

NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND GLOBAL PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

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Abstract

Nigeria's influence as a regional hegemon transcends its numerical strength, resource endowment and economic potentials. This continues to be demonstrated by her outstanding contributions in global peace support operations. Nigeria's strong commitment to issues of global peace and security is demonstrated in her numerous conflict management and peace support efforts using the platforms of the ECOMOG in particular and also the UN among others. As an influential state in Africa, Nigeria has since independence remained consistent in most peace support operations within Africa and beyond. These interventions, no doubt, have come to constitute massive assets not only to Nigeria as a nation, but also, to the global community. Sadly, there are clear signals that peacekeeping operations have consistently become deceptive and repressive instruments in the hands of the global big powers who have become more concerned with protection of their vested interests in conflict regions of the world. Relying on secondary data sourced from text books, journal articles, internet documents and newspaper editorials to analyze philosophically the prevailing developments in the global peace support operations. In addition, the paper employed as its theoretical frame work the liberal theory of international relations and argued that through collective actions, states can cooperate to enthrone peace and security and eliminate possibility of war and should there be any, limit its catastrophes. The paper concludes that even with its proactive foreign policy in global peace support operations, Nigeria needs to do more, particularly in working to ensure that the global big powers are minimally influenced by vested interests in their own interventions. Finally, the paper recommends that Nigeria should take its interest beyond sustaining political status-quo in conflict ridden countries to also devising means of making regimes in power more responsible and accountable to their citizenry.

Keywords: Global; Peace support; Conflict Management; Peacekeeping; Hegemon.

Introduction

Since 1945 the interest of the world has been focused on how to ensure global peace through effective management of international crisis. Despite the profound changes in the international system in the past decades, the central focus of the world powers has proved remarkably tough towards negotiation, mediation, conciliation by the United Nations and regional bodies peacekeeping (Jackson, 2001). This has necessitated the formation of the U.N with global peace support and prevention of conflicts as its top agenda. For instance, the organization has as its central mandate;

To maintain international peace and security and to that end, to take effective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of peace and to bring by peaceful means and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace (Article 1.1 the U.N charter).

This clearly shows that peace support operations are fundamental mechanisms, developed by the United Nations to enclose and control armed conflicts and to facilitate their resolution by peaceful means.

In the past decades' peace has become too scarce to find within the African continent, being most likely as a result of its composition of weak and fragile systems. The perennial conflict in Africa has aroused the launching of more peace support operations in the continent than in any other. Moreover, in as much as the various U.N missions in Africa have recorded some level of successes, the organization has also suffered most serious failures in Africa, particularly in Rwanda and Somalia. The setbacks suffered in Rwanda, Somalia and other War-torn countries like Yugoslavia (Neethling, 2000), have also aroused the involvement and willingness of Africans to affirm their authority and assume responsibility for continental peace and security (Landsberg, 2001). This has been made possible because the U.N Charter in its article 52 permits states to form regional and sub-regional organizations for dealing with matters of peace and security within the member states. Hence, the appearance of sub-regional groups in Africa, (particularly among ECOWAS member states) in various peace support initiatives in African continent.

Nigeria as a great and influential African state has been aggressively involved in most peace support operations within and beyond the African continent, either under the sponsorship of the United Nations or the African Union or those championed by Nigeria itself. This has been based on the general awareness of Nigerian political leaders that such fearless involvement in international peace support operations will give Nigeria more international recognition and influence. This paper is focused on Nigeria, its role in global peace support operations in Africa.

Nigeria remains a major participant in conflict management, conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and peace-building and humanitarian support across the world since independence

in 1960. She was the architect and pioneer of regional peace keeping operations through the ECOWAS, whose peacekeeping efforts in military actions she propelled as the lead nation in the sub-region (Chambas; 2004). The national commitment to global peace which rose to an unprecedented level with the leadership role of the nation in the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) operations in Liberia and subsequently in Sierra Leone and other West African States has become a key national strategy for global engagement which successive leaderships in the country see as defining in several respects the nation's place in global politics.

Peacekeeping, a subject of the charter of the U.N, was invented after the second world war for intervention in interstate conflicts by deployment of troops to monitor and ensure maintenance of ceasefire (Adeniji; 2004). Peacekeeping operations despite their inadequacies, have thus contributed immensely to the standard of relative peace which is enjoyed all over the world today. This is despite the many conflict situations that continue to bedevil humanity. There are, therefore, continuing demand and pressure on Nigeria to participate in more and more peace support operations across the world, particularly, in the many sensitive and complex internal political crises among states on the continent. Even with numerous compelling demands on human and material resources, the Nigerian leadership always feels obliged to continue to invest in peace support interventions when and even when not invited to do so.

However, with over half a century experience in global peacekeeping efforts and with the very dramatic changes in world politics, it is argued in this paper that there is need for a review of the role of peacekeeping and peace support operations in Nigeria's interaction with the world in such a manner that would reduce the weight of material and human cost on her.

Conceptual Issues

I. Security: Security can be conceived as a state of existence that is free from danger, fear, threat, anxiety and uncertainty. Hornby (2010) defines human security as the activities involved in protecting a person against attack, danger and anxiety. Since security transcend every facet of human existence, it is inextricably linked to peace and conflict (Francis 2006). Though a widely contested concept, security is generally about the condition or feeling safe from harm or danger, the defence, protection and preservation of core value and the absence of threats to acquired values. Put simply, security is about survival and the condition of human existence.

Traditionally, security has been conceived largely from military angle which focused on the state as the primary referent object of security. This militaristic focus of security led to the development of strategic studies. However, strong criticisms that trails this militaristic focus of security as too narrow and incapable of explaining the emerging non-military sources of threat to security at individual, societal, state, regional and global levels has brought about a refocus. According to Francis (2006), today, the conception of security has been broadened to embrace non-military dimensions such as environment, migration, ethno-religious and nationalistic identities, poverty, diseases and human insecurity. The broadening and deepening of the security agenda is now broadly described as critical security studies.

Security is about the protection and preservation, from fear and danger that threatens the survival of mankind. It is about peace, development and justice because the absence of all these create the conditions for conflict and insecurity. The absence of peace means the absence of

security and vice versa. It is in the light of this that we establish the relevance of the concept of security to this paper.

II. Peace Support: There is a tendency in peace and conflict studies to conceptualise peace as the converse of war. Thus, peace is seen, simply as the absence of war and by logical extension, war is the absence of peace (Ibeanu 2006). This way of conceptualising peace, though attractive, is inadequate for understanding the nature of peace. Peace researchers have also studied peace from philosophical, sociological and political dimensions. While extant conceptions of peace are not necessarily wrong, there are seen as inadequate in understanding the entire reality of peace.

Though diverse perspectives exist on the notion of peace, it is widely seen as a dynamic socio-economic process rather than as a condition. By this, peace is seen as a process involving activities that are directly or indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict both within specific societies and in the wider international community (Gaya-best 2006). While development is a process of improving the conditions in which human beings live, a process of progressively eliminating conditions that alienate labour in society (Nnoli 1981), conflict expresses a direct or indirect relation between two or more actors in which they attempt to undermine the interests of one another, often through the instrumentalities of violence. Galtung (1996) identifies two types of violence viz (i) Direct violence usually expressed in physical and psychological violence against an opponent and (ii) Structural violence which does not immediately come across as violence but arises from particular form of social organization and processes and expressed in such conditions as exclusion, deprivation and poverty.

Since the justification for peace is increase in social development and decrease in social conflict, and also since social conflict is intrinsic and inevitable in human society, state and non-state actors have keyed into the various peace support processes available at the intra-state, inter-state and international levels. Thus, while adopting diverse conflict resolution and peace-building styles at the domestic level, Nigeria has at the policy level not only domesticated most of the existing international and regional resolutions on peace support programmes, but has also emerged as one of the most active participants in global, regional and sub-regional peace support operations. Nigeria therefore, has emerged a strong voice in peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, peace-making and peace building operations and advocacies at all levels of human relationship.

III. Foreign Policy: For Akinboye and Otor (2007) foreign policy can be seen as a type of policy that transcends the boundary of a given state. It is that type of action a state embarks upon in its interaction with other member-states in the international environment, in the process of striving to attain its objectives and goals. Conceived as the totality of all actions, decisions, overtures, and interactions between and among states in the international system (Adesola 2004), foreign policy has two dimensions in its organization viz (a) the formulation and (b) the implementation dimensions. While the implantation dimension is mainly reserved for the executive organ of government, the formulation dimension is most often reserved for both the legislative and the executive organs.

Foreign policy objectives are classified into three viz- the short range or core objectives; the middle range objectives and the long range objectives. The short range or core objectives of a nation (for instance Nigeria) are those values and interests that are critical for the survival of the state and the population. Naturally, the population itself, resources, security, territory, peaceful

coexistence among others would form the core value of any state and no state compromises in its foreign policy whenever its core values are threatened (Mbah 2007). Core objectives, usually concerned with self-preservation and national integrity is considered the most critical objectives of the state and may not necessarily be restricted to only the state in question.

On the other hand, the middle range objectives of the state in foreign policy formulation and implementation are those that are not all that significant, though, significant enough to be pursued by the state. They include military assistance, foreign aid, foreign trade, defence of other states, support to other states to withstand destabilisation among others. Usually not as urgent as the core objectives, a state can negotiate, bargain and make a trade off with other actors in the system if its middle range objectives are involved (Mbah 2007). Clearly, Nigeria's interest in global peace and, in fact, her physical involvement in peace operations around the world falls into this range of foreign policy objectives. Additionally, long range foreign policy objectives are those objectives that have a messianic character to change the world community, for example communism, world capitalism, world government and African Unity. Such objectives do not have fixed dates for their accomplishment. A typical African state like Nigeria, for instance, has the following as its long range foreign policy objectives; disarmament, arms control, creation of a new international economic order, attainment of global climatic/environmental security and achievement of world peace (Mbah 2007). These are policies that are certainly beyond the immediate or mid-range capabilities of Nigeria to determine.

However, Akinboye and Otteh (2007) have informed that the extent to which a foreign policy is achieved depends largely on the quality, character and disposition of the policy makers, the prevailing political and economic circumstances, the resource endowment of the state, the military capability, geographical location, population and a host of other factors. Thus, in the pursuit of their foreign policy goals, nation-states display certain common features which according to Nweke (1985) are intended to; promote the welfare and prosperity of the citizens; safeguard the security and territorial integrity of the state; project the prestige and reputation of the nation; help cultivate friendship, peace, understanding, good neighborliness and cooperation in relations among states; and encourage the practice of civilized standards in the conduct of intra and international relations. Even at that, it is noted that the above can only thrive under a verile stable domestic base, what is implied here is that every foreign policy must have a sound domestic base. There must be resources that would enhance the policy to achieve its objectives. If there is a poor synchronization at the resource level, it would be difficult for a policy to attain it objectives.

Theoretical Framework

The Liberal/Neo Liberal Theory: Liberalism and Neo-liberal institutionalism is one of the theories of international relations deemed appropriate for this study.

Assumption: According to Mingst (1999), the liberals hold that human nature is basically good and that innate goodness makes societal progress possible. Unacceptable human behaviour such as war is the product of inadequate social institutions and of misunderstanding among leaders. Thus, liberals believe that through collective action, states can cooperate to eliminate the possibility of war.

Origin of the Theory: The origin of liberal theory are found in Enlightenment optimism which rests on the Greek idea that individuals are rational human beings, able to understand the universally applicable laws governing both nature and human society. Then, the nineteenth century liberalism reformulation of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment rationalism when they added a preference for democracy over aristocracy and for free trade over national economic self sufficiency. The twentieth-century liberals came up with proposition that war is preventable. This is demonstrated in the League of Nations covenant which basically was focused on preventing war. The covenant accommodated a provision legitimising the notion of collective security, wherein aggression, by one state would be countered by collective action, embodied in a “league of nations”. Since the 1970s, liberalism has been revived under the rubric of neoliberal institutionalism. Neoliberals have asked time and time over why states choose to cooperate most of the time in the anarchic condition of international system and have also attempted to provide answer (Axelrod and Keohane 1986).

Proponents of the Theory: Earliest recorded ideas on liberalism originated from classical Greek philosophers like Socrates, Aristotle etc. Then, scholars like Montesquieu and Kant further projected the liberal idea. In the twentieth century, President Woodrow Wilson of the United States of America became its greatest adherent. Its most contemporary advocates are political scientists Robert Axelrod and Robert Keohane.

Basic Trust of the Theory: Some of the basic trusts of liberalism include that:

(i) Individuals are rational human beings, able to understand the universally applicable laws governing both nature and human society.

(ii) Understanding such laws means that people have the capacity to improve their condition by creating a just society.

(iii) If a just society is not attained, then the fault rests with inadequate institutions – the result of a corrupt environment.

(iv) Human nature is not defective and that problems are created as man enters civil society and forms several nations.

(v) War is a product of society, not an attribute inherent in individuals.

(vi) International anarchy can be overcome through some kind of collective action.

(vii) Individual freedom and autonomy can best be realized in a democratic state that is based on the economic system of free trade.

(viii) War is preventable and that aggression by one state would be countered by collective action, embodied in a “league of nations”.

Application of Liberal Theory to the Study: States emerged basically for maintenance of security and peace. When we ascribe to state, the unique feature of sovereignty, what is implied, is that both internal and external security, stability and peace are the concern of the state. Nigerian foreign policy makers realised the imperative of peace at all levels when they factored global peace support within the middle range objectives of her foreign policy. Purely from the liberal and neoliberal assumption that human nature is basically good and that this innate goodness makes societal progress possible, the Nigerian state has pursued her foreign policy in intra and inter state peace from the liberal prescriptions.

Nigeria's policy on global peace support, therefore, revolve around the basic assumptions of the liberal/neoliberal scholars, particularly, the notion that international anarchy can be overcome through some kind of collective action, that war is preventable and that aggression by one state would be countered by collective action embodied in a "league of nations". Nigeria's faith and absolute involvement in global peace support operations on the platform of international organizations such as the United Nations Organization, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African states (ECOWAS/ECOMOG) clearly attests to how committed she is to the global peace project.

Nigeria in Global Peace Support Operations

Nigeria's contribution in global conflict resolution through peacekeeping has become a key feature of the nation's foreign policy. The nation's involvement is indeed quite extensive, having participated in almost all UN peacekeeping operations in Africa and the major ones across the world. These efforts cover all the various aspects of conflict management and resolution.

At the same time, the nature of new conflicts particularly, the proliferation of intra-state conflicts clearly meant that regional organizations would have to play more role in peacekeeping and conflict resolution. In all these, Nigeria has played very active role, providing necessary leadership to move the regional and sub-regional bodies on the continent to action.

Such consistent participation in global peace support operation could only emanate from a national philosophy that sees it as a key aspect of national interest. Many of these conflicts are multifaceted such that deep strategic knowledge and military capabilities are required to make successful interventions. The interventions which impose huge costs on the nation are even authorized by the UN, the African Union (AU) and the ECOWAS.

It is on record that the expenses incurred by Nigeria in the African Union sponsored operations including the Chad Peacekeeping operations and the ECOMOG operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone have not been refunded. Thus, Nigeria had to carry the burden of financing those operations at huge cost to the nation.

At the dawn of the Fourth Republic, President Olusegun Obasanjo, having reviewed the cost of the operations and their overall impact on the military and the economy declared that henceforth, Nigeria was going to be more selective in the peace support operations she would participate in. He unequivocally insisted that Nigeria was going to withdraw from the Sierra Leone operations. However, as a result of pressure from the international community and several knowledgeable voices from within the country, Nigeria eventually did not withdraw from Sierra Leone but had to continue to participate from thence, only under UN sponsorship. There are reasons for this.

In the peacekeeping operations in Chad which Nigeria participated under the auspices of the AU, the country spent about \$82m which was never refunded. Also, Nigeria's contribution to the ECOMOG peacekeeping operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone gulped over \$10 billion naira. The creation of an appropriate institutional framework for managing conflict in Africa was paramount to Nigeria's engagement and contribution to peace and security on the continent and in the world. This has seen Nigeria playing active role in the ECOWAS to set up the ECOMOG and create the Mechanism for Conflict Management and Resolution in 2001. This is in addition to the

very significant role Nigeria Played in and the transformation of the OAU to AU, and the creation of the 5-member Peace and Security Council for the body.

I. Peace and Security in Nigerian Foreign Policy

The core principles of Nigerian foreign policy suggest strong commitment of the successive Nigerian leadership to international peace and security. These core principles as enshrined in section 19 of the 1999 Constitution include:

The creation of necessary political conditions in Africa and the rest of the world for the protection of the technical integrity and security of all African countries; The promotion of equality and self-reliance in Africa and other developing parts of the world; the promotion and defense of justice and respect for human dignity, especially the dignity of the Blackman; the defense and promotion of world peace.

In addition, there are clear indications of the depth of commitment of successive Nigerian leaderships to this role and the self-prescribed responsibility to champion the progress and development of Africa and the black race. There is a self-righteous feeling among successive governments about the nation's achievements in this self-appointed role.

Peace and security are ultimate desires which every government pledges to fulfill for the survival of the state and for the citizens. For states to achieve this, some of them have traveled the realist path, seeking military and other capabilities required for domination and hegemony. This is more so because, to protect and safeguard the nation from both internal subversion and external aggression, strong military potential was required. Some other states have adopted a cooperative and collective security framework believing that their security would not be achieved in isolation from the security of other members of the international community. This is actually the direction the world is moving presently. However, at the same time, a nation's security is being redefined to include the broad range of values. As the UNDP argued:

For long, security was narrowly interpreted as security of territory from external aggression or as protection of national interests in foreign policy or as a global security from the threat of nuclear holocaust. It has been related more to nation states than to people who sought security in their daily lives. For many of these people, therefore, security symbolizes protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards (UNDP 1994).

This is why security is increasingly seen as development, justice, fairness and good governance. It is why security is now more appropriately referred to and called human security. Accordingly, any nation that pursues peace and security either in domestic or external affairs without due concern for the welfare of the people is off the track. Peace and security operations of the international system have always been a major problem to the international community. It acquired a new significance after the Second World War, when the concern for peace and security led to the formation of the United Nations with a mandate to save future generations the agonies of war. On a global scale, peace and security considerations have always been paramount issues and have dominated every aspect of national and international discourse. International organizations,

like the United Nations and also, regional and sub-regional bodies in their complex variations are equally involved in critical dimensions in the management of peace and security.

Since the end of the Second World War, the global community has been driven by the need to maintain peace and security at all cost. Even as the world broke into two ideological blocs in the aftermath of the Second World War, with the formation of two war machines- the Warsaw Pact (for the socialist bloc) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (for the capitalist bloc) and the resultant development of the cold war and the arms race, humanity, through the UN still held on tenaciously to the ideals of promoting peace and security, introducing the peacekeeping mechanism as a practical way of reducing and resolving conflict.

Nigeria's approach to peace and security is underlined by the belief that Nigeria's national interest lies in a conflict-free and rapidly developing Africa. Nigeria can neither be prosperous nor secure if it is surrounded by weak, poor and vulnerable states. It is, therefore, appropriate that Nigeria's definition of peace and security and her defining role in maintaining global peace and security is in consonance with the systemic objectives and purpose of global peace and security. Accordingly, Nigeria has therefore, found it quite appealing to contribute effectively to peacekeeping and peace support activities.

II. Nigeria's contribution to Peacekeeping Operations

Immediately after independence, Nigeria was inducted into global politics when the UN asked her to contribute and deploy a contingent of its national troops to Congo for peacekeeping under the auspices- the United Nations Operations in the Congo (UNOC). This request provided the first distinctive indication that Nigeria was expected to assume a prominent role in African affairs. In that operation, Nigeria did not join other radical African states who withdrew their troops after the Congolese Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba, was murdered. Nigerian troops served in the Congo operations from 1960 to the end of the operations in 1964 with Nigeria's Major General J.T.U Aguiyi-Ironsi eventually becoming the overall commanding officer of the UNOC forces during its last six months (Yoroms, 2005).

A major peacekeeping operation undertaken by Nigeria was in Chad during the civil war which began in the mid-1970s. Chad's concerned neighbors, particularly, Nigeria did not want instability on their borders or refugees on their soil and so Nigeria helped to broker a peaceful settlement, hosting the Lagos and Kano Peace Accords in 1979 and 1982 respectively. In 1981, she contributed soldiers to an OAU peacekeeping force including Zairean forces, commanded by Nigeria's Major General J. Ejiga and with the logistics support of the US, France and the UK (Mays, 2003).

Again, with the reluctance of the United Nations and the international community to intervene in the Liberian crisis, Nigeria had to move ECOWAS to raise a 3,000 strong ceasefire monitoring force from amongst Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone and the Gambia to intervene in the Liberian conflict. The force, later known as the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) established in 1990 was able after several years of efforts, to pave way for the elections of July 1997 which restored democratic governance under Charles Taylor. This was a very huge burden for Nigeria which according to General Sani Abacha was carrying close to 90% of the cost of running ECOMOG in Liberia (kuna, 2006).

The critical role of Nigeria in Liberia also brought Nigeria into the Sierra Leonean conflict, when the legitimate government of Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was overthrown by soldiers, thus, leading to the collapse of civil rule and the outbreak of civil war with rebels running over the entire country. Again Nigeria's leadership role in the ECOWAS intervention and peacekeeping efforts restored TejanKabbah to office and led to the restoration of peace under a 1998 UN mandated peacekeeping and peace-enforcement operation in Sierra Leone (UNISIL).

Despite the successes achieved in Liberia, there were as at 2009, a two battalion Nigerian military contingent in Liberia serving with the ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) which later merged with the UN Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL). Major General Luka Yusuf, leader of the Nigerian contingent to UNOMIL was detailed to serve as the Chief of Army Staff in Liberia. Nigeria has also been involved in efforts to restore peace in the larger Mano River Union countries of Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone that have suffered severe political conflicts in the past few decades.

Kuna (2006) has rightfully observed that for over three decades now, Nigeria has been contributing troops to several UN Peacekeeping operations in many parts of Africa. For instance, in the United Nations Angolan Verification Mission (UNAVEM I, II and III) starting in 1989; United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) from 1992-94; United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ) from 1992-95, United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) in 1993; Eritrea/Ethiopia in 1999-2003, Nigeria's involvements were clearly visible.

Nigeria was equally involved in effort to avert the collapse of the government of Guinea (Conakry) and the seizure of power in Guinea Bissau by soldiers also attracted the intervention of Nigeria to resolve the problems between President Nino Vierra and the military, providing a cash grant of US\$500,000 to Guinea Bissau. The civil war in Cote d'Ivoire, one of the most stable countries in West Africa was a major blow to ECOWAS and the AU. The Nigerian government again rose to the occasion, ensuring that ECOWAS immediately activated its Mechanism for Peace and Security (Kuna 2006).

Nigeria has been in the forefront of current international efforts to bring peace to Sudan's Darfur region. Similarly, Nigeria also successfully mediated the restoration of democratic rule in Sao Tome and Principe in 2003 after a military coup that toppled the country's elected civilian government. The Nigerian government of President Olusegun Obasanjo also successfully intervened to forestall conflict in Togo following Faure Gnassingbe's undemocratic seizure of power after his father's sudden death in February 2005 (Akinterinea 2005).

The landmark Darfur Peace Accord (DPA) between the Sudanese government and the rebel groups from Darfur was reached in Abuja, where the Nigerian government hosted the very tasking negotiations. Nigeria's General Martin L. Agwai was the commander of the hybrid African Union (AMIS)/United Nations Peace Keeping Mission in Dafur, where the country has already lost several of its soldiers.

Nigeria has also participated in many other UN peacekeeping operations in other parts of the world. Nigerian troops have been on peacekeeping duties between 1962 and 1963 with United Nations Security Force in New Guinea (UNSF); in Tanzania under a bilateral Agreement in 1964; in 1965-66 in the United Nations India-Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM), between 1978 and 1983 with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon; in Kuwait with the UN Observer Mission after the Iraq-Kuwait war 1988-91; in Western Sahara in 1991 during the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO); in 1992-93 with the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, and in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Jackson 2001). There are growing pressures on Nigeria to deploy troops to Somalia and other theatres of conflict on the continent from the UN, AU and the US.

Nigeria has over the years contributed thousands of troops to UN peacekeeping operations, making her one of the largest contributors to global peace and security. At least five of these peace keeping missions have been commanded by senior Nigerian military officers. Such missions include in the Congo where General AguiyiIronsi commanded the UN troops for the last six months of the operations in 1964; In Lebanon and Angola where General Chris Garuba commanded, In Chad- where General J. Ejiga commanded; In Sudan-Darfur where General Martin Agwai commanded and the Joint Task Force in the Lake Chad Basin against the Boko Haram and Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) insurgents under the command of Maj. Gen Lamidi Adeosun (2016) and the current commander Maj. Gen I.M Yusuf. Nigerian Police Units have also served in several United Nations Peacekeeping Missions in Congo, Liberia and Haiti (MINUSTAH) among several others. This is in addition to civilian officials who have served in various capacities in UN peace operations. Among these is Ambassador Olu Adeniji who headed two UN peacekeeping Missions including the one in Sierra Leone.

III. Nigeria's Participation in Peacekeeping Operations 1960-2013:

S/N	Period	Nigeria in peacekeeping operation(1960 – 2013)
1.	1960-1964	United Nations Operation in the Congo (UNOC)
2.	1962-1963	United Nations Security Force in west New Guinea (UNSF)
3.	1964	Tanzania (Under Bilateral Arrangement)
4.	1965-1966	United Nations India-Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM)
5.	1978	Chad (Under Bilateral Arrangement)
6.	1978-1983	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)
7.	1981	Chad (Under OAU)
8.	1988-1991	United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Mission (UNIIMOG)
9.	1990	ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG- under ECOWAS)
10.	1991	United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer (UNIKOM)

11.	1989	United Nations Angolan Verification Mission (UNAVEM) (I, II, III)
12.	1989-1990	United Nations Transition Assistance Group (Namibia) – (UNTAG)
13.	1990	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)
14.	1992-1993	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)
15.	1992-1994	United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM)
16.	1991	United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR)
17.	1992-1995	United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ)
18.	1993	United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR)
19.	1994	United Nations Group in the Aouzuo Strip (UNASOG)
20.	1998	ECOMOG (and later United Nations) Mission in Sierra Leone (UNSIL)
21.	2006	United Nations/ AU Peacekeeping in Sudan (Darfur)
22.	2006	Bosnia-Herzegovina
23.	2008	United Nations Formed Police Unit (UNFPU) with the United Nations. Peace Keeping Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)
24.	2013	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Mali MINUSMA

Source: Kuna M. (2006)Chambas M. (2004). “Major Issues and Opportunities in the Interface between the UN and Regional Organizations in Peace Operations: Perspective from ECOWAS’’. In Adedeji A.G. and Zabadi I.S. *The Regional Dimension of Peace Operations into the 21st century*; Abuja: NWC.

Even though many countries are contributors to UN peacekeeping forces, the greatest burden continues to be borne by a core group of developing countries including Nigeria. It is also worth noting that Nigeria has a bilateral agreement with UN as one of the countries which subscribe to the UN standby arrangements. Nigeria's commitment to global peace and security has even been taken to a new height with the nation hosting the 14th edition of the challenges of peace operations in Abuja from 31st May to 4th June, 2004, in collaboration with the Folke Bernadotte Academy of Sweden thus, becoming a partner country in the Global Challenges of Peace Operations movement which started in 1997.

IV. The Challenge of Global Peace Support Operations:

As we observed above, the international community is decidedly committed to the maintenance of global peace and security by putting in place a framework for managing conflicts. Since it is not practically possible to stop nations from having misunderstanding, it was necessary to put in place an arrangement that would mitigate the consequences of conflict. That arrangement was the peacekeeping process which in its traditional sense was the separation of belligerents and antagonists of usually two or more states. In the immediate post Second World War period, particularly during the cold war, peacekeeping was designed to maintain peace between two usually warring states.

The cold war ended in 1989 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. However, new threats to global peace and security continued to emerge largely because of pressures of the global imperial capitalist economic order but also as a result of several unresolved national socio-economic and political problems. In addition, there is the problem of the failure on the political front of many national governments. This is why the post-cold-war era has witnessed a proliferation of intra-state conflicts, particularly, in Africa.

This new type of conflict was defined by its internal, largely intra-state nature, usually resulting in civil war with huge damages to national resources and heavy losses in human resources. This was a more difficult type of conflict and imposes a big burden on those trying to mediate and keep the peace as it were. This type of conflict became common in Africa, creating situations which the international community particularly the United Nations and other regional and sub-regional organizations as well as nations such as Nigeria have strived to deal with.

This new type of conflict needed a new type of peacekeeping. Peace Support Operations "is the term used to highlight the distinguishing characteristic of the traditional peacekeeping from the type of operations undertaken in the 1990s. Peace support operations would, therefore, include Peacemaking, Peacekeeping, Peace-enforcement, Peace accord implementation and Peace building (Oche; 2003). In addition, peace operations now involve also humanitarian, social, political, legal, economic, human rights and other issues. The concept of peacekeeping was also broadened to include the resolution of the causes of conflict, which usually have both political and military aspects (Adeniji; 2004).

In view of the preponderance of intra-state conflicts in Africa, regional bodies like the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS) started putting in place peace support operations. Such operations have been mounted in Chad, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire among others. Even in Europe (Bosnia-Herzegovina in former Yugoslavia), the EU also mounted a peacekeeping operation supported by the NATO. In the African experiences, Nigeria played very crucial roles, providing leadership in men and material.

Paradoxically, over the years, peace support operations have become not only more problematic but also more complex as conflict have increased in number and the resources to manage them have considerably dwindled, creating many new challenges. New ideas are clearly required, not only by the

international community but also by individual nations to improve on the management of conflict and on improving peacekeeping operations.

At the 14th edition on the Challenges on Peace Operations conference hosted in Abuja Nigeria, the challenges facing the United Nations and other Regional peace operations bodies were identified to include among others: What should be the respective roles of the United Nations and of the numerous regional organization? How governments, with differing resources and capabilities can best respond; and What could be some of the most helpful ways through which members' states could support UN peace operations (Hilding-Norberg; 2004).

Importantly, it was the aim of the conference to stimulate in partner countries such as Nigeria, efforts to influence policy at the national level; stimulate follow-up action at regional, national and sub-national levels and in multinational fora (Hilding-Norberg; 2004).

There should, particularly in Africa, be a regional response to these intra-state conflicts fueled largely by complex emergencies and the phenomenon of failing states and also the collapse of state institutions. This has propelled the regional dimension of peace operations because neighbours should have interest in the peace, security and stability of their environment. Peace operations, as good and helpful as they have come to be, are very sensitive and difficult to manage. Also as already highlighted, peace operations require so much in terms of troops, specialized skilled civilian personnel, adequate logistics, sophisticated equipment and significantly, political wisdom. But regional and sub-regional organizations, for instance, the AU, the ECOWAS and others, have huge problems of lack of capacity and adequate resources for sustaining regional peace operations in several respects.

This is another major challenge for peacekeeping in Africa and most of the developing world which form the epicenter of global internal conflicts. As a result, regional and sub-regional peacekeeping operations fail even when they are bankrolled by willing regional powers like Nigeria. It is only interventions from the UN that have witnessed high degree of successes in peace operations. This has given rise to hybrid operations involving the UN, regional organizations and multinational forces composed of willing states.

Another challenge is the impotence of regional organizations such as the AU and ECOWAS in that even though the Peace and Security Council of the AU is in existence and has mandate for conflict prevention, management and resolution, with a continent wide Early Warning System, the leaders are incapable of making it work because of poor political judgment. As President Obasanjo once informed, "what has been seriously lacking... is the capacity and the resolve to give effect to decisions" (Obasanjo 2000). This is largely because many African leaders are guilty of the same offence of bad governance, corruption, oppression, lack of tolerance for opposing political views and impunity which are the major causes of conflict across the continent.

This much has been the experience of Nigeria in its efforts to encourage regional interventions. Nigeria has been very eager to shoulder the heavy burdens of such operations as demonstrated in Chad, Liberia, Sierra Leone Cote d'Ivoire and the Gambia. In its experiences in Chad, Liberia and Sierra Leone, Nigeria suffered the pain of lack of cooperation fueled largely by suspicion. Some of these bitter experiences have been detailed by Adeshina (2002), a Brigadier General and former commander of the Nigerian Peacekeeping and Intervention Force under the ECOWAS peacekeeping operation in Sierra Leone. In such cases, there was poor and inadequate resource-support for the regional efforts. This is why it was argued that while regional organizations should be involved in peace support operations, such operations should not be regionalized (Vogt; 1996). Even though Nigeria is in the forefront of states in Africa investing enormous resources in building capabilities in peace operations, but this effort can only

be complementary by what the UN and the major powers are prepared to bankroll as apart from the troops, other critical resources including the funds, logistics and necessary political and diplomatic resources cannot be provided by the regional bodies such as the AU and the ECOWAS.

The African Union has set up the African Standby Force at its meeting in Sirte, Libya in February 2004 to facilitate rapid assembly and deployment of troops for peace support operations. But such forces would still need UN authorization and support. Earlier, the ECOWAS had decided to establish a Regional Standby Force. But as observed in the Cote d'Ivoire operations, without external support, such arrangement would barely succeed. In Cote d'Ivoire, the logistic support was fragmented. Different countries came with their own equipment. In addition, while the French RECAMP provided support for some countries, Britain provided for Ghana with Belgium providing for the troops from Benin (Alli; 2006).

These inadequacies on the part of African states have created another opportunity for former colonial and other major powers to join in a new scramble for peacekeeping influence on the continent, thus undermining all the efforts of Nigeria in this regard.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In summary, Nigeria is a major player in global efforts to maintain peace and security by the way she conducts her foreign policy and her immense contribution of men and material to global, regional and sub-regional peacekeeping efforts. A great deal of national capability has been built in this regard such that the nation is now globally acclaimed as a major source of human resources for peace support operations. These activities have endeared her to the international community. However, Nigeria's contributions to global peace support efforts have been at a cost the nation could hardly afford as there are many compelling needs at home. This is particularly so in cases where the nation decides to deploy its resources to intervene in conflict situations.

While it is imperative that all nations must contribute to the achievement of global peace and that as a member of the global community, Nigeria should play its part, it has become pertinent that she review her approach to peace support operations in such a manner that would not jeopardize the maintenance of global peace and at the same time, the achievement of the national goal of socio-economic development. To this end, Nigeria should stop any unilateral peacekeeping activity and seek at all times, the collective burden-sharing and UN approved and sponsored approach to peace support operations. At the same time, Nigeria should ensure that Standby Force arrangements already agreed upon by the AU and the ECOWAS are operational and available for deployment to enhance peace support operations

Additionally, Nigeria should strive to improve on the quality of intelligence available to her with regard to who the aggressor(s) are in intra state, interstate or international hostilities. This will assist her in making informed decisions on whether to intervene or not in peace operations and also on whose side to intervene. Also allying with the governments in power against the opposition or separatist positions at every point in time even without having first-hand information on reasons for conflict and hostilities clearly removes objectivity from the peace support process. In this case, even if a semblance of peace is achieved in such settings through any of the peace process mechanisms, what we may continue to witness is negative peace fuelled and sustained by structural violence as against the much desired positive peace.

Finally and closely related to the above is that Nigeria must begin to project a robust policy on global peace support operations. The habit of always relying on and aligning with treaties, conventions and protocols of international organisations, particularly the U.N the A.U may turn out to be her albatross. This is because most of the operational rules of these International Organisations were either designed or influenced to serve the vested interests of powerful western nations particularly, in resource-rich, third

world states. Depending on the circumstance that serve their vested interests, at one time, Western resource interests have instigated separatist agitations and at another time, supported official clampdown of oppositions in third world states. Often times, Nigeria has ignorantly mobilized to pitch tent in wars that often decimate her military forces while benefiting powerful western nations with vested interests in such conflict territories. This clearly, makes no sense.

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