

**Theory and practice of national aim, objectives and core values in
Nigeria's strategic history and culture: 1960-2021**

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Abstract

Nigeria's national aim, objectives and core values have been valuable assets in her strategic history and culture since independence. Nations of the world pull these assets together for the overall preservation of the national interest and national security objectives. Nigeria has not been an exception in this regard in terms of the practice and execution of these values. However, this development has not provoked adequate scholarly debate or discussion, and the scrutiny of commentators and public policy analysts. Therefore, the practice of Nigeria's institutionalisation of these assets as national strategic culture is the main basis and focus of this paper. The paper's findings have revealed that Nigeria forged her national aim, objectives and core values effectively in the immediate post-independence era, but the changes and adjustments needed for their entrenchment internally and within a dynamic world system has left much to be desired. For, the efforts that Nigeria has made to take its pride of place in the world through this strategic culture have been hindered by corruption, extreme ethnic nationalism among public office holders, problems of leadership and good governance, and the lack of political will to galvanise resources for national cohesion. The methodology adopted for this paper is the multi-disciplinary approach, the adoption of secondary sources, critical social science analysis, and the theoretical perspectives of strategic history and culture in order to achieve the objectives of its focal point.

Key Words: National aim, objectives and core values, strategic history and culture, leadership and good governance, political will, national cohesion



Introduction

Nigeria is strategically located in the West African sub-region of the African continent. The country is bordered to the South by the vast Atlantic Ocean, which with a distance of 580 Miles extends from the Bimbia Peninsula East of Bimbia Creek to a point of 2° 45'55 to the East. This point also covers the Meridian of the Ajara Creek between Badagry in Lagos and Porto Novo in Benin Republic. In the Eastern part where lies the vast Niger-Delta Region the country is bordered mostly with the Gulf of Guinea and the Southern part of the Republic of Cameroon. To the Western part of Nigeria is the former French Colony of Benin Republic, while the Northern part of the country is bordered chiefly by the Republics of Niger and Chad. At the Northeastern part of Nigeria especially the Borno area, the boundary line passes through Lake Chad, bypassing the Republic of Chad located further North, while the Northern part of the Republic of Cameroon serves as the border with Nigeria's Northeastern States of Adamawa, Taraba and some communities in Benue State.¹

Nigeria's border lands and boundaries however are a colonial creation of the British through military conquest and spoils of war. This particular location of the country can be conveniently described as the heart of Africa. Ultimately, the Federal Republic of Nigeria is in West Africa between Latitudes 4° to 14° North and between Longitudes 2° 2 and 14° 30' East. The country has a North-South length of about 1,450 kilometres and a West-East breadth of about 800 kilometres. Its total land boundary is 4,047 kilometres, while the coastline is 853 kilometres. The lowest point is the Atlantic Ocean at sea level, while the highest point is the Chappal Waddi at 2,419 metres. Estimates show that the country has a land mass of 356,669 square miles and 923,768 square kilometres of total area. The river Niger and Benue are the major rivers and river Niger is the third longest river in Africa. The country obtained its independence in 1960. The period of independence brought hope for a great nation endowed with enormous natural and human resources including oil and solid minerals. The country is Africa's largest producer of oil and sixth largest producer in the world.² This paper is about Nigeria's national and international strategy based upon the theory and practice of the fundamental principles of her strategic culture and thought, as well as the values of her nationhood and national development within the context, comity and system of nations. It is important to note the dearth of works on a narrative account of the practice of Nigeria's strategic history and culture even though aspects of it have occupied the interests of scholars. This is the gap in literature which has formed the basis

¹N.P. Iloeje, *A New Geography of Nigeria*, New Revised Edition, Lagos: Longman Nigeria Publishers, 2001, pp. 200-203.

²<http://www.motherlandnigeria.com/geography.html>. See also World Fact Book, July 2006 Report, pp. 23-25.

for the analysis of the study as presented in this paper.³ Ultimately, an assessment of the ideas and principles of this strategic culture has been carried out by the paper at the end of the discussion.

Conceptual Overview and Framework of Analysis

The major concepts that are imperative for clarification in this paper in order to establish a framework of analysis concern the definitions of 'strategy and culture' or 'strategic culture' as it relates to a nation's actions and interactions in international diplomacy specifically regarding Nigeria and how the characteristics and features of these concepts could make or mar the position that a nation may hold in the world system. As a consequence of the above, this conceptualisation will constitute a logical and analytical guide and provide better understanding of the overall picture within the framework of the strategic history and culture of Nigeria.

Strategic Culture

From its Greek derivation and origins, *strategos* or strategy is a set of ideas and plan of action implemented through political and military organisations to pursue desired short or long-term goals of socio-economic and political significance. The word first appeared in use during the 18th century and was seen in its narrow sense as the "art of the general" and "the art of arrangement" mostly and essentially, of troops. In its expanded meaning, strategy also deals with the planning and conduct of campaigns, the movement and disposition of forces or the socio-economic and political power of a state to achieve the ultimate aims and objectives of compulsion and control of the enemy or other groups, as well as the preservation of the national interest.⁴ In his work, Carl Von Clausewitz defined strategy as, "the employment of battles to gain the end of war." According to Edward N. Luttwak, "strategy details knowledge on calculative thinking for competitive advantages for the purposes of domination and control."⁵ Basil H. Liddell Hart's definition put less emphasis on battles, and looked more upon the overall goals of a state defining strategy as "the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy."⁶

³See works such as Julius O. Ihonvbere, "Nigeria as Africa's Great Power: Constraints and Prospects for the 1990s," in *International Affairs Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 3, (Regional Powers), Summer 1991, pp. 510-535; Attahiru M. Jega, Jacqueline W. Farris, et.al., *Nigeria At Fifty: Contributions To Peace, Democracy and Development*, Abuja: Shehu Musa Yar'adua Foundation, 2010, pp. 162-163; A. Bolaji Akinyemi, *Nigeria and the World*, Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 1978; Ibrahim A. Gambari, *The Domestic Politics of Nigeria's Foreign Policy*, Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press, 1979; Adagbo Onoja, "Toward the East in Search of New Friends: General Sani Abacha's Foreign Policy in Perspective, 1994-1998," in *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 16, 2005-2006, pp. 112-113; and Jonah Onuoha, *Beyond Diplomacy: Contemporary Issues in International Relations*, Nsukka: Great AP Express Publishers Limited, 2008, p. 51.

⁴Michael E. Howard & Peter Paret, (eds. trans.), *Carl von Clausewitz's On War*, Princeton: University Press, 1976, p. 75.

⁵Ibid., see also Edward N. Luttwak, *Strategy: The Logic of History*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012, pp. 133-134.

⁶"Military strategy" <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/militarystrategy>, Accessed 16-06-2016.

Hence, these scholars gave the pre-eminence to socio-economic and political aims over military goals which make it a fitting tribute to the conduct of nations in foreign affairs and global strategy. A strategy can also be a larger, overall plan that comprises several tactics, which are smaller, focused, less impactful plans that are part of the overall plan. While the original usage of the terms strategy was in a military context, it has now been used in a wide variety of everyday settings, including plans and schemes of state building and foreign policy.⁷ Culture on the other hand and in this context refers to the traditionally established ways and means of conducting affairs of state-craft especially in military policy, national security and foreign policy. This means that the total way of life of a people or nation, their values, idiosyncrasies and peculiarities influences or shapes their responses to given circumstances, conditions and situations. Thus from these developed the concept of 'strategic culture.' This refers to a set of general beliefs and assumptions that frame a nation's choices in international military, diplomatic and political behavior concerning decisions to go to war, expansionism, policies on offensive or defensive measures, and doctrines in domestic and foreign affairs.⁸

Nigeria's National Aim and Objectives

The national aim and objectives of states explains their entire hopes and aspirations, vision and mission, and the fondest dreams of such states for their people, nation, the international community and the world of mankind in general. These are expressed through certain strict aspects of national life and existence in a state's historical development and experience. Nigeria's national aim and objectives has also been strategically located along these parameters.

The Basis on Social and Cultural Development

At independence in 1960, Nigeria was committed to unity, integration, peace and progress which became the country's aim and objectives. It also demonstrated growing responsibility to the African continent and the black race everywhere in the world which led to its embrace of the immediate concerns that affected the region and its people and hence Nigeria's united and unanimous adoption of the ideology and philosophy of a Pan-Africanist foreign policy which has continued to flourish and to thrive throughout the country's contemporary history. Among the core values of Nigeria for state building is the social and cultural instrument. The diverse social and cultural groups that make-up the country are united together to form a strong federal union and project such power and image in the international society. The federating social and cultural units are a source of strength and powerful public opinion for the galvanisation of ideas, and as the basis for foreign policy decision making for Nigeria. To this end, Nigeria's policy was always a struggle against all forms of cultural imperialism which were imposed upon the country and the African continent by European colonialists. The Nigerian or African culture was to be

⁷Ibid.

⁸Carl von Clausewitz, *Strategie*, cited in Peter Paret, *Clausewitz and the State: The Man, His Theories, and His Times*, Oxford and New York, 1976, reprinted Princeton: University Press, 1985, pp. 169-179.

desired in order to avoid the drift away of the rich cultures and values of the Africans. Many Nigerian citizens and several other Africans dropped their else-while English or other European names to maintain their nature and culture as Africans. Examples were seen among individuals such as Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, and many others. In the area of social issues and institutions such as religion, diversity of beliefs have also played a great role and earned for the country friends from several different countries and cultures around the world. Therefore, the social and cultural instrument for Nigeria being a country with great diversity has helped the objective of projection of its ideals, image and personality, as well as its penetration in different corners of the globe.⁹

Nigeria's Core Values

Core values refer to the fundamental and guiding principles upon which states conduct their national and international affairs. These values are usually unique to certain states although they may share aspects of their core values with other states for which a system of mutual understanding and respect, and strategic cooperation or alliances may be forged.¹⁰ These core values operate successfully under certain conditions of strict adherence to the nature of a country's strategic culture, thought, history and national experience. Nigeria's core values in this regard also involve certain strengths in ideas, principles and assets.

Geography and Population

Nigeria's geographical location and its great population are important core values of its national existence. This factor is based upon the vast terrain, topography, landscape, and climate. According to Louis Bonaparte, "the foreign policy of a particular nation depends upon its geography."¹¹ Indeed it was the geographical location of Nigeria that also determined the nature and character of its contemporary international history. Other geographical factors that has been part of the country's core values is the size, length, width, and the land mass, which are strategic assets of any country especially in times of war or an invasion by enemy nations. The climate in Nigeria particularly the country's temperature, relief, seasons, and so on, has influenced its power in Africa and the international community due to its development of an agricultural base and the thriving of human and natural resources. Nigeria's population has also been vital and essential especially in the case of a war situation or peacekeeping endeavours where more and more troops can be deployed. With a corresponding development of the agricultural and other vital sectors, Nigeria has been highly equipped to achieve huge successes in the national and

⁹ See the seminal work of Ali A. Mazrui, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*, Boston: Little and Brown Publishers, 1986, pp. 81-87.

¹⁰ See Alan Tonelson, "The Real National Interest," in *Foreign Policy*, No. 61, Winter 1985-1986, pp. 49-52.

¹¹ Louis Bonaparte, cited in John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, Fourth

Edition, Connecticut: The Dushkin Publishing Group, 1993, p. 19.

international system.¹² Ultimately, the country's natural and material resources has attracted the attention of various countries around the world and has influenced its history from the pre-colonial, colonial and independence eras and impacted significantly on the nature, character and direction of Nigeria's policy formulation, decision-making and implementation.

Natural Resources and Economic Policy

Another core value is the availability of the highest quality of natural resources and the adoption of a sound economic policy. Nigeria's ability to harness the vast potentials that the nation possesses has to some extent determined its power and influence within Africa and the international community throughout its history. Like any other nation, Nigeria's economy is based upon the production, exchange, and distribution of goods and services as well as the efforts to improve the sharing of the national wealth. The country's economy predominantly occupied with the production of oil and gas and other mineral resources remains a source of strength. Oil production and sales has contributed greatly to determine the power and capabilities of the country in Africa and within the international community. Oil wealth has helped Nigeria's development as a nation and its contribution to the growth, development and stability of other African countries and those of the rest of the world. It was this natural and material resource that served as a huge impetus to Nigeria's role in national and international affairs and organisations. Since independence in 1960, the trading partners of Nigeria has greatly increased steadily with many countries such as Britain, USA, Germany, Italy, Japan, China, Australia, New Zealand, and many others, all in dire need of the country's oil for services in their vast industries, both military and civil, as well as for strategic calculations.¹³

Ideology and Propaganda

Nigeria's ideology and propaganda has also been a core value of the country. These instruments reinforced the resistance and power of the country in the past during the period of colonial struggle, neo-colonialism, the determined fight against the apartheid system in South Africa, proxy and puppet regimes in Africa, the stance of non-alignment to any super power blocs during the cold war, but rather, the promotion of national unity and the ideology of Pan-Africanism, African unity and development. Nigeria therefore, has used propaganda in sending signals to foreign nations across borders and boundaries through newspapers such as the then *West African Pilot*, *the Nigerian Tribune*, *the National Concord*, as well as the *Voice of Nigeria*, and several other media organisations since the colonial period to the attainment of independence, and even the post-independence era.¹⁴ Others include a strong national character,

¹² Jonah Onuoha, *Beyond Diplomacy: Contemporary Issues in International Relations*, Nsukka:

Great AP Express Publishers Limited, 2008, p. 51.

¹³ Instructive here is Julius O. Ihonvbere, "Resource Availability and Foreign Policy Change: The

Impact of Oil on Nigeria's Foreign Policy since Independence," in *Afrika Spectrum*, Vol. 2, No.

11, 1982, pp. 24-33.

¹⁴ This point is made in Olajide Aluko, *Essays in Nigerian Foreign Policy*, London: George

morale and will, a dynamic leadership and excellent appreciation of power politics, effective use of skilful diplomacy, an organised array of pressure groups, and an informed public opinion, among others.¹⁵

National Security

Nigeria's core values also include that of national security. The country utilises all available national human and material resources for the protection of the nation from attack or subversion. Nigeria's preparedness and readiness for war and military action, its continued diligence in the security of the country through intelligence gathering against national uprisings and insurgencies, albeit the severe challenges, has served to keep the country together and ensured a strong and united front in matters of foreign policy. The national security instrument has also moved the country to protect the various resources of the nation and the rights of the Nigerian citizens that are considered critical to the smooth and harmonious functioning of national life.

According to Charles Maier, national security can be described as the capacity and power of a nation to control those domestic and foreign conditions that the public opinion believes are necessary to enjoy its own self-determination, autonomy, prosperity and well-being.¹⁶ Defining national security precisely from the angle of diplomacy and war, Carl Von Clausewitz saw it as the instrument for the advancement of a nation's cause by the use of its armed forces, the police, intelligence services, diplomacy, economic power, and all other sources of national power to further its self-interest. In international interactions, Clausewitz's analysis became known as 'classical realism,' which has continued to embody national policies not only in Nigeria but also around the world.¹⁷

But the lack of commitment and resolve, and lack of internal cohesion and national harmony arising from ethnic, religious and political affiliations hampered the efforts towards the achievement of the desired national peace and security. Nigeria utilises both the military and the non-military aspects of national security in order to attain the overall national and international goals of the country. These include economic security, political security, environmental security, and energy security, among others.¹⁸ Therefore, the instrument of national security encompasses both national defence and the foreign relations of the country. Examples have been Nigeria's concerted commitment for peace and security of the West African Sub-region and even throughout Africa in part to secure its national peace and security against insurgencies in Central and West Africa and to avoid an escalation and spill-

Allen and Unwin Publishers, 1981, pp. 32-35.

¹⁵ See Editorial, "Mandela's Ultimatum to Abacha," in *Tell*, Vol. 7, No. 3, April 24, 1995, p. 5.

¹⁶ Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State*,

Boston: Houghton Mifflin Publishers, 1977, pp. 134-141.

¹⁷ See C.N. Watson, *US National Security: A Reference Handbook*, Boston: Little and Brown Publishers, 2008, p. 281.

¹⁸ Consult the work of Onuoha, *Beyond Diplomacy*, pp. 52-55.

over of various socio-economic and political crises within the areas and throughout Africa.¹⁹

National Interest

Through the principle of the national interest, Nigeria seeks to strike a co-relationship between international cooperation with the rest of the world and its crucial priorities of overall national development. The country's foreign relations too is therefore conducted with the aim of expanding the developmental goals within the country to ensure the socio-political and economic growth and development of human and material resources, as well as the spread of peace and prosperity. According to Alan Tonelson, "the national interest is a finite set of intrinsically important goals either essential or beneficial to the country's survival, its prosperity, the psychological well-being of its population, or any combination of these."²⁰ The policy objectives of Nigeria are also based upon these assumptions of the national interest.

A nation's foray in public policy and foreign affairs may lack cohesion, direction or focus as a result of a vast array of domestic pressures and vested interests in several corners around the globe. It is therefore the core value of the national interest that clearly defines the parameters of policy and its scope and limits of coverage or operations. At the country's independence in 1960, Nigeria clearly defined its national interest that was to be adopted in its policy formulation, decision-making, and implementation. Africa was to be the centre-piece of Nigeria's foreign policy, colonialism and imperialism were to be stamped out, racism and all forms of discrimination were to be abolished, and the apartheid system in South Africa dismantled. The guiding light of this broad but focused foreign policy postulation was the philosophy of Pan-Africanism with all its features, assumptions and tenets. Nigerian leaders at the time of independence in 1960 clearly understood that for a young nation coming out of the shackles and throes of colonialism, an unlimited or universal approach to foreign policy formulation and implementation would not be in the national interest and the short or long term benefit to the country. Thus, the country's national interest was clearly defined as focused on the concentric circles of domestic policy, the West African Sub-region, the African continent, and the rest of the world. The country's vast human, natural and material resources were to be galvanised to achieve overall socio-economic and industrial growth, progress and development for the continued strength and power of Nigeria, Africans, and the entire African race in the diaspora.²¹

Anti-Imperialism Principle

The principle of anti-imperialism is historically integral to Nigeria because of its anti-colonial struggle for the attainment of independence not only for the

¹⁹See Ibrahim Abdullahi, *Between Democracy and Terrorism: The Sierra Leone Civil War*, Dakar: CODESRIA, 2004, pp. 21-25.

²⁰Tonelson, "The Real National Interest," p. 49.

²¹Ihonvbere, "Resource Availability and Foreign Policy Change," pp. 22-28.

country but also for the rest of the continent. Nigeria worked hard throughout the 20th century to fight for its independence from Great Britain as well as to free the entire continent from all forms of imperialist control and domination. Indeed throughout this period and beyond, Africa remained the centre-piece of the country's foreign policy. The anti-imperialist principle acted as a guide for the anti-imperialist struggle against systems such as apartheid and racial discrimination in South Africa, imperialist proxy regimes Angola, Mozambique, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Namibia, and elsewhere, as well as against neo-colonialism in the continent. In addition, this principle acted as a motivating factor for the struggle for freedom and self-determination in Nigeria and throughout the African continent.²²

Pan-Africanism Principle

Nigeria like other well meaning countries in Africa operates its policy upon the basis of the principle of Pan-Africanism. To several scholars Pan-Africanism connotes the idea of a true unity of African states in the social, political, and economic spheres. It emerged out of the desire to strengthen unity, understanding, cooperation and development among Africa's peoples and Africans in the diaspora with the stern denunciation of colonialism, neo-colonialism, cultural imperialism, dependency and underdevelopment of the continent by internal and external forces. According to Asante and Chaniwa, Pan-Africanism is a political phenomenon which regards Africa, Africans and African descendants abroad as a unit and aims at the regeneration and unification of Africa and the promotion of a feeling of solidarity among the people of the African world.²³ Nigeria emphasises upon this principle as a major basis for the forging of an unbreakable bond of unity for the thriving of socio-economic growth, development, peace and prosperity for the African people.

Nigeria's overall motivation in the various interventionist measures adopted for Africa since the country's independence in 1960 has been based upon the principle of Pan-Africanism. Attempts for the creation of an enabling atmosphere of peace in Africa through this ideology and philosophy have been matched with the expansion of efforts and moves towards regional economic and political integration for progress, development and prosperity. Thus socio-economic mechanisms and institutions have been set up such as the African Peer Review Mechanism, (APRM), New Partnership for Africa's Development, (NEPAD), Africa Business Round Table, (ABRT), as well as the African Growth and Opportunities Act, (AGOA), and many others. It can be observed therefore, that one of the major aims and objectives of Pan-Africanism as spearheaded by Nigeria in the continent has been the struggle for peace, stability, and

²²See James S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, Benin and Katrineholm: Broburg

and Wistrom Publishers, 1986, pp. 172-200, and 220-231.

²³S.K.B. Asante, et. al., "Pan-Africanism and Regional Integration in Africa," in Mazrui, (ed.), *UNESCO General History of Africa*, Vol. 8, Africa since 1935, Paris: UNESCO Press, 1999, p. 724.

sustainable development in order to address Africa's age-old and historical problems of impoverishment and underdevelopment.²⁴

Non-Alignment Principle

The principle of non-alignment as a core value in national and foreign affairs was invoked by Nigeria as a careful attempt to maintain and safeguard its growing international influence and strength, and to maintain its vast legion of friends that emerged in the international system especially in the early years of the country's independence from Britain. This was as a result of the neo-colonial period of competition between the United States of America, (USA), and the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, (USSR), for spheres of influence around the World for their strategic advantages and struggle for supremacy in the event of a nuclear war. Therefore, the principle of non-alignment developed chiefly in the cold war era as a movement for Africa and all developing nations to remain neutral in the cold war strategic calculations of the super powers, especially the United States of America and the then Soviet Union. Nigeria particularly played a leading role in the movement in Africa throughout the post-independence era. The high point of this frontline role of Nigeria was during the Muhammed-Obasanjo regime that stood firm to ensure the triumph of the principle in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe, where the regime backed only liberation movements that enjoyed the widespread national support rather than the puppet or proxy regimes, or the organisations that had imperialist support or super power backing. Thus the MPLA regime was supported in Angola, FRELIMO in Mozambique, SWAPO in Namibia, and ZANU in Zimbabwe, as in several other African nations.²⁵

It was clear from the principle of non-alignment that all nations desire strategic advantages in the international system, so rather than join any prevailing power blocs during the cold war, Nigeria took the lead in calling upon other countries to form the concert of medium powers who remained neutral and cherished their socio-economic and political independence and freedom to decide their destiny in international affairs in line with the national interests of their various countries. This development led to the emergence of military, political and economic international groupings opposed to the cold war such as the Non-Aligned Movement, (NAM), which comprised of countries such as India, Nigeria, and several developing nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America. These countries continued to insulate themselves from the dangerous cold war politics of the USA and the USSR until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Anti-Terrorism Principle

The anti-terrorism principle in foreign interactions, being a universal principle of civilised humankind, was also developed in Nigeria even long before the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in the United States of America.

²⁴ See R.H. Green, A. Seidman, *Unity or Poverty: The Economics of Pan-Africanism*, Baltimore,

Maryland: The Penguin African Library, 1968, pp. 231-249.

²⁵ Ralph Uwechue, (ed.), *Africa Yearbook and Who's Who 1977*, London: Africa Journal Limited, 1976, pp. 249-253.

Firstly, beginning from the 1960s, Nigeria saw imperialism and neo-colonialism in the African continent as a form of terror on the African people and continually fought for Africa's independence and self-determination with the attainment of the country's political freedom from Great Britain. The anti-terrorism principle as advanced by countries such as Nigeria, did not accept violence or mass murder as the means of socio-economic and political protests, or the achievement of the desired objectives in international politics. Thus in the 1970s, Nigeria opposed Libya and Uganda's state-sponsored terrorism and maintained uneasy relations with the two countries for many years, and was one of the countries that endorsed the Palestine Liberation Organisation, (PLO), only after it renounced terror and embraced dialogue at the negotiation table. For example, the two leaders, Idi Amin of Uganda and Muammar Gaddafi of Libya introduced a dangerous element of foreign affairs conduct into the continent by way of terrorism as the 1976 Air France hijack of Israeli passengers by operatives of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, (PFLP) showed.

Nigeria also publicly denounced apartheid South Africa's terror networks against the Africans on the Pretext of national security. These terror networks were directed at the frontline states of Southern Africa such as Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Swaziland. Nigeria's abhorrence of terrorism was again brought to a head when the country kept a notable silence during the US attack on Tripoli and Benghazi in April, 1986 in retaliation for Libya's terrorist attack against its citizens who were passengers aboard the hijacked Trans-world Airlines Flight in Beirut, Lebanon.²⁶ Nigeria opposed Libya's intransigence about terrorism towards the US and western nations. The country has continued to work hard and in cooperation with several other countries around the world that are opposed to terrorism in the interest of world peace, and to secure common ground for the thriving of democracy, economic development, and the spread of wealth and prosperity. Nigeria also stood firm as a notable champion of the war against small arms, light weapons, the struggle for the cause of disarmament, and the fight against insurgencies within the West African Sub-region and throughout the African continent. A position Nigeria established a presidential committee to oversee.²⁷

Economic Diplomacy Principle

With the establishment of a large and thriving oil sector and developing non-oil sectors, Nigeria has often embarked upon the principle of economic diplomacy to contribute towards national and international development and forge world peace, create wealth and prosperity, as well as to play the usual paternalistic role in Africa and the developing world. This principle was adopted by various Nigerian regimes since independence and successfully carried out by the Gowon administration and others under ECOWAS and the economic and social council of the then OAU. Through programmes such as the Structural Adjustment Programme, (SAP), the Second-tier Foreign Exchange Market,

²⁶ See Newswatch, Vol. 3, No.16, April 21, 1986, pp. 23-24.

²⁷ Known as Presidential Committee on Small Arms Movements and Light Weapons, (PRESCOM) See Daily Trust, Vol. 35, No. 51, 2014, p. 7.

(SFEM), especially during the Babangida administration, economic diplomacy was carried out to sell the nation's economic recovery programmes abroad for foreign creditors' acceptability, support and sustainability especially in the face of the country's rejection of the IMF loan. This was also meant to strengthen the country's relationship with the various economic clubs around the world and to improve bilateral or multi-lateral cooperation for maximum and mutual benefits, as well as negotiations for debt relief, debt rescheduling and other palliatives.²⁸ Subsequent regimes have also adopted this principle such as the Obasanjo, Yar'adua and the Jonathan regimes.

Through the full adoption and participation in the Millennium Development Goals, (MDGs), New Partnership for Africa's Development, (NEPAD), African Growth and Opportunities Act, (AGOA), African Peer Review Mechanism, (APRM), the Nigerian Diaspora development, and other initiatives, Nigeria has continued with economic shuttle diplomacy aimed at achieving national growth, progress and development.²⁹ It was also meant to enhance the country's foreign reserve, negotiations for debt cancellation, strengthening the value of the currency, increasing the volume of international trade, and the attraction of foreign direct investment. According to Jonah Onuoha, this method was also aimed at attaining Africa's overall development in the 21st century, to further develop the capacities of Nigerians at home and in the Diaspora, to create a Nigerian identity in enterprise just as has been achieved by China, India, Japan, and South Korea, as well as to work for the establishment of Nigeria as one of the twenty (20) most industrialised nations by the year 2020. Further developments in the field of economic diplomacy had been Nigeria's participation in many bi-national commissions which focused on bilateral or multi-lateral cooperation for mutually assured benefits.³⁰

Brief Assessment of the National Aim, Objectives and Core Values in Nigeria's Strategic History and Culture since 1960

The problem that can be observed in Nigeria's conduct in strategic culture has been the inability to match these with the country's national development, through history and experience. This has hindered progress towards the nation's ascendancy to the top level of the world's socio-economic and political order. It is to be understood that the great lesson for Nigeria is that this strategic culture and its projection in every nations' interactions in the international system is not given but has to be developed, adhered to, and rightly earned. The development of this strategic culture necessarily has to be geared towards the attainment of the maximum objectives in the specific national interest and national security thought of Nigeria for the preservation of her competitive advantages in an ever changing and dynamic world system.³¹

The country's vision of a peaceful Africa and a secure world for the prevalence and endurance of democracy and development has influenced its lead in

²⁸ Newswatch, Vol. 3, No. 15, April 14, 1986, p. 31.

²⁹ See Nigeria Today, pp. 27-30.

³⁰ Onuoha, pp. 229-233.

³¹ See Akinyemi, Nigeria and the World, pp. 124-127, and Gambari, The Domestic Politics of

Nigeria's Foreign Policy, pp. 201-213.

international peacekeeping missions especially in Africa. But a clear-cut understanding of the national interest and national security of the country with regards to those activities has not really being struck with a few exceptions since the first republic. According to Trevor Clark for instance, when asked by the then Congolese leader what Nigeria wanted after the country's first great peace effort in the Congo in 1960, Prime Minister Balewa responded, "Whatever assistance we gave to the Congo was assistance from brother to brother."³² Although Nigeria has also made attempts to engage the international community through its foreign policy based upon the national interest, these attempts have not always been successful, and mostly have been practiced in the breach. In recent history, dwindling fortunes in leadership and governance as well as brutal corruption has characterised the nature of several Nigerian regimes, culminating in the twenty-two year democratic misadventure and fiasco of 1999-2021.

Conclusion

This paper committed to outline the developments, events and key features in Nigeria's national aim, objectives and core values that has influenced the development and expansion of Nigeria's strategic history and culture in the post-independence era, and the instruments, principles and objectives of the country's foreign policy since 1960. The paper laid a background to an understanding of the overall strategic history, culture and thought of Nigeria as a basis for the focal point of the country's role in the international system such as her contribution to the liberation struggle and international peace-keeping missions in Africa. The paper also served as the groundwork to subsequently assess or measure the impact and the challenges of Nigeria's foray in strategic culture especially as it relates to the preservation of the national interest and attainment of national security objectives. The essence is to contribute to the expansion of knowledge and understanding on aspects of strategy and culture in national political and world order with Nigeria as the example.

³² Trevor A. Clark, A Right Honourable Gentleman: The Life and Times of Alhaji Sir Abubakar

Tafawa Balewa, Zaria: Hudahuda Publishing Company, 1991, p. 493.