

Continuity and Change in Nigeria's Foreign Policy (1960-2016)

L. ANDY AFINOTAN

Department of Political Science,
Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Ikeji Arakeji,
Osun State Nigeria

ABSTRACT

One of the most important challenges of statehood for Nigeria since independence has been the quest for an enduring orientation, a deliberately constructed and sustainable design to fit the country properly into the international system. Political development in Nigeria has been characterized by the near absence of a general consensus on policy, which really reflects the deep socio-political cleavages that define relationship between units that make up the Nigerian Federation. The search therefore for an enduring foreign policy orientation around which all Nigerians would be prepared to rally has taken the country through several foreign policy somersaults, in spite of occasional unanimity on issues such as racial equality and the decolonization process. Making use of library research and content analysis methodologies in a historical aqualitative analytical perspective, the paper highlighted these areas of common commitment, and detailed the nation's historic efforts to advance the cause of the black race and the war against colonialism and racial discrimination in all its facets. The paper further analyzed the various changes in foreign policy, spanning several regimes, and culminating in an emerging trend towards a definite foreign policy orientation, that seems to re-define the concentric circles idea. The paper argued that the idea of concentricism, as it is conceived now, is no longer adequate as a foreign policy doctrine capable of attaining the objectives of Nigeria's foreign policy in the 21st century, and must therefore be re-conceptualized without delay. The paper concluded that the conceptualization and design, as well as the general guidance of foreign policy must be left in the hands of technocrats rather than bureaucrats and lay politicians.

Keywords: Foreign Policy Orientation, Concentricism, Continuity, Change, Leadership, Consensus.

Introduction

One of the greatest challenges that the post-colonial States of Africa and the third world had to face upon the attainment of political independence, was how to develop and consolidate a foreign policy orientation to meet the challenges of international Power Politics. These were basically challenges posed by their abrupt entry into the existing international arena which had been one-sidedly skewed in favour of the major powers, and which presented to the new entrants a socio-economic, political and structural *fait accompli*. Coming from a background of socio-political and economic servitude, within the context of a praetorian political socialization and cultural alienation, these new entrants into the international arena obviously found the process of navigating their way through the murky waters of international power politics a rather arduous task.

In the specific case of Nigeria, a country endowed with a kaleidoscope of rainbow coloured *pot pourri* of ethnic nationalities, socio-politically and culturally defracted, and roughly welded together by colonial and military praetorian rules, the situation was particularly pathetic. In the

circumstances, it appears natural that the most fundamental and central problem of Nigeria's foreign policy remains how to forge a national consensus behind any foreign policy issue or challenge which the country has to address on the world stage. Consequently, it was often very difficult for the country to uphold with conviction a definite stand on issues on the world stage, even when such a stand is perceived to be necessary. Thus according to Joseph Nanven Garba, a one-time Nigerian foreign minister under the Murtala/Obasanjo regime:

We want the nation to be positively neutral, in the sense that we want to take an independent stand on major issues, and we don't want to sit on the fence. What was happening was that, when we send delegates out on national service to international conferences, **we usually failed to brief them about our stand, they sat back rather than commit themselves on any issue** (Oyediran 1975) (emphasis mine)

This has been due mainly to the dictates of a domestic reality, occasioned by a fractured and diffracted society enmeshed in an unending struggle to find a national consensus. It was therefore extremely difficult for the country to embrace any integrated system of ideas to guide Nigeria's foreign relations and give the necessary direction to foreign policy. Even when such visionary scholars, practitioners and technocrats in foreign relations as Bolaji Akinyemi and Ibrahim Gambari had left behind an enlightened body of ideas to drive the country's foreign policy machinery and give it a sustainable orientation, the attainment of a capacity for reliable implementation has continued to "blow in the wind". This is fundamentally because it has, over the years proved very difficult for our leaders to get the necessary national consensus behind major foreign policy decisions.

The heavy sectional, and to a large extent unenlightened criticisms of the ideas and postulations of these technocrats point most sharply to the invidious effects on foreign policy, of a lack of national consensus occasioned by the very structural contradictions that threaten the domestic milieu. The insidious effects of divide-and-rule politics introduced by the British colonial praetors, and perfected by military praetorian socialization, have left behind the bitter taste of a barrack mentality amongst the populace. This has further exacerbated the subsisting cleavages already precipitated by the careless attempt to roughly weld together incompatible ethnic nationalities to form one giant political entity with an alien political culture, structure and orientation.

Superimposed on this was a rash of democratic experiments which may be better described as "civilian administrations" steeped in sectional politics of prebendalism in a zero-sum political struggle among the ethnic-based political parties. The occasional alliances of convenience between these parties have done little to forge a national ideological consensus that can form a basis for stable foreign relations. The net results have therefore been frequent foreign policy somersaults in spite of constitutional provisions specifying the necessary or fundamental building blocks for a viable foreign policy orientation.

This paper examines in a historical and analytical perspective the various elements of continuity and change in Nigeria's foreign policy from independence till date with a view to identifying and analyzing those factors that have always influenced our external relations. The paper also attempts to identify future trends in Nigeria's foreign relations and proffer suggestions for a more stable orientation in foreign policy. This is not only a *sine qua non* for the attainment of the national objective of guaranteeing economic well-being of the people through the attraction of foreign private investment, it is also a basic prerequisite for forging a new partnership for African development (NEPAD) and the attainment of sustainable Development goals in the 21st Century.

The Concept of Foreign Policy

The notion of foreign policy embraces a deliberately constructed design to fit a country properly into the international system. It is a carefully planned course of action which informs the behavioural pattern of a country towards other countries in the international system, and which is designed to facilitate the attainment of the objectives of a state in its relationship with other members of the international community (Afinotan, 2007).

Within this context, foreign policy is divisible into three broad sections: it involves the setting of goals, the development of strategies for their attainment, and the implementation of those strategies or conduct of the foreign policy (Afinotan, 2007). Basically, the main elements of foreign policy would include such things as the overall policy orientation of a country towards her external environment, manifesting her intentions towards that environment, the objectives which she seeks to achieve in her relations with other countries, and the means for achieving those objectives (Adeniran, 1983). According to Holsti (1983), foreign policy deals with the actions of a state towards its external environment. And Northedge (1968) describes it as "an interplay between the outside and the inside". Whereas Rosenau (1974) argues that, it is the authoritative action which Governments take, or are committed to take in order to preserve the desirable aspects of the international environment or alter its undesirable aspects.

Anderson and Greene (1983) view foreign policy as; "the pattern of behaviour that one state adopts while pursuing its interests in relations with other nations". In this perspective, foreign policy is concerned with the process of decisions to follow specific courses of action. For Adeniran (1985) however, foreign policy consists of goals and objectives which a nation seeks to achieve and the means at her disposal for achieving them. Kolawole (2001) summarises the various definitions of foreign policy thus: That first, foreign policy is usually an attempt at shaping the world towards a nation's direction of the ideal system. Second, that in its formulation and execution, it realizes the existence of, and aims at other actors in the international system. And finally, that there is an organic relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy. A nation's foreign policy is in part, a reflection of its domestic policy.

Central to the concept of foreign policy however is the idea of national interest which constitutes the fulcrum around which foreign policy revolves (Afinotan, 2007). In the specific case of Nigeria, the search for national unity has come to assume the dimensions of a national

survival project, and an issue of strategic national interest. Since all state policy, domestic or foreign is directed in the first place towards the attainment and preservation of national security and survival, Nigeria's quest for unity, constitutes an important issue area towards which state policy is being directed. And central to this issue is the search for a definite national orientation with which all Nigerians can identify, and around which they will all be prepared to rally. And according to Afinotan (2007), "this may be more easily found in foreign relations and foreign policy than in the beleaguered milieu of the domestic setting."

Some Basic Contextual Considerations

Any analysis of the evolution and further development of Nigeria's external relations must of necessity take into consideration some basic contextual factors in the context of the ecological framework within which Nigeria's foreign policy took shape. These may also be described as fundamental determinants of Nigeria's foreign policy. In this regard, one major contextual factor is the foreign policy decision-making environment. Foreign Policy decision-making is not done in a vacuum. The ecological factors within which context, decisions are made tend to impact very significantly on the nature and content as well as the general orientation of the policy output which are fed back into the environment by decision makers. In the specific case of Nigeria, the foreign policy making and implementation machinery as well as the environment from which inputs flow into the system have been very significant as key determinants of Nigeria's foreign policy.

Part of the environment is the key bureaucratic institutions responsible for policy making within the country. These include *inter alia*, the Presidency, the Ministry of External Affairs, other ministries such as Defence, Finance, Commerce and Industry, as well as the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, all play various roles in the policy making conversion box. The Nigerian Institute of International Affairs however, is fundamentally a research institute that plays only an advisory role, in foreign policy making and implementation. Its main focus is to provide and maintain means of information upon international questions and promote the study and investigation of Nigeria and international questions by means of conferences, lectures and discussions, and by the preparation and publication of books, records, reports or otherwise as may seem desirable, so as to develop a body of informed opinion on Nigeria and the world. The Institute also seeks to encourage and facilitate the understanding of international affairs and of the circumstances, conditions and attitudes of foreign countries and their peoples. It also strives to promote the scientific study of international politics, economics and jurisprudence. (Delancy, 1976).

The two foremost technocrats who led the affairs of the Institute at different times; Professors Bolaji Akinyemi and Ibrahim Gambari not only became Nigeria's foreign ministers, but were also the most successful technocrats with the greatest impact on Nigeria's foreign policy orientation to date (Afinotan, 2007).

The Ministry of External Affairs has the primary responsibility for the day to day running and conduct of Nigeria's foreign relations. Established in 1957 as a division of the Prime Minister's

office, to take charge of Nigeria's foreign affairs under the British colonial government, it was reconstituted and upgraded to a full-fledged ministry of foreign affairs and commonwealth relations. In 1963, it was renamed the Ministry of External Affairs (Afinotan, 2002). The political head of the ministry is the minister of external affairs who bears primary responsibility within the government for the conduct of the country's foreign relations. At the apex of the administrative pyramid is the Permanent Secretary who is coordinator of the ministry's activities, as well as being the chief adviser to the Minister and the general overseer of the nation's missions abroad. (Afinotan, 2002)

The impact of this ministry on the conduct of Nigeria's foreign policy is to say the least, often very decisive, if not overwhelming. This depends among other things on; the personality of the External Affairs Minister, the personality and foreign policy interests of the prevailing Head of State, and on the specific issues involved at any point in time. For instance, during the Abacha regime, foreign policy decisions were said to be made by the Head of State, the External Affairs Minister and very few trusted officials, instead of the official cabinet (Kolawole, 1998). Generally however, the over-arching influence of the Ministry of External Affairs on foreign policy, which very often manifests in a politics of exclusion when relating with other institutions of state, was considered worrisome even by incumbent Ministers of External Affairs. This overwhelming influence as a manifestation of an internal struggle for power and control by the bureaucracy sometimes takes on such aura of importance as to compromise and override Nigeria's manifest interests. According to Bolaji Akinyemi, Nigeria's one time Minister of External Affairs:

The Angolan episode was a baptism of fire for me in many respects. Up to that time, in my naivety, I had always assumed that, that cherished concept called national interest will always dictate. That it is not really who does what, that counts as long as, at the end of the day, the decision is in the national interest... I was soon to find out that bureaucratic in-fighting for the power to take decision, and to fight against any encroachment on that power, was more important than whether the decision is actually taken or not. (Akinyemi, 1983)

This underlines in bold letters the importance of the role of the ministry in furthering or impeding the foreign policy articulation and implementation process, according to the efficiency and effectiveness or otherwise of the bureaucratic process. Ibrahim Gambari, external affairs minister after Akinyemi, presents this impact in clearer perspective when he stated the issues thus:

Worse still, there has been considerable resentment by home ministries against the foreign ministry. Personality conflicts, rivalries and petty jealousies were only part of the problem. The larger problem has been the lack of any focal point of the coordination for the activities of the ministries of External Affairs with those of the home ministries where external relations were concerned. When inter-ministerial meetings took place, they tended to be ad hoc in nature, and participation rarely included the ministers themselves.(Gambari, 1986).

It is fairly obvious from the foregoing therefore that the role of the Ministry of external affairs in Foreign Policy decision-making and implementation is central to the understanding of the entire process of foreign policy management in Nigeria. As a contextual factor in the determination of Nigeria's foreign policy, the centrality of the role of this ministry cannot be overemphasized. It must however be stressed here that the influence of the foreign ministry on policy will largely depend on the personality of the foreign minister, his standing with the prevailing Head of State, as well as his foreign policy expertise, and the degree of leverage allowed the Ministry by the Head of State.

Conceptual Framework

Our preferred conceptual framework for analysis in this study is the Leadership personality model. This is basically on account of its centrality to the purpose content, and essential nature of our current problematique. Dipo Kolawole (1997) had posited that it is the leadership of a country that usually defines in broad terms the foreign policy directions of a nation. He further argued that such definition is usually based on the leadership cognitive perception of world events in relation to its own country's national interest; stating emphatically that the variation in the character of individuals in the leadership hierarchy of a country at any given time would influence and determine the foreign policy directions of such a country. In this very succinct argument, Kolawole summarized the *Leadership personality Model* as a framework for analysis of a country's foreign policy, concluding that it is the leadership that gives both content and direction to foreign policy.

Arguing in support of this position, Rosen and Jones (1980) posit that the quality of leadership orchestrates the other components of national power, defines goals in a realizable manner and determines the path of strategy.

According to Rosen and Jones (1980)

China exemplifies the extent to which a change in leadership alone can mobilize the other latent energies and capacities of a nation, transforming it from a weak victim of a succession of international predators to a self-sufficient power able to exercise considerable influence on foreign affairs. The same population with the same territory and endowment of natural resources, can be weak and disunited or strong and dynamic, depending on the quality of leadership... Leadership cannot create power out of air, but it can dip into untapped reserves of national creative energy. Sometimes a single statesman makes the difference.

Scholars who have made use of this paradigm in political analysis include Rosenau who identified the personality factor as the first of the five variables influencing foreign policy behaviour. According to Rosenau (1966)

The first set encompasses the idiosyncrasies of the decision makers who determine the implement of foreign policies of a nation. Idiosyncratic variables

include all those aspects of a decision-maker; his values, talents and prior experiences- that distinguish his foreign policy choices or behaviours from those of every other decision-maker.

Herman has also used this model in a study she carried out on Personality and foreign policy behaviour, lamenting the fact that studies in this area has been few (Kolawole, 1998). Other scholars who have applied this approach in various studies include Van Dalen and Ziegler (1977) and Kolawole (1998).

The Leadership personality approach as has been used so far as a tool of analysis of political behaviour has been very useful for the understanding of the individual political leaders in every country and consequently also in understanding the behaviour of state actors in the international system. This is basically because, it does in the first instance study the relationship between personality traits and the behaviour of individuals whose actions impact directly upon the foreign policy behaviour of their home countries (Kolawole, 1998), as well as indirectly upon the international socio-political environment at large. In the specific case of Nigeria, the lack of general orientation for several years after independence, and the consequent discrete decisions taken with regards to foreign policy issues, have always reflected the personality characteristics of each prevailing Head of State and Government, especially in the military dispensations. Hence this condition *ipso facto*, most aptly situates the leadership personality model in its utility context as our framework for analysis of this problematic.

Continuity in Nigeria's Foreign Policy: Africa as Centre-Piece

One key issue area in which Nigeria's has from independence in 1960 established and maintained a strong and unwavering position in foreign policy is the question of commitment to Africa. Although this concept of Africa as centre piece was not formally articulated at independence, there were speeches and declarations by Prime Minister Balewa that pointed very strongly towards the concretization of this concept as a future foreign policy doctrinaire for the country. According to Balewa, in his UN acceptance speech in 1960:

So far, I have concentrated on the problems of Africa. Please do not think that we are not interested in the problems of the rest of the world: We are intensely interested in them and hope to be allowed to assist in finding solutions to them through this organization, but being human we are naturally concerned first with what affects our immediate neighbourhood (Quoted in Fawole, 2003)

Furthermore, in enunciating the cardinal principles that would underpin Nigeria's external relations, Balewa posited among other things that "Nigeria hopes to work with other African states for the progress of Africa and to assist in bringing all African territories to a state of responsible independence" (Gambari, 1975).

This displays in bold relief the main features of an emerging foreign policy orientation for the young nation. And Fawole (2003) observed:

...the basic principles that can be distilled from the pronouncements of Sir Abubakar and to which all successive Nigerian governments, military and civilians have committed themselves can be summarized as follows... that Africa would be the cornerstone of the country's external relations. (Emphasis mine)

Fawole's observation above establishes without doubt that, with this statement of Balewa, the concept and policy of Africa as centre-piece of Nigeria's foreign policy had been unequivocally stated and the foundation for it unambiguously laid. Balewa had thus made it clear that Africa would occupy a central place in Nigeria's perception of the world, and in the policies designed to fit the country properly into the international political arena. It was only through the prevailing circumstances of the early 1960s, non-the-least of which was his violent overthrow that did not permit his government to give much more dynamic expression to this thrust (Fawole, 2003). Afinotan (2006) had observed that the main aims and objectives of Nigeria's foreign policy may have been more sharply and pointedly defined by successive regimes over the years, but they have undergone no major changes or modification since independence. The orientation had remained basically, a commitment to Africa and Pan-Africanism. And Bumah (2008) had already pointed out that virtually all past administrations in Nigeria have sought among other things to promote, not only the unity of all African states, but also the total political, economic social and cultural liberation of Africa and Africans in diaspora.

It was however, not until the Muritala/Obasanjo regime in 1976 that the idea of Africa as centre-piece of Nigeria's foreign policy was finally concretized. It was under this regime that the Adedeji report on foreign relations coined the "Africa as centre-piece" concept (Gambari, 1985). The leader of this administration gave concrete expression to this concept through their pan African activities which yielded positive results, especially over the decolonization of Angola and Zimbabwe (Gambari, 1985).

By 1979, three years after this concretization, the basic idea of Africa as centre-piece had become, not just a foreign policy doctrinaire, but a basic constitutional provision. According to section 19 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979:

The State shall promote African unity as well as total political, economic, social and cultural liberation of Africa and all other forms of international cooperation conducive to the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect and friendship among all peoples and states, and shall combat racial discrimination in all its manifestations.

This therefore may be considered the most fundamental element of continuity in Nigeria's foreign policy. It was upon this foundation that the national foreign policy orientation of the doctrine of concentric circles was finally built by the Buhari administration in 1983, and

sustained by all succeeding administration including the present administration of President Muhammadu Buhari.

Opposition to Apartheid/Racial Discrimination

The last sentence in section 19, of the 1979 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria states that: "The country shall combat racial discrimination in all its manifestations". This is a fundamental pillar of Nigeria's foreign policy today as it has been for over fifty years since independence. The Murtala/Obasanjo regime had three years earlier (in 1976) declared five main objectives of Nigeria's foreign policy. The fourth of these, according to Olajide Aluko (1981), was the promotion and defence of justice and respect for human dignity, and especially the dignity of the black man.

The fact that this goal is not only realistic but is also realizable within the context of world politics can hardly be in doubt. This is so because it is not the first time that a state will champion the cause of a brutalized race or people with a common identity scattered all over the world. The Jewish Race has proved through the state of Israel that this is not only possible, but also desirable to give a sense of dignity, respectability, identity and commitment to a people. (Afinotan, 2007) And as Fawole (2003) succinctly observed:

The question of racism as exemplified in white supremacist rule in Rhodesia and Apartheid South Africa, was also unacceptable to Nigerians. Opposition to these twin evils had always been a cardinal objective of Nigeria's African diplomacy even before independence.

In justifying his support for liberation movements in Africa, (in 1977), Obasanjo argued that "...wherever any black of Africa is oppressed, we (Nigeria) share the indignity... moral support for liberation movements is a duty in the interest of the black man all over the world. (Ogwu, 1986)

Successive Nigerian governments have not only continued the anti-apartheid policy enunciated by the Balewa government, but have also heightened that commitment through moral, material and diplomatic support for liberation in Southern Africa and other parts of the world. Nigeria had continued to espouse the linkage between the oppression of the black man anywhere in the world, and her core national interest of self-preservation. embracing this philosophy, Nigeria had for over fifty years and cutting across all regimes- military or civilian, continued to maintain and sustain her commitment to, not only the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, but also to all movements across the world dedicated to the eradication of racial discrimination.

Allied to this, is the decolonisation struggle against colonialism on the African continent, was an issue area where the country had been obliged to play leadership roles. This doctrine had not only been fruitful in promoting Nigeria's leadership role in the continent, but had also gained the greatest strength in providing continuity on a specific policy issue (Ogwu, 1986).

Commitment to World Peace

In one of his first foreign policy pronouncements at independence, Balewa stated that, in the United Nations and in any other way possible, Nigeria shall direct her energies and influence to helping to reach solutions which will contribute to the peace of the nations and well-being of mankind. (Idang, 1973)

The Congo crisis of the early 1960s, provided Nigeria with her first opportunity to demonstrate her commitment to world peace, and "contribute to the peace of the nations and well-being of mankind". The participation of Nigerian troops and police in the peace-keeping efforts in the Congo, the Federal Government's call for a fact-finding mission of African nations, 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 displayed in bold relief Nigeria's concern for peace and stability in the continent (Ogwu, 1986). The conciliatory role played by the Gowon administration in resolving the perennial conflict between Kerekou's Togo and Eyadema's Republic of Benin may have served Nigeria's national security interests. But it was no doubt a timely intervention to prevent a wider conflict in the West African sub-region, and contribute to fostering international peace and security on the African Continent.

Nigeria's mediatory role also in the Chadian conflict, through her peace-keeping efforts in not only sending troops to Chad, but also employing economic sanctions contributed in no small measure to sending Hissene Habre and Goukouni Weddeye to the negotiation table. The negotiations ultimately led to the signing of the Lagos Accord of August 1979 which instituted a fresh provisional government and temporarily resolved the conflict.

But by far the largest intervention in peace keeping and enforcement roles by Nigeria was in Liberia and Sierra Leone where Nigeria accounted for between 70% and 90% of the 20,000 troops involved in ECOMOG operations in the beleaguered states (Ajayi, 1998). Nigeria also provided the bulk of the arms and ammunitions used in the operations as well as the bulk of the logistic requirements of the force, for a period of not less than eight years (between 1990 and 1998). In Sierra Leone, Nigeria deployed over 2000 troops as part of an ECOMOG military force of 3000 troops to re-establish democratic governance through restoring President Tejan Kabbah who had been sacked in a military putsch (Ajayi, 1998).

Nigeria had also participated in peace keeping missions under the auspices of the United Nations in Lebanon, Somalia, Sudan and Bosnia. The relentless war against international terrorism and drug trafficking is a major pillar of Nigeria's foreign policy orientation (Afinotan, 2007). Besides, Nigeria is a signatory to and a consistent defender of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. In addition, Nigeria's mature handling of the dispute with Cameroon over the Bakassi Peninsula and her refusal to go to war with Cameroon, even in the face of obvious provocation underlines Nigeria's disposition to maintenance of world peace. Nigeria's commitment to world peace contains a strong element of continuity in a foreign policy issue area that has stretched from Balewa to Buhari.

Economic Diplomacy

One of the biggest problems that the Buhari regime had to contend with upon seizing the reins of government from the Shagari administration on the eve of 1984 was the problem of severe economic downturn. There was an urgent need to inject foreign capital in the form of loans and new credit lines into the already comatose economy in the hope that it could still be revived and made to grow appreciably strong within a relatively short time (Afinotan, 2007). The economic problems were enormous and the challenges almost overwhelming. Nigeria was in a severe debt crisis, oil prices had plunged in the international market. Her traditional creditors, the London and Paris clubs had both refused to grant new credit lines without a fresh guarantee from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). According to Ajayi (2000):

Nigeria's debt situation makes a unique and laughable one, as she could not ascertain how much her external debt is... at a point it was also revealed that the country's debt file was missing, thereby generating some ripples between the Nigerian and British governments

In the meantime, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had offered a loan facility to Nigeria, provided Nigeria was prepared to meet the relevant conditionalities which were generally perceived as being too stiff to be useful to the country, and carried the economic difficulties and pauperizing the populace. (Afinotan, 2007) It was in the midst of this dilemma that Bolaji Akinyemi was appointed as minister of external affairs by the Babangida administration in 1985, with one of his first major tasks being to fashion out a programme of economic diplomacy capable of effecting a lasting diplomatic rapprochement between Nigeria and Britain, also the Paris and London clubs as a means of facilitating economic recovery at home. It was Akinyemi's largely successful shuttle diplomacy in pursuit of Nigeria's economic recovery programme that eventually earned him the appellation of "Africa's Henry Kissinger". (Afinotan, 2007)

The major aims of Babangida's economic diplomacy were: first, to find ways and means of attracting foreign investments; second was to seek the understanding of the foreign creditors as regards the rescheduling of Nigeria's debts. Third, was to promote the export of non-oil products. And fourth was to support the strategy of export oriented growth and development in general. (Ajayi 1991)

Subsequent administrations from Chief Obasanjo, through Yar'Adua to Jonathan and currently Buhari, have all striven to promote these ideals of economic diplomacy first enunciated by the Babangida Administration in 1985. As an element of continuity in Nigeria's foreign Policy, economic diplomacy has occupied a place of priority in our foreign policy calculations over the years, and across both military and civilian administrations.

Change in Nigeria's Foreign Policy: From Anglophilism to Concentricism

The basic elements of change in Nigeria's foreign policy over the years, has been concerned more with specific issue areas rather than a radical change in general orientation. These

changes were also linked more with the leadership personalities of successive regimes rather than with fundamental changes in domestic realities in terms of basic values, interests and objectives. In at least one issue area, the re-organization of Nigeria's foreign policy has produced a change in methodology and approach, leading to a distinct and more focused orientation. This has in turn led to new continuities in policy direction as well as a consistent commitment to clearly discernible and understandable orientation which, as an exception has produced a domestic consensus around which all Nigerians have been willing to rally. This new and unusual consensus has been formed around the idea of the Doctrine of Concentric Circles.

Nigeria's foreign policy under the Balewa regime in the immediate post-independent years had been unabashedly "Anglophile". It was not only Western-moralistic in content, but also Euro-ethnocentric in orientation, even while proclaiming Africa as being the centre-piece of Nigeria's foreign policy. This early reference to an Afro-centric orientation in foreign policy was nevertheless moderated by Balewa's personal commitment to the afore-mentioned Anglophile policy preferences. However, following the experiences of the Nigerian Civil War and the relatively mild and conciliatory personality characteristics of General Yakubu Gowon, a gradual change in direction became discernible in the Country's foreign relations.

With the disappointing response from Britain and other Western European Countries to Nigeria's request for assistance to prosecute the Civil War campaign, the Country had no choice but to turn away from her traditional Western allies to seek rapprochement with the Soviet bloc to which Nigeria had to turn for the supply of arms to prosecute her war of unity at home (Fawole, 2003). The fundamental lesson from this experience was the need to broaden and diversify the framework of its external relations to include countries of hitherto incompatible ideological persuasions, bringing in its wake a more balanced and interest-driven foreign policy orientation (Fawole, 2003). This also accorded perfectly with the conciliatory disposition of the incumbent war-time Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon.

In addition to this, the reality of external political alignment on both sides of the conflict awakened Nigeria to the realization of the importance of her immediate neighbours to her national security interests. The Francophone neighbours under the prompting of the French, were not only more disposed to supporting Biafra, but were also willing to make their own territories available to France, should that nation decide to intervene on the side of Biafra. This was perhaps displayed in bold relief by the decision of France to deploy in Chad, an unusually large, well-armed and elite contingent of its own forces, having given its recognition to the State of Biafra. The resultant threat to the Country's security made Nigeria very uncomfortable, and caused her to re-define her national security interests to include her immediate neighbours, especially the Francophone States around her.

Perhaps that is why Bolaji Akinyemi argued that Nigeria's role in Africa and the world implies that Nigeria must possess a military force that is second to none in Africa, and must match the military capability of a medium size European Power (Afinotan, 2007). It was therefore hardly surprising that when in 1983, Gambari proposed the idea of the Concentric Circles as a *nouveau*

foreign policy orientation for Nigeria, the then government of General Muhammadu Buhari enthusiastically embraced it, and the preponderance of Nigeria's public opinion and foreign policy elite rallied around the idea. With this, Nigeria had turned a full circle from Anglophilism to Concentricism, thus anchoring for the first time as it were, a genuine and unwavering commitment to Afrocentrism as a foreign policy doctrine.

Nigeria-Francophone Relations: From Rancour to Rapprochement

One of the most problematic issues in Nigeria's foreign relations has been her tenuous and often rancorous relationship of mutual suspicion with its French speaking West African neighbours (Omole, 2010). With France itself, Nigeria's relations have often vacillated between benign neglect, feigned unconcern, and covert hostility (Omole 2010). Following Balewa's response to France's testing of three atomic bombs in Reggan-Algeria in the Sahara desert (Omole, 1996), and especially with regards to the unceremonious and humiliating expulsion of Monsieur Raymond Offroy and nine other French diplomats from Nigeria, France-Nigeria relations hit an all-time low.

In a *Quid-pro-Quo* diplomatic reaction, the then French leader Charles De Gaulle, actually feigned not to locate Nigeria on a world map! (Omole, 2010). With the outbreak of the Nigerian civil war, France's hostility towards Nigeria became displayed in bold relief as France actually supported Biafra's bid to secede from Nigeria, and even influenced Nigeria's Francophone neighbours to openly declare support for the secessionist regime. This was seen as a payback for the humiliation inflicted upon France by Nigeria, with the expulsion of Raymond Offroy. Besides, it was seen as constituting a calculated geo-political strategy by France to support or promote the dismemberment of Nigeria into smaller units, to remove the political and strategic threat an oversized Nigeria could constitute to French geo-political and economic interests in the West African sub-region (Omole, 2010).

It must be remembered that certain factors, none the least of which is the age-long cultural rivalry between Britain and France which was also transferred to their respective colonial territories during the era of colonialism, generated mutual suspicion between an Anglophone Nigeria and her Francophone neighbours. Thus, according to Omole (2010),

This linguistic Schism and banner have had consequences on their relations as it engendered suspicion, mistrust, inclusiveness, and outright hostility between Nigeria and the Francophone states of West Africa. Secondly, Nigeria is more demographically preponderant than all the populations of the French-speaking states of West Africa put together... while the population of Nigeria is about 154 million, Niger 15 million, Chad 11 million, Republic of Benin 9 million, Cameroun 19 million, Togo 6 million, Cote d'ivoire 21 million, and Senegal 12.5 million...

Furthermore, Nigeria is much more endowed with natural resources than any Francophone country in the West African sub-region (Omole, 2010). This immense population has great potentiality for a viable market besides formidable military strength in terms of manpower

which such a preponderant population gap with the Francophone states would endow Nigeria. Nigeria has more men under arms, and more military hardware than any of the Francophone states (Omole, 2010). In addition, Nigeria's market for goods and services is bigger than all the markets of the Francophone states put together (Omole, 2010). All of these constitute reasons for mutual suspicion, schism and mistrust when they are juxtaposed upon already existing traditional cultural rivalry between their erstwhile hegemonial colonial mentors with which they still retain neo-colonial ties.

This situation has over the years led to some kind of regional rivalry and hostility between France and Nigeria, because the French consider the Francophone West African states as territory still under their sphere of influence, a kind of reserved territory which other countries must steer clear of. This attitude on the part of France was what earned her the nickname of the "the policeman of Francophone Africa" (Omole, 2010). This was the situation until the end of the Nigerian Civil War in 1970.

The end of the civil war coincided with an era of oil boom in Nigeria, marked by a period of general prosperity in the country. According to Omole (2010), France guided by her own larger economic interests, not only suddenly forgot her humiliation, but was now able to locate Nigeria on the world map, as she became a major player in Nigeria's new found economic prosperity (Omole, 2010). Apparently, Nigeria's attitude towards the French had also undergone a fundamental transformation.

The reason for this was obviously not only economic and political, but also strategic. Nigeria is geographically contiguous with a number of countries which were under French neo-colonial control. It is obvious that as an aspiring regional power, the country could not fulfill its aspirations without seriously addressing the glaring economic and security challenges in its neighbourhood. Besides the issues of strategic interests, the challenges posed by currency trafficking, smuggling and sundry cross-border crimes, all of which undermine and subvert Nigeria's economic and socio-political interests exert a strategic pressure that could not be lightly ignored.

This fact leaves Nigeria with no alternative but to embark upon a substantive and constructive engagement of not only its Francophone neighbours but also of the French themselves. For Nigeria, the need for constructive diplomatic engagement of her Francophone neighbours was predicated upon, not only territorial contiguity, but also socio-cultural homogeneity which transcends international boundaries across the entire sub-region. A politics of good neighbourliness in the perspective of the fundamental foundations of the Monroe doctrine became inescapable for Nigeria, in pursuit of its aspirations to regional power status. For this to be successful, the cooperation of France was a key variable, making *détente* and *rapprochement* with that European country an unavoidable *sine qua non*

In pursuit of mutual interests therefore, Nigeria and France became enmeshed in a new-found socio-economic cooperation. The French invested extensively in Nigeria's new oil-driven

economic *Eldorado*. The French company, Michelin, French car maker, Peugeot Societe Anonyme (PSA), which in 1972, established its subsidiary, the Peugeot Automobile of Nigeria (PAN), as well as sundry Banking companies from France, settled to business in Nigeria. The Societe Commerciale de L'Ouest Africaine (SCOA), Compagnie Francaise de L'Afrique Occidentale (CFAO), Banque Nationale de Paris, whose subsidiary in Nigeria is the United Bank for Africa (UBA), as well as Credit Lyonnais Nigeria Ltd; in the banking sector began to do business in Nigeria. Besides, the oil company ELF Aquitaine, the construction companies DUMEZ and Fougerolle were getting juicy government contracts and other patronages from Nigeria (Omole, 2010). This was no doubt a very significant diplomatic paradigm shift from hostility to mutual cooperation in Nigeria-Francophone relations.

But by far the most significant deviation from the traditionally rancorous relationship between Nigeria and France was recorded in the last two years. It was occasioned by the Boko Haram insurgency in north-east Nigeria. The threat to mutual security interests of Nigeria, France and the Francophone States of Cameroun, Chad, Niger and Mali, proved too perilous for the hegemonic State to ignore. On the 17th of May 2014, President Hollande of France convened a regional security summit in Paris, attended by major Western leaders besides Nigeria and the French West African States. The goal was to marshal out closer military cooperation and assistance in tackling the threat of terrorism and the consequent humanitarian crisis in the sub-region. Following on the heels of this summit, France provided training equipment for the Nigerian military, which included *inter alia* British military trainers and U.S. surveillance Drones. Through intelligence gathering, information sharing, counter insurgency training, and by provision of equipment to the multi-national force in Ndjamena, France supported massively the war against terrorism in north-east Nigeria.

On Monday 14th September 2015, President Buhari of Nigeria visited Hollande in Paris. At a closed door meeting at the Elysee palace, bilateral talks were held between the two leaders during which they signed several accords on technical, scientific and cultural cooperation, as well as agreements on development issues. This was followed by a second summit in Abuja on Saturday May 14, 2016. At this meeting, Buhari and Hollande discussed issues bordering on new strategies of partnership that would enable Nigeria and her neighbours restore peace in the area already ravaged by the Boko Haram insurgency. But even more significant than these, was the signing of "a letter of intent" which is to pave way for a future defence agreement between Nigeria and France. This unprecedented move highlights only too clearly the trend towards a congruence of strategic interests between the two nations and a decisive change of direction in foreign policy on both sides.

Relations with the United States and the Soviet Union

A key element of change in Nigeria's foreign policy in the last fifty years was in connection with her relations with the Soviet Union and the United States of America. Upon gaining her independence from Britain in 1960, Nigeria's obvious leaning towards Western Europe and

especially Great Britain, while declaring a doctrine of positive neutrality in the cold war was easily understandable.

Apart from the fact of the personality of its leadership anchored as it was in the nature of Tafawa Balewa, there were more objective physical and domestic realities which impelled Nigeria towards a Western orientation in foreign policy. Nigeria's basic vulnerabilities as an independent nation in need of development and transfer of badly needed modern technology, as well as the need to determine in a sustainable way, the price of her raw materials, posed a serious challenge to the fledging state. This consideration is believed to have accounted for the outward posture of restraint and caution that observers of Nigeria's foreign policy tended to describe as a foreign policy of economic alignment and political non-alignment (Ogwu, 1986). Nigeria was clearly tied economically to the apron-strings of her erstwhile colonial mentor, Great Britain, as a result of which the United States had always viewed her as the exclusive preserve and responsibility of the United Kingdom. Consequently, she had very few direct bilateral links with Nigeria at the latter's independence and during the immediate years following this.

However, following the Arab oil embargo on the US during the 1973-74 Gulf crisis, America had to turn to Nigeria for oil supplies, thus propelling Nigeria into a position of vital economic importance to the United States (Ogwu, 1986). It should be recalled that during the Nigerian Civil war which lasted all of thirty months, Nigeria had turned to America for help in supplying military hardware and technical advice to prosecute the war, having been disappointed by the British. America had pointedly turned down Nigeria's request on the grounds that America considered Nigeria as being in practical terms, a British responsibility. According to American Secretary of State, Dean Rusk; "we regard Nigeria as part of Britain's sphere of influence". With this, America had embargoed the sale of arms to both sides of the Nigeria-Biafra conflict (Fawole, 2003). Up till 1973 therefore, Nigeria's relations with the United States from independence could be categorized as neutral, if not cool.

By 1976 however, Nigeria had become a significant, if not a principal supplier of oil to the United States. By 1977, Nigeria's oil exports to the United States had reached a peak of 90%, elevating it to the position of America's second major supplier of petroleum after Saudi Arabia (Ogwu, 1986). This fact had in turn made the United States a major supplier of badly needed foreign exchange to Nigeria, accompanied by enormous balance of trade deficit in favour of Nigeria. By 1980, the US was over 8 billion dollars in trade deficit with Nigeria.

Politically, Nigeria also steadily acquired fundamental importance to the United States in the pursuit of the latter's policy towards Africa. As a direct result of Nigeria's almost messianic mission in Africa, and the United States' comprehensive competition with the Soviet Union, Nigeria had become politically strategic to the US. It was in recognition of this that the Ford Administration in the US sought to leverage on his country's new relationship with Nigeria to influence the legitimization of UNITA and FLNA to try to end the Angolan crisis.

What is even more germane to Nigeria's change of policy towards the United States was the reality of her domestic politics, through the adoption of the American type constitutional Presidential Federalism. This decisively brought into play a twin economic and political linkage aptly described by Ali Mazrui as "Fuel and Federalism" (Ogwu, 1986). This was of course reinforced by the binding racial identification of Nigeria with over twenty-five million black Americans of African origin, who constitute a potential source of foreign policy support for Nigeria in the United States (Ogwu, 1986).

Nigeria on the other hand had in the meantime recognized that in the pursuit of her foreign policy in Southern Africa, the United States and her European allies are pivotal to the attainment of this objective, particularly in regard to the Anglo-American proposal for the independence of Zimbabwe (Ogwu, 1986). A combination of these economic and political ties and links informed and conditioned the development of a new orientation and fundamental change in Nigeria-US relations, a relationship which is built on mutual economic, political, cultural, strategic and ideological interests and objectives.

The change in Nigeria's relationship with the Soviet Union which really began in the early 1970s was no less dramatic. Having learnt important lessons from the civil war experience, Nigeria had become a lot more enlightened in the game of international politics. Most fundamental was the fact that there are neither saints nor villains in the international arena, but that only permanent interests determine the action of states. Nigeria naturally sought to encourage closer ties with the Soviet Union, in a sharp deviation from her hitherto pro-western inclination in international relations.

Deserted by her traditional western friends during the war against Biafra, Nigeria had sought desperately needed weapons of war from the Soviet Union, which, as the world's largest producer of arms, needed buyers for her weapons (Fawole, 2003). In addition, Moscow had deployed soviet military and other technical personnel to train Nigerian soldiers in the handling and use of Soviet weapons. According to Fawole (2003), "the old restrictions that punctuated bilateral relations surreptitiously vanished as the Soviet Union became Nigeria's best friend and ally. Nigeria turned full circle from its old rabid anti-communist ways to become Moscow's number one partner on the African continent".

Perhaps nothing typified this change more than the high profile state visit to Moscow by a Nigerian (incumbent) Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, who had to personally express Nigeria's gratitude to the Soviet Union for her timely assistance to Nigeria during the war with Biafra. Besides this, the 1970s witnessed stronger business ties with the two countries, culminating in the award of the contract for the construction of Nigeria's multi-billion Naira iron and steel industry at Ajaokuta (Fawole, 2003)

New Emphasis on Reciprocity and Citizen Diplomacy

The idea of reciprocity as a foreign policy doctrine was first mooted by Professor Bolaji Akinyemi at the Kuru Conference of 7th April, 1986. This idea, also known as the Akinyemi

Doctrine, or also the Kuru doctrine on reciprocity and consultation, in its essential meaning and connotation, stands on a tripod.

First is that, if Nigeria must continue to defend the interest of African states, then Nigeria's interest must be viewed as important and must be defended by African states in reciprocity. Second is that, if Nigeria is expected by other African states to stand up for and respond in defense of the interests of Africa whenever such interests are threatened, then Nigeria must be consulted when the situation calls for consultation. And third is that Nigeria does not occupy a position of subservience vis-à-vis the rest of Africa, and therefore her support for other nations' brinkmanship should not be automatic and hence such support must not be taken for granted by other nations in Africa (Afinotan, 2007).

To situate this within its proper context, it must be remembered that the main thrust of Nigeria's foreign policy had been defined within the framework of the "Africa as centre-piece" idea, since independence in 1960. This meant that Nigeria had failed to focus its moral, material and financial assistance to the continent towards the attainment of its national interests and core foreign policy objectives. Thus, Nigeria's "big brother" role in African politics has always been a self-sacrificing one. The result was that Nigeria began to witness a challenge to its claim to Africa's leadership from lesser countries, especially Libya. Akinyemi had therefore argued that with the clear and empirical evidence that Nigeria's interests were being continually undermined by African states with impunity, Nigeria had a duty and a right to review its self-sacrificing big brother attitude to African issues.

What the Kuru declaration by the Nigerian foreign minister was saying is that; if there is one mistake Nigeria had made in the past in her relations with other African states, it is that it carried the policy of self effacement to such an extent that other states in Africa paid as much attention to Nigeria's interests and feelings "as crowds in a circus paid to those of a clown". It became the diplomatic norm in Africa to brush aside rather imperiously, Nigeria's interests (Akinyemi, 1977).

Consequently, if African countries, in spite of Nigeria's contributions would not voluntarily recognize Nigeria's leadership in continental affairs, then Nigeria should feel within her rights to use her vast resources and her good will in the international arena to advance her own interest, which includes extracting respect for herself from those nations in Africa who think they should enjoy Nigeria's support and patronage, and make this a condition for bestowing such patronage.

In spite of various ineffectual criticisms of this doctrine, it did represent a significant paradigm shift in conceptualizing and defining Nigeria's role in Africa, and therefore a significant element of change in Nigeria's foreign policy calculations.

Under the Chief Olusegun Obasanjo administration (1999-2007), Ambassador Olu Adeniji became Nigeria's foreign minister. Seeking to re-conceptualize the concentric circles orientation in Nigeria's foreign policy, the new foreign minister mooted the idea of constructive concentricism. This became the main philosophical foundation for his citizen-centred foreign policy option, a position which not a few Nigerians see as a tautological foreign policy. Since all governance is all about the governed and their overall welfare, it would seem superfluous to characterize a certain policy orientation, foreign or domestic as a citizen-centred policy. All foreign policy therefore should and must be citizen-centred if it is to be relevant and successful. A more useful characterization of Nigeria's foreign policy under that dispensation would simply have been constructive concentricism, a doctrine which seeks to provide a new direction for foreign policy in Nigeria (Akinterinwa, 2004), a new foreign policy orientation which in many respects, only represents a transformation of the old concentric circles idea.

This however already constitutes a significant element of change in the foreign policy orientation of the Nigerian state. However, it still remains to be seen whether or not this new orientation will find general acceptance and become sustainable under successive regimes in the near future. Perhaps much more work needs to be done in this respect, to help situate this idea within its proper utility context as a viable foreign policy doctrinaire for Nigeria in the 21st century.

New Engagement with the Far East: Nigeria-China Relations

Nigeria's foreign policy towards China constitutes a significant element of change in general orientation from the previously rabidly pro-West perspective of the immediate post-independence years. China's engagement with Nigeria began at independence in 1960 when, upon Nigeria's invitation a delegation from China arrived in Nigeria to attend the country's independence celebrations. It was however not until 1971 that formal diplomatic ties between the two countries was established, following which a six-man delegation from Nigeria visited Beijing in August, 1972.

The Delegation led by Adebayo Adedeji, the then Nigeria's Commissioner for Economic Reconstruction and Development, signed agreements on economic and technical co-operation with the Chinese (Manko, 2015). Nigeria's principal area of engagement with China over the years has centered on trade and investment, especially on infrastructure and primary products. Nigeria's economic relations with China however developed rather slowly over the years with the balance of trade weighing heavily in favour of China. Between 1975 and 1976 for example, Nigeria's imports from China did not exceed 140 million USD, while export for both years stood at 8.5 million USD.

But the impact of economic and political sanctions on Nigeria during the Sanni Abacha regime by the United States and Western allies, over the regimes' human right abuses impelled Nigeria to shift her gaze towards the East from her former Western orientation. Nevertheless, the balance of trade continued to favour the Chinese by a wide margin, in spite of measures taken by both countries to redress the imbalance.

Under the Obasanjo regime in 1999, the President of Nigeria visited China twice in three years (between 1999 and 2001), leading to the signing of various protocols concerning trade and investment as well as technical, scientific and technological cooperation between the two countries. These deals also provided for substantial investment in the Nigerian oil industry by the Chinese (Manko, 2015).

By February 2008, when President Umar Musa Yar'Adua visited China, both countries had moved closer to one another, agreeing to pursue a strategic partnership in power and energy as well as transport infrastructure.

Under the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, Nigeria-China relations expanded considerably, with Chinese companies being awarded substantial contracts in the Nigerian economy, especially in the power sector and the railway system (Manko, 2015).

With the sudden and expected decline in Western demand for Nigeria's oil, the Jonathan administration began a frantic search for new customers for Nigeria's crude oil. As a way of preventing its monocultural and oil dependent economy from imminent collapse, the Jonathan administration took the search for new markets to the Far East, targeting the rapidly expanding Chinese economy. Jonathan began to encourage China to take greater interest in the Nigerian economy as its preferred new investment destination (Udo, 2013). Jonathan led a high-powered delegation consisting of state governors, members of the National Assembly, Ministers and representatives of Nigeria's private sector in Beijing. The object of the visit was to hold high-level talks with Chinese leaders and captains of industry on the prospects of increasing China's direct investment in the Nigerian economy. A part of the bilateral agreements to be signed between the two countries during the five-day visit would be a 3 billion USD Chinese loan to build new infrastructure in Nigeria.

Perhaps, this explains in part why Jonathan's successor in office, President Muhammadu Buhari received an invitation from his Chinese counterpart, President Xi Jinping to pay a state visit to China from April 11 to April 15, 2016. Both presidents were to hold talks and exchange views on bilateral relations and issues of common concern. Nigeria's engagement with China has, over the years produced truly significant results, especially with regards to economic cooperation. According to the statistics of the General Administration of Customs of China: The economic and commercial counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Nigeria, Mr Zao Ling Xiang highlighted the major feats in relations between both parties since its establishment of Diplomatic relations and the 11th anniversary of the establishment of strategic partnership between China and Nigeria. During those years, economic and trade cooperation has always been like an anchor and propeller of China-Nigeria relationship... total bilateral trade volume between China and Nigeria, from 2004 to 2015 recorded at 101 billion dollars. The bilateral trade volume between both countries stood at 14.94 billion dollars in 2015 (Olaitan, 2016)

The counselor further observed that the figures constituted 8.3 percent of China's total trade with Africa, and 42% of its trade with ECOWAS. The major commodities exported by Nigeria to China are; mineral resources, wood, agricultural produce like cotton, palm oil seeds and cashew nuts *inter alia* (Olaitan, 2016). Whereas on its own part, China has exported to Nigeria electrical machinery equipment, machinery and mechanical appliances and vehicles. In addition, a large number of projects are being implemented in Nigeria with funds from China, with advanced technologies and services. These projects are said to have created more than 20,000 jobs for Nigerians.

Thus, since the last few years both countries have sought to advance and maintain enhanced bilateral ties through high-level exchanges at various levels on the international arena.

According to a press release by the Federal Government of Nigeria on the 15th of April 2016, "President Buhari has expressed satisfaction with the outcome of his working visit to China, which has yielded additional investments in Nigeria exceeding 6 billion dollars. President Buhari believes that the several agreements concluded with the Chinese during the visit will have a huge and positive impact on key sectors of the Nigerian economy, including power, solid minerals, agriculture, housing and rail transportation" (Premium Times, April 15, 2016).

This evolving new dimension in foreign policy orientation observable in Nigeria-China relations is a clear departure from the pro-West ideological perspective of the last millennium, and an important element of change in the foreign policy pursuit of the country at the world stage.

Concluding Remarks

As has been established so far in this discourse, Nigeria's foreign policy has exhibited such significant elements of continuity over the years as to present a picture of consistency and strength. This is certainly good for the nation's image as a courageous and consistent fighter for the African personality and pride, especially in an age of racial bigotry. It has also enhanced her claim to leadership of Africa, and of the Black peoples all over the world. But the gap between image and reality, between the psychological and the operational perceptual environment in a Sprout and Sprout perspective, needs to be narrowed to the point of congruence. The Country still seems a long way to this lofty goal, as achievement has consistently failed to approximate to or even reflect manifest potentials. This has been attributed largely to leadership failure especially in the realm of policy conceptualization, design and implementation. It is for this reason that changes in foreign policy management and methodology has become an unavoidable *sine qua non* for development and progress on the world stage. The need for a deliberately constructed design to fit the country properly into the global socio-political arena, a carefully planned course of action which is to inform the behavioural pattern of the Country towards the international community, in such a way as to facilitate the attainment of its objectives, is the real purport of the various changes observed in the Nation's foreign policy in the post-Balewa years.

However, these changes must no longer depend so completely on the personalities of the various leaders alone, but more fundamentally, reflect on a consistent basis the permanent interests of Nigeria as a nation, and a conscious and focused player on the international economic and political chessboard of Power Politics. Hence the need for a new foreign policy orientation, capable of attaining this lofty goal, as the country progresses farther into the new millennium. The idea of concentricism as it is conceived now, is no longer adequate as a foreign policy doctrine, and a tool for the attainment of the objectives of Nigeria's national interests, and must therefore be re-conceptualized without delay. To this effect, it may be a good idea to henceforth, and for a fairly long time to come, leave the design, conceptualization and general guidance of foreign policy issues in the hands of technocrats, rather than bureaucrats and lay politicians.

REFERENCES

- Adeniran, T. (1983). *Introduction to International Relations*. Ibadan: Macmillan Publishers.
- Afinotan, L. A. (2007). *Technocrats and Nigerian Foreign Policy: Analysis of the Roles of Bolaji Akinyemi and Ibrahim Gambari in Nigeria's Foreign Policy*. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis; Department of Political Science, University of Ado-Ekiti.
- _____ (2010) "Nigerian Foreign Policy Objectives and the Problem of Terrorism." In Omotoso F, Agagu A, and Abegunde O. (eds). *Governance Politics and Policies in Nigeria*. Porto Novo: ESAF.
- Ajayi, K. (1991) *Innovation in Nigeria's Foreign Policy. The Babangida Administration's Economic Diplomacy*. Ibadan: Unpublished M.Sc Project Work, University of Ibadan.
- _____ (1998) "Public Policy and Political Scientists in the Babangida Administration 1985-1993" *Journal of the Faculty of Administration*. Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.
- _____ (2000). *International Administration and Economic Relations in a Changing World*. Ilorin: Majab Publishers.
- Akinyemi, A.B (1983) *A Farewell to Policy*. Lagos: Nigerian Constitution of International Affairs.
- Aluko, O. (1981). *Essays on Nigerian Foreign Policy*. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.
- Anderson and Greene (1983). *Introduction to Political Science*. Japan: McGraw Hill Book Company.
- Delancy. M. (1977) *The Nigerian Institute of International Affairs*. Lagos: Reports; Mimeograph.
- Fawole, W. A. (2003) *Nigeria's External Relations and Foreign Policy under Military Rule (1966-1999)*. Ile-Ife: OAU Press Ltd.
- Gambari, I. (1975). Quoted in Fawole (2003), *Nigeria's External Relations and Foreign Policy under Military Rule (1966-1999)*. Ile-Ife: OAU Press Ltd.

- _____ (1985). "Nigeria's Foreign Policy: The Search for Consensus on Major Issues". In Atanda, J. A and Aliyu, A.Y. (eds) *Political Development in Nigeria*. Zaria: The Panel on Nigeria Since Independence History Project.
- Holsti, K. J. (1983) *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*. London: Prentice Hall International Inc.
- Idang, G. J. (1973) *Nigeria's Internal Politics and Foreign Policy (1960-1966)*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Kolawole, D. (1997) "Nigeria's Foreign Policy under the Abacha Regime" In Dipo Kolawole (ed). *Readings in Political Science*. Ibadan: Dekaal Publishers.
- _____ (1998) "Personality and Foreign Policy. An Analysis of the Idiosyncratic attributes of Selected Nigerian Foreign Ministers". In Kolawole, D (ed) *Issues in Nigerian Government and Politics*. Ibadan: Dekaal Publishers.
- _____ (2001). *Military Rule and Nigeria's Foreign Policy (1966-1999)*. Ibadan: Rulad Publishers.
- Manko, R. R. (2016) "Nigeria-China Economic Relations from 1999-2014" Retrieved from <http://www.nationalreview.ng/component/k2/item/885-nigeria-china-economic-relations.html>
- Northege, F.S. (1968) *Foreign Policies of the Major Powers*. London: Faber and Faber
- Ogwu, U. J (1986) *Nigeria Foreign Policy- Alternative Futures*. Lagos: Nigeria Institute of International Affairs and Macmillan Publishers
- Olaitan, K. (2016) "Buhari's Visit and Prospects for Nigeria-China Relations" Retrieved from <http://guardian.ng/features/buharis-visit-and-prospects-for-nigeria-china-relations/>
- Omole, B. (1996) *Now That the Myth is Broken: Re-appraising Nigeria's Francophone Diplomacy Beyond the Year 2000AD*. Ile-Ife: OAU Press.
- _____ (2010) *Nigeria, France and the Francophone States: The Joy and Anguish of a Regional Power*. Ile-Ife: OAU Press Limited.
- Oyediran, O. (1975). "Survey of Nigeria's Affairs". Quoted in Kolawole; *Military Rule and Foreign Policy*. Ibadan: Rulad Publishers
- Premium Times (April 15, 2016 Press Release) "Presidency Lists Nigeria's Benefit from Buhari's China Visit. Retrieved from <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/topnews/201873-presidency-lists-nigerias-benefits-buharis-china-visit.html>
- Rosen, S. and Jones, W. (1980). *The Logic of International Relations*. Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers Inc.
- Rosenau, J. (1974) "Comparing Foreign Policies: Why, What, How?" In James Rosenau (ed) *Comparing Foreign Policies*. New York: John Wiley.
- Udo, B. (2013) "As U.S Gradually Closes Door, Nigeria Turns to China to Boost Economy". Retrieved from <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/business/140193-as-us-gradually-closes-door-nigeria-turns-to-china-to-boost-economy.html>