

Boko Haram insurgency and the paradox of 'Afrocentricity' of Nigerian foreign policy

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Abstract

The paper explores Nigeria's foreign policy since Boko Haram's emergence in Nigeria. The government of Nigeria has in past years pursued ties with its immediate neighbors, Cameroon, Niger, Benin and Chad. Nigeria has followed an external policy since its independence, focusing on Africa, especially its West African neighbors. The primary focus of the actions of Nigeria on issues relating to the African continent in general and West Africa were based on the principle of Africa as the center-piece of Nigeria's foreign policy, which was emphasized long before its independence as the nucleus of Nigerian foreign policy. However, in recent times Nigeria's foreign policy momentum towards Africa has developed and advanced, which has negated Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy. This study would look at how Nigeria relates to its immediate neighbors since Boko Haram was formed. Research is important to identify and challenge whether Africa is still first considered by Nigeria. Based on the qualitative approach to research, the study concludes that Boko Haram's emergence was a major factor in Nigeria's foreign policy of afrocentricism, with Nigeria introducing foreign policy against its neighbors, dismissing the notion of Africa as the core of Nigeria's foreign policy.

Keywords: Foreign Policy, book haram terrorism, big brother policy, Nigeria, linkage politics

Introduction

Nigerian foreign policy is distinguished by an emphasis on Africa and adherence to certain fundamental values after independence: African solidarity and independence; peaceful conflict resolution; non-alignment and non-interference in other nations' internal relations and international economic cooperation and development¹. Of note, the focus of Nigeria's external relations has remained Africa. The key issues in Nigeria foreign policy towards Africa have been: promotion of peace, prosperity, stability and development in Africa; promotion

¹Ate B. E., Akinterinwa B. A. (1992). Nigeria and its Immediate Neighbours: Constraints and Prospects of Sub - Regional Security in the 1990's.



of political goodwill and understanding among Africa countries despite the cultural, linguistic and economic barriers; the discouragement of international intervention and presence in Africa; the promotion of rapid social-economic development of Africa through regional economic integration; the strengthening of sub-regional economic institutions and the reduction of economic dependence on extra-continental powers; the development of cultural cooperation as a means of strengthening political ties with all African countries; and finally, self-determination for all counties on the continent².

The Nigerian Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, enunciated some basic principles after Nigeria's independence in 1960. Consequently, these basic concepts that were set out gradually established the basis for Nigeria's foreign policy. It should be noted that these fundamental values have been accepted by subsequent regimes³. The following values include: respect for the legal equality, independence and sovereignty and of each Member State, compliance with the doctrines of non-interference in all other States' internal affairs, non-alignment (which would not routinely align Nigeria to any of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's existing military blocs and the Warsaw pact), that Nigeria would join as a matter of routine policy international organizations, who are considered suitable to her needs, and Africa would be the center-piece (cornerstone) of Nigeria's foreign policy⁴ (Akintola, 2007). And since independence, Nigerian leaders have not struggled to effectively contribute to the economic and political well-being of Africa. For instance, during the First Republic, the Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa asserted: "we belong to Africa and Africa must claim first attention in our external affairs"⁵.

While it is important to emphasize that some of these principles are no longer fashionable in the contemporary conduct of Nigeria's foreign policy especially the principle of non-alignment since the end of the Cold War in 1990, others such as Africa being the cornerstone of Nigeria's foreign policy is still very much relevant. Despite numerous government changes, the goals of Nigerian foreign policy have always been retained.

After independence, Nigeria stayed static on basic foreign policy values and goals. However, each successive government in the country has invented new mechanisms tailored to the foreign policy objective. Successive Nigerian administrations have shown their adherence to these driving ideals in Nigeria's Foreign Policy from the Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Nigeria's first prime minister, to the immediate past government of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. Mathew Nwagwu, chairman of the Senate Committee on International Affairs, stated that Nigeria's foreign policy has not drastically changed since 1960⁶. Nigeria's longest running foreign policy thrust is its afro-centered foreign

²Teryima Benjamin Ashaver,(2014) "Continuities and Discontinuities in Nigerian Foreign Policy", International Journal of Development and Sustainability Vol.3 No2.

³Fawole WA (2003). "Nigeria"s External Relations and Foreign Policy under Military rule (1966-1999)". P. 38. (ObafemiAwolowo University Press Ltd).

⁴Bukola S. Akintola, (2007) "Nigeria and the World: A Review of Nigeria's Foreign Policy (1960-2007)". P. 441. Army Quarterly Journal Volume 3 No 4, Dec. 2007.

⁵ ibid

⁶Premium Times June 2, 2014

policy philosophy in which Nigeria expended tremendous energy in promoting independence from the colonial domination of other African countries such as Namibia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Mozambique etc. Nigeria also engaged in South Africa's anti-apartheid war under the African as the central stage of Nigerian foreign policy. In conflict zones in Africa, peacekeeping forces have also contributed and financed by Nigeria in countries such as Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Ivory Coast, Sudan, Darfur and Somalia⁷.

For the Nigerian nation, the threat of terrorist activity by Boko Haram has brought to the fore the core interests of national security in its foreign policy with its immediate neighbors. The Nigerian government has been in a dispute about the costs and benefits of Big Brother's dominant foreign policy or, rather, good neighborliness⁸ in its international ties with its immediate neighbors for several years now. Although scholars have argued and Nigerians have generally accepted that Africa is the centerpiece of Nigeria's foreign policy, this study examines the changing nature of Nigeria's foreign policy in the light of Boko Haram's terrorism.

Literature Review

Foreign policy

Chibundu defines foreign policy as the environmental reaction of a government, which may be friendly or aggressive, casual or serious, basic or complicated, within or outside its limits⁹. This involves different aspects, including political, economic, environmental, social, cultural, educational, sporting and so on, and it varies accordingly in form and focus. In a comparatively short or long time, certain countries can be mates, rivals, or trusted allies. As a consequence or as a function of the dynamic interplay between internal and external political conditions of the country, foreign policy is then formulated

Afrocentric policy of Nigerian foreign policy thrust

According to Nigeria's fifth operational principle, Africa is the cornerstone and center of foreign policy in Nigeria¹⁰. Afro-centrism is one of the driving ideals of Nigerian external policies. Two interlinked concepts are expressed by the principle of the Afro-centric policy. Firstly, it aims to promote Africa's interest

⁷V.O.S Okeke and E.T. Aniche (2014), "Internal Political Environment of Nigerian Foreign Policy and Implementation of Citizen Diplomacy Under Yar'Adua/Jonathan Administration (2007-2011): A Linkage of Political Approach." *America Journal of Social Issues and Humanities* Volume 4 P.72

⁸Atah Pine (2011), "Nigeria Foreign Policy, 1960-2011: Fifty One Years of Conceptual Confusion".

⁹Chibundu VN (2004). *Foreign Policy with particular Reference to Nigeria: 1961-2002*. (Ibadan Spectrum Books Limited).

¹⁰Olusanya G. O., and Akindele R. A., (1986), "The Fundamentals of Nigeria's Foreign Policy and External Economic Relations". *Nigeria's External Relations: The First twenty-Five Years* p. 4 (University Press Limited).

and well-being through numerous diplomatic channels within and outside Africa. Second, Nigeria's position as Africa's undeniable leader is to be strengthened as a voice of Africa at the global stage and the tremendous sacrifices made during this process. After its liberation, Africa has not only become an ideology as the core aspect of Nigeria's international strategy, but has also driven Nigeria's foreign strategy. This principle is therefore not only theoretical but also practical. In a statement on foreign relations of Nigeria on 1 October 1971, for example, General Gowon stressed the importance of Africa to Nigeria: "We have learned from our experience in the international sphere to give a high standard to our relations with the countries of Africa. Africa is the pillar and focal point of Nigerian foreign policy, in line with the fifth operational theory governing Nigeria's international policy¹¹. Since Independence, Africa has not only become a hypothesis as the foundation of Nigeria's international policy, it has also powered Nigeria's international policy operations. It is not only hypothetical, but still realistic in other words. First of all, General Gowon in a 1st October, 1971 speech on Nigeria's international affairs stressed the importance of Africa to Nigeria: "We found from our encounters in the world that our links with Africa are granted a very strong premium."¹² The principle – Africa as the core of Nigeria's foreign policy has been carried out by the reality that, if Nigeria is to be relevant to international affairs, it must first be central to African politics. Successive governments from Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa have come to realize and accept this principle-Africa as the cornerstone of Nigeria's foreign policy. On the other hand, the fact that Africa is at the center of Nigerian foreign policy is widely accepted in literature.

Africa is not only in principle, but in reality as the centerpiece of external policies in Nigeria. For example, between 2003 and 2011, to the Economic Community of West African States, Nigeria donated 1.17 million dollars¹³, which is greater than the funds that all other Member States contributed. Nigeria was the founding force for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and supplies over one third of the organization's budget. For years, Nigeria's funding to the 15-member body stood at three to six times what other nations contributed. In the 1990s, Nigeria initiated multilateral militarized peacekeeping operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone¹⁴. Nigeria was actively involved among others in the championing of burning African issues such as continental unity, opposition to racism and apartheid, decolonization, regional cooperation and integration among others. Nigeria was a significant player in the establishment of the Organization of African Unity¹⁵. Nigeria played an active role in the negotiation of the Lome Convention involving 46 African countries with the Caribbean and Pacific Countries (ACP) and the European Economic Community (EEC), part of the results of which was favorable tariff

¹¹ Ibid

¹²Akintola BS (2007). Nigeria and the World: A Review of Nigeria's Foreign Policy (1960-2007). P. 441. Army Quarterly Journal 3:4.

¹³Premium Times (2020). "Nigeria Contributed \$1.17bn to ECOWAS in 16 years". Premium Times July 29, 2020.

¹⁴Emily Meierding (2010), "International Relations Theory as Politics, International Politics as Theory: a Nigerian Case Study". African Nebula, Issue 2, September 2010

¹⁵Akintola BS (2007). Nigeria and the World: A Review of Nigeria's Foreign Policy (1960-2007). P. 441. Army Quarterly Journal 3:4.

reductions, aid fund and stabilizing export prices that were negotiated between 1975 and 1995¹⁶.

Terrorism

Terrorism is the premeditated use or risk of non-normal violence or brutality by subnational groups, by intimidating a large audience which is usually not directly involved in the policies that terrorists seek to influence¹⁷. The US Department of State defines terrorism as "politically motivated violence by subnational groups or underground agents, which is generally designed to influence an audience, against noncombatants' targets"¹⁸. Terrorism is an act or threat of violence against non-combatants to intimidate or affect an audience or another in the pursuit of vague intentions.

Centralisation of Africa in Nigeria's foreign policy

In this section, the background of the Afro-centered nature of the foreign policy of Nigeria with Africa and the West African sub-region in particular is to be discussed. We intend to explore in this chapter of this article why the idea of Africa as the core of Nigeria's foreign policy is brought to light. This chapter addresses Nigeria's external security position in Africa. The main subject in Nigeria's foreign policy is Africa. Africa will become the most important continent to Nigeria as a centerpiece of Nigeria's external policy, Nigeria would mainly deal with African nations' business and problems and Nigeria would attach importance to ties to Africa. This theory has been strengthened by the fact that Nigeria must be significant to the continent of Africa if it is to be essential to the globe. Africa is the focus of Nigeria's foreign policy as it is clear that Nigeria's role in the international system will be viewed through the African binoculars and that any Nigerian external policy that does not take into account Africa's unique position is impractical¹⁹. Nigeria's longest-standing foreign policy was an Afro-centric Nigerian external policy ideology, in which Nigeria invested considerable resources helping to achieve independence from colonial rule in other African countries, such as, for example, Namibia, Angola, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. Nigeria has also contributed under the Nigerian foreign policy's African orientation to the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. In conflict areas in Africa such as Mali, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Sudan, Darfur, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, etc. it also contributed to peacekeepers operations²⁰. Okeke and Aniche claimed that, given its conservative orientation, Nigeria's foreign policy underwent many processes

¹⁶Calle E (2007). Country Profile: Nigeria and its Regional Context Annex Foreign Policy. International Year Book 2008 Keys to Facilitate the Monitoring of the Spanish Foreign Policy and the International Relations in 2007.

¹⁷James D. Fearon (1998), "Domestic Politics, Foreign Policy and Theories of International Relations" Annual Review of Political Science 1

¹⁸Omar Lizardo (2008), "Defining and Theorizing Terrorism: A Global Actor-Centered Approach", *Journal of World Systems Research* Volume 16 No 2

¹⁹Atah Pine (2011), "Nigeria Foreign Policy, 1960-2011: Fifty One Years of Conceptual Confusion".

²⁰Ashaver TB (2014). Continuities and Discontinuities in Nigerian Foreign Policy. *International Journal of Development and Sustainability* 3(2):286-305.

and improvements after 1960²¹. From the start the Nigerian foreign policy was based on those concepts or goals of foreign policy, such as the Africa of the Foreign Policy of Nigeria; non-intervention in other States' internal affairs; policy of good neighborliness; non-alignment; policy of decline in Africa, etc., under the Balewa administration (1960-1966). African policy remained the most prevalent ideology until recently, the core part of the Nigerian foreign policy or the Afro-centered foreign policy theory of Nigeria. Nigeria's foreign policy base is focused on Africa: first, Africa's decolonization and eradication policies on racial division, such as South African apartheid, and so on; secondly, pan-Africanism; thirdly, Africa's solidarity, stability and unity; and, finally, African states' technical and financial support²². After the first Republic, Nigeria's external policy was primarily afro-centric. It is the First Republic of Nigeria (1960-1966), under the leadership of Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa that originated with the idea Africa, the core element of Nigeria's foreign policy. The idea was built on this concept. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa's government has made it abundantly clear that Africa has first place in international affairs of Nigeria²³.

The reasons for Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy and 'big-brotherhood' in Africa

Nigeria has a love for Africa, and the interest has emerged from circumstances. Nigeria has a specific focus on Africa. The belief that Africa is the core of Nigeria's foreign policy has been focused on theoretical and psychological roots. Such underpinnings act as the basis for Nigeria's African diplomacy. Through theoretical underpinning, we mean the empirical framework that can be used to explain Nigeria's leading position in Africa. What are the analytical bases? Such theoretical sources are as follows:

The first is Nigeria's position on the African continent. Nigeria is strategically situated at the junction between West and Central Africa. Nigeria, too, has access to the sea. The advantage of this is that Nigeria can engage in international maritime trade. That is because the transportation of bulk goods is easier by marine transport. Aside from this, Nigeria should have a strong naval force. The sea can be used to move military weapons and equipment. The army can also be moved by sea. This places Nigeria ahead of other African nations, such as Chad and Niger, who are geographically impoverished. Agriculturally, Nigeria is also situated in a position that can grow all sorts of crops, as it has a varied environment and a huge amount of mineral wealth. No

²¹V.O.S Okeke and E.T. Aniche (2014), "Internal Political Environment of Nigerian Foreign Policy and Implementation of Citizen Diplomacy Under Yar'Adua/Jonathan Administration (2007-2011): A Linkage of Political Approach." *America Journal of Social Issues and Humanities* Volume 4

²²V.O.S Okeke and E.T. Aniche (2014), "Internal Political Environment of Nigerian Foreign Policy and Implementation of Citizen Diplomacy Under Yar'Adua/Jonathan Administration (2007-2011): A Linkage of Political Approach." *America Journal of Social Issues and Humanities* Volume 4

²³Olusanya G. O., and Akindele R. A., (1986), "The Fundamentals of Nigeria's Foreign Policy and External Economic Relations". *Nigeria's External Relations: The First twenty-Five Years* p. 4 (University Press Limited).

foreign policy can succeed on the basis of a single factor, such as the economy²⁴. International policy is focused on a variety of considerations, such as society, economy, culture, patriotism, geography, military strength, etc.

The second is the gigantic population of the country. Nwanolue and Victor argue that over the years Nigeria has lived with a big name and informal recognition as the giant of Africa²⁵. Once again, what puts Nigeria ahead of other African countries is its population. In 2020, it has more than 200 million people, the largest in Africa and the largest black population in the world. The second largest is Ethiopia with a population of about 100 million²⁶. It implies that Nigeria is double the population of Ethiopia. Nigeria not only has a gigantic population, but also has a gigantic racial distribution of around 300 ethnic communities. Nigeria is indeed a great nation in Africa. It is twice the population of Egypt, three times the population of South Africa and twelve times the population of Zambia. Nigeria alone accounts for 25 % of the total African population. This implies Nigeria's strategic position in Africa and its leading role in stabilizing Africa and making it a force to be reckoned with in the international community.

Moreover, Africa as the centerpiece of Nigeria's foreign policy was borne out of psychological underpinning. The psychological underpinning is the mental image and impression that Nigerian leaders have of Africa. Countries are run by humans who belong to a particular religion, ethnic group, and culture. Every leader is a product of circumstances that played upon him. Nigerian leaders also are product of circumstances- some of them cultural, some of them religion. The behavior of leaders is influenced by their personality. Nigerian leaders since independence have always believed that Nigeria was destined to be in Africa and was destined to take the mantle of leadership of Africa. This has been the notion even before independence. There was this believe that Nigeria has a manifest destiny and historic mission in Africa. Fawole argued that it is instructive to note that Nigeria's commitment to radical Afro-centric policy in the 1970s was a product of psychological belief of Nigerians in the divine programme of leadership for their country in Africa and, indeed, the Black race²⁷. Even before the country attained independence and decades prior to the economic prosperity experienced in the country in the 1970s as a result of the Arab-Israeli war, Nigerians had always had the notion that the country was preordained to play an important role in African affairs. The notion of "manifest destiny and historic mission" gradually germinated from public speeches of parliamentary debates by frontline politicians, commentators, journalists and even academics. It was these set of people who conceived this notion of manifest destiny and historic mission that eventually took over the mantle of leadership shortly after independence and hence they brought this notion to the

²⁴Atah Pine (2011), "Nigeria Foreign Policy, 1960-2011: Fifty One Years of Conceptual Confusion".

²⁵Nwanolue B.O.G and Victor Chidubem Iwuoha (2012), "A Reflection on Nigeria's Past: Africa as the Centerpiece of Nigeria's Foreign Policy Revisited". Journal on International Knowledge Sharing Platform, Vol. 2, No 4.

²⁶Wikipedia, 2020

²⁷Fawole WA (2003). "Nigeria's External Relations and Foreign Policy under Military rule (1966-1999)". (Obafemi Awolowo University Press Ltd).

fore. It is for this reason that Nigeria's foreign policy since independence has been Afro-centric in nature.

The conceptualization of the notion of "historic mission and manifest destiny" did not only emanate from Nigerians alone but the International community also came to the realization of the fact that Nigeria has to play a leadership role on the continent of Africa. In other words, the international community did not only validate the leadership role of Nigeria in Africa but also almost legitimized it. The international community demonstrated this within a month after Nigeria attained independence by appointing a Nigerian, Hon. Jaja Wachukwu as the chair of United Nations Congo Conciliation Commission²⁸. This could be said to be an endorsement of Nigeria's leadership role in Africa by the international community.

Naturally, Africa has remained the center-piece of Nigeria's foreign policy. Nigeria's major concerns in Africa have been as follows: promotion of peace, prosperity, stability and development in Africa; promotion of political goodwill and understanding among Africa countries despite the cultural, linguistic and economic barriers erected by erstwhile colonialism; the discouragement of international intervention and presence in Africa; the promotion of rapid social-economic development of Africa through regional economic integration; the strengthening of sub-regional economic institutions and the reduction of economic dependence on extra-continental powers; the development of cultural cooperation as a means of strengthening political ties with all African countries; and finally, self-determination for all countries on the continent and the elimination of apartheid in South Africa and the eradication of all forms of racial discrimination in Africa

Methodology

Methodologically, we seek to adopt a qualitative descriptive method of data collection and analysis. The research method used in this study is based on the analysis and evaluation of past works. Hence, historical approach was adopted. In the study, we rely on open documents such as public lectures, journalistic articles, academic journals, newspapers and textbooks. For this study, information was collected using secondary sources of data collection. The secondary source of data used for this research work comprises of those collected from published textbooks, papers, journals, online materials, articles as well as seminar papers were used as source of data

It provides a thorough analysis of the foreign policy of Afrocentric direction of Nigeria, states a range of unanswered issues in Nigerian foreign policy since the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency and analyses of the question of Nigeria's changing priorities in its foreign policy since the advent of Boko Haram.

Theoretical foundation

National interest theory

²⁸Tilman RO, Cole T (1962). The Nigerian Political Scene (Duke University Press)

Global policy covers all cooperation with national states and other nations. The aim of foreign policies is to achieve domestically and internationally outlined interests. The analysis is based on the theoretical premise that nations behave for their own benefit in their foreign relations and not for others unless all interests are assimilated. A broad and increasing foreign relations literature suggests that domestic politics is generally an important interpretation of the external policies of States, and attempts to explain their effect more specifically. The realists traditionally claim that the national interests are an important explanatory tool in contemporary foreign policy analysis and understanding. The analytical view of national interest is expressed in two ways: firstly, by historical study and secondly, by legislative practice. The National Interest Theory is a tool of political science to identify, justify or analyze the origins or the adequacy of the foreign policy of a government. It helps to explain, condemn or suggest measures as a tool of collective practice. The application of this principle is based on the best interest of the government of a nation in the generality of the people in question. The definition of the paradigm of the national interest is deeply rooted in the strongest of ideals.

That means, therefore, that the means of promoting national interest are foreign policy²⁹. Therefore, the national interest needs to be described much more clearly than by the general objectives of the self – centered obligations which have become the trademark of Nigerian foreign policy. Consequently, foreign policies are seen in the light of fact as a tool open to a government that supports and defends its national interests and this is to be compatible and includes protecting its sovereignty and territorial dignity, enhancing its people's economic and social well-being, fostering prospects for excellent trade links with other countries and leveraging them. Although national interest is completely predictable, the content of the national interest varies with time and conditions. The strategy will thus become versatile and respond to the evolving world in which Nigeria's international policy represents the integrated circle principle.

The study therefore relies upon theoretical presumption that countries are behaving for their own gain and not for the good of others in their diplomatic relations unless all objectives are assimilated. This real-life policy logic that underlies or should be the principle of national interest is the key to understanding the foreign policy obligations of contemporary Nigeria. The creation of the common interest of the State is an intrinsic element of national security in keeping with this principle. It is this issue of national interest that has overshadowed Nigeria's foreign policy greatly, particularly in Africa, in the past. Yet if every country wants to pursue its national objectives effectively, domestic target engagement is a precondition for the effective achievement of the priorities of foreign policy. Obviously, there is no modern notion that we have to look in States to see the relationships between them. Rosenau proposed decades ago that foreign political studies will be improved by exploring closer

²⁹Folarin SF (2014). Visibility and Relevance in International Politics: National role conceptions and Nigeria's Foreign policy in Africa. Lagos: Media Expression International.

the relation between domestic political processes and their impact on international relations³⁰.

The long-known link between internal processes and foreign policy conduct explains Nigeria's increasing frustration when it comes to updating its coveted leadership role in Africa. Their commitment to foreign policy is also significant. The extremist activities of Boko Haram and the ongoing economic downturn have served to threaten Nigeria's foreign-policy undertakings' powers and respectability over the last 50 years³¹. While the Nigerians, and in particular their leaders remain cynical about the leadership position of their nation in Africa, other analysts and scholars think differently. Nigeria and its partnership with the rest of the world are now characterized by a variety of offensive expressions: "a wounded giant"; "open a sore of a globe"; "a giant with twisted feet;" "shoestring empire," "crumbling tower of Babel," and "the Nigerian Gulliver facing the prospect of becoming the world's larder.

Linkage politics theory

The second theoretical paradigm to be included in this study is also linkage politics apart from the realist national interest model. Home relations and international policy is complex to some degree, but our theories have not yet solved the troubling mystery. The argument about whether domestic politics really form foreign affairs or the opposite is fruitless. Linkage Politics stresses most of all the interdependence between national and foreign structures. It looks at the ongoing problems of the relation between domestic politics and foreign policy through the intersection of national and international politics. Most of the current domestic and international relations literature also include ad hoc lists of various foreign policy underscored by "domestic causes," and common statements that domestic and international affairs are somehow related. James Rosenau was one of the first researchers in this field. However, his extensive "linkage politics," with the exception of his whirlwind of domestic and foreign conflicts correlating studies, provided no combined analysis. In his research Linkage Politics was described by Rosenau as the repetitive pattern of action that comes into existence and is responded to in one mechanism³². The actions of Boko Haram in Nigeria continued to respond throughout Nigeria. Everything occurs in a program and its circumstances have a causal connection. Linkage Politics is essential for understanding every occurrence in our global structure of international relations.

The linkage theory suggests that domestic politics and foreign policy are interrelated organically and Nigeria's foreign policy character is established and dictated by the entirety of the national framework. That is, Nigeria's external policy consequences are influenced by its internal political climate. In brief, it is important to go beyond the pure observation that domestic influences affect

³⁰Rosenau J (1969). Linkage Politics: Essays on the Convergence of National and International Systems. New York: free Press.

³¹Emmanuel O (2012). Nigeria, Boko Haram and the Superman. The Guardian (Lagos) March 8, 2012 p. 67.

³²Rosenau J (1969). Linkage Politics: Essays on the Convergence of National and International Systems. New York: free Press.

foreign relations and vice versa to try hypotheses that combine both spheres by taking note of the areas of interconnection between them and beyond plain catalogue of instances of such impact.

Nigerian external relations in Africa since the emergence of Boko Haram

The Afro-centric philosophy of Nigeria's foreign policy remained the most enduring principle of Nigerian foreign policy. The African centeredness of Nigerian foreign policy has been vehemently criticized by over the years following the emergence of Boko Haram in Nigeria. Nigeria has been plagued by many violent uprisings from ethnic militias. The insurgency from Boko Haram, a fundamentalist Islamic sect in North-eastern Nigeria has, no doubt heightened Nigeria's insecurity³³.

One very important slogan of Nigeria's foreign policy is Africa is the center-piece of Nigeria's foreign policy thrust. It was a nice statement that conferred a lot of dignity on an average Nigerian government official. This statement was at the time the Nigerian government was so wealthy with oil money and good strength of its local currency against other foreign currencies. That period, Nigeria was in a good position to buy the world. It did. Its voice on any issue was legion. It played a role that wanted to offer protection to all Africans and even their nations. Many African countries looked up to Nigeria for any kind of help. That was when it began to take charge in war thorn countries like Mozambique, Namibia, Angola, South Africa, and later Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Therefore, taking into cognizance the contributions made by Nigeria towards African peace and development, one fundamental question that needs to be raised is, upon all these enviable roles and contributions which Nigeria made in the continent, can the nation afford to continue pursuing an African agenda with the emergence of Boko Haram terrorism and with the recent collapse of its economy?

Since our research focuses on the foreign policy of Nigeria and its immediate surroundings, with the emergence of the terrorist group Boko Haram, we would like to look at the effect of the issue of Boko Haram on Benin, Chad, Cameroon and Niger as part of Nigerian foreign policy.

The Republic of Benin is designated the 37th province in Nigeria. The economic backbone of Benin is related to Nigeria's foreign exchange. This was because the Republic of Benin appeared to gain somewhat from its sister Nigeria's transboundary exchange. Boko Haram's rise has prompted Nigeria to reconsider and revisit the Benin Republic's frontier practices, which tend not to be beneficial to the Republic's economy. Let us say that in the past the Republic of Benin has greatly benefited from the Afro-centric nature of the Nigerian foreign policy but Nigeria's national security appears more important when the Boko Haram came into being. In fact, in the past few years Nigeria has been working

³³Aworom A (2012). Boko Haram and Nigeria's National Security Challenges, 2009-2012: Some Preliminary Observations. African Journal of Culture, Philosophy and Society 2:1.

more with Benin to defeat Boko Haram's terrorism and less on economic relations³⁴.

The ties between Chad and Nigeria were still not without their tensions³⁵. The two countries had clashes, especially since 2009, beginning with the emergence of the Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. Nigeria had hundreds of thousands of immigrants expelled. There have been at least 30 000 expulsions from Nigeria most of which are Chadians. Nigeria has helped put peace in Chad to a halt, and both nations have reaffirmed their purpose to retain strong relations. Nevertheless, Nigeria's foreign policies towards Chad, particularly after Boko Haram's rise, seem to have shifted in the Afro-Centric context. This partnership was also worsened by Nigeria's own northern turmoil, triggered by the rise of the insurgents. The Chadian soldiers fighting against Boko Haram have withdrawn from Nigeria into Cameroon in the form of strained bilateral relations between Nigeria and its Northern neighbor³⁶. Idris Derby, Chadian President, claimed to have called the extremist group Boko Haram war by himself and said nothing would have been done if it were left to the Nigerian government because Chad never had to engage in war (Osun Defenders 2015). The statement certainly did not go well with the authorities in Nigeria, because the military quickly made counter-representations that refuted and warned the members of the Joint Task Force of carefree declarations. After the terrorists from Boko Haram appeared, there seemed to be too many tensions in the connection between Nigeria and Chad. In comparison, in some of the unstable areas of Borno, Yobe, Niger and Plateau States, the Federal Government of Nigeria's decision to shut the nation's border as a tool for fighting Boko Haram extremism with other neighboring countries is negative. Chad is the most impaired with this directive. 80% of most commodities and services going to Chad come from Nigeria because Chad is a land-locked country³⁷. With the closure of Nigerian borders since the end of 2014, the economy of Chad has not been the same. The Chadians suffer severely. The closure of the boundaries has a huge effect on Nigeria and Chad's trading rate. With the frontier closing, Chadian businessmen are now gradually costing their products from Sudan and some other African countries.

The ties between Nigeria and Cameroon are described as a product of reciprocal distrust and rubbing on the contested Bakassi Peninsula from both sides. The Peninsular of Bakassi has made relations between Nigeria and Cameroon characterized by mutual distrust, suspicion and animosity³⁸. The frontier is the largest of all Nigeria's external boundaries, and perhaps the most complex (Vogt, 1987). However, the commercial relations between Nigeria and Cameroon remain sluggish as Boko Haram extremism falls along, following Cameroon-Nigeria's rise in the terrorist organization calling for military

³⁴Cook D (2011) "The Rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria". Combating Terrorism Center.

³⁵James I (1987).The Nigerian - Chadian Border Conflict." The Nigerian Journal of International Affairs 10(1):63-73.

³⁶Bamgbose J. Adele (2013), "The Boko Haram Crisis and Nigeria's External Relations".*British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*. Volume 11 No. 2

³⁷Premium Times, 6 September 2015

³⁸Njoku, N.L. (2014). The Bakassi Kingdom and the Dilemma of 'Boundaries' and Co-existence in Post-Colonial Africa.*Africana* (2155-7829), 6(1): 194.

cooperation. In Sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria is Cameroon's largest economically (Chimtom, 2012). Both countries have long been closely connected. Nigeria buys 38 products from Cameroon, 16% more than France, according to the World Bank, but the rise of Boko Haram's terror is hindering such productive relations. Misunderstandings arising from the rise of Boko Haram violence have also hindered the relationship between the two countries. Nigeria's exports to Cameroon (cosmetics, textiles, motor replacement parts, domestic equipment, etc.) stood at 36 percent between 2011 and 2014. On the other side, Cambodia's exports of non-petrol goods to Nigeria were 24 percent over the same period, mostly cotton, rubber and food³⁹. Nigeria's exports to Cameroon are down by nearly 12 percent⁴⁰. The explanation is not disturbed because of the Boko Haram activities of terrorists who contributed to the bombing of the bridge between Nigeria and Cameroon.

With the advent of the militant group Boko Haram in 2002 and the accountability for many terrorist incidents, Nigeria's foreign policy seems in recent times to have modified. In other terms, in Nigeria, a nation that has suffered terrorist threats by the Islamic militant organization and which often seems to have influenced the Afro-centric essence of its foreign policy is now facing unprecedented security challenges. The terrorist group carried out a series of coordinated attacks, including attacks against the Headquarters of the United Nations in Abuja that killed over 23 individuals⁴¹ among others. The group can be said to have affected and affect the conduct of Nigeria's foreign policy in these assaults and activities in general, for this is because foreign policy reflects domestic politics. The foreign relation of every country is an extension to domestic politics⁴². In other words, Nigeria's external policy has been influenced by the activities of the insurgents. Nigeria's foreign policy is challenged by the actions of the Boko Haram militant organization (Africa as the center of Nigeria's foreign policy). Boko Haram's actions pressured Nigeria to adjust its foreign strategy⁴³.

For instance, Nigeria's withdrawal of its peacekeeping troops from Mali⁴⁴, the Boko Haram insurgency had become a major challenge to Nigeria's efforts at forging relationships with her French-speaking neighbors, and the deportation of more than 4000 foreign nationals from Chad, Niger, Cameroon- the immediate neighbors on the northeast axis of Nigeria, among others⁴⁵.

³⁹Christopher Jator (2015), "Nigeria: Cameroon-Nigeria Maximising Trade Opportunities". Retrieved from allAfrica.com.

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹Nigerian Television Authority, 2014

⁴²Ede O (1986). Nigeria and Francophone Africa. (p. 176) in, G. Olusanya and R. A. Akindele (eds.), Nigeria's External Relations: The First Twenty-Five Years. Ibadan: University Press Ltd.

⁴³IfedayoTolu (2013), "Nigeria's Security Interest in West Africa: A Critical Analysis". *Journal of Research and Development* Vol. 1, No.6

⁴⁴Premium Times, 2014

⁴⁵Akpomera E, Omoyibo K (2013). Boko Haram Terrorism in Nigeria: The Paradox and Challenges of Big Brother Foreign Policy. *An International Journal of Arts and Humanities* 2(1):94-113.

Nigeria's changing priorities in its foreign policy since the advent of Boko Haram.

Such goals are the fundamental and overarching ideology driving force pushing Nigeria to implement the four focused cycles approach as previously advocated. A notable accomplishment is the involvement by Nigeria, from its commitment in Africa to peacekeeping and dispute settlement and the role of Nigeria in settling civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone and finally to dismantling apartheid in South Africa, to the creation of the 1963 OAU and to the 1975 ECOWAS, to the achievement of independence by Angola and Zimbabwe in 1975 and 1980. One of Nigeria's most crippling threats today is extremism. In the northeast region of Nigeria, Boko Haram jihadists wreak havoc and target the innocent Nigerians, religious organisations and even the security personnel of the country⁴⁶. Because of the above described problems, Nigeria has lost the position of leadership and addresses security challenges, military incursions into the politics and administration of that nation as a part of the vulnerability that reform should tackle.

Conclusion

Economically, the rise of Boko Haram has influenced Nigeria, as capital that could be spent in infrastructure programs is instead being redirected to security concerns, unlike when the nation was economically thriving in the 1970s and might participate in an Afro-centric form of foreign policy. The country financially today has so little. Throughout this sense, there is uncertainty regarding the position of the country's big brother throughout Africa. The illusion of Nigeria's Big Brother foreign policy against its neighbors over the recent times has been exacerbated by religious fanaticism, violence, particularly weapons smuggling and borderless illegal migration in the northern part of the nation, exposing the beleaguered country to the actions of the jihadists and comatose economy. From the above, even though Nigeria's foreign policy insists on the idea that Africa is at the core of its global strategy, the degree this hypothesis is nebulous in the light of the country's current security problems and the subsequent series of responses that the government has adopted to combat the terrorism and apparently does not appear to put Africa at the center of her foreign policy.

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