to present their case. It is now the case that thirty two African states have decided, that their continent must be free and independent. And it is only fair, right and proper that all countries should give the African states wholehearted support in their just endeavors to remove all vestiges of the humiliation of African people and all the vestiges of colonialism" (p: 4) Nigeria maintained that it was her duty to do anything possible within her power to see that the continent of Africa is liberated.

Wachuku (1963): pointed that:

"we the Africans do not recognize the right of Portuguese to be in Africa, Africa belong to Africans and we do not accept white minority rule on our continent, therefore, every action taken to right the situation is proper and legitimate whether you like it or not, nationalism has taken roots and is bound to win. Once nationalism grows and germinates, there is nothing you can do about it. It is bound to win, it may take some years, but it is bound to win and imperialism bound to lose" (p:19).

Nigerian governments had not only continued to reaffirm Nigeria original commitment in South Africa, but also have heightened that commitment. In this regard, Gowon's administration spoke vociferously in support of the Southern-Africa liberation movement and vehemently opposed the support of British arm to South Africa, led the campaign both at the Organization of Africa Unity and commonwealth against the Anglo-Rhodesia relationship. And on the issue of a "dialogue" with South Africa, Nigeria made it clear that she was not prepared for such talks, she went further to propel the Organization of Africa Unity (OAU) members state into adopting a common stance against dialogue, and the popular slogan then was "FREE NAMIBIA BEFORE DIALOGUE" (Ogwu,1986:64). She infused material and moral support to the Namibian people

under the leadership of South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) to achieve freedom and self-determination. Similarly, Brigadier, Joseph Garba, the then Federal Commissioner for External Affairs stressed that Nigeria has taken definite position on colonial questions and there is no alternative to majority rule in Rhodesia, and that Ian Smith was a rebel and his regime should be crushed by all means, because a rebel is a rebel. Anybody who rebels should be dealt with savagely.

In Angola, Nigerian initial primary concern was the establishment of a national government by the three leading political groups in the country namely: the Popular Front For the Liberation of Angola. (MPLA), the National Front of Liberation of Angola. (FNLA) and the National Union for Total Independence of Angola. (UNITA). The East-West ideological differences manifested as the three different groups aligned to each of the existing two ideological camps. But Nigeria encouraged the three factional groups to jointly work together to gain independence in the interest of their people. When it became oblivious that apartheid South- Africa was working to ensure a puppet government was formed in Luanda by UNITA and FNLA, Nigeria spontaneously reconsidered her position, General Garba (1971) stated that:

"...the entry of apartheid South – Africa on the side of two of the movements, however has change the situation completely and resulted, as you know, in our recognition of the MPLA government as a sole government of Angola. It is inconceivable to the Federal Military Government that a self-respecting government implacable opposed to apartheid could have done otherwise, for were this unholy trinity to have overcome the MPLA and installed a government in Luanda agreeable to Pretoria, Africa's fight against apartheid would have receive a major set-back"(p:5)

The country made no pretense about her stand on the Angolan crises, Nigeria replied United States President Ford, rejecting completely what she terms as attempt by the Ford's administration to insult the intelligence of African Nations and scorn the dignity of the black man, henceforth, the regime was determined to fight for the dignity of the Black man with vigor. On January 11,

1976, the country announced its recognition of the MPLA government as the legitimate government and the one representing the interest of the Angola people, in a powerful address delivered at the Kampala summit of the OAU by General Murtala Ramat Mohammad declared unequivocally that;

"... The Nigerian Federal Military Government has been deeply convinced that MPLA is the most dynamic, most nationalistic of all the movement representing the interest of the Angolan people, and convinced that it possesses the attributes of an effective government joined other African countries in according it recognition..." (Garba, 1976)

It is evidently clear that Nigeria was opposed to colonialism and saw its end in Africa as inevitable. She did not hid her stand on colonial domination. The assassination of General Murtala Mohammad in 1976, did not dampen the tempo of radicalism and dynamism of the country's policy abroad. The new head of state, General Olusegun Obasanjo consolidated Murtala's effort and Nigeria's voice continued to be heard in the international community. It is evidently clear that Nigeria was opposed to colonialism and saw its end in Africa as inevitable. The country did not hid her stand on colonial domination. For instance General Obasanjo once stated that:"

We in Nigeria believe that so long as one inch of African territory is occupied territory, we remain in bondage; and ... wherever any black or African is oppressed, we share the indignity..." (Garba, 1976).

Nigeria led other members of the Organization of African Unity to boycott the Montreal Olympic Games and protest the tour of apartheid South Africa by New Zealand Rugby players and the refusal of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to exclude New Zealand. Similarly, in 1978, Nigeria led other African countries in the Commonwealth of Nations to boycott the Edmonton Commonwealth Games to protest New Zealand's sporting links with apartheid South Africa (Anifowose and Enemu, 1999: 374). One of the most outstanding things done by Nigeria was the punitive measures applied to British companies following Britain's unacceptable policy in Rhodesia

and apartheid South-Africa. For instance, in 1978, the British-owned Barclays Bank was partially nationalized in Nigeria; the government took over 80% of the company's shares and changed it to Union Bank of Nigeria Limited. The British Petroleum was also nationalized in 1979 as a means of hastening the Lancaster's Conference that was to usher in Zimbabwe's independence (Garba, 1976:5).

The Southern-African Relief Fund was launched and headed by the Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters, then Brigadier Shehu Musa Yar'adua and subsequently launched in all the then 19 states. Civil servants were requested to contribute 2% of a month's salary. The response to this request was favorably received by Nigerian businessmen who donated huge sum of money (Izah, 1991:127). According to Brigadier Yar'adua, the money collected would be used to buy relief materials to be sent to the various refugee camps in South-Africa, part of it would be used to give scholarship, to the over one thousand students from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola and Namibia studying in various institutions in Nigeria:(Nigerian Bulletin on Foreign Policy, 1996:1). The central role of Nigeria in the Liberation struggle in Africa have been seen in her implacable opposition to the inhuman white minority regime in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique and Namibia. Regardless of the fact that the West Africa states does not have any boundary with Southern African region (Okechuku, 2005:6)

second year and \$ 84,000 in the third year. Beside these, there were considerable bilateral assistance in form of cash grants, scholarships and aids was offered to Zimbabwe for independence celebration, she contributed and committed a lot of resource to Namibia's, independence.

Conclusion and Recommendations

African unity, economic integration and security, struggle to dismantle apartheid, respect and protect the dignity of the black race, defines Nigeria's Afro-centric. These efforts boasted Nigeria image globally and afforded her an international recognition as a major power in African continent. At the International

Organization Nigeria has actively contributed towards the survival, substances and effective functioning of the United Nations organization: Nigeria has been obedient to the principles of the United Nations Charter; Regular payment of dues; has contributed immensely in peace-keeping operations of the United Nations. Moreover, Nigerian nationals have also occupied strategic positions which helped to shape the policy and the functions of the organization. Nigeria has demonstrated its leadership position in Africa and deserved to represent the continent in the United Nations Security Council Permanent Seat. The study recommends the

need for Nigeria to adopt a sound economic policy as a fundamental pre-requisite for conducting effective foreign policy. Since all foreign policy spring from the economic base of a state, the country's economy should be re-orientated in such a manner that the country's dependency structure can be removed and a national economy that is capable of sustaining a realistic foreign policy. Moreover, Since Nigeria's foreign policy can only be meaningfully conducted in a stable environment. There is the need for the country to transform its security architecture to do away with any threats that can undermine the security of the nation.

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