

CHAPTER FIVE

NIGERIA AND THE SOUTH

5.1 Introduction: Nigeria's Strategic Position and National Interest

Nigeria's impact on the South will be determined by first focussing on its geo-political dimensions as well as its national interest, as this has imposed on the country certain obligations, responsibilities and commitments which shape its foreign policy. Nigeria, having attained independence from Great Britain in 1960, is in reality a conglomeration of several ancient states, kingdoms and chiefdoms which were brought together through conquest and artful manipulation by the British in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nigeria is a federal republic of 36 states plus the federal capital territory Abuja with a total landmass of 954,000 sq. km. With an estimated population of over 110 million, Nigeria is the ninth most populous nation in the world and by far the most populous black nation in Africa. One out of every five Africans and one out of every six black persons in the world is a Nigerian—facts, which naturally thrust the country into a leadership position in the black and African world.¹

Nigeria is extremely well endowed with enormous human, natural and mineral resources, much of which are yet to be fully exploited. These include arable land and water resources capable of supporting agriculture all year round. With a current output of 2 million barrels per day, and proven reserves of 17.1 billion barrels as of December 1999, Nigeria is the seventh largest producer of petroleum in the world. Its other minerals include, enormous quantities of natural gas, tin, coal, iron-ore, manganese and

limestone. All these geo-political facts have had tremendous impact on the conception, articulation and practice of Nigerian foreign policy.

Nigeria's foreign policy principles and national interest priorities as enunciated by Olusegun Obasanjo (the current and also former President of Nigeria from 1976-1979) are:

- (a) the defense of its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity;
- (b) the creation of necessary political and economic conditions in Africa and the rest of the world which will facilitate the defense of the independence and territorial integrity of all African countries while at the same time fostering national self-reliance and rapid economic development,
- (c) the promotion of equality and self-reliance in Africa and the rest of the developing world;
- (d) the promotion and defense of justice and respect for human dignity, especially the dignity of the black man; and
- (e) the defense and promotion of world peace.²

At different times in over three decades following Nigeria's independence, successive administrations, from their varying perspectives have sort to identify the ultimate aims and objectives of Nigeria in the prevailing context of international politics. In a major speech in August 1960, the Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, enumerated the general aims of the nation's foreign policy as:

1. The promotion of the national interest of the federation and of its citizens.

2. Friendship and cooperation with all nations of the world which recognizes and respect Nigeria's sovereignty.
3. Non-alignment to any power blocks.
4. Assistance to African states in search of solutions to their problems and encouragement of the development of common ties among all African states to foster cooperation among countries of Africa in so far as it is compatible with Nigeria's national interest.
5. Respect for the sovereign equality of all nations as well as non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states, and unimpeded decolonization. As stated by Abubakar Tafawa Balewa,

In the whole sphere of Nigeria's external relations the government attaches the greatest importance to our African policy. We are aware that because of our population and potentials, the majority of opinion in the civilized world looks up to us to provide responsible leadership in Africa; and by the degree of success or failure with which we face up to the challenge which this expectation throws on us.³

In the world's view, Nigeria's size and resources (material and human) place it among the most fortunate of nations. These vital characteristics have led to the belief that Nigeria has an important leadership role to play in Africa and world affairs. The perception of Nigeria as a candidate for leadership position has evidenced its greatest impact at the continental level. The reasons are clear-cut: firstly, because Nigeria has concerned itself primarily with African affairs: secondly, Nigeria's input towards the welfare of its most immediate west African neighbors is immeasurable. However, the leadership role requires the establishment and maintenance of friendly relations with

diverse countries, irrespective of differing ideological and political differences.⁴ Nigeria's external environment has been viewed in concentric circles, namely: the west Africa sub-region, the African region (as the middle circle) and the international community. The rationale of this model is that success in sub-regional relations, for example, in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), will spur success in other areas. It is believed that if regional cooperation flourishes through Nigeria's deep involvement, the chances of a more credible role in the international arena will be greatly increased. But the approach adopted is neither one of priority nor proximity.⁵ The emphasis on African affairs emanates from the enduring preoccupation of successive Nigerian leaders with Nigeria's perception of its role in Africa. As Garba puts it,

in placing primacy on African issues, we are not merely seeking to fulfil our historical role, but also to carry out our OAU charter responsibilities which is to help in achieving the liberation of those African territories still under colonial and racist regimes.⁶

Concern with attaining and playing a leadership role in Africa dates back to the pre-independence period. At the zenith of the struggle of African states for the dominance of their respective political principles over one another, Nigeria took opportunity to assert its leadership. Perhaps the clearest statement of this concern is found in the 1960 new year message of the first prime minister Balewa, who believed that Nigeria was providing peaceful, sensible leadership by its advocacy of functionalism in Pan Africanism when he said,

during the past few months as I have watched events occurring in other territories in Africa, I have come to realize that Nigeria has not only a right but also a tremendous duty to become independent so that she may play her proper

role ..as the country of the African continent having by far the largest population, we shall inevitably occupy an important position.⁷

Thus it can safely be stated that the basic outlines of Nigeria African policy were drawn at independence. In the Nigerian view, an African environment already beleaguered by dependency was not to be subjected to further loss of power and dignity to a supra-national body such as advocated by Nkrumah and the Casablanca group of countries. That was why Nigeria specifically stated that the promotion of functional unity through the practical steps of economic, educational, cultural, scientific and technical cooperation shall form one of the fundamental tenets of its foreign policy. This policy in recent times has been expanded to include the attainment of security through regional cooperation, policies designed to minimize and where possible, counter French penetration of West Africa. This was basically the *raison d'être* for ECOWAS. The ensuing discussion attempts to analyze and sketch future paths for policy in Africa and beyond with particular reference to Nigeria and its immediate neighbours, ECOWAS, South Africa, the rest of Africa, the OAU, conflict resolution/pacific settlement, Nigeria's military role, the Non-Aligned movement, the Group of 77, the G15, OPEC, the Commonwealth and the United Nations Organization (UNO).⁸

5.2 Nigeria and Its Immediate Neighbours: Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Successive Nigerian governments have continued to attach great importance to economic integration of the countries within the West African sub-region. The

commitment to sub-regional integration is based on recognition of West African countries as Nigeria's natural market. This was underscored by President Babangida in 1990, when he asserted that:

ECOWAS remains the most important sub-regional experiment at economic integration in the African continent, a fact which bestows on us a heavy Responsibility to see it survive and grow as a part of our own contribution to the attainment of African economic community.⁹

This realization as well as the significance of the larger context of African economic community (AEC) has continued to guide Nigeria's bilateral relations with the 16 member-countries of ECOWAS. The pattern of bilateral economic relations between Nigeria and most of these countries has taken various forms, such as joint venture projects, financial assistance, and outright grants. In addition, Nigeria's technical assistance to many countries in the sub-region includes: the provision of personnel in specialized areas through the TAC programmes, as well as training facilities in Nigerian higher institutions for their nationals. Economic diplomacy has also generated some off-shore investments by Nigerian entrepreneurs in some of the countries notably Benin, Togo and Cote d' Ivoire. As an example of bilateral cooperation, Nigeria and Niger established a joint commission. Nigeria also formed joint ventures with Guinea and Benin for uranium mining, cement production, sugar refining, and road construction. Two other prominent examples illustrate Nigeria's commitment to functional economic cooperation and sub-regional integration. One is the Lake Chad Basin Commission which groups Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. The objective of this Commission is to jointly explore and develop the resources of Lake Chad. The other is the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which brings together the 16 countries of

West Africa. ECOWAS trade liberalization scheme, cooperation in the banking sector and the protocol on free movement of persons became operational.¹⁰

In January, 1990 Nigeria promulgated a decree allowing the importation of 36 unprocessed items and handicraft from ECOWAS countries, and for a graduated reduction on duties on certain industrial products, envisaged to attain zero duty by 1994. Nevertheless, although a subsequent treaty for this proposal was signed at the governmental level in 1998, implementation has at best been poor, thereby acting as a stumbling block to the realization of the treaty.¹¹

The important role of banking and financial cooperation for trade within the region informs the prominent role Nigeria played in ECOBANK Transnational Incorporated (ETI) with the headquarters established in Lome. An affiliate of the bank has since 1990, been established in Nigeria. Also at the level of the private sector, Nigeria has played a prominent role in the establishment of the Federation of West African Manufacturers (FEWAMA) in 1990.¹² Nigeria looms large in any consideration of regional African relations, especially at the sub-regional level. In sub-regional proportions Nigeria occupies 35% of the land area of west Africa, its 110 million inhabitants is about 56 per cent of ECOWAS countries' population of 140 million, and its 1977 gross national product of approximately USD34.2 billion was greater than the combined total of the 14 Francophone states (approximately USD21.55 billion). In addition, Nigerian citizens are scattered in great numbers all over west Africa (nearly 1 million in Ivory Coast and Liberia alone) and actively engaged in trade.

Nigeria borders on four other African nations--Benin, Niger, Chad and the Cameroon. The Chad Basin commission, Nigeria/Niger joint commission, and the Lagos-Trans-Mombassa highway--represent Nigeria's early initiative to develop close links with its neighbors. Nigeria's economic relationship with the republic of Benin appears to be a useful mechanism for promoting the idea of self-reliance in small industries. The sugar and cement joint ventures with the republic of Benin and Togo have been sources of foreign exchange savings for the participating countries. Nigeria not only shares the facilities of the Kanji Dam for power generation with Niger, it also operates a joint Uranium venture in which it has 16 per cent interest. Nigeria assisted in the construction of the Birni N Konni Bridge in Niger, and also infused substantial aid in the country during the Sahelian drought in 1974. Nigeria mediated to reconcile the war-ravaged Chad and accommodated its refugees.¹³

Despite these efforts, its neighbours--namely, Chad, Benin, and Cameroon--have posed a concern for Nigeria's security and a potential threat to peace and stability in the region. The conflict in Chad with its concomitant refugee problem, the occupation of Nigerian villages in Sokoto state by Benin forces and the killing of five Nigerian soldiers across the Nigerian border by Cameroon gendarmes have precipitated heightened tension in Nigeria's relations with its neighbours. Yet Nigeria kept on its unrelenting drive to help create a sub-regional economic community (ECOWAS). It appears that the remarkable success of the European community (EC) and the European Free Trade Association, provided additional stimulus for revitalizing Nigeria's aspirations for economic

cooperation in West Africa--and thereby advancing the cause of South-South cooperation and empowerment of the South.¹⁴

By April 1972 Nigeria and Togo, the prime movers, set the tone by signing a treaty establishing the nucleus of ECOWAS with headquarter in Lagos. However, because of the traditional, almost umbilical, cultural, economic and political links between France and her Francophone states their attitude towards the creation of ECOWAS was lukewarm and weary. By May 1975, 15 West African nation-states had signed the treaty with two of Nigeria's closest neighbours (Chad and Cameroon) conspicuously absent. It was not until 1998 that Cameroon joined ECOWAS which, became a crucial issue for Nigeria because most of her neighbours are Francophone colonies, and as Ike Nwachukwu put it,

the natural rival of Nigeria is France, and unless Nigeria reconciles itself to the status of a competitor with France in its backyard, it will have to reassess its policies to counter- balance the numerous problems and dilemmas that it would inevitably confront in future.¹⁵

As a result the challenge for Nigeria became how to keep its neighbours friendly without sacrificing its national interest on the altar of good neighbourliness and regional solidarity. Furthermore the massive influx of citizens of neighbouring countries to participate in a relatively more prosperous Nigerian economy pushed Nigeria to adopt bilateral economic relations with the home countries of the people rushing to its territory to make them focus less on Nigeria. Nigeria also recognises that a hungry neighbour is an angry neighbour, which can eventually spark off a conflict involving Nigeria itself, hence the provision of assistance is based on both self and mutual interests.

5.3 Nigeria and Southern Africa

The Southern African problem was always at the heart of Nigeria's diplomacy. A future that intensifies or escalated Nigeria's southern African commitment presupposes that the nation possess adequate, parallel economic and military resources backed by a willing public and a less hostile external environment, the country of the African continent having by far the largest population. This natural endowment has not only been largely fruitful in advancing Nigeria's leadership role and assumption of a big brother status but has gained the greatest strength in providing continuity on specific policy issues. In the linkage paradigm, the oppression and bondage of blacks, especially in southern Africa was tantamount to oppression of Nigerians. 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.¹⁶

On the other hand, the racist regime of South Africa was a relatively credible military power in African continent. In addition to its own technology and armaments industry it has guaranteed access to arms and other material assistance from its western supporters. It may be presumed then, that Nigeria and South Africa were mutually antagonistic. Indeed, the hard-line approach rests on the mutual perception of Nigeria and South Africa as common enemies; therefore, relations between the two countries became tense and hostile. Nigeria's commitment to armed struggle in Southern Africa perhaps provided the main focus for assessing the degree of tension between Nigeria and the racist regime of South Africa. Indeed Nigeria's general policy toward Southern Africa was derived from its commitment to help achieve accelerated decolonization in Africa

and to uphold the dignity of the black man. Implicitly, Nigeria was faced with all the ramifications of the Southern African problem including: (a) minority rule in Zimbabwe, (b) South Africa's colonization of Southwest Africa a former United Nations territory illegally annexed by South Africa on the expiry of its mandate in 1966, now independent Namibia, and apartheid and racial discrimination in the areas mentioned above and in South Africa itself.¹⁷

In keeping with Nigeria's avowed policy of termination of colonialism and white minority rule in Southern Africa, her first Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa, set the pace for the political diplomatic offensive against South Africa at the first Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, when he called for the "withdrawal" of South Africa from the Commonwealth on the ground that South Africa's open endorsement and practice of racial discrimination was detrimental to a free and equal association of member states. The Balewa government also provided aid to southern African refugees and financial assistance to African liberation movements. Nigeria's assistance to the special fund of the (OAU) liberation committee progressively increased from USD20, 000 to USD128,000 in 1965-1966. Furthermore, Balewa, the first prime minister of Nigeria from 1960-1966 hosted the first Commonwealth Prime Minister's conference in Lagos to discuss the rebellion of the white minority in Rhodesia against the British government. The Yakubu Gowon administration that succeeded Balewa opposed the supply of British arms to South Africa and led a campaign both at the OAU and in the Commonwealth against the Anglo-Rhodesian proposals and on the issue of a dialogue with South Africa. Nigeria infused material and moral support to the Namibian people under the leadership of the

South West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO) to achieve freedom and self-determination. South Africa's military intervention and support of UNITA and FNLA precipitated Nigeria's decision to recognize the MPLA. Under the then new military leader, General Murtala Mohammed, Nigeria also set up a relief fund to alleviate the plight of South African refugees. The regime of Murtala in 1976 also opened Nigerian doors for refugees and exiles from southern Africa, admitted their displaced students into higher schools and universities in Nigeria and embarked on manpower educational programmes for citizens of the conflict ridden areas who could benefit from such technical training.¹⁸

5.4 Nigeria's Use of the United Nations Against Apartheid

Beginning from 1960, Nigeria at the United Nations advocated vociferously for the independence of Angola, Namibia and also voted for the condemnation of apartheid as an evil against humanity. In addition, Nigeria's chairmanship of the United Nations committee on apartheid in the 1970s provided a strategic location from which Nigeria could launch vigorous international campaigns to stir up global moral indignation against apartheid. The world conference for action against apartheid held in Lagos in 1977 was a profound manifestation of Nigeria's commitment to eradicating apartheid. From the platform of UN committee mentioned above, Nigeria has also specifically sought to exert pressure on prominent third world groups in the UN such as, the Non-Aligned and Afro-Asian groups to effectively isolate South Africa and Rhodesia and support the liberation movement in more tangible terms. Even more significant was Nigeria's persistent attempts to bring pressure to bear on the great powers that have sustained the minority

regimes with massive infusion of armaments and development capital. Nigeria employed the use of threat during the Obasanjo administration to pressure Britain, for example into reconsidering its role in Zimbabwe and South Africa and translated that threat into action when it nationalized Barclays Bank for doing business with South Africa and British petroleum in Nigeria for selling Nigerian oil illegally to South Africa. Furthermore, Nigeria identified the United States corporate interests as one of the most important sources of support for South African prosperity and sort to apply political pressure on the United States administration.¹⁹

By 1976, Nigeria's bilateral relationship with the United States had waned to the point where the military government of General Obasanjo could refuse the US Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger an official visit to Nigeria during his African tour. In response to Nigeria's demand President Jimmy Carter on assuming office in January 1977 set the pace for a new era in US-Nigeria relations by repealing the controversial Bryd amendment which flouted United Nations economic sanctions against Ian Smith's illegal regime in Zimbabwe. Carter's human rights crusade, his visit to Nigeria and his support of democracy in South Africa was an illustration of a new policy towards South Africa and Nigeria, and an indication of the results of Nigeria's efforts to influence opinion of the key countries that made the minority regimes in Southern Africa capable of resisting international pressure.²⁰

By 1979, the new civilian president of Nigeria, Shehu Shagari continued the efforts of his predecessors on Southern African issues by fully assuming a key role in

the Lancaster House negotiations on the constitutional future of Zimbabwe, and on the Anglo/American proposals for a constitutional settlement in Zimbabwe. Nigeria sent a protest to the British government when Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher appeared to block efforts to reach a transitional arrangement. Nigeria sent strong delegations not only to observe the Lancaster House proceedings, but also to monitor closely the election that followed. Zimbabwe achieved independence by 1980, and to demonstrate Nigeria's continued support, its president Shehu Shagari offered USD10 million at Zimbabwe's independence celebration.²¹

On Namibia, Nigeria approached the matter of drawing a long-range plan with the OAU frontline states of: Tanzania, Zambia, Angola, Mozambique, Botswana, and Zimbabwe to take a common stand on the issue of Walvis Bay and Namibian territorial boundaries with others. As well as the conduct of free and fair elections in the country. In financial terms, during the period under review, Nigerian contribution towards Namibian independence amounted to about USD666.6million. Nigeria was in the forefront of the African group lobby at the United Nations General Assembly to have 1982 proclaimed as the international year of mobilization for sanctions against South Africa and engineered other nations' boycott of the 1980 Olympics.²²

5.5 Nigeria and the Post-Apartheid Southern Africa

Ike Nwachukwu, at the conference of the Nigeria society of international affairs on 5th November 1990 declared that:

The Southern Africa area from Zaire and Kenya downwards forms a single economic union potentially, if the racial problem is removed. With the infrastructure already in place, there is no reason therefore, why that region should not be the industrial and economic power house of our continent. Combining the South African region should provide the basis for the regeneration of all Africa.²³

In this connection, the inaugural session of the Nigeria/Zimbabwe joint commission was held in 1989, while that with Namibia was held in May 1992. There is also a proposed session with Botswana. The joint commission session with Zimbabwe resulted in the signing of a trade agreement, which provides a framework for the promotion of bilateral trade between the two countries. It also established a basis for the exchange of scientific information and data between research institutions in the two countries. Other areas of cooperation identified so far include: agriculture, education, mining, information, petroleum and manpower development. Similarly, the joint commission session held with Namibia in 1992 which coincided with President Babangida's state visit to that country provided further impetus to the development of bilateral economic relations. In particular, it provided new opportunities to Nigerian businessmen to establish new lines of business in petroleum, banking and finance, property development, mining and fishing. With regard to Angola and Mozambique, bilateral cooperation has been mainly in the fishing sector. Nigeria attended the private sector investment conference organized by the government of Namibia in Feb. 1991. The

33-man delegation drawn from the private and public sectors used the occasion to explore investment outlets and markets for Nigeria's non-oil exports. As a result, the Nigerian delegation and Namibian government agreed to cooperate in areas such as banking and petroleum. As a follow-up to the investment forum, President Babangida paid a visit to Namibia in May 1992. The visit achieved two objectives, namely, consideration of identified business interests, and establishment of a consortium for construction.²⁴

5.6 Nigeria and East/North Africa

The Nigerian pattern of bilateral economic relations with the rest of Africa has always followed a similar trend. Though the volume of recorded trade with some countries remains low, considerable informal trade continues between them, especially with North and Central Africa. As a step towards stimulating trade and channeling it through banking mechanisms, Nigeria organized solo exhibitions in some South African countries in 1990 and 1991. The level of industrial cooperation continues to be equally low. As a further move to facilitate the expansion of economic ties, President Babangida undertook state visits to Egypt and Uganda in 1991 and 1992 respectively. Bilateral talks and joint commission sessions were held with Uganda and Tanzania in 1991 and 1992 respectively. Since Africa still remains the centerpiece of Nigeria's foreign policy, various forms of technical assistance continue to be offered to those countries by Nigeria.²⁵

5.7 Nigeria's Extra-African Multilateral Relations: Images and Self-Perceptions.

Several oil-importing African countries were severely affected by the sharp rises in the price of oil in 1973-74. In keeping with its feeling of responsibility to assist other African countries whenever possible, and in order to alleviate the plight of such countries, Nigeria established a Nigerian Trust Fund (NTF) within the ADB. (See Appendix Five). The Fund which was set up in 1976 had an initial capital outlay of USD80million which was replenished in 1981 by an additional USD80 million. In the period from its establishment to December 1990, the Nigerian Trust Fund has financed 43 development projects in 27 African countries with a total value of USD240,764,220. These projects range from rice irrigation, rural electrification, water supply projects to construction of dams, ports, roads and airports as well as telecommunication projects.

The oil price increase starting in 1973 greatly contributed to the take-off of the North-South dialogue. This issue brought the Western industrial countries who were previously lukewarm towards the idea, to the table. They saw the talks as a window of opportunity for controlling the price of oil. Nigeria was one of the six countries that represented Africa at the Conference on International Economic Cooperation (CIEC) otherwise called the North-South Dialogue which held several meetings in Paris from 1975 to 1977. Nigeria also participated in the Cancun Summit on international economic cooperation, which took place in Mexico in 1981 among a select number of heads of state and government drawn from industrialized and developing countries.²⁶ This was a bold effort, which elevated the North-South dialogue to the highest level of political leadership, although it did little to advance the stated objectives of the dialogue.

The failure of the North-South dialogue was due to a number of factors, not least being the tenacity with which both sides held to their views. The death-knell for the process was sounded in the early eighties with the emergence of conservative government in major Western countries like the United States, the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany. These regimes advocated less government involvement in domestic economic matters and were not therefore, about to concede to more management of the international economy. Additionally, the global recession and the collapse in oil prices in 1981 led to a greater emphasis on national solutions and also led to the elimination of the basic motive for the interest shown in the dialogue by the industrial countries.

5.8 Nigeria and the Organization of African Unity (OAU)

The idea of African unity was institutionalized in May, 1963 as the Organization of African Unity (OAU). To ensure the successful birth of this entity, Nigeria's first prime minister Tafawa Balewa played a crucial role in reconciling the differing political persuasions in the complex and tempestuous process that led to its birth. Although the evolution of the organization did not proceed smoothly, Balewa's gradualist, functional approach to the question of African unity subsequently prevailed over Nkurumah's "idealist" stance and vision of a politically integrated Africa, creating one sovereign entity out of over twenty infant sovereign states. Indeed successive Nigerian governments have strongly supported the OAU with the notion that Nigeria has a special role to play in the union. Nigeria was evidently motivated by the Monrovia Declaration of the commitment of heads of state and government of the Organization of African Unity on guidelines and

measures for national and collective self-reliance in Social and Economic Development for the establishment of a New International Economic Order. Nigeria hosted a summit of African heads of state at Lagos in April 1980 that culminated in the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) for the Economic Development of Africa. The Lagos Plan of Action envisaged a self-reliant and self-sustaining continental economy capped by the establishment of an African common market by the year 2000. The common market would be built on the foundation of sub-regional economic groupings like ECOWAS which, in turn, depend on national economic efforts. Some key areas of national economic focus for all countries were also identified. These include food and agriculture, industry, natural resources, human resources development and utilization, science and technology, transport and communication, trade and finance.²⁷

Under the initiative of Nigeria, a special economic summit of African heads of state and government of OAU called the 20th Summit of the OAU was held in Addis Ababa on November 13, 1984. The Summit adopted three key proposals put forwards by Nigeria: The Summit approved Nigeria's proposal to convene a special summit the following year devoted to review the progress made in implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos and the formulation of emergency programmes for Africa including immediate measures in the priority areas particularly food and agriculture. Secondly, the setting up of a permanent steering committee consisting of Algeria, Cote d' Ivorie, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Zimbabwe to prepare for a special summit on economic matters. Thirdly, the establishment of a special emergency assistance fund (SEAF) for draught and farming in Africa to which a total of USD28

million had been pledged by June 1988 of which USD16 million was paid. Nigeria pledged USD5 million and had honoured its commitment.²⁸ Nigeria's initiatives at the 20th summit were significant for a number of reasons: firstly they prompted a renewed reform on economic matters by the OAU at the time when the economic crisis confronting member states and sharp disagreement over policy towards western Sahara were exercising a paralytic effect on discussions at the OAU. Secondly the permanent steering committee established at the behest of Nigeria, did the preparatory work for the 21st Summit of the OAU which was devoted mainly to the discussion of African economic issues. The committee was subsequently transformed into a permanent committee, which now plays a leading role in OAU economic matters. The highlight of the 21st Summit was the adoption of the African Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER), 1985-1990 in July, 1985. APPER was a framework formulated to operationalise the provision of the LPA during the emergency as well as in the short-to-medium term period. Secondly, the call by African leaders for an international conference on Africa's external debt was initiated by Nigeria.²⁹

To promote and sustain the momentum for the international conference, the summit established a contact group. The 21st summit also called for a special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to the critical economic situation in Africa. Thus was held the 13th special session of the United Nations general Assembly in New York from May 27-June 1, 1980 at which the United Nations Programme of Africa for Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAERD) was adopted. UNPAERD was a compact between Africa and the international community. In it, African governments

undertook to implement economic policy reforms and to raise USD82.5 billion for the execution of the programme. The international community on the other hand made a commitment to support the process by providing USD46.1 billion to Africa in the period 1986-1990. During the session Nigeria was one of the five countries that represented the five regions of Africa and addressed the session on different issues. Thus Nigeria spoke on food and agriculture, Cameroon on human resources, Zimbabwe on the international economic environment, and Sudan on drought and desertification.³⁰

Nigeria through its membership of the contact group on Africa's external debt crisis approached a number of governments and international institutions to give sympathetic consideration to the African common position. In particular it was Nigeria that proposed at the mid-term review of UNPARED at the UN General Assembly in 1988 that the African common position should be taken account of and seriously considered by the international community. This proposal was reflected in resolution 43/27/51 of the UN General Assembly. Nigeria played a leading role in the discussion concerning the Final Act of the Lagos Plan of Action, which called for the establishment of an African Economic Community by the year 2000. The final draft of the treaty was approved by the 53rd Regular Session of the OAU Council of ministers held in February 1991 in Addis Ababa.³¹

The objectives of the proposed community are:

- a. To promote economic, social and cultural development and the integration of African economies in order to increase economic self-reliance and promote an endogenous and self-sustained development;

- b. To establish on a continental scale, a framework for the development, mobilization and utilization of the human and material resources of Africa in order to achieve a self-reliant development;
- c. To promote cooperation in all fields of human endeavour in order to raise the standard of living of its people, maintain and enhance economic stability, foster close and peaceful relations among member states and contribute to the progress, development and the economic integration of the African continent; and
- d. To co-ordinate and harmonize policies among existing and future economic communities in order to foster the gradual establishment of the African economic community.³²

Some transnational corporations and enterprises from industrialized countries, apparently, unable to dispose of the hazardous wastes in their own countries due to the stringent environmental legislation and codes, use Africa as a repository of those lethal wastes. It was Nigeria that first alerted African countries to the practice of and (dangers posed by the) dumping of such waste in Africa when it brought the matter to the attention of the 48th session of the OAU Council of Ministers in 1988. Subsequently, the council adopted a Nigerian-initiated resolution deploring the practice, calling for a halt to it and requesting the inscription of the item on the agenda of the 43rd session of the UN General Assembly in 1988. And the UN resolution 43/17/51 condemned such act and prohibited it.³³

5.9 Nigerian Government's Assistance to African Refugees

Nigeria, through multilateral and bilateral channels, has, over the years, demonstrated its commitment to and sympathy for the problems of African refugees. It will be recalled that the international community met in 1981 and 1984, at the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA-I & II). Under (ICARA-I) as a manifestation of Nigeria's full commitment to refugee matters on the continent, the government of Nigeria subscribed the sum of USD3million. Under ICARA- II, it made a substantial non-cash pledge towards promoting joint multiple project financing or bilateral executions, within the context of Nigeria's technical assistance programmes with African countries and the National Liberation Movement operations in Southern Africa. Nigeria's pledge of USS11150 million in kind to the African Fund is well known. By 1988 the Government of Nigeria had given the sum of (USD53,000) for project support and assistance for the benefit of refugees in Malawi, through the Lagos representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. To date such support-flows amount to USD64 million.³⁴

Nigerian ambassadors were elected as chairman of the O.A.U Commission of Fifteen on Refugees in 1984, 1988 and 1990 respectively. The energetic participation of Nigeria as the Chairman of the O.A.U Commission of Fifteen on Refugees and the cooperation of other O.A.U member states produced the following achievements in the field of refugees:

(1) Establishment of (OAU) Special Refugee Contingency Fund: It was during Nigeria's Chairmanship of the O.A.U Commission of Fifteen on Refugees in 1980 that

(4) **Bilateral Assistance to Refugees:** Apart from being a donor country to the UNHCR refugees fund, Nigeria has provided substantial financial assistance on a direct bilateral level to countries with huge refugee populations. For example, assistance was given to children of Mozambican displaced persons residing in Malawi; USD100,000.00 was pledge to UNCHR in aid of the African refugees; while USD330 million was spent by Nigeria on relief materials to ease the plight of thousands of Namibian refugees. Nigeria, in addition, maintains its liberal policy on the provision of resettlement and education opportunities for refugees from any part of the continent.³⁶

5.10 Nigeria's Mediatory Role in African Conflicts

Nigeria's chief goals in the resolution of African conflicts may be summarized as: enforcement of the OAU clause of inviolability of African borders, prevention of instability on the continent, and averting the internationalization of African disputes. But national security considerations also abound in Nigeria's multilateral and bilateral mediatory efforts. Nigeria perceives its security as closely linked with those of its immediate neighbours. For this reason, it is sensitive to the security threats of its neighbours. In the analyses that follow, it will be shown that Nigeria has consistently taken active measures to resolve conflicts (even on a unilateral basis) deemed vital to its security.³⁷

In general terms, the Congo crisis provided Nigeria with its first attempt at “fire fighting diplomacy” in the continent. Although essentially a mediatory effort under the aegis of the United Nations, the Balewa government in various pronouncements attempted to underline the African dimension of the conflict. In his first official statement

recommendation No. 68, to create a Special Refugee Contingency Fund of one percent of the total O.A.U approved budget was made. This percentage was increased to two percent in 1984, again, at the initiative of Nigeria chairmanship of the Commission.

(2) **Fact-finding Missions:** Nigeria led the O.A.U Commission of Fifteen on refugee fact-finding missions to West and North Africa and Kenya in 1987/88. Notable among the refugee camps visited were Tindouf in Algeria (which camped mostly refugees from the Saharawi Republic); Togogaria in Zimbabwe, which accommodated mostly refugees from apartheid South Africa; Gambella and Hartishek in Ethiopia with mostly Sudanese and Somali refugees; and Angola with mostly Namibian refugees.³⁵

(3) **Promoting Greater Awareness about, and International Support, for African**

Refugees: It was at the instance of Nigeria's chairmanship that the consciousness of Africa was aroused to the need to address some new developments at the United Nations High Commission for Refugees Headquarter in Geneva, and the manner in which these developments might adversely affect the plight of refugees in Africa. In his statement to the O.A.U. Commission of Fifteen on Refugees at the Extraordinary Session held on Friday 10 November, 1989, Chief Segun Olusola, Nigeria's Ambassador to Ethiopia and the chairman of the Commission pointed out that the Nigerian Chairman of the O.A.U Commission of Fifteen was mandated by the commission thereafter, in November/December 1989 to go on a missions to New York and Geneva so as to convey to the international donor community the gravity of the problem of refugees and displaced persons in Africa. He also expressed the need to mobilize additional resources to assist the six million refugees and about twelve million displaced persons on the continent.

on the crisis at the United Nations General Assembly in October 1960, Balewa asserted his wish to see the Congo crisis resolved by African states, as he perceived the conflict as an African problem to be resolved by Africans alone. The active participation of Nigerian troops and police in the peace-keeping efforts, the government's call for a fact-finding mission of African nations to the Congo to study and mediate in the conflict, and Balewa's injunction to the Nigerian troops to assume a strict neutrality in the affairs of the Congo, perhaps, illustrate Nigeria's concern for the stability of the continent.³⁸

It is important to differentiate Nigeria's mediation efforts in terms of three categories: (a) unilateral intervention, (b) mediation under OAU auspices and (c) mediation on the basis of Nigeria good offices, usually at the request of the belligerents. Aside from the intervention in the Republics of Benin/Togo border conflict and in the East African Community, Nigeria's conflict resolution efforts in Africa tend to be limited to (b) and (c) in the case of the East African Community, the strained relations between Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania posed a serious threat to the survival of a seemingly model African economic union. Nigeria intervened to save the union. It succeeded in effecting the withdrawal of Kenyan troops from Uganda, but it was too late to save the community. The sporadic, volatile conflicts between Togo and the Republic of Benin were alleged to be based on ideological cleavages and personality clashes between President Kerekou and President Eyadema. The possibility that the conflict could spill over into Nigeria, (at least in economic terms) stimulated Nigeria's interest in peaceful resolution. Thus faced with a serious threat of economic loss, Nigeria waded into the crisis and used its good offices to obtain a peaceful settlement. It could be argued that

Nigeria intervened unilaterally in the conflict purely on self-interest. On the other hand, the specter of a unilateral intervention would perhaps have been grave for Nigeria if it had lacked the relative economic capacity to influence or coerce both sides if they proved intransigent.³⁹

In the Chadian conflict, Nigeria's interest in Chad has been constantly aroused chiefly by boundary security issues. Nigeria shares about 98km of its Northeast boundary with the republic of Chad. Ike Nwachukwu noted that:

in the Chadian lengthy civil strife, Nigeria responded to the French invitation mainly in its national interest, perhaps, to avoid a spill-over of the conflict into Nigeria's territory and to prevent an influx of large numbers of refugees that would of necessity, impose demands on Nigeria's resources.⁴⁰

Therefore, nations at times cooperate with neighbours in crises to avoid a spill-over. Nwachukwu further observed that Nigeria's initial intervention in Chad was made outside the OAU framework, basically through its good office. Hissen Habre, the leader of the contending faction in conflict, embraced the French to stabilize his position and simultaneously sought the support of the OAU, for the legitimization of his faction. Habre's request threatened to rock the unity of the OAU as some French-speaking member states were clearly supportive. Nigeria responded by imposing economic sanctions on the Habre regime. It stopped the flow of much needed oil to Chad. Habre reluctantly turned to Nigeria once more. The negotiations which followed culminated in the Lagos Accord of August 1979 which established a fresh provisional government. Hissen Habre was forced down as Defence Minister while a new leader Guokouni Weddeye was elected by a consensus of the competing factions. However, Nigeria's role

in the conflict in Western Sahara was not because it posed an immediate national security threat, but because the then new civilian administration was expected to be actively involved in the larger security interests of Africa.⁴¹

In the observation of U. Joy Ugwu, Nigeria has played a very active and constructive role in the areas of conflict management and resolution within the framework of the O.A.U. Nigeria was a member of OAU good offices committee, which successfully mediated in the Ethiopia/Somali dispute over the Ogaden Region. The Ethiopia/Somali dispute was primarily over the Ogaden Region of Ethiopia, which was claimed by Somalia principally because people of Somali stock inhabited it. Ethiopia disputed the Somali claim mainly on the basis of the principle of inviolability of inherited colonial boundaries, which is enshrined in the OAU charter as respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable right to independent existence. One of the most recent demonstrations of Nigeria's willingness to play a leadership role in the resolution of African regional conflicts is its involvement in efforts to bring peace to war-torn Liberia, although these efforts were largely outside the auspices of the OAU. The Liberian crisis was sparked off when Mr. Charles Taylor, an Americo-Liberian opposition leader in exile, led a group of armed dissidents to challenge the rule of President Samuel Doe.⁴²

The most recent involvement of Nigeria in crisis management is the Sierra Leone situation. In May 1997, a military junta overthrew a civilian head of state that won election through the democratic process which resulted in confusion, loss of lives and

destruction of property. Under the banner of the Economic Community of West African States, Nigerian troops were deployed in June to enforce a regional embargo against the junta and pressure it to return power to elected civilian president Ahmad Tejan Kabbah. This move eventually succeeded in the ejection of the military junta and restored the democratically elected president.⁴³

5.11 Nigeria and Multilateral Diplomacy

In the words of Joseph N. Garba, Nigeria's external affairs commissioner from 1975 to 1979,

in all our dealings with international organizations we are guided not by selfish national interest, but by a higher sense of responsibility and concern for countries (particularly in Africa) whose needs in some respects are greater than ours.⁴⁴

In spite of the basic constraint and limitation of its socio-economic and political system, Nigeria at independence assumed the profile of an active participant in the international system. Fueled by African nationalism, Nigeria's diplomacy and participation in numerous international organizations was in turn heavily conditioned by a desire to achieve ascendancy to a better position in the international arena, to further its own interests and the larger African interest. Because of its size and population of over a quarter of Africa, its rich natural resources and economic potential, it was considerably easier for Nigeria to thrust itself into a prestigious position and be accepted as a rising power in the multilateral sphere. Given its perception of its leadership role, Nigeria attempted to assert itself politically by giving a considerable degree of attention to

multilateral diplomacy. The major interest areas are the Non-Aligned movement, the Commonwealth, the United Nations and its specialized agencies.⁴⁵

(a) Nigeria and the Non-Aligned Movement

At independence, non-alignment was emphasized as one of the basic tenets of Nigeria's foreign policy. The rationale for a non-aligned policy was basically to preserve Nigeria's choice and freedom of action as a sovereign state. The broad objectives, principles and doctrine of the non-aligned movement itself which included the eradication of colonialism and apartheid, promotion of global peace, sanctity of territorial integrity of new states and the solidarity of new states as a crucial force in ensuring a new international order were all entirely in harmony with Nigeria's global objectives.

In the economic realm Nigeria has pursued with intensity, the position that there must be a re-ordering of the global redistribution of resources to facilitate the accelerated economic development of the disadvantaged South. Thus Nigeria took a special interest in the quest for a New International Economic Order through the United Nations and EEC/ACP negotiations. Nigeria recognized that the mobilization of the participating developing states would provide the disadvantaged Third World states with stronger leverage to press for better terms of trade and a greater capability to assume responsibility for the planning of their own economic development. The end of the Cold War heightened the urgency for a re-evaluation and re-definition of the methodology and objectives of NAM. Despite its problems with the international community, Nigeria in concert with

other like-minded countries within the movement, sought to fashion a common vision of the New World Order during the past decade.⁴⁶

(b) Nigeria and the Summit Level Group of 15 Heads of State/Government for South-South Consultations and Cooperation--The G-15:

The Group of 15 (G-15 Countries) is made up of the Non-Aligned and other Developing Countries in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America namely: Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Venezuela, Yugoslavia and Zimbabwe. The Group was established at the 9th Summit of the Non- Aligned Movement meeting in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in May 1989 in the firm belief that great potential exists for mutually beneficial cooperation among developing countries and that collective self-reliance was essential for their development in an increasingly interdependent world. In November 1997, Kenya was admitted as its 16th member. The task of the Group is to evolve common positions and strategies on major economic issues in the North/South dialogue. However, the credibility of the Group to serve as an effective interlocutor has been undermined by the low level of participation at its meeting. The fourth G-15 summit in New Delhi, India, from March 28 -30, 1994, marked a watershed in search of a solution to this difficulty. Nigeria addressed this fundamental problem and argued for flexibility of the group so as to stave off potential irrelevance. Nigeria proposed a quorum requirement of 8 for future meetings with a minimum of 5 Heads of State or Government whilst the remaining 3 should not be lower than either vice-presidents or prime ministers. This proposal was endorsed by the summit. The initiative not only saved the G15 and rendered its operations more dynamic, but has also become the reference point of many countries who

have continued to seek Nigeria's views on all issues of mutual interest.⁴⁷ Other notable achievements of the summit, based on Nigeria's initiative, included the identification of concrete projects as vehicles for future linkages among South firms and companies, as well as South-South cooperation. Currently, Nigeria is the focus of G15 cooperation in the area of utilization of available solid minerals and raw materials.

(c) Nigeria and South-South Cooperation:

Nigeria is a strong advocate of South-South cooperation and has been actively involved in the preparation of the various economic cooperation programmes among developing countries (ECDC), and technical cooperation among developing countries, (TCDC), both of which are programs under the auspices of the Group of 77 countries. In 1988, Nigeria hosted the meeting of the Action Committee on Raw Materials of the G-77. The objective of the meeting, among others, was to ensure the sharing of experiences in the development and use of raw materials in developing countries. This pattern of support for South-South collaboration has gained prominence in the wake of economic diplomacy as the main preoccupation in the conduct of Nigeria's external relations. This was the basis for the importance which Nigeria attached to the work of the South Commission. Nigeria was one of the first countries to launch the Report of the Commission—the Challenge to the South. During the launching at Abuja in November 1990, General Nwachukwu stated as follows:

If Nigeria takes special pride on this occasion, it is not just because Dr. Pious Okigbo was a member of the Commission. It is because of our firm conviction that the mandate of the Commission dovetails into our action and policies in strengthening cooperation in our subregion, the African continent and with developing countries as a whole. That is why from its very inception the Commission had received the total and unswerving support for the ideals which are addressed in the report are also those in which we firmly believe and to which we are irrevocably committed.⁴⁸

(d) Nigeria, Asia and Pacific:

In regional terms, Nigeria's economic relations with the various countries in Asia have experienced the most phenomenal development. Economic relations, especially in terms of trade, have expanded with Japan, Korea and India to incorporate the "four tigers"--Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Thailand--as well as China, Pakistan, Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia. The thrust of economic relations with these Asian countries has been energized by the need to strengthen South-South cooperation for the mutual advantage and benefit of all participating countries. In 1989, the Nigerian minister of foreign affairs led trade delegations to Japan, India, South Korea and Hong Kong. This was followed in 1990 by its economic mission to Malaysia and Indonesia led by then Minister of Budget and Economic Planning Dr. Chu Okongwu. In October 1991, and June 1992, its Asian Chamber of Commerce organized trade missions to Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong and the Philippines. Similarly, in October 1991, NACCIMA sponsored trade missions to Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, New Zealand and Australia, and to Pakistan in April 1992.

A total of forty seven (47) joint commission/bilateral talks were held in the period spanning 1970-88. However, since 1988, the tempo of activities has increased significantly. By the first half of 1992, 29 joint commission/bilateral talks were held with various countries. With greater emphasis on South South Cooperation, it is expected that the figure will continue to increase.⁴⁹

(e) Latin America/Caribbean:

With the exception of Brazil, the overall state of Nigeria's economic relations with most of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean has not experienced appreciable growth. Regarding Brazil, trade constituted a major component of the bilateral relationship. A session of Nigerian-Brazilian joint commission was held in Lagos in 1989 and trade missions were exchanged. However, the level of investment has remained low. With some of the CARICOM countries, efforts made by Nigeria to open up economic ties within the context of economic diplomacy are yet to yield desired results. A Nigerian private sector delegation visited Jamaica in July and November 1989 respectively. A trade agreement and a protocol established a joint commission with Jamaica in 1989. The visit to Nigeria by the former prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Robinson, provided a useful forum to map out strategies for improving bilateral economic relations with the countries of the sub-region. However, practical problems militate against the forging of closer ties such as distance, absence of communication links and non-complementarity of products. Despite these constraints many of the CARICOM countries received various forms of technical assistance from Nigeria, especially through the TAC Programme.⁵⁰

(f) The Nigerian G-15 Cooperation Council:

Nigeria established the G-15 Economic Cooperation Council in 1990 after the Economic Commission to Malaysia and Indonesia as a model of public/private sector collaboration in order to promote economic cooperation with member states in the

context of South- South Cooperation. In specific terms, the aims and objectives of the council can be summarized as follows:

- (a) To formulate strategies to bring about accelerated but sustainable economic growth;
- (b) To expand the frontiers of Nigeria's business interests to other G-15 countries;
- (c) To devise a system of cooperation between government and private sector towards the achievement of progress and development in the Nigerian economy; and
- (d) To monitor the success story of the "South East Asian Tigers" and devise appropriate policy measures that could facilitate Nigeria's industrial take off.

From its inception, Nigeria has participated in the First G-15 Business and Investment Forum (BIF) held in Caracas, Venezuela in 1991. The participation of the 50-member private sector delegation led by the late Bashurun M.K.O. Abiola at the business forum marked a significant development in pursuit of Nigeria's economic diplomacy at the multilateral level. The Council also played host to a 17-member Malaysian Trade Delegation to Nigeria in 1992. The visit was aimed at further consolidation of contacts and joint-venture proposals made with their Nigerian counterparts in the areas of construction, plantation factories, rubber, wood technology and petroleum to mention a few. A memorandum of understanding was signed at the end of the visit to give effect to the commitment of the private sector from Malaysia to pursue meaningful cooperation between them. Also the Nigerian government's full commitment to such cooperation was demonstrated on that occasion by the allocation of land to the Malaysians for the development of an industrial park and a residential estate at Abuja.⁵¹

The Nigerian/Malaysian private sector cooperation has yielded positive results with the establishment of three joint-venture projects namely, Florist City (Nigeria) Ltd., Mantra Consortium (Nigeria) Ltd., and Tan Hock Seng (Nigeria) Ltd. Both sides are currently exploring the possibility of establishing joint ventures in the areas of construction of dams, roads, housing, electricity poles and production of limestone-based bricks.⁵²

(g) Nigeria and OPEC:

The discovery of oil in Nigeria in commercial quantities in the early 1960s made Nigeria a member and an active participant in OPEC negotiations for oil price agreements, and has enabled the country to champion efforts to grant price concessions to disadvantaged African countries. It has also used the forum to alleviate sufferings of the non-OPEC African states by granting special concessions and contributing substantially to the African Development Bank (ADB) and OPEC Development Fund to aid other developing states in meeting oil-related balance of payments problems and in development projects.

(h) Nigeria and the Commonwealth of Nations: Nigeria's participation in the Commonwealth organization was heavily influenced by its British colonial heritage. A number of similarities marked the membership of the Commonwealth, among them, language, history and a shared legacy of colonial rule. Nigeria became a member of the organization on attainment of independence in 1960 and appeared to incline towards the organization as a strategic forum advancing its national interest while pursuing general

goals in multilateral activities. Nigeria used the forum to demand the expulsion of South Africa that was a member of the Union in 1961 at the CHOMG summit because of Pretoria's indulgence in apartheid and violation of human rights. Nigeria also used the Commonwealth forum to force the Apartheid regime out of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) due to its racist practices. Nigeria enjoyed the support and loyalty of member states and used them to exert pressure on the British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher to rescind her stance on recognizing the puppet regime of Abel Muzorewa in Zimbabwe.⁵³

(i) Nigeria and the United Nations:

Nigeria is a member of the United Nations, and its successive governments have placed a high premium on the efficacy of the organization as a forum in which it can press overriding concerns of Africa's diverse endemic problems. Nigerian motivation and source of hope lay in the benevolent provisions in the United Nations Charter on dependent territories. It was clear at that time that Nigeria's expectations of the UN for the solution of international problems (especially those relating to Africa) were quite high. These aims were most clearly demonstrated in Nigeria's active participation and vociferous demands on issues of decolonization, over sanctions against Rhodesia and South Africa, creation of the new international economic order, finance matters and disarmament. In the United Nations, Nigeria was observed to take one of the hardest stands against colonialism and racism, each time voting in favour of total diplomatic and trade sanctions on the white minority regimes of Southern Africa and other perpetrators of the abominable system of apartheid.⁵⁴

Under the auspices of the United Nations, Nigeria hosted a world conference for action against apartheid in Lagos on August 22, 1977. A similar conference was held in Paris in 1981 by the United Nations with the cooperation of the OAU, and Nigeria featured prominently. Nigeria has also provided unflinching support for UN peacekeeping efforts. Nigerian contingents have provided invaluable support for UN peacekeeping forces in Congo, Kashmir and Lebanon. At the same time Nigeria has demonstrated profound interest in disarmament issues, insisting that there must be disarmament to channel resources for development. Nigerian nationals have featured prominently on high level executive appointments in UN agencies and the UN itself. Two of such significant appointments were the elevation of Professor Lambo as the President of WHO and Mr. Shuaib Yola as a Deputy Under Secretary General of the UN.

In the economic sphere, Nigeria has participated actively in the struggle of the developing nations to achieve a more equitable world order, transfer of technology and better terms of trade. Its participation in the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has enabled it to pursue its national goals and the economic objectives of Africa. At the 35th United Nations General Assembly in 1980, the then president of Nigeria, Shehu Shagari, called on the UN General Assembly to launch a decade of reparation and restitution for Africa as a master plan for economic recovery for Africa.⁵⁵

5.12 Challenges

Prominent among the challenges facing Nigeria is the maintenance and sustenance of internal political stability. The three major ethnic groups in Nigeria have

been in constant struggle for political leadership, therefore the resolution of the leadership issue will go a long way in ensuring internal stability. The next challenge is the effective exploitation and utilization of the huge resources available in the country to provide the necessities of life for the citizens. Furthermore, considering the population of the country, it is imperative that the country should find an avenue for ensuring that the able-bodied people looking for work do indeed find remunerative employment.

Nigeria also has the task of winning back the mind of the international community that the present democracy will be sustained so as to attract foreign investors because it is not easy for a third world nation such as Nigeria to make it without the inflow of foreign capital. More so, Nigeria's greatest challenge now is economic recovery. This is necessary in order to bounce back to its traditional role of big brother in Africa.

Technological development is another challenge facing Nigeria. This is necessary because the world is fast mechanizing in every thing, so to keep pace with change, it is in dire need of technological innovation. Prominent among the challenges facing Nigeria is to fight corruption in high places in government, and to ensure transparency and accountability. Furthermore, it is necessary to discard the search for political power based on mere political adventuresome, tribal parochialism, economic opportunism, and religious fanaticism. Thus, Nigeria's pressing agenda for 2000 includes achieving development and economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the peoples of Nigeria, and support the socially and economically disadvantaged through national integration. Additionally, its goal is to promote and maximize productive employment and utilization of resources of the

country, and to achieve sustainable utilization of natural resources and effective protection of the environment. Through such an enlightened strategy, Nigeria would be an effective contributor to South-South cooperation in this century.

5.13 Prospects

The return to democracy on 29th of May 1999 when the present head of state President Olusegun Obasanjo, a southerner, was sworn in has rekindled the hopes of Nigerians. The regime has since then restored human rights, liberty, and freedom--basic rights that were highly abused by the military. There is today internal peace and security, and it is expected that the situation now will surely woo foreign investors into the country. There is now a government with vision that is prioritizing the interests of the masses. With the present system of government in Nigeria based on presidential democracy, the country is safely on the road to restoring its previous glory.

5.14 Conclusion

After Nigeria's independence in October 1960, the leaders saw the natural endowments of the country as a blessing for a strategic leadership position in Africa. Based on that perception they adopted an Afro-centric foreign policy to exert a formidable influence in the continent so as to use the base to further enhance their position in inter-regional interactions. Since the resources were available the leaders did not hesitate in flaunting, as well as distributing their wealth particularly in Africa, to

attain and maintain the status of big brother nation in the continent. Having been under the tutelage of a foreign nation for a long time, they then wanted to show the world that they have arrived not only as a leader in Africa, but as a people that have something to offer in international relations and diplomacy.

Nigeria sought a forum to further project the objectives of its foreign policy. It saw the different factions of the African continent as something that need uniting, and towards that goal, played a prominent role in the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. Subsequently, Nigeria motivated the rest of Africa in the formation of the African Development Bank and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975, with headquarter in Lagos. Nigeria contributed 2/3 of the human, financial and material resources used in fighting against apartheid in South Africa, and 1/4 of the resources used in running the Organization of African Unity. The Economic Community of West African States is Nigeria's baby and feeds mainly from it. Its military enforcement arm (ECOMOG) is led and sponsored by Nigeria.

However, it should be noted that Nigerian leaders always command wealth but fail to maximize it for internal development. Thus, they are not captains of industrialization and infrastructure development. They have always been externalizing their interests thereby creating a big loophole at home with the result being economic and political crises coupled with militarization of politics and factionalism. This ugly situation apparently set Nigeria backward for years. However, the recent economic diplomacy initiated by Nigeria has virtually opened another door for a renewed role in

its immediate neighbourhood, Africa and the rest of the world. Nigeria stands the chance of being a formidable global player and a champion of the South if it can consolidate democracy and development at home.

ENDNOTES

1. The top level elaboration of Nigeria's foreign policy objectives often referred to as the 'Dodan Declaration'. Dodan is the name of the military barracks where the military heads of state resided. Various national newspapers and media published this broadcast, among them, the Daily Times, 30 July, 1976. Also quoted in Sam Ovobaire, "The national Interest and Nigerian Foreign Policy in the 80s". Text of a presidential address delivered at the annual meeting of the Nigerian society of International Affairs Abuja, 29 July, 1976 by Olusegun Obasanjo.
2. See Daily Times of Nigeria, July 14, 1976, p. 6.
3. See text of speech by Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (Federation of Nigeria) in the Official Records of the United Nations General Assembly, Fifteenth Session, 893rd Plenary Meeting, October 25, 1960, p. 535, paragraph 173. Published by Western University Press, Ibadan, 1964, p. 7.
4. Claude S. Phillips, jr., The Development of Nigerian Foreign Policy, Evanston Press, Ibadan, 1976.p. 46.
5. See Gordon J. Idang, Nigeria: Internal Politics and Foreign Policy (1960-1966), Ibadan University Press 1973, pp. 5-19.
6. See Joe Nanven Garba, Nigerian Commissioner for External Affairs (1975-1979) in an Address to the Nigerian Diplomatic Corps, Victoria Island, Lagos, June 21, 1976.
7. See speech by Nigerian first prime minister Balewa, at OAU summit in Cairo, Egypt. OAU doc. AHG/PV.2, July 1964, and summit in Accra, Ghana, AHG/PV.6, October 1965.
8. Olajide Aluko, "Nigeria's Initiative in Economic Community of West African States", in Ike Nwachukwu, Nigeria's Economic Dipolmacy (a publication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nigeria), Lagos, 1992, pp. 11-20.
9. U. Joy Ogbu, "Nigeria's Role in ECOWAS". Text of a Lecture Delivered at the Command and Staff College in Jaji, by President Ibrahim Babangida on October 1, 1984 (unpublished).
10. Ibid., p. 68
11. Ibid., p.74
12. See Okechukwu Mbonu, "Nigerian Neighbours" in Daily Times (Nigeria), 11 January 1982, p. 3.
- 13 Ibid.

14. See Daily Times of Nigeria, September 21, 1981, p. 14.
15. Successive Nigerian Governments have continued to attach great importance to economic integration of the countries within the West African sub-region. The commitment to subregional integration is based on the recognition of West African countries as Nigeria's natural market. See Ike Nwachukwu, "Nigeria and West African Sub-Region" in Nigeria's Economic Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Abuja, 1992. p. 74.
16. General Olusegun Obasanjo, An address to the delegates at the World Conference for Action Against Apartheid, in Lagos 22 August 1977. Reported in Daily Times, 26 August 1977, pp. 5 and 9.
17. Nigeria Speaks: Speeches by Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Longmans of Nigeria, Ibadan, 1964, p. 91.
18. See Text of speech by General Yakubu Gowon at the OAU Extraordinary Summit Conference on the Angola Crisis, held on January 11 1966, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Published in Observer, January 15, 1966, pp. 18-19.
19. The nationalization of companies which disregarded Nigeria's sanctions against South Africa amply demonstrated at that time Nigeria's determination to utilize its economic leverage to enforce sanctions. Vanguard, July 4 1978, pp. 5-6.
20. The decision of the federal military government to turn down Henry Kissinger's request to visit Nigeria early in 1976, can be viewed as one of those political pressures which Nigeria attempted to exert on the United States of America. See Daily Times of Nigeria, February 18, 1976, p. 12.
21. See text of speech by President Shehu Shagari to the first Economic Summit of OAU held in Lagos, Nigeria, April 28, 1980.
22. Okoi Arikpo, "Nigeria and the OAU", Nigerian Journal of International Affairs Vol.11, No. 1, July 1995, pp. 1-11. Nigeria's pioneering role in continental Organizations has been generally acclaimed by political observers.
23. See statement delivered by Major General I. O. S. Wachukwu, Minister of External Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on "The Dumping of Nuclear Wastes in Africa", at the 48th. Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, on May 3, 1988.
24. For details, see Fajana O., Nigeria's Inter-African Economic Relations: Trends, Problems and Prospects, Oxford University Press, 1978, pp. 17-29.
25. See Nigeria and the Organisation of African Unity: In Search of An African Reality,

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26. N. Garba, Diplomatic Soldiering, Spectrum Publishers, Ibadan, 1997, pp. 111-121.
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28. Organization of African Unity, OAU Draft Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community. Daily Times of Nigeria, 23 October 1980.
29. "Africa and the African Development Bank, Current and Future Challenges".
See above feature article in Observer, May 17, 1991 pp. 3-5.
30. Ibid.
31. See, Nigeria and the Organization of African Unity in Search of An African Reality, op. cit., p. 53.
32. Daily Times of Nigeria, 27 July 1980, p. 5.
33. Conflict and Change in Southern Africa". See Daily Times of Nigeria, June 9, 1978, pp. 30-31.
34. See Nigeria and the Organisation of African Unity, op. cit., p. 79.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Liberia: A Mission of Peace. A publication by the Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos, 1991, p. 6.
38. See The Sun, (a Malaysian daily), October 17, 1997, p. 22.
39. House of Representatives Debate, Lagos, August 20, 1960, column 2670.
40. General Ike Nwachukwu (rtd), "The Dynamics of Nigeria's Foreign Policy", in Nigeria and the Organisation of African Unity: In Search of African Reality, op.cit., p. 86
41. Nigeria appears to tread cautiously on the issue of the recognition of Polisario liberation movement in Angola.. This stance or lack of it was potentially dangerous definite Nigerian position finally swings the majority opinion in the OAU, as it did in the case of Angola. See New Nigerian, September 29, 1980, p. 5.
42. U Joy Ugwu, Nigerian Foreign Policy: Alternative Futures, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Abuja, 1986, p. 88.

43. Ibid.
44. See J.N. Garba The New Nigerian Foreign Policy, Federal Ministry of Information, News Release, No.1538,1 December, 1976.
45. Statistical News No. 155, Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) Publication, 10 September 1991; and Statistical News No.169, Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) Publication, 20th.June 1992.
46. Speech by the Nigerian Minister for External Affairs, I.Ke Nwachukwu at the launching of the Report of the South Commission in Abuja, Nigeria in November 7-8, 1990.
47. See the Account of the 50-member private sector delegation led by M.K.O. Abiola at the Business Forum of the first G15 Business and Investment Forum (BIF) held in Caracas, Venezuela in May 1991.
48. Ibid.
49. Vice Admiral Augustus Aikhomu, during the visit to Jamaica by the 47 Nigerian Private Investors in July and November 1989 respectively. See Daily Times of Nigeria, November 25, 1989 pp. 4-5. The visit highlights Nigeria's economic diplomacy and lucrative commercial ties with South America.
50. Ibid.
51. Address by Bashorun M. K. O. Abiola, at Caracas Business Forum, p. 27, 1991. See also Nigeria's Economic Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Abuja, 1992, pp. 88-89.
52. Report of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, Petroleum Exploration and Development Department, 1986, p.8.
53. Extracts from text of speech by President Shehu Shagari to the first Economic summit of the Organisation of African Unity. OAU held in Lagos, Nigeria, April, 28, 1980.
54. Daily Times of Nigeria, August, 23, 1977, p.12.
55. Nigerian Vanguard, August 25, 1977, pp.4-5.