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Challenges of Nigeria's Foreign Policy

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Abstract

Nigeria's foreign policy like those of every other elsewhere, is hoped to achieve for the benefit of Nigeria and Nigerians, the aspired goals and articulated interests of the Nigerian state. This expectation, by the judgment of many informed Nigerians, is yet to be fully realized. Nigeria's foreign policy inter alia, has failed to work out the transformation of Nigeria's status and Nigerians' lives from where it is, to where it should be. What possibly could answer for this foreign policy failure? In response to the puzzle, this paper excurses into the mixed and myriad challenges that have vexed Nigeria's foreign policy from the formative years of her foreign policy formulation and implementation to the present. The finding is that the persistence of these challenges due to neglect, bad and irresponsible leadership is debilitating to Nigeria's foreign policy output and has made foreign policy performance leave much to be desired. The paper concludes with a number of recommended suggestions as a panacea to the identified teething challenges.

Introduction

Foreign policy is a *sine qua non* in international relations and politics. Every country, in order to live and survive as an independent state in the complex, sometimes dangerous world, must have a foreign policy. Given the deepening interdependent character of the international system, it remains a truism that states relate internationally. In this relationship in which the international system provides the stage and theatre upon which states act, each state comes with defined set of goals and interests. It is a common knowledge among scholars and students of international relations that it is hardly possible to conjecture foreign policy outside of the milieu of national interest (Akinboye 1999, Tyoden 1986). It is for this that Hans Morgenthau contended that national interest is the context within which a nation formulates its foreign policy (Morgenthau 2006). To realize and actualize their goals and interests, states consciously device some set of policies and plans otherwise called foreign policy, which guide their actions as they deal and interact with their fellows in the international arena. Foreign policies are usually conceived and formulated on the basis of the interests of a state defined in terms of those needs she desires to satisfy in her relations with other states. As an actor interacting with other state actors in the international environment, the Nigerian state, on the basis of its various domestic and international needs and gratifications, deliberately formulates a set of goals and objectives which she seeks to achieve in her relations with other countries. But despite its many strong points, there is still a feeling that Nigeria's diplomacy is punching below its rightful weights. It is to highlight and weigh the challenges, which in their various capacities have debilitated Nigeria's foreign policy performance that engages the concern of this paper.

Challenges of Nigeria's Foreign Policy

1. Challenge of Professionalism

The institutional framework for foreign policy formulation and execution, particularly with regards to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, faces teething challenges. When Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was appointed foreign affairs minister in August 2006, she discovered that the ministry had no internet connection with the outside world, including its missions abroad, and that the lifts in the building were not functioning (Mustapha 2008). Embassy buildings in Khartoum, Teheran and others in Latin America were said to be leaking. This sort of context is hardly conducive for creative and professional thinking.

Staffing, training and funding combine as formidable challenges that glare at the professional practices of Nigeria's foreign policy. This is debilitating to the overall output of foreign policy in Nigeria. Nigeria's foreign policy practice is challenged by professional deficiency. This is especially so, when viewed against the backdrop of the

fact that diplomacy is a noble profession requiring sound intellectual background, a solid grasp of international affairs *inter alia*. Evidence has it that Nigerian diplomats and foreign policy practitioners seem not to have received the requisite training and orientation to meet up with the diplomatic realities and challenges of the present global age (Fawowara 2008). Writing in 1981, Ibrahim Gambari, an erstwhile minister of foreign affairs noted with regret that for a long time in the Nigeria's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, since their entry into it in the 1950s and early 60s, no further training was undertaken by officials who later attained very senior positions in the ministry. Moreover, the Foreign Service Academy which was established in the early 1980s only served the training needs of staff newly recruited into the service. There was no systematic programme for follow-up training for this or indeed any other category of foreign affairs officers (Gambari 1989).

Budgetary allocations for foreign affairs have always been low to meet up with the expected service delivery. The foreign affairs ministry receives just about one percent of the federal government budget for recurrent expenditure. In contrast, defence and some other ministries receive far more. The downward exchange rate adjustment of the naira since the early 1980s has made the matter worse. There were some disturbing reports of the country's mission abroad owing rents, and Nigerian diplomats not being paid their allowances regularly (Fawowara 2008). Because of the issue of underfunding, some Nigerian foreign policy analysts and political stakeholders have called for the closure of Nigerian missions abroad. Specifically, in the regime of President Olusegun Obasanjo, a committee was set up which suggested the closure of some missions deemed to be expensive for the country's economy to run. Such missions were those in Venezuela, Kuwait, Lebanon, Congo, Pakistan, Bangladesh, North Korea and Philipines (BBC 2013). The disturbing problem posed by this closure is that "when we close mission, we damage relations that have taken years to build" (Ashiru 2013). Referring to Nigeria's foreign policy budget for 2009 and 2010, Uhomobhi (2012) wrote

When it is compared with South Africa's...in 2009 and 2010 respectively, it becomes clear why Nigeria's global outreach, influence and relevance cannot match that of South Africa. Yet South Africa is one of the countries against which Nigeria is competing for leadership in Africa, including membership of the UN Security Council.

Required attention is yet to be paid to the staffing of the foreign affairs ministry. A 2002 study by the Bureau of Public Service Reform showed that most government ministries in Nigeria have ageing staff, with whole generation missing from the staff profile (Mustapha 2008). Corruption and incompetence also trouble foreign ministry staff. Between June and August 2006, the Authentication and Consular units of the foreign ministry were closed down on account of these problems (Thisday

2006). Fawowara, a former Nigerian diplomat argued that funding and training of Nigerian diplomats both face serious constraints and financial setbacks. He suggests that only 25 percent of foreign ministry personnel speak a second international language apart from English (Fawowara 2008). Gambari (2008) has argued for a move away from a foreign service based on *generalists*, to one based more heavily on *specialists*. In this era of intricate trade negotiations and rapid movement of people across the globe, specialist disciplinary and language skills are of vital importance.

The federal character principle in the appointment and placement of persons in positions of importance in Nigeria's Foreign Service, has demonstrably undermined merit, talent and efficiency. Evidentially, the constitutional provision for reflection of federal character and regional balance in the recruitment and appointment of public officers, has not served the foreign ministry well. This is due, more to abuse of the recruitment process than the availability of well-qualified candidates across the various states of the federation. The present recruitment pattern which brings a significant number of ill-qualified personnel into the professional cadre of the Foreign Service, simply justifies the federal character provisions for recruitment into the Foreign Service. In consequence, and more often than not, officers with proven capacity for high standard performance, innovative thinking, creative solutions and proactive approaches to policy execution are passed over in appointments and promotions. On the other hand, mediocrity and incompetence are blindly rewarded, while misconduct and unprofessional behaviours thrive under a culture of impunity.

A much stronger assault on the morale of professional Foreign Service officers derives from the recent practice of appointing a significantly larger number of politicians than careerists to ambassadorial posts abroad. Indubitably, the injection of politics into recruitment process in the Foreign Ministry has impacted negatively on the quality and professionalism in the foreign affairs service. It is imperative that Nigeria's foreign policy be driven by professionals that have a deep knowledge and understanding of the contemporary international system. In general, the need to restore efficiency and professionalism remains a major challenge facing both the Nigerian Foreign Service and Nigeria's foreign policy. Added to this, the phenomenon of appointing and posting a disproportionate number of non-career diplomats to sensitive diplomatic posts is another unfortunate development that is eroding professionalism. It is in the interest of professionalism and service integrity to create space for Foreign Service officers at the top of their careers to be the lead change agents driving Nigeria's foreign policy pursuits abroad. There is the added value that opening spaces for the appointment of more career ambassadors could help address the lingering problems of low morale among senior officers in the service. It is well known that where frustration is widespread at the top of any organization, as has been the case in Nigeria's Ministry of Foreign Affairs because of limited openings for ambassadorial appointments for career diplomats (Uhomobhi 2012), loyalty and productivity are often the first

casualties. Without doubts, the issue of sagging morale in the career Foreign Service constitutes a strategic challenge for the ministry of foreign affairs and the federal government, given its potential to compromise objective and focused pursuit of the national interest.

2. Legislative-Executive Relations

Another challenge that Nigeria's foreign policy faces is the difficulty in relationship between the executive and legislative arms of government. Besides the difficulty in getting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' budget approved by the National Assembly, ambassadorial nominees also have to be confirmed by the Assembly. In the routine conduct of foreign affairs, the foreign affairs department and officials encounter hitches with the legislature. This organ of the government often times injects itself directly in the foreign policy implementation process. In many instances, the legislative organ of the government reacts or deals with aspects of Nigeria's foreign relations without the benefit of institutional knowledge and information about best practices and processes. The net effect of this policy of incoherence is that this organ of state then works at cross purposes, making Nigeria's foreign policy goals and objectives unclear and ambiguous. In January 2003, some members of the House of Representatives visited Pakistan, apparently seeking to mediate in the dispute over Kashmir, without consulting the Foreign Affairs Ministry. The ministry under Sule Lamido wrote to the chairman of the committee, pointing out the risk of such a trip without background knowledge of the delicate balance of alliances. The lawmakers reacted angrily that "...nobody is here as an appendage of Sule Lamido's ministry. We are not his boys. We are not bound by his whatever foreign policy strategy" (Sule 2013: 4). To be sure, it is not being argued that the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs be the sole agency for the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. The point that cannot be overstated is that, given the dynamic nature of foreign policy making, consultations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a *sine qua non* for coherent and effective policy.

Worse still, there has been considerable resentment by the home ministries against the foreign ministry. Personality conflicts, rivalries and petty jealousies are only part of the problem. The larger problem has been the lack of any focal point of coordination for the activities of the ministries of foreign affairs with those of home ministries where external relations are concerned. When inter-ministerial meetings take place, they tended to be ad hoc in nature, and participation rarely included the ministers themselves. Enquiries and communications between the foreign affairs ministry and other ministries *vice versa* were often left unanswered even on crucial or urgent matters of trade and economic relations with other countries or international organizations.

3. Reciprocity

In international relations and foreign policy, the principle of reciprocity states that favours, benefits or penalties that are granted by one state to the citizens or legal entities of another should be returned (Eze 2010). The implication is that Nigeria should have incurred enormous benefits from her many and varied humanitarian policies towards fellow African countries. But to this expectation, the contrary has remained the case. For example, it is on record that Nigeria contributed 12000 out of the 13000 ECOMOG troops deployed to Sierra Leone between 1998 and 1999 and its treasury released nearly 400 million US Dollars annually for the mission (Uhomoibhi 2010). Nigeria provided at least 80% of the ECOMOG's troops that kept peace in the embattled Liberia and 90% of its funding (Obioma 2013, Adebajo 2008). But contrary to the expectations of reciprocity in international politics, both Liberia and Sierra Leone voted against Nigeria's interest and candidature of non-permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council. After the Liberian and Sierra Leonean Wars, disappointingly, no Nigerian construction company or human resource firm was offered a contract in both countries for rebuilding and reconstruction as a way of compensating and recouping the enormous amount of money spent on peacekeeping in both countries. As Obioma (2013) noted, Nigeria failed to take advantage of these military deployments and spending in diplomatic terms. There was no clear indication that such good gestures by Nigeria were regionally appreciated beyond rhetorically expressed gratitude.

In pursuance of her Afrocentric policy stance Nigeria contributed immensely towards Angola's political independence. Nigeria did not only recognize the MPLA, but also gave financial back up of up to twenty million dollars, military hardware, fighter planes, etc (Obi 2006). But despite all that Nigeria did for Angola, Nigeria's name was not contained in the list of countries that Angola paid tribute to, for their assistance in Angola's independence struggle, in its first appearance at the OAU Summit (Obi 2006). It took Angola a long time to express their condolences over the death of Murtala Muhammad, Nigeria's Head of State as at the time of Nigeria's support roles in Angola's independence (Garba 1991). Nigeria tried without success to win Angola's consent to allow Nigerian trawlers fish off the Angolan coast. Rather than Nigeria, Russia was granted exclusive fishing rights in the same coast. Of the system of international relations in which national interest is always in view and reciprocity is a constant factor, Nigeria did not get high marks. In Garba's words, "...we gave and gave to Angola, and in return got nothing". What is confusing is whether in spite of all these, Nigeria should feel obliged to such countries that have shown open hostility despite benevolence shown.

An instance of reciprocity in international politics and conduct of foreign policy could be seen in Nigeria-US relations during the very beginning of President Obasanjo's era. Dokubo (2010) notes:

While Obasanjo lobbied Clinton to put in a word with the Paris Club to consider the forgiveness of Nigeria's debt, Clinton reciprocally extracted a promise from him (Obasanjo) to pressure OPEC to reduce the soaring crude oil prices in the world market.

Against this understanding, twenty million dollars in cash went to Angola without even a discussion of what Nigeria might gain, or even what uses it would be put to (Garba 1991). It seems right to argue in the light of the above that Nigerian government under President Babangida should have applied the principle of reciprocity when the Liberian president, Samuel Doe wrote to Nigeria asking for help by requesting for an agreement contract that Nigerian companies would take charge of reconstruction once peace is restored.

In several African countries, innocent Nigerians have been mistreated. Gabon and Equatorial Guinea are specific examples. Ghana adopted some economic policies (over-taxation) that are partly meant to limit the economic presence of Nigerian businessmen in that country (Akinterinwa 2012). At the extra-African level, the manner of treatment of Nigerians requesting for visas in various diplomatic missions accredited to Nigeria cannot be said to reflect any form of respect for Nigeria, her government and its people.

Extrapolating from the foregoing, the question is, should Nigeria's foreign policy attitude towards African countries be predicated on reciprocal treatment or not, bearing in mind that Nigeria wants to provide leadership in the management and conduct of African affairs?

4. Public Opinion and Citizen Involvement in Foreign Policy

The centrality and fundamentality of public opinion in foreign policy process is not in dispute (Chuka 2007). Ideally, public opinion inputs in, and impacts on a country's foreign policy determination (Rourke 1997). Especially in democracies, the assumption is that the chance of foreign policy process is enhanced by public opinion. But since Nigeria's independence in 1960, a number of test cases exist, that point to the contrary. Abounding evidences have it that foreign policy decisions in Nigeria are *personalistic*, with political class as independent actors, having free and unfettered hands in policy making. A number of developments and incidents have shown up to demonstrate the failed and foiled attempts by the public opinion of the Nigerian public to exert influence on the foreign policy process and foreign policy stances of the government. In 1960 for instance, the government of Nigeria ratified an Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact (Tyoden 1986). In response to this pact, several developments

and demonstrations on the domestic front took place, creating pressures for the abrogation of the pact. Popular oppositions and pressures against the signing of the pact mounted, reaching their peak, when massive demonstrations were organized to prevent the ratification. Interest groups, students, the intelligentsia, the professional and bureaucratic elites were all part of the agitation and demonstration to abrogate the defence pact. Though the pact was however abrogated in 1962, but the government had shown that public opinion constituted no threat to its control of Nigeria's foreign policy. Public opinion and interest groups, though operative, did not weigh heavily both in the decision to ratify and abrogate the pact. The government went into the ratification in exclusion of public opinion. That the pact was not abrogated in 1960 (when the public outcry was made), but in 1962, is evidential enough to confirm the suspicion that the abrogation was not a case of a government's response to public opinion in foreign policy decisions. This point is further demonstrated by the government's fierce use of the police against the rioters which had the demonstrations neatly quelled. Moreso, though the pact was announced to have been abolished, but the terms therein, were almost duly implemented. Joy Ogwu revealed that: "All the specific points about United Kingdom flying rights and assistance and weapons and training for Nigerian troops were in practice retained by the executive government..." In her skepticism of the abrogation being a representation of government's response to group pressures and opinion of the public, Ogwu posited that "No one could say precisely what conditioned the decision of the prime minister who 'made his own foreign policy'". Referring to the same incidence, Sonny Tyoden (1986) contains that it is clear that government do not hold public opinion on foreign policy in high esteem. Still on this, Ogwu further expressed that: "As a practical matter, Nigerian decision makers have often formulated policies on an exclusive basis, relying mainly on the kitchen cabinet... On the broadest level, group pressure have not heavily influenced policy."

Crucial in any consideration of public opinion as input in the foreign policy process in Nigeria, is an examination of the diverse demands on the government during the Nigeria/Cameroun border crisis in 1981. With the killing of five Nigerian soldiers on border patrol duty, various segments of the public including political parties, the press, labour union, students' organizations, individuals, and even the armed forces, advocated a confrontation with Cameroun (Chuka 2007). The pressure generated by the groups was sufficient to propel the country into war with Cameroun, but it was remarkable that Shagari's decision was to avoid belligerency. Inferred from this observation is a question mark on the degree to which public opinion impacts on, and does shape Nigeria's foreign policy. Certainly, Ogwu is right in asserting that Nigerian decision makers formulate foreign policies on an exclusive basis.

Another test case for measuring the degree of government's consideration of the people's opinion in policy making is the IMF loan debate during the Babangida administration. The opinion of the Nigerian public favoured a rejection of the loan. In

the open, President Babangida accepted the position of Nigerians, but went ahead in a *Maradonic* style to implement the IMF and SAP policies. The damage that this brought in the years that followed on the socio-economic life of the people was too obvious to detain us here. The obvious and undeniable challenge that this poses is that it makes Nigeria's foreign policy not to be firmly based at home and ineffective abroad.

5. Articulation of National Interest

National interest is at the heart of foreign policy. Foreign policy is essentially about the protection and advancement of the national interest of a country, and therefore, cannot be operated in a vacuum. Every nation's foreign policy is or should be in the service of its national interest (Eze 2010). Worrisome enough, this centrally important 'National Interest' has defied a comprehensive, clear and precise definition in Nigeria's constitutions and in Nigeria's foreign policy practices. Analysts and leaders alike are not agreed on what constitutes Nigeria's national interest. Alluding to this, Professor Osita Eze wrote "It is difficult to identify Nigeria's conception of national interest since independence to date" (Eze 2010:81). If it is difficult to define what national interest of Nigeria is, it will even be more difficult to redefine it, in order to provide among other things, the mechanism and strategy that will facilitate the pursuit of foreign policy to achieve its national objectives especially given the deepening of globalization and the emergence of new powerful actors. By every parameter of measurement and consideration, this is a fundamental challenge that confronts Nigeria in the 21st Century.

It is noticeable that trends in Nigeria's foreign policy indicating its national interest have not been very stable over time. From the Tafawa Balewa administration, identifiable national interests and foreign policy goals were decolonization from colonial racists' settler regimes; pan African solidarity; National economic development and world peace. Yet under Babangida at the All-Nigerian Conference on Foreign Policy 1986, he conceived of national interest as simply national security (Agreen 2013).

Often times in Nigeria, the adjudged national interest lacks '*nationalness*' and its 'nationalistic' quality is in great doubt. While the first term interrogates the extent of the peoples input and participation in determining that which is tagged their collective interest, the second doubts the people-centeredness of the so-called interests. Viewed from the Marxian perspective, Nigeria's national interest cannot be sequestered from class, the ruling class. Therefore, according to this school, national interest is another name for the interest of the class ruling at a given time and period in the country.

Akin to the above is the challenge of *primordialism* and lack of tradition in Nigeria's foreign policy process and practice. Excessive personalization of foreign

policy process by successive heads of state is a huge obstacle to Nigeria's foreign policy progress. The foreign policy of Nigeria during the Tafawa Balewa era was but a reflection of the Balewa's personality and character, rather than that of the Nigerian state. The idiosyncratic traits of Presidents Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo were the reason for the injection of activism and dynamism into the foreign policy manifestations of the country within the time. With this, Nigeria's foreign policy seems to have been void of tradition. The patterns and processes of foreign policy in Nigeria do change with changing leaderships and regimes. The fundamental question this raises is whether there is really anything like 'Nigeria's Foreign Policy?' Does Nigeria actually own a policy? Will it not be more appropriate to say Tafa Balewa's policy, Obasanjo's policy etc?

6. Challenge of Afrocentricism

Arising from the Afrocentric character of the Nigeria's foreign policy are lots of problems and challenges. For some obvious reasons, Nigeria since her independence has made Africa the major plank of her foreign policy. For this, Nigeria has supported Africa's course in many respects, participated in various peacekeeping operations. This involvement of the country in peace operations in many troubled African zones has drained both material and human resources of Nigeria. It has also created conflicting perceptions among different actors in the conflicts which are carried along in other forums and international platforms. More so, Nigerian citizens themselves need to see the practical results and gains of the country's Afrocentric diplomacy in the material improvement of their lives, otherwise they will see no justification for the money spent on these pursuits. Moreso, the age long grasp of Afrocentricism by the Nigeria's foreign policy is long overdue to give way to citizencentricism as a foreign policy stance of the country. Nigeria has for many years pursued, without gains, after the good and wellbeing of other African nations at the expense of the wellbeing of its own citizens. The impression that has been ingrained in the minds of Nigerians, especially those living outside the shores of the country, is that the Nigerian state does not care about the plight of its citizens abroad. Cases involving Nigerians abroad, that the intervention of the Nigerian state through the missions would have ameliorated, were perceived to have been left unattended. Nigerians who are facing difficulties abroad are almost all times, seen as sheep without shepherds, yet the constitution unambiguously provides that sovereignty belongs to the people, from whom the government derives its power. It is for this understanding that the government of Yar'Adua began giving thoughts to what its Foreign Affairs Minister, Ojo Mmaduekwe called Citizen Diplomacy. This principle in consonance with the constitutional directive principles, places the priority of Nigeria's foreign policy on the protection of the interest of the Nigerian citizens, both at home and abroad.

Especially since the post Cold War era, it has been the expectation that there should be an alteration and shift in the Africa-centeredness of Nigeria's foreign policy in view of the Nigeria's domestic situation and the realities of the post Cold War international system. It is absurd to rely on foreign policy tools and conceptual frameworks developed in the 1960s for dealing with the modern complexities of an international system, increasingly driven by the forces of globalization. In the era of globalization, Nigeria has no choice but to adjust and adapt in the way she conducts her foreign policy. For instance, such challenge as climate change, terrorism and trans-national crime issues are impossible to ignore, and imperatively they are to reflect on foreign policy formulation and governance at the domestic level. Accordingly, Nigeria's foreign policy must keep a watchful brief on these issues and pay attention to their wider ramifications.

7. Economy

The weak state and appendage nature of Nigeria's economy has debilitated the ability of Nigeria's foreign policy to protect the national interest, and project it affectively into the outside world. It is a truism that a state's foreign rating and influence in a very fundamental sense is a reflection of the health and size of the country's economy. While Nigeria has large economy, it equally has serious economic crisis that makes it difficult to realize its full potential. The economy of Nigeria exhibits largely a neo-colonial structure, depending on export of primary goods and importation of finished commodities. More so, Nigeria is heavily indebted. This, unarguably, disallows her to play the critical roles she craves for in the international system.

Connected to the issue of economy in Nigeria's foreign policy challenges is the challenge of globalization. The global transition to the 21st Century poses serious challenges to Nigeria, especially in the context of Africa. The phenomenon of globalization is the singular most profound change in the 21st Century. Globalization refers to the relative liberalization and homogenization of the globe as a result of the technological revolutions. The focus of this is the advance in information and communication technology. This has made transmission of information around the world very easy, fast and cheap. Today the world is witnessing extensive global trade patterns that make available, greater variety and quality of goods to consumers. Paradoxically, while globalization tends to sweep away all barriers to the formation of a single world market, increase the volume of trade and expand the parameters of consumption, the reaction of nation-states has been protectionist, in the main (Mbachu 2009). Presently, there is no country in the world that is totally independent of others. Finance, capital, labour and goods are highly mobile, as the world has rapidly shrunk as a result of the information age. However, this interdependence poses a threat to developing countries like Nigeria, as it is not equally beneficial to all states because the developed countries enjoy favourable balance of trade and more economic power than

the developing countries like Nigeria. This situation makes Nigeria and other developing countries vulnerable to manipulation by industrialized countries.

Terrorism is another important foreign policy challenge for Nigeria. In international relations, states have a monopoly of the use of coercive force. In a situation whereby there are non-governmental groups contending with the state in the use of coercive force, a situation of order and counter order ensues, hence, disorderliness assumes the defining characteristic of the state in question. Book Haram terrorist incidences in Nigeria is too obvious to detain us here. One challenge of this development, especially as they linger, is creating an impression of a weak government that does not have the capacity to maintain internal security. This, again, can send wrong signals to foreign tourists and investors, especially where the economic diplomacy of the government is anchored on attraction of foreign direct investments, deepening of trade, and enhancing domestic productivity.

Conclusion and Suggestions

In the preceding sections, efforts have been made to examine Nigeria's foreign policy with the view to highlight and discuss its mixed and many challenges. Extrapolating from the cited cases and instances above, it is no gainsaying that Nigeria's foreign policy is fraught with myriad challenges which over the years have debilitated its expected performance. The implication of the persistence of this ugly development is that Nigeria as an actor among other state actors in the international system will hardly be adequately positioned in the emerging global and continental order. It is therefore, imperative that Nigeria's foreign policy be urgently reviewed and repackaged in the light of the new challenges of the globalized world order, so as to make it more efficient and result oriented. The need for Nigeria to adopt a sound economic policy as a fundamental pre-requisite for conducting effective foreign policy cannot be overemphasized. Since all foreign policies spring from the economic base of a state, Nigeria's economic base should be re-orientated in such a manner that the country's dependency structure would be removed and a national economy that is capable of sustaining a realistic foreign policy goal be built. It is politically logical that Nigeria matches her foreign policy with her real economic status, and not imaginary one. With the debt burden and crisis bugging the country, and with attendant appalling state of social infrastructure, it is time the foreign policy objectives be skewed in favour of economic determinism. It simply does not make sense for Nigeria to continue with her Spray Diplomacy while she still takes foreign loans.

The need to de-personalize Nigeria's foreign policy is urgent. Expectedly the leaders' ideas should not be eschewed, but these should be made pass through distilling process of the decision making machinery of the state. This calls for the democratization of the foreign policy making process, allowing citizen participation and input in the foreign policy process, and ensuring that the institutions that are

constitutionally empowered to take part in decision making are free to play their statutory roles.

It is of great importance to strengthen the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with adequate staffing, funding and direction. In order to move forward, the Ministry should be freed from those who from the outside exercise authority over the ministry without taking responsibility for their shortcomings. The Foreign Affairs Ministry should be allowed to take charge of the formulation and execution of Nigeria's foreign policy, and to take credit or blame for its failures and successes. The policy of influx of non-career ambassadors in the country's foreign policy practice is demoralizing to the career Foreign Service officers, a good number of whom are denied their rightful aspirations to become ambassadors. This way, the wealth of experiences of the trained career diplomats are emptied of Nigeria's Foreign Service operations.

There is the need to make prominent reciprocity in the delivery of Nigeria's relations with other nations. Elsewhere, foreign policies are based on reciprocity. Nigeria's past experiences in Africa does not bear this out. The idea of accepting the maltreatment of Nigerians by so called friendly nations without reciprocating such actions should be over by now. The policy of 'father Christmas' and 'Free Breakfast' in Nigeria's African policy should be minimized. Nigeria's foreign policy should be on *quid pro quo* basis. Government should ensure that the era of grants-in-aid and interests free loans to African countries without any economic or political strings attached is over.

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