



NIGERIA'S ROLE AND ITS PEACEKEEPING CHALLENGES IN AFRICA: AN ASSESSMENT

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Abstract:

The Nigeria's role in the maintenance of peace and stability in the African continent is great due to its Afrocentric policy. Nigeria has taken part in a numerous peacekeeping and peace-making processes in the continent. In fact, the country's good largesse has cut across the African continent and beyond where the Nigerian peacekeepers had made the country proud in their efforts abroad when returning peace and stability back to the conflicts zones. However, while Nigeria has been making series of sacrifices both length, breath, left, right and centre, committing huge resources (both human and material resources) towards its peace maintenance in the continents particularly the African region, its home / domestic has been faced with series of havocs. These domestic problems ranging from poverty, insecurity, unemployment, malnutrition, ethno-religious crises and many other more had drawn the attention of scholars on the needs for Nigeria to be more rational in its big brother roles in Africa. Apart from that, the Nigeria's big brother role in Africa has not been appreciated by the beneficiaries. Nigeria has often been paid back with ingratitude by African countries to which it had been a benefactor. These formed parts of the gap to be filled in this study. This study therefore employs historical and descriptive methodologies through the use of secondary data to assess the burden shouldered by Nigeria in its course for peace and

stability in Africa through the peacekeeping role with little or no appreciation from the receivers.

Keywords: Nigeria, Africa, military, peacekeeping, burden and challenges

1. Introduction

The African continent is the most ethnically divided societies (Posner 2005). This is because the colonial enterprise created artificial states in Africa through joining together different groups. The colonial masters did nothing to create effective State institutions that will mediate the resulting conflicts between the groups which were forcefully merged together into fragile political entity (Nasongo's 2015a). The colonialism had no plan for effective Statehood post-colonialism in Africa but only organizing the extraction of resources in the African continent and arrange for its transshipment to the colonial metropolises. As a result of these, African continent are confronted with what Nasongo's (2015b) referred to as state building and nation building. In the course of nation / state building of African continent as mending tool to the fragile political institutions inherited from colonialism, violent conflicts emerged. This is what made many studies on Africa to conclude that postcolonial Africa has been the theater of some of the deadliest conflicts in the world (Nasongo's 2015a).

The conflicts in Africa have greatly affected the continent which invariably attributed to some of the developmental backwardness in Africa. According to Nasongo's (2015a), the scourges of war and conflict in Africa have impacted negatively on many African States. This is because many lives were lost, many were affected with diseases through malnutrition and some were forced to dislocate for safety of their lives (William 2016). This disintegration in African continent has caught the attentions of some concerned actors in the continent to rise up to the challenges on how best the menace could be curbed. One of such actors is Nigeria which its impact has been felt throughout the continents, particularly the African region on the need for peace and stability in Africa. Nigeria as an actor in the international community and a hegemon in the African continent has shouldered the responsibility of maintain peace in Africa. This exercise upheld by Nigeria towards maintaining peace has gulped huge amount of money bored by Nigeria and at the same time claimed numerous lives of the country's human resources in the course of restoring peace and stability to the continent (Omaamaka & Groupson-Paul 2015).

In spite of the burden bored by Nigeria in its peacekeeping role in Africa, the country did not relent in its efforts and contribution to the development and stability in the continent. It is at this point that the study will examine the challenges faced by

Nigeria in its peacekeeping and stability role in Africa. Hence, for the clarity of the study, there will be need for conceptual clarification of terms related to the discussion.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1 Notion of Conflict

What is Conflict? In an attempt to understand peacekeeping missions, it becomes imperative to study the term conflict. In the same vein, conflict is central to peacekeeping missions and must equally be understood before any serious study of peacekeeping can be undertaken.

Conflict is defined by William (2016) as the pursuit of incompatible goals by different group. He further explained that conflicts do lead to warfare, and the warfare involves the use of organized violence for political motives which always lead to casualties. Conflict can also mean a situation in which one identifiable unit is in conscious opposition to one or more identifiable units over what are perceived to be unpalatable (Ebo, 1999). From these therefore, it could be saved to infer that, conflict is after all one that defies any attempt to impose order or define rule of behaviour (Chester et al, 1996). Nevertheless, studies have shown that conflict surpasses these notions, there is more to conflict than the narrow conception above. It will blur and limit the understanding of the concept if one restricts oneself to the above definition.

In the 19th century, the German military strategist, Clause wiz assisted in this regard when he called war as; *"the continuation of political activities by other means"* (Nixon, 1983, p.1). What this mean is that, in the United Nations, policy maker who double as politicians selfishly pursue their narrow national interests and that of allies at the expense of the greater ideal. The pursuit of National Interest can lead to war, hence, for obvious reasons national leaders used wars or the threat of war as a last resort to extract concessions from their adversaries. What this portend is that some national leaders are war managers and can go to war deliberately only to achieve certain conceivable benefits. To this end, one can place the action of Hitler of Germany's expansionist tendency as largely responsible for the World War II; the attempt to annex the Czech Republic boomeranged in the series of activities which culminated in the World War II (Nixon, 1983).

Also, happenings in the international arena have revealed that interest articulation and the pursuit of national goals and objectives are the dominant factor responsible for wars. Shortly after World War II, super powers that emerge have pre-occupied themselves with stockpiling arms preparatory to conflict situations. It seems that no country would want to be caught off guard against. However, they were mindless of the over 15 millions and 45 millions death and casualties recorded in both

World War I and II respectively (Nixon, 1983). This mutual distrust, the pursuit of national interest, scramble for colony and a world divided against itself by ideology argued by some scholars are responsible for the accumulation of some deadly and lately considered unacceptable instrument of warfare which was so profusely stocked and extensively utilized in certain conflict situation. Accordingly, Nixon in his book called *Real Peace*, expresses serious fear that:

"..the two super powers cannot afford any war with each other at anytime or any circumstance, each sides vast military might make war obscure, the extent of damages that will be inflicted if the super powers engaged in fierce battle is better imagine"

(Nixon 1983, p.73)

This demonstrates that in any war, there would be no winner but only loser. Nixon further argued that, no matter how small a war is, the mighty and strength of the aggressors certainly men and material losses are recorded.

Also put differently, Charles De Gaulle of France during a meeting in Versailles observed that, in World War II, all the nations of Europe lost (Nixon, 1983). In essence, Charles De Gaulle was trying to stress the disadvantages involved when nations engage themselves in battle. Despite the violent havoc, the destruction to lives and properties, the permanent injuries inflicted to man, nation-states have not been deterred from accumulating weapon of mass destruction. In addition, even since people have learnt to live together as organized society, surprisingly, in any country, defence sector alone have carried the chunk of their budget leaving a paltry sum to other sectors, which are hardly enough to execute laudable programmes (Harrison, 2016).

The bane of conflict can be regarded as man's greater undoing with a destabilizing effect to the economy of nation-states because resources that should be invested in viable and economically rewarding projects are used in stockpiling arms. In other words, the scourge of conflict and the attendant problem caused, no doubt, deny man the judicious utility of his immense resources. Money that should be utilized in good ventures is often diverted into the procurement of weapon of war (Salim, 1996). The reason being that, in the world of today, the strength of any country is not measured by the amount of what that country can produce, but by the size of deadly weapon in that country's arsenal. Observers have argued that, for the super powers, the myth behind stockpiling arms is that, weapon is considered as an instrument to woo compliance and most importantly concession in the international system (Horowitz & Narang, 2014).

Hence, proliferation of arms is central to war. It also means that, country should not necessarily own the plant, in as much as the state has the wherewithal to procure

such. There are countries that produce in excess of their requirements and are equally willing to offer for sale. The fear being expressed by the super powers and international strategist does not include the possibility of a direct conflict between the United States and the Russian Republic or any of the super power for that matter. This can never happen. The USA and other super powers are conscious of the destructive capability of the arms in their possession. This particular fear made the United State turning herself to be world police which invariably made her to invaded attack on Iraq under Saddam Hussein and given warning to Pakistan, Syria and host of others over their nurturing in the production of nuclear weapon (Hallion 1992; Montgomery & Mount 2014). Given both the United States and Russia's experiences with World War I and II, it rationally follows that the world powers will do everything within their means to avert war (Nixon, 1983).

However, the greatest threat to peace would certainly come from the medium powers and the third world countries alike. One can argue that, the Third World Countries are too conscious of the veracity of the deadly weapon in their cache of arms, and can decide to explode such weapon at the slightest provocation (Palmer & Perkins, 1999). What about the storage condition under which such weapons are kept? The fear that conflict will occur is certainly not a new thing to the international community, but the greatest fear is the dynamic turn of event in the last decades, where nation-states had to contend with wars of unimaginable proportion.

Poverty and bad governance are also not strange to the developing countries. Increasingly, what is probably new to developing countries is that millions who endure poverty and bad government are aware of what they are being denied of. The realization that those who live in the West are far more wealthy, far more comfortable and better fed, has created frustration and tension throughout the developing world (Nixon, 1983). This tension and frustration make revolutionary change inevitable. The questions now are whether change will come by peaceful means or by violence? Or whether it destroys or builds? Of course, the questions of peaceful change in the third world countries should be totally ruled out because of the quest for totalitarian leadership style by the elites who would not compromise or dialogue at all. Since conflict has become an integral aspect of man, that is inexcusable, although, can be managed, and the situation which we found ourselves are too precarious to advance our society forward. It is imperative that leaders should seize the moment to negotiate in order to achieve a major breakthrough so that peace can reign supreme based on joint recognition of the harsh reality. This means that when leaders failed to uphold peace before conflict broken out, such leaders would rationally follow the measures to be adopted in managing the unfavourable consequences.

To this end, Nixon suggested that, we must not allow our understandable fear of a nuclear war or conventional war to blind us to the increasing awesome destructiveness of war, be it nuclear or conventional; war is war (Nixon, 1983). Hence, this is to suggest that when there are crises, the international community should be up and doing in the management of war, through peacekeeping missions or conflict control measure.

2.2 Notion of Peacekeeping Missions

The peacekeeping mission is not specifically mentioned in the Charter of the UN, the concept of peacekeeping was introduced to enhance Chapter VI of the UN Charter, which provides for the pacific settlement of disputes. Within ECOWAS, the 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance and Defense empowers member-states to intervene militarily when the security of a member is threatened (Vogt, 2001). According to James;

“a peacekeeping body is a traditional-looking military force, composed of a number of battalions and the authority of a commander. The battalions will have been detached from or supplied by various national armies, and the commander is appointed by, and be responsible to, the international authority which has arranged the operation.”

(James 1990, p.1)

The concept of peacekeeping is derived from certain principles: the consent of the parties to the conflict; the use of force only in self-defense and, more importantly, claims to impartiality. It is well documented that these principles which constitute the basic elements of classical peacekeeping have become problematic in many intra-state conflict situations (Carment & James, 1998; and Gambari 2001).

According to Ryan (1995), when ethnic groups are engaged in violent conflict, peacekeeping is often the most urgent and necessary of all peace strategies since it is the only one which deals directly with the warriors on all sides who are engaged in mutual destruction. Until this violent behavior is stopped, Ryan argues that any attempt at resolution will be an exercise in futility. Therefore, peacekeeping offers temporary relief, in fact it is more a palliative, rather than a cure. Brian (1988), compared peacekeeping to nursing care when he wrote that:

“Peacekeeping is a sort of daily nursing care. It is like the staff in a hospital engaged in getting the patient’s temperature down and keeping him reasonably healthy. And when you get to a certain point, a great surgeon may be able to arrive and deal with the problem. Maybe there isn’t a great surgeon; maybe the case is not operable, in which case

the aim must be to keep the patient reasonably comfortable. One has got to be realistic about the difficulty of settling the basic disputes, which give rise to peacekeeping."

(Brian 1988, p.13)

For the avoidance of doubt, a peacekeeping mission is conceived as a pragmatic strategy for the pursuance of collective security and a guarantor for global peace (Saliu, 1998). In simple term, collective security can be taken to mean that all members within the international system are obliged by responsibility to contribute to the prevention and/or elimination of an unanticipated development in the global system. In other words, this statement implies that the member-states must come to the aid of any member who is distressed (Omede, 1994).

It has been argued that the term peacekeeping mission does not enjoy constitutional authorization (Vogt, 2001; and Hultman, Kathman, & Shannon 2013). This does not mean that the peacekeeping mission is ultra vires. The frequency with which peacekeeping mission is used to manage crisis has bestowed on it in principle the status of a legal instrument (Saliu, 2000). However, peacekeeping mission at the outset witnessed the problem of acceptability; its evolution is not supported by a firm theoretical foundation postulated by international experts. This notwithstanding, as conflicts are managed intermittently, the Secretary General of the UN usually prepares supportive documents to the Security Council which have served the purpose for reference (Onoja, 1996).

Peacekeeping mission according to Onoja (1996) is an operation involving the use of military personnel but without enforcement powers to maintain or restore international peace and security in areas of conflict. It can be deduced from this argument that, for peacekeeping to succeed three principles is strongly considered; it should be based on the consent, cooperation and should be acceptable to all the concerned parties. In another occasion, peacekeeping is seen as a conflict control mechanism whose principal aims is to diffuse tension and to control international disputes or conflicts or to stop conflict from escalation out of proportion (Onoja, 1996). It is only when such a stabilized atmosphere is provided by peacekeepers that negotiation through governmental, political and diplomatic machinery can now spring into action.

Akindele (1988) conceptualizes peacekeeping as prevention and termination of hostilities between and among states through the medium of a third party intervention in order to organize and internationally use multilateral forces of soldier, police and civilian to restore and maintain peace. He also added that, the operational deployment of soldiers, police or civilian is not to fight, but to prevent escalation of conflict while negotiation arbitration and mediation are in progress. While defining peacekeeping, he

does the same with regards to the United Nations. To Akindele, the UN is the most sophisticated political skill mankind ever developed to maintain international peace and security.

From the positions of scholars above therefore, one can infer to peacekeeping as the following, the totality of techniques or processes adopted to;

- put in place modalities to cushion the destructive tendencies inherent in conflict situations,
- prevent the unfavourable development that may arise out of conflict situation,
- once a crisis has been determined, put in place measure to halt the undesirable behaviour and remove the sources of crisis through identification, settlement, agreement or resolution of the conflict (Mitchell, 1989, p.256).

There are some key issues associated with the politics of peacekeeping operations in Africa which influencing the realization of the objectives and determining the degree of effectiveness of the missions. These issues includes; (a) Motivation for Intervention, (b) the politics involved in the process of taking the decision for deployment, (c) the Controversies associated with the deployment of the missions, (d) the contents of the peacekeeping missions, and (f) the Operational Time-Frame. It is important to note that typical examples of countries in West Africa will be used in the course of analyzing.

2.2.1 Motivation for Intervention

In considering the motivation for intervention in recent African conflicts, it needs to be noted that the motives for undertaking any peacekeeping mission is always a controversial issue to gauge and this is indeed a reflection of the degree of political cohesion in the sub-region. In most cases, there are often the “declared” and the “hidden” reasons for intervention (Alao, 1996, pp. 67-70). While the declared are those that come through official government pronouncements and ones which governments and authorizing bodies are often willing to advertise, the hidden ones are those subtle under-currents which they do not openly declare, but are nevertheless paramount in explaining actions that are taken and the decisiveness with which they are executed. This was certainly a crucial factor in explaining interventions in African conflicts, as there were both “declared” and “hidden” motives behind some of the peacekeeping and peace support missions in the region. What however, makes the situation a bit complex in the case of West Africa is that there were often blurred distinctions between the agenda of some key members of either continental or regional organizations such as AU and ECOWAS, notably Nigeria, and the agenda of the organisation (Alao, Mackinlay & Olonisakin, 1999).

2.2.2 The Process of Taking Decisions to Deploy Troops

The processes of taking decisions to deploy peacekeeping missions to countries where there are crises were dictated by two considerations: the prevailing security situations in those countries and the political climate within the organisation member states (Olonisakin, 2000, pp. 12-13). For example in Liberia, as the casualties mounted in August 1990, the decision by the ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) to deploy the ECOMOG force was criticized on the ground that it was illegal because it was the decision of a smaller body of ECOWAS. The process of taking that decision was also influenced by the fact that ECOWAS members were divided with some providing covert and overt support for either side. This compounded the situation and led to the charge of illegality (Olonisakin, 2000). This was later generated controversies about Nigeria's motive in the country.

Also, the process that led to the decision for deployment to Sierra Leone was also complex. Two things must be pointed out to preface any discussion on ECOMOG operations in Sierra Leone. First, the country had provided an operational base and supply route for the ECOMOG operations in Liberia. Second, before the ECOMOG operation was officially deployed in Sierra Leone, Nigeria had, under a bilateral arrangement between the two countries, dispatched a military team to the country at the request of late President Joseph Momoh (Fawole, 2001). The attendant implication of these is that when eventually a peacekeeping mission was to be dispatched, some of the logistical issues that could have made deployment difficult were avoided.

A pattern seems to have emerged, in which regional peacekeepers are first deployed to the target countries – Sierra Leone 1997; Liberia 2003 (ECOMIL), Cote d'Ivoire in 2003 (ECOMICI) – and then "rehabbed" into an expanded, more multi-national, better resourced UN mission (Olonisakin, 2008, p.17). This seems logical if regional organisations can deploy more rapidly and more importantly, can more robustly tackle the murkier operational environment before the arrival of the UN. This is a potentially strong partnership – regional organisations known for robustness, and UN more cautious to undertake UN Chapter VII type operations. This has at times generated criticism in some African quarters that this is an arrangement in which "Africans give the blood and the UN takes the glory" (Olonisakin, 2008, p.25).

2.2.3 The Politics of Deployment

In a climate such as that enumerated above, it was inevitable that controversies would emerge in the decision to deploy. The first intervention in Liberia was controversial, especially as the intervention was deemed illegal by some member states (although by no means illegitimate) (Olonisakin, 2000). It was this that gave a number of Francophone countries, in particular, Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire, the impression

that the intervention was a mere subterfuge to protect the government of the late President Doe (Olonisakin, 2000).

This controversy, which was widely demonstrated at the time of the first ECOWAS intervention in Liberia, later became a major factor in the politics surrounding deployment of troops and appointment of staff officers. Nigerian planners had anticipated some opposition and needed to accord a high degree of legitimacy to the force (Olonisakin, 2000). In order to appease Francophone countries and not to give the impression of wanting to advance a selfish national agenda in Liberia, Nigeria conceded the leadership of the peacekeeping mission to Ghana, despite providing the bulk of the troops for the peacekeeping mission (Berman & Katie, 2000). Throughout the ECOMOG operation in Liberia, the Nigerian contingent made up on average, about 70 percent of the entire force. This explains why a Ghanaian General, Arnold Quinoo, was the first ECOMOG Commander in Liberia.

2.2.4 Contents of Mission Planning and Execution

In all Peacekeeping and Peace Support missions in West Africa and Africa in general, the "contents" have often been determined by the nature of the actors, more than the situation on the ground in those countries (Bellamy & Paul, 2005). In Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Cote d'Ivoire, ECOWAS operations had been largely limited to Peacekeeping and enforcement with the aim of ending the carnage and establishing a semblance of order. At the time the earlier peacekeeping missions were being planned by ECOWAS, not much concern was given to key issues like provision of humanitarian support, peace-building, good governance, development and the re-establishment of rule of law (Olonisakin, 2000).

There are at least three reasons for the neglect of emphasis on long-term developmental agenda. First, the initial desire was to end the carnage and bring political stability to these countries. Already, the extent of the carnage had overwhelmed ECOWAS such that it was not willing to go beyond the initial objective of peacekeeping. Besides, it was clear during the first mission in Liberia that ECOMOG planners had little understanding of the complexities of the new war environments, particularly the scale of humanitarian tragedy. Liberia was one of the first conflicts to demonstrate the scale of challenges posed by intra-state conflict in the post-Cold War era. Second, ECOWAS did not have the resources to sustain peace-building and all its diverse ramifications. Already, the cost of peacekeeping was too great for the organisation and it often had to resort to seeking external assistance to meet the demands of peacekeeping. To thus contemplate adding post-conflict reconstruction and other developmental agenda to its activities was far beyond the capacity of the organisation. Third and related to the second point, ECOWAS did not have a strong

and credible enough structure to handle peace-building (Olonisakin, 2000). Even in peacekeeping where it had achieved considerable success, this was an ad-hoc creation that was designed to meet exigencies.

2.2.5 Operational Time Frame

Not until recently, ECOWAS in all its peacekeeping missions did not specify an exit plan (Abdoulaye, 2000). It was clear that it would not abandon missions, mid-way although mandates were renewed periodically. Typically, Field Commanders presented situation reports to ECOWAS Heads of States and Governments, after which mandates were duly changed or renewed (Olonisakin, 2000). The situation with Peace Support operations was somewhat dependent on the specific actor. While other actors have appeared more flexible in their time scopes, the United Nations often puts its involvement under constant review, with mandates for extension of operations only provided by the UN Security Council (Olonisakin, 2008).

From all the above, it can be seen that the time-frame for operations has varied. While ECOWAS and the UN involvement have always been determined by their respective organisations, they often have to respond to the situation on the ground in war-torn countries on the basis of the needs on the ground and the capacity and degree of political will within the organisation to remain in the operational environment (Olonisakin, 2008). Hence, regional organisations have tended to exhibit greater resolve to deal with conflict in their regions, which ultimately impact on neighbouring countries.

3. Peace Enforcement

It is obvious that the use of force in efforts to reduce violent intrastate conflict constitutes a basic violation of impartiality. Some, like James (2001), have argued that favoritism in intrastate conflicts is more likely to make peacekeepers targets rather than intermediaries. By way of contrast, Betts (2006), argues that intervention cannot hope to maintain impartiality if the form of forceful intervention is limited in scope. He maintains that only in instances where the outside power takes absolute control of the situation and imposes a peace settlement will the intervention yields stability. More limited forms of intervention undertaken with the goal of impartiality will usually keep either belligerent from defeating the other, but will not stop the adversaries from waging war in an attempt to do so.

The argument of Betts is fourfold. First, the intervening force must recognize that to make peace is to decide who rules *post bellum*. The intervening force should have no illusions that force will result in victory of one faction over the other. Second, the

intervener must avoid half-measures, because limited intervention will only create confusion within the belligerents' calculations for victory and create false hopes for victory, thereby increasing the level of violence. Third, Betts counsels that one should not "confuse peace with justice" and that putting an end to the killing should be the intervener's first priority. Fourth, Betts cautions that intervention should be consistent with the interveners' military capabilities and their willingness to engage belligerents with the use of force (Betts 2006, pp. 333-343).

Like Betts, Rothchild & Lake (1998, pp. 203-226) see evidence of a movement towards a norm of collective intervention in a wide range of situations. This includes genocide, delivery of relief's interference, ceasefire violation agreements; pronounce of civil order, and interruption of democratic governance. While coercive intervention can alter the internal balance of ethnic power and thereby equalizing the forces creating a "hurting stalemate". This hurting stalemate according to Rothchild and Lake will neither lead to victory nor to settlement negotiation, but it can lead to situations wherein the intervention emboldens the weaker party. This made Rothchild and Lake to conclude that pressure must be exerted on both sides to moderate their demands.

Hence, the conclusions that can be drawn from the above analyses are; (a) the assumption that interveners must be perceived and act as impartial is flawed, and (b) an intervener should not be discredited in seeing the conflict reach a specific outcome. Indeed, as Zartman & Touval (1998) argue, a prospective intervener may be more effective in achieving a stable, short-term outcome when it has a vested interest in a specific outcome that may favor one side over another. For Zartman and Touval, power is the basis for this process. Power translates into leverage in the form of persuasion, extraction (producing a favorable outcome for each party); termination (withdraw from a negotiation); deprivation (to affect a hurting stalemate by withholding resources from one side or move them to another); and gratification (addition of resources to the outcome). They emphasize that the third party who intervene will make as much of an arithmetic based on interest in deciding to mediate as is the case for adversarial parties when deciding to engage in war. It becomes imperative at this juncture to examine the causes of conflict in the African continent.

4. Major Causes of Conflict in Africa

Most of the causes of conflict in Africa continent today lie in the potent ambition of socio-economic dislocation burdens of debt, IMF, SAP, the insecurity nature of Africa and the needs for democratization. Other includes boundaries disputes, marginalization and demand for empowerment (Adekanye, 2007). The combined effect of these had resulted to the alarming rates on socio-ethnic tension and conflict in the continent. The

links are well established and itemized in various conflict literatures. Adequate sensitization programmes, policy as well as the implementation of such policies should be urgently targeted on these areas in order for the international community to move forward. This will ensure the attainment of goals and objectives for promoting sustainable peace and development in Africa.

There is also a growing recognition in the international community of the fact that the very programmes of its own agencies in Africa, particularly the World Bank and IMF with the imposition of political-economic package of structural adjustment programmes (SAP), which mostly have relatively cause tensions and conflicts. But this has not occurred to many African states, not until the system had thrown a number of them into series of violent conflicts. The SAP as an IMF programme, one of its objectives was to turn African states into a small government (Adekanye, 2007). However, the outcome of such restructuring led to the raising in the role of States in Africa towards eradication of poverty, hunger, ignorance, disease and other obstacles in order to for the continent to improve on its human development index.

The UN as the global organization accepted the interconnectedness of the proposed public investment in the social sphere with the support to device strategy on Africa's external debt. This global body also emphasized on the needs for Africa to develop its own conflict resolution mechanism that will be capable to resolve crises that characterized the African continent (Asongu, Efobi, and Beecroft, 2015). In doing this, it is believe that such will create the linkage on how to tackle the problems of debt burden, poverty and conflict in Africa. Specifically, one of the ways by which Africa can resolve its problems is through improvement in the area of agriculture. The needs to control land degradation, desertification, encourage irrigation and improve soil quality are some of the measures clearly designed to improve food security in Africa (Ayittey, 2011). The abundance food production in Africa that will be sufficient for its populace will relief the ecological problem created by man in the environment. In this regards, African leaders have been intensifying efforts to improve governance that will make the people to live in a crises and conflicts free atmosphere. These can be done through the initiative supports and orientation of the civil society to better States' development, building of independent judicial systems, effectiveness of functional parliaments and making active the electoral processes in order to produce a credible representative that will be accountable to the general public (Ayittey, 2011).

Nigeria as a nation has since independence in 1960 been involved in conflict resolution in various parts of the world, especially in Africa. To Nigeria, the protection and promotion of world peace has been the major pillar of its foreign policy objectives (Okunnu, 2010). In keeping peace, Nigeria has demonstrated its willingness to cooperate and joined forces with other peace-loving members in order to ensure peace

and stability in the African continent. In West-African sub-region, Nigeria has led other members to curtailed conflict and maintains peace in the region. Nigeria has been privileged to achieve this objective due to its self-commitment to Africa's integration. The possession of endowed human and natural resources in Nigeria over its neighbours has been parts of the reasons behind Nigeria's commitment towards peace in Africa (Oni and Taiwo 2016). The search for peace and security in Africa has been pursued through bilateral, multilateral agreement where the regional security architectures are meeting on how to proffer solution to Africa problems.

The Nigeria's commitment to Africa's peace, stability and conflict resolution dated back to 1960s when its troops were to keep peace in Congo. There are other peace engagements that Nigeria had spearheaded such as the 1975 peaceful resolution between Togo and Benin Republic. Nigeria has been featuring in promoting peace in the region, one of such is its deployment of troops to Chad for peacekeeping during the imbroglio (Okunnu, 2010). Another unique role played by Nigeria in integrating Africa was its role to rescued the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU) from disintegration due to the OAU recognition of Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), which against the wish of some members of the organisation (Dokubo & Joseph 2011). Nigerian's leadership role in Africa conflict resolution was manifested into the formation of ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), this canvassed for the success recorded by peacekeepers in Liberia crisis. Nigeria was the largest financier of the mission in Liberia, and ECOMOG did not only resolve the conflict in Liberia but also returned peace to Sierra Leone. Nigeria has equally played a dominant role in Darfur crisis in Sudan, (Dokubo & Joseph 2011). More importantly was the role played by Nigeria in ending apartheid regime in South Africa. Nigeria believes in the use of diplomatic means in resolving issues rather than using force.

5. Nigeria's Peacekeeping Involvements

The Nigeria's contribution to the internal security of other states is impressive. Its government has initiated, coordinated and financed peace missions in Africa. Nigeria has also actively participated in numerous UN peace interventions worldwide, making available men of its police force, navy, army and air force (Ekoko, 1993; Gbor, 2007; Nwolise, 2007) even in times of severe domestic insecurity. In fact, the scope of police roles in peacekeeping has increased considerably so also the participation of Nigeria Police (Julie, 2010). The followings are some of the peacekeeping missions with Nigeria's participation;

- UN Operation in Congo (ONUC) 1960-1964
- UN Security Force in West New Guinea (UNSF) 1962-1983

- UN India-Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM) 1965-1966
- UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) 1978-1983
- Chad Operation (Operation Harmony I) Bilateral 1979
- OAU Mission Intervention Force in Chad (Operation Harmony II) 1981-1982.
- UN Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group 1988-1991
- UN Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM I,II, and III) in 1989-1991, 1991-1992, 1992-1995
- UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia 1989-1990
- UN Mission for Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) 1991 onwards
- UN Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) 1991
- UN Interim Mission Kosovo (UNMIK) 1991
- UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) 1992-1993
- UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I) 1992-1995
- UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) 1992-1995
- UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Yugoslavia 1992-1993
- UN Operation in Mozambique (UNOSOM II) 1992-1995
- UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) 1992 onwards
- Organization of African Unity (OAU) Monitoring Group in Rwanda 1992-1993
- UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) 1993
- UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) 1993-1995
- UN Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) 1993-1995
- Nigeria Peacekeeping Force in Tanzania (TAPKM) 1994
- UN Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) 1994-2000
- UN Group in the Aouzou Strip, Libya/Chad (UNASOG) 1994
- UN Prevention Deployment in Macedonia (UNPREDEP) 1995-2000
- UN Transitional Administration for Eastern Slovenia, Baranja, Western Sirmium in Croatia (UNTAES) 1996-1998
- UN Observer Mission in Previakia (UNMOP) 1996-2000
- UN Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA) July 1997
- ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) Operation Harmony in Liberia 1990-1997
- ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) Operation Sandstorm in Sierra Leone 1997-2000
- UN Civilian Police Support Group, Dambe Region, Croatia 1998
- UN Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) 2000 onwards
- UN Transition Authority in East Timor (UNTAET) 2000
- ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) August-October 2003
- UN Mission in Sudan (AMIS) 2004 onwards

- UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) 2004
- UN-African Union Hybrid Operation in Dafur (UNAMID) 2007 onwards
- UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo 2010 onwards
- UN Organization Interim Security Force for Abyei 2011 onwards
- UN Organization in the Republic of South Sudan 2011 onwards
- UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali 2013 onwards
- UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in in the Central African Republic 2014 onwards, (Chigozie & Ituma, 2015).

In addition to the Nigeria involvement in peacekeeping operations in the World, the country had the largest troop contingent support to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) (Human Rights Watch, 2006) and over 12,000 men of its armed forces were deployed to the ECOMOG PSOs in Liberia and Sierra Leone crises (Abdurrahman, 2005). In 2000, Nigeria contributed 3,404 troops to peacekeeping missions in the world under the umbrella of UN, making her the second largest troop-contributing state after Bangladesh (Ebegbulem, 2012). Between December 2007 and April 2008, Nigeria's troop supports to UN operations increased with the sending of 5,271 troops (Okereke, 2009). Nigerian troops serving under UN mandates in different conflict theatres had increased to over 6,000 by 2013 (Hamman & Omojuwa 2013). The country's total troop deployment for PSOs to date exceeds 100,000.

6. Cost of Frequent Peace Interventions without Positive Rewards for Nigeria

Nigeria has been deeply involved in the peace efforts in Africa, West Africa and particularly in Liberia with serious commitment. Worse still is that similar gestures by Nigeria in the past were not appreciated. The peacekeeping operation in Chad (1979–82) cost Nigeria USD 82 million. Nigeria's intervention in the Liberian crisis from 1991–2003 led it to spend \$12 billion and lose 1000 soldiers. By 2009, Nigeria had provided more than 80% of ECOMOG funding for all its peacekeeping missions (Abubakar, 2009). The deployment of Nigerian troops for the operation in Mali in January 2013 swallowed USD 34 million (Adigbuo, 2013). Also in 1999, Nigeria had spent \$8 billion and equally lost 500 soldiers (Olawale 2003). On the average Nigeria was spending \$1 million daily for the up-keep of the troops and other logistics in Liberia. Testifying before a commission of enquiry on communal clashes in the Middle-Belt, former ECOMOG boss and former Chief of Staff Nigerian Army, Lt. General Victor Malu (rtd.) noted how unprecedented number of corpses of Nigerian soldiers killed were brought home from Liberia while on the peace mission in Liberia and he had directed that they *"be buried secretly in the night to avoid national uproar and panic"* (Olawale, 2003, p. 21). On

its own, the Nigerian Army claimed to have spent N135 million to foot the medical bills of about 150 ECOMOG soldiers with bullet and other war injuries from the missions in Liberia. It is speculated that some 400 Nigerian ECOMOG soldiers were infected with HIV/AIDS (Olawale, 2003).

The sore point of the forgoing is that internally, there are serious issues begging for government attention, hence the gesture in the view of one time Federal Minister Paul Unongo smacks of "charity beginning abroad instead of the other way round" (Anyagafu, 2003, p.15). More vexatious is that these gestures were not appreciated, neither have they, in the words of Sagay (2003) received any gestures of gratitude commensurate with the exertions on behalf of brotherly African states including Liberia, who has exhibited ingratitude and hostility to Nigeria. Even Charles Taylor whose ascendancy Nigeria had ensured via ECOMOG had in return hounded Nigeria and Nigerians at every opportunity.

It is undeniable that Nigeria's contribution to peacekeeping operations in Africa and indeed the rest of the world is invaluable (Eke, 2015). While this fact can hardly be disputed, other questions are not as suitable. For example, has the cost (both human and materials) of these interventions incurred by the country an increased know-how in conflict management at home? Is the decision to intervene or not to get involved advocated by Nigeria's national interest? Or has Nigeria's capacity to confront its domestic security threats been supported by its peacekeeping experience? These are the questions which need to be addressed for Nigeria to balance its domestic needs with its good gesture to neighboring countries in both African region and other parts of the continents.

This development is not surprising, as Nigeria has often been paid back with ingratitude by African countries to which it had been a benefactor. Nigerians are today hounded all over South Africa, and the same Nigerians from whose salaries deductions were made towards the South African Relief Fund in addition to other Nigeria's efforts at dismantling apartheid in South Africa (Animasaun, 2003). The same is true of Cameroon; a recipient of Nigeria's assistance, especially when the former experienced volcanic eruptions. Yet Cameroon has used its gendarmerie to harass Nigerian communities along its borders. What of Equatorial Guinea that allowed South Africa use it as a military base against Nigeria despite the fact that Nigeria regards Equatorial Guinea as a friend and had rallied to its assistance in moments of need (Ojieh, 2008). These and many more are parts of what many writers suggest that Nigeria should put on its thinking cap in direction with its national interest and be rational when it comes to a decision on peacekeeping missions abroad.

7. Lessons Learned From Nigeria's Interventions in Peacekeeping Operations

Nigeria as the driven force behind ECOMOG initiative, the first of its kind in Africa, was a significant milestone in African politics. It signified a bold attempt in designing African solutions to problems in Africa within the current environment of global neglect and state failure. Given the novelty of the initiative for Africa, the complexity of the Liberian conflict, the intra-regional rivalries, the lack of experience in multilateral diplomacy on the part of sub-regional leaders and the difficult financial and political circumstances within which ECOMOG had to operate, there is little doubt that the initiative was ill-fated from the outset. Overall, the ECOMOG initiative is indicative of a number of lessons both for policy and theory on peacekeeping in Africa.

First, the intervention confirms previous claims that intra-state conflicts do not lead themselves to interventions that are premised on "traditional peacekeeping". Any strategy that is weak in capability will not be taken seriously as a credible deterrent and is more likely to fail under extreme and hostile conditions like those that existed in Liberia (Aning, 2000). This may mean that intervention forces must be prepared to invoke robust mandates when necessary, acquiesce and possibly withdraw in the face of stronger counter-forces in some situations and, if incapable of assuring the necessary resolve, be prepared not to get involved in the first place. In retrospect, since there was no cease-fire in place before ECOMOG's deployment and given the nature of circumstances in Liberia, it was imperative for Nigeria to get all ECOWAS members, especially the Francophone members to agree to the use of robust force. This it did not do. An agreement for more robust measures might have ensured hastened compliance from Taylor who would not have had allies in the sub-region. Indeed, the United Nations/ECOMOG intervention in neighboring Sierra Leone during which peacekeepers were abducted and humiliated by Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels (Adebajo, 2008), points to the obvious and embarrassing conclusion that the lessons of the Liberian intervention have not been taken seriously.

A second important lesson is that regional political rivalries should be recognized as a serious influence, if not constraint, on peace-keeping effectiveness. Today's intra-state conflicts are seen too much as internal problems. Instead, they need to be better placed in a regional context, not only with respect to regional rivalries, but also how refugee flows affect conflict dynamics and how arms flows and local support for insurgencies undermine efforts at establishing a stable environment in which peace can be nurtured.

Again, another lesson learnt is that of the exposure and familiarity of Nigerian troops with modern weapons. Not that Nigeria did not have some of those weapons in its arsenal, but the possibility that the preference of Nigeria for peaceful resolution

conflict and the good neighbourliness policy might not create room for the use of such weapons (Lipede and Saliu, 1998). But when participating in peacekeeping operations, such weapons may have to be used in practical conflict situation and this directly or indirectly will improve the general handling of weapons (Eze, 1996).

Finally, there may be ways of counter-balancing these constraints. For example, while it is realistic in today's world to argue that sub-regional organizations should manage crises in their backyard (Adebajo, 2008). It is also realistic to expect that there may be global support for such initiatives. With its years of peacekeeping experience in logistics and training, the UN and its member-states could be expected to do more in supporting regional efforts. UN support will not only have the effect of neutralizing the perception that 'regional hegemon's' are at the forefront of local peace initiatives, but it could also do much to enhance the global organization's peacekeeping capabilities, influence and reputation.

8. Recommendations

Having examined Nigeria's role in peacekeeping operations since independence, the following recommendations are proffer to guide Nigeria in its future intervention;

- Should in case Nigerian armed forces are to participate in peacekeeping operations in the future, the mandate should be clear spelt out and achievable objectives, the mandate should be precise and finite; and there must be a reasonable arrangement for the safety and security of the Nigerian personnel.
- The Nigeria's Afro-centric policy must be based on cogent and coherent strategic objectives. Africa is the second largest continent in the world and the one with the highest diversity of states but Nigeria has not been utilizing its manifest destiny to lead the continent effectively and to use such leadership to achieve her national interests and continental aspirations. As far as the Armed Forces are concerned, Nigeria should concentrate efforts on two roles ;regional security such as the Gulf of Guinea Guard force, the emerging sub regional standby forces and the upcoming Africa standby force (ASF) and secondly UN operation because Nigerian personnel have invaluable experience in peacekeeping operation.
- There is need for a total review of the nation's defense doctrine to take these into consideration. There is a readiness by policy makers to recognise that the world has changed, but is not to adapt institutions to new situation.
- The Nigerian government should review the peacekeeping role of each institution to be played and the relationships between those institutions. In this regard, government should create a national coordinating body to bring together

relevant ministries and agencies for strategic planning as well as evaluation of peacekeeping missions with clearly spelt out goals to be achieved for each mission. Government should also work within the UN system to support the use of appropriately skilled civilian for peacekeeping missions.

- Government should also set up a coordinating body for Nigerian peacekeeping efforts within mission countries. The national coordinating body should help to consolidate some Nigerian enterprises in key sectors to make them able to meet international standards in terms of quality of staff, expertise and services so that they would be engaged in reconstruction works, be involved in genuine investments and participation in those countries economics and also government should consider strategic relationships with those countries to extract some specific mutually beneficial concessions and considerations.
- Selection process for peacekeeping mission should be done based on merit and competence to ensure optimum result.
- Part of the resources expended on peacekeeping missions should be utilized to restructure the Nigeria's internal security, as every nation has to survive before pursuing other interests in the international system.
- Nigeria government should give more priority to the welfare of its citizens and for infrastructural development instead of its total devotion to peacekeeping operations.
- Since Nigerian foreign policy can only be effectively operated in a stable political environment, there is the need to evolve a stable polity in the country.

9. Conclusion

The frequent occurrence of intra and inter States conflict in the African history which has attributed to the developing or underdeveloped nature of some States in the African region need to be checked. The efforts and existence of some prominent actors like Nigeria in each region alleviate the likely irreparable casualty which crisis is capable of introducing into the continent. This paper examined the Nigeria's role and its peacekeeping challenges in Africa. Nigeria played a prominent role in the peacekeeping and integrative efforts in the continent in numerous countries both within and outside the African continent. The Nigeria's efforts towards maintaining peace in some trouble spots across the globe have been commended by the international community. However, it must be noted that both the human and material loss the country has invested on these involvements have been significant. Thus, the countries received these good gestures from Nigeria paid back ingratitude. This is more reason why Nigeria should minimize its worst possible outcome and maximize its benefit. Nigeria

needs to be more rational and diplomatic when taking decision on its involvement in peacekeeping operations both within and outside the continent.

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