CHAPTER - IV

NIGERIA AND OAU

In the last chapter, we discussed the establishment of OAU, the factors which led to its rise and the problems of Africa. Presently, we shall highlight the contribution made by Nigeria to the achievements of the OAU. We have seen how the convergence of the foreign policy objectives of Nigeria and the aims and objectives of OAU provided to Nigeria the opportunity to play a leadership role. It is also the convergence of these interests which influences Nigeria's pattern of voting in OAU, UNO, Commonwealth of Nations and other regional, sub-regional or international organizations to which it belongs. The congruence of these interests implies that both Nigeria and OAU must work in tandem for the realization of those objectives which they have cherished the most. It is in this context that we shall discuss the contributions made by both Nigeria and OAU.

Nigeria's contribution is proposed to be discussed under the following framework: (i) African Economic Cooperation and Unity; (ii) Decolonization, Eradication of Apartheid and Racism, and Foreign Military Interventions; (iii) Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, and Maintenance of Peace and Security; (iv) Respect for African Dignity and Peoples' rights.
I. AFRICAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND UNITY

To begin with, the preamble to the charter asserts that,

"All African States should henceforth unite so that the welfare and well being of their peoples can be assured". Secondly, article two calls upon member states to coordinate and harmonize their general policies in relation to functional cooperation. The then Prime Minister of Nigeria Abubakar Tafawa Balewa at the Addis-Ababa epoch-making Conference of thirty two independent African States from 23-25 May 1963, in his address said that, "... African Unity should be achieved by promoting economic, educational, scientific and cultural cooperation and by trying first to get Africans, with different background, traditions, culture and economic condition, to understand one another before embarking upon more complicated and more difficult arrangement of a political union...."

Nigeria has sought to achieve this through functional cooperation within her immediate geographical region and by going beyond that later to the continental level. This conception had influenced her in all its activities and relations in order not to go against this ideal of getting the best for the continent. Equally she regarded her relations and involvement in OAU above her relations with other African states.

This accounts for her interest and efforts at maintaining the sanctity of the organization whenever it was threatened by divisive tendencies and the desecration of its towering image in the continent. With this in mind, Nigeria has become the harbinger of what the OAU stands for. It is in the forefront to promote its activities, ideals, and objectives. That is why, it has been observing the OAU principles, aims and resolutions especially those that deal with non-interference in the internal affairs of sister African states, maintenance of status-quo in relation to the African frontiers as left behind by the former colonial powers, peaceful settlement of disputes, etc. For example, she has refrained from engaging Chad, Benin, Cameroon, and Niger Republic in direct combat after killing her citizens and violating her borders in the late 1970s and early 1980s. She rather resolved the matters amicably with them. These include the boycott of South Africa and the imposition of economic and military embargo despite the tempting offer to it by the racist government for the sale of oil to it in exchange of gold. Another is the severance of diplomatic relations with Israel in fulfilment of the OAU political decision because Israel failed to return Egyptian lands captured during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war and, the continued
collaboration of Israel with the South African government in
both economic and military fields.

Thus Nigeria has lived up to its constitutional
obligations which according to Section 19 of its 1979
constitution urges the State to, "promote African Unity, as
well as total political, economic, social and cultural
liberation of Africa and all other forms of international
cooperation conducive to the consolidation of universal
peace and mutual respect and friendship among all peoples
and states, and shall combat racial discrimination in all
its manifestations".

Nigeria's contribution has been significant in view of
the fact that the question of international economic
cooperation as well as peace, security, disarmament, had
acquired a new urgency especially with the apparent erosion
in the commitment of the developed countries to
multilateralism who were resorting to the exclusive club
approach (e.g. the Paris and London Clubs for aid donors and
exporting countries of nuclear materials) and, most of the

2. See, National Concord (Lagos), August 30 1991, p. 7,
and also; Toyin Falola and Julius Ihonvbere (eds.),
The Rise and Fall of Nigeria's Second Republic: 1979-

3. Chapter Three (Fundamental objectives and Directive
Principles of State Policy), Section 19 (Foreign Policy
Objectives), The Constitution of the Federal Republic Of
Nigeria 1979 with the Amendments. (Lagos: Federal
Department of Information, Printing Division, 1980),
p. 10.
time, to even unilateral action in attending to the global economic and political issues, as they affected the third world states in general but Africa in particular, with fast declining economic aid. Moreover, with the weakening of UN System, as could be seen from the western nations assault on UNESCO, the FAO, and the parent UN itself, as well as the break-down of dialogue and consensus on issues of global concern, there was the need therefore to explore new avenues, approaches and mechanisms to complement the current efforts at international cooperation.

Such were the compulsions which forced her in mid-1973 to become the spokesman for Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific States (ACPS) in negotiating with European Economic Community (EEC). This was contrary to her earlier hostile attitude to the Community up till the end of 1972. She became conciliatory in order to ensure that through a united front in Brussels the ACP states were able to gain more from their negotiations with the EEC. This gave birth to the Lome (I) and Lome (II) conventions signed in February 1975.

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Note: The constitution since the military take over in December 1983, has remained suspended in part.


and 1979 for five years respectively between the EEC and ACP states.

The same led Nigeria with Togo to plan for the realization of an economic union within the West African sub-region. Although, the original idea for this belonged to William Tulbert of Liberia who, in 1964, invited representatives of Ivory Coast, Guinea, and Sierra Leone to discuss the proposal in Monrovia. Nigeria's policy of functional approach to African unity resulted in a number of viable international economic organizations in Africa including African Development Bank (ADB), that came into existence in September 1964, when twenty independent African States signed the agreement; the coming into being of ECOWAS on 28 May 1975, when fifteen West African countries signed the treaty in Lagos (the States are: Benin, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali,


Mauritania; Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra-Leone, Togo, and Upper Volta).

The long-term objectives of the ECOWAS are, the establishment of an economic union (or a 'customs union', in the language of the Community Treaty). Thus, a new chapter was opened in the economic relations within the sub-region. The creation of ECOWAS and the conclusions of other economic agreements that founded the Lake Chad Basin Commission in May 21-23 1964 and, in 1974 River Niger Commission were great contributions to African economic cooperations by Nigeria.

8. See Article 12 of the Lagos Treaty which provides that, there shall be progressively established in the course of a transitional period of Fifteen (15) years from the definitive entry into force of this Treaty... a customs union among the Member States. Within this union, customs duties or other charges with equivalent effect on imports shall be eliminated. Quota, quantitative or like restrictions or prohibitions and administrative obstacles to trade among the Member-States shall also be removed. Further more, a Common Customs tariff in respect of all goods imported into the Member-States from third countries shall be established and maintained".

9. Also, under Article 35, Member States agree to take all measures necessary for the creation of a common policy especially, in the fields of research, training, production, processing and marketing of the products of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and fisheries. They further undertake under Article 40 and 48 respectively, "to evolve gradually common policies in the areas of transportation and communications, and energy and mineral resources".
As far as ECOWAS is concerned, Nigeria has been playing a key role which had ensured its success up till now. Moreover, her vast economic resources have been of immense advantage to the Community in general. It had thus helped in overcoming some of the problems faced by the organization. Nigerian leaders from time to time have been displaying great caution in handling the ECOWAS affairs. Problems that arose, particularly the frontier issues, have been attended to with the spirit of give and take. With ECOWAS unity, solidarity, peace and stability of member states has been enhanced. It has helped equally in removing what hitherto, had been the cause of rancour and discord which had existed in the sub-region prior to this date. Moreover, it has become a forum whereby irritants are discussed and sorted out in both brotherly and friendly manner. In the process, sub-regional discords had been prevented from going outside. It is gratifying for the region that, the ECOWAS is growing in fulfilment of its objectives for the well-being of the people of the region and the entire continent. ECOWAS has, equally, emerged as a model for sub-regional integration economically and otherwise like the, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in the Indian sub-continent for example. Both ECOWAS and SAARC have identical aims - the overall development and welfare of the people of their various sub-regions. The member states of these two sub-
regional organizations are poor and existing in similar environment of suspicion and mistrust, regional imbalances, and tensions within, etc.

As a consequence of its belief in functional cooperation, Nigeria has continued to cooperate with Cameroon, Chad and Niger in making the Lake Chad Basin Commission a viable economic entity. She became also a member of the eight-nation River-Niger Basin Commission comprising Nigeria, Benin, Mali, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Niger and Guinea. These two Commissions were meant to promote economic prosperity and the welfare of the people of these countries.

In 1979 during the OAU Heads of State Meeting in Khartoum-Sudan, the then Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, had urged the member states about the urgent need for an African Economic Community, whereby suitable measures would be taken to enable the continent to become self-dependent and self-reliant to end the existing under development and over dependency on the western nations.


11. Lake Chad Basin Commission and River Niger Commission were meant to promote economic prosperity and well being of the the people of the member states as well as a forum for promoting a feeling of brotherhood amongst the people, and resolving differences that may arise amongst them when fully operational.
brought about by their historic existence. This was to be preceded by an OAU economic Summit to take stock of the existing African economic situation. This proposal was accepted by the African leaders. Ultimately, Nigeria agreed to host such an historic OAU Economic Summit in Lagos in April 1980 that brought about the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and, the Final Act of Lagos (FAL). This meeting and its outcome, became a landmark in the economic development of Africa. Through this development, Nigeria was able to transfer its ideas of functional approach to regional cooperation into a new era of collective economic endeavours for the overall welfare and emancipation of the African continent.

In the continuing economic crisis of the continent, it has been able to realize its impact resulting in adjustments. As a consequence, the LPA and the FAL were collectively adopted by the Special Economic Summit in 1980. And in reassessing the LPA and FAL, in view of the critical economic situation facing the continent, the organization

* The LPA and FAL is a plan of action adopted in Lagos-Nigeria by the African states in 1980 during their first ever economic summit to overcome the socio-economic underdevelopment of the continent. While aiming at accelerating the pace of socio-economic development of the continent through collective self-reliance, it is also hoped that by the year 2000, economic integration of Africa would have taken place with the establishment of an African Common Economic Market.
later adopted the "African Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER)" which identified new priorities and injected fresh initiatives in the areas of food production and rehabilitation of African agriculture, agro-allied industries, related infrastructural development, rolling back of the effects of drought and desertification and development of human resources through radical changes in the educational system. For the effective implementation of APPER and its success, $128.1 billion would be needed within the next few years. African states therefore desired that, they provided $82.5 billion of the total amount themselves while the international community shall be asked to provide the balance of $45.6 billion. This was done to demonstrate their major concerns and primary responsibility for financing APPER.

Nigeria had stood for South-South Cooperation as a means of development amongst the African states in particular and the Third World states in general. It also believed in the North-South dialogue whereby the industrialized states would assist the developing nations in their quest for development and, in the process bridge the gap between the developed and developing states. Through its belief in the unity and functional cooperation amongst the OAU states and that of the generality of the developing countries, it thus became the spokesman for the

African, the Caribbean and the Pacific States (ACPS) who joined the African states in Brussels in negotiating with the European Economic Community (EEC), for more economic and trade concessions as stated earlier. This affects her relation and actions in the Commonwealth of Nations, OPEC, and other economic institutions to which it belongs.

On the other hand, Nigeria became a member of the Multi-lateral Economic and Financial Institutions which offers some facilities like loans to poor states through the African Development Bank (ADB). She has been cooperating with the ECOWAS in the West African sub-region in such fields as Communications, energy, industry, etc., and the United Nations Specialized institutions. As an associate ACP member of the EEC, it vigorously pursued and promoted the implementation of all bilateral scientific, technical and cultural agreements with its economic partners so as to ensure the training of skilled personnel in these vital spheres to enable her to harness the potentials of its natural resources which shall sustain all round growth and development of its nation and Africa in general. Though, the desired results are yet to manifest themselves according to expectations. But, it is hoped that within the shortest period of time the expectations would materialize.

In terms of aids to the needy and poor states of Africa, her contribution has been immense. In 1974, the IMF borrowed from her about $120 million to help finance oil credits for other states. The World Bank also borrowed from her some $240 million. Bilaterally also, she has been helping its neighbours. For instance, it gave an estimated amount of 2 million pounds in relief to the drought affected Sahel countries including Ethiopia and Somalia. Mali Republic was gifted with the sum of 25000 pounds in 1973.

And between 1970-75, it made grants to some of the French-speaking West African states like Togo, Benin, and Niger. These were to help them balance their deficit budgets and also minimize their dependence on France and other industrialized western states. It also provided technical assistance to several African states within this period especially, to the English-speaking countries of East and Central Africa and Gambia, in the form of scholarships tenable in Nigerian institutions of higher learning, and loaned her experts. Help was also extended to countries like, Malawi, Swazi-land, Lesotho, and Botswana.

In the same way, aids in the form of legal and police personnel was provided to Botswana. At the time of her independence, Guinea-Bissau was given the sum of 500,000 naira in aid. Zambia too received help from Nigeria when as a result of the closure of its borders by Ian Smith it faced the problem of exporting its copper at the Kingstone...
Commonwealth Conference, it promised aid to Mozambique if it suffered any loss of revenue due to closing its borders against Rhodesia.

THE 1982/83 OAU CRISIS AND NIGERIA'S POSITION

The crisis was as a result:

(a) President Gaddafi of Libya was alleged to have links with international terrorism and secondly, he was accused of intervention in the affairs of sister African states.

(b) The disagreement over which of the two delegations from Chad were to be allowed to participate in the OAU Summit Conference those of ex-President Goukoni Weddeye and Hissene Habre. For instance, Libya, the host country and some other African states supported the ousted President Goukoni Weddeye on the basis that he had been recognized by the OAU as the leader of the defunct Transitional National Union Government (GUNT). Conversely, thirteen member states, particularly the Francophone countries refrained from attending the meeting, should President Hissene Habre whom they considered the true leader of Chad be excluded from the Summit.
(c) The 'illegal' admission of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) and secondly, the OAU had already decided at the 16th Summit in 1979 that the SADR had a right to self-determination only through a referendum.

The crisis came about as a result of the fact that, at the eighteenth Summit in Nairobi Libya was nominated to host the nineteenth Summit. Some states like Ivory Coast, Gabon, Egypt, etc. protested against it. At the same time, there were other countries which were friendly with him and supported his policies. Such a situation created a division among the OAU member countries thereby making it difficult to form a quorum each time a Summit of the OAU was to be held in Tripoli -Libya. As a result of these burning issues, the organization was quite unable to function. This situation directly affected the unity and pride of Africa. There was an urgent need therefore to save the OAU from total collapse.

Nigeria is therefore, "firmly committed to the political and economic integration of African states. Since the formation of the Organization of African Unity, for instance, Nigeria has always been in the forefront in making the organization a very strong one. In this connection, in order to bring back the OAU strongly to its feet after two unsuccessful attempts at holding the nineteenth Summit in Tripoli -Libya, the Federal Republic of Nigeria stepped in and played a leading role until the Summit eventually became
a reality with the ceremonial opening of the Summit on 9 June 1983 in 'Africa Hall', Addis Ababa, Ethiopia exactly the same venue where the Organization was established twenty years ago. Nigeria's role in ensuring that the Organization did not 'die' after all would always remain a historic event in the future development of the organization".

It was quite evident that the successful 19th OAU Summit was beset with series of doubts and anxieties. However, the organization was able to achieve positive results mainly because of the activities of well-meaning OAU Member-states. Nigeria on her own engaged herself in a number of activities which finally led to the survival of the organization. Some of these activities include (A) Mobilization of efforts leading to the holding of the crucial Contact Committee Meeting in Nairobi in February 1983. (B) President Shehu Shagari's formula ; (C) Promotion of Consultations ; (D) Goodwill Missions (E) Public Declarations of the intention of ECOWAS Heads of State to attend a reconvened summit ; (F) Performance of the Nigerian Delegation at Addis Ababa (G) Pre-summit Consultations and Negotiations in Addis Ababa.

Therefore, "the success of the OAU Summit should be seen as a great victory for Africa's struggle for unity.

14. OAU 1983 Nigeria's Role (Lagos: External Publicity Division, Department of Information, Executive Office of the President), pp. 5-7.
True to her commitment to the cause of entire African continent, Nigeria has shown to the entire world her firm intention to ensure the unity of African countries. Her role in saving the Organization of African unity from collapse through the diplomatic handling of the intricate situations before the Organization by the President of Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari clearly demonstrated the capability of Africans to hold their own destiny.

Nigeria has been attending all the Summit Meetings except during the early period of the civil war years. This provides the leadership the privilege to interact with other African leaders creating opportunity for better understanding of one another in the process. Here are also discussed bilateral matters outside the purview of the OAU. Besides, Nigeria has been contributing regularly to the budget of the association unlike some of the Member states that are several years in arrears despite the fact that, they annually pay their UN contributions and levies. She has always been setting the trend for others in the association to follow, thus seeking to enhance and maintain peace, unity and cooperation in the continent.

According to Segun Olushola, Nigeria is known to be the major contributor in terms of finance to the Union. Her contribution is ten percent (10%) of the total cost of

15. Ibid., p. 13.
maintaining the African System. This is true until present. Even then, it does not wield undue influence on its affairs more than other members. This ensures that it does not control the association.

Other important contributions made were that it was a host to All African Games in 1973 that brought together all African footballers in Lagos. It hosted the Second All African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in January 1977, where it incurred an estimated expenditure of about $1.34 billion. Politically, this was significant and testified to her increasing role in African affairs and for the good of the black race in general. The festival attracted all peoples of black origin throughout the world (from the USA; Southern/Latin America; West Indies; etc.). It brought home once again, the feeling of oneness and brotherhood, unity, cooperation, and understanding among the participants and their countries. This was no mean achievement for her and the black community.

Nigeria had equally worked hard in, and chaired, many of the Commissions and Committees set up by the OAU or the UN for the solution of several intricate African problems. 17

Through her initiatives in 1972, some of the OAU


Specialized Commissions such as the Educational and Cultural Commission, and the Scientific, Technical and Research Commission, were reactivated after having been abandoned for years. Moreover, as an example, for more than two decades, it was the Chairman of the UNO Committee Against Apartheid. It was within these periods that under the Committee, a UNO mandatory sanction against South Africa was agreed upon and came into effect. Equally, SWAPO the then Liberation Movement in Namibia and other liberation Movements in the continent, were recognized by the UNO as legitimate. It then directed its agencies to equally extend whatever supports they could to them. It was at this time also that the racist regime was banned from participating in international sporting events.

II. DECOLONIZATION, ERADICATION OF APARTHEID AND RACISM, AND FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

The main features of the new Nigerian Foreign Policy as outlined by the Murtala/Obasanjo Administration were: support to the liberation movements in Africa, Asia and the rest of the world; an end to apartheid, racism, and decolonization in Southern Africa; support for world peace and security; non-alignment; and support to the Arab countries and Palestinians in their fight against Israel; close links and cooperation with OAU, the Commonwealth of Nations, ECOWAS, UNO, OPEC, and other international
organizations in their determined efforts to create an equitable and just world order.

Nigeria, therefore, through these associations internally and externally, has espoused the cause of Africans in the Southern African region to free themselves from the clutches of apartheid and racism, colonialism and imperialism, dispossession of land and territories. It has given aid, assistance and support financially, militarily, politically, diplomatically, and otherwise to the Liberation Movements and freedom fighters fighting to free themselves from the hands of exploiters and colonial domination in the form of apartheid and racism. At the same time, it must be mentioned here that, from 1960 to 1966 and early 1970s, Nigeria only paid lip service and did not play active role in OAU and African affairs due to its pro-western policy as stated earlier especially that concerning Liberation Movements.

That Nigeria used the Commonwealth of Nations to espouse the cause of the Africans can be deduced from the speech of General Gowon, the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria during the Ottawa 1973 Meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government when he said:

"My delegation and I have come to this meeting deeply convinced that the continued existence of the Commonwealth is a matter of fundamental importance to
us in Nigeria and to the cause of international Peace and Security. It is in this spirit that I intend to make this brief statement on "The World and Commonwealth Trends" with particular reference to Africa... If I dwell on African problems in relation to the Commonwealth, it is because, they are naturally, closer to me... The African problems I wish to refer to are three fold, namely colonial and racial; economic and commercial; and general...."

Gowon went on to say that,

"the whole world is at one on the colonial issues of Africa... The sanctions which the United Nations Security Council imposed against it commended virtually total support of the international community.... And so the sanctions have been officially breached by the United States of America and surreptitiously by the other countries which claim to be friends of Africa... I do not want to talk about the apartheid in South Africa, the Social out-cast of the international Community. Nor do I wish to speak of the evils of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. Portugal's recent resorts to Jungle Justice and to criminal acts of assassination of the leaders of the liberation movements in her African colonies are too abhorrent to require elaboration. It does not matter how long and how costly the struggle. The anachronism that Portuguese colonialism in Africa represents will be eliminated for good no sooner than we think...."


19. Ibid., p. 3.

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In this way, the Nigerian Government believed that as long as any part of the continent was still under the colonial domination and oppression; apartheid and racism, no African or the black men the world over could call themselves free. It has maintained this position to the hilt. It is as a result of this feeling that since its independence till now, most of have foreign policy objectives and pursuits have been devoted to overcoming these injustices meted out to Africans and blacks in particular. All Nigerian governments adhere steadfastly though with varying degrees and commitments to this belief.

Regarding the issues involved in Southern Africa, the most significant event in Nigeria's foreign policy since her independence came in 1975 when, she adopted an active pro-MPLA stance in Angola. At that time, Murtala Mohammed, the Head of State and Government, gave a rebuff to the former U.S. President, Mr. Ford, who had sought to intimidate the OAU Member States, in order to compel them to support a servile, pro-Western group. The Nigerian Head of State accused the American President of "arm-twisting" and "insulting the intelligence of African leaders". Therefore, it was made clear that African memory was not as short as the American Government thought". "We are intelligent enough to draw a distinction between foreign advisers from friendly countries invited by patriotic forces to assist in maintaining national sovereignty and defend territorial
integrity and those racist adventurers who take upon themselves to invade African countries in order to undermine their independence and exercise neocolonialist influence. 20

President Ford was told in no uncertain terms by the Nigerian leadership that Africa was not prepared to bow to the dictates of a superpower. Nigeria recognized the MPLA Government of Neto, and her Ministers travelled to various African capitals to persuade other states also to follow the Nigerian example.

Thus, on the Angolan situation and 'the unedifying role which the United States has played in the African liberation struggle', 'the Nigerian Federal Military Government took very strong objection to the patronizing interest which President Ford suddenly developed'. In this way, Nigeria had also been exposing the double standards of the former imperialist powers and other western countries regarding the issues and problems of Africa. This Angolan issue brought a great rift in the OAU and, without Nigeria's deft handling of the situation would have resulted in the member states of the organization calling it a day.

That accounts for Nigerian government coming down heavily on the Reagan Administration for encouraging and


abetting apartheid and racism by extending support to the South African government in its financial and economic dealings with it. Shagari voiced his concern to that government when he asserted that,

"we in Nigeria feel that the history of your country (the United States of America) places on the government and the people of (your country) a great responsibility to use your powerful international economic and financial position to discourage and, eventually, destroy apartheid in South Africa... your policy towards South Africa has been largely dominated by a single-minded pursuit of economic and strategic considerations. This in my view can at best offer only a temporary advantage, for in the final analysis, only a South African which accepts majority rule can truly offer a lasting guarantee to the security of your economic and strategic interests...."

Nigeria repeatedly urged the USA to abandon its policy of 'Constructive Engagements' with the apartheid regime as it had realized that, such a policy instead of dissuading the government from its practices encouraged it. The government in Lagos as an alternative, requested the US government to join the growing international efforts in isolating the unholy South African government, and also follow suit in imposing comprehensive mandatory economic sanctions against it until such a time when, it shall initiate measures that would eliminate the obnoxious system

which ushers in the real democratic system of 'one man one vote' without any deprivation due to race, colour, religion or creed.

Regrettably, the US government under Reagan was not the one to heed to this demand of the hour despite its own domestic public opinion. Nigeria also urged the US multinationals and other non-US based companies to stop investing in South Africa since it was not only the African state to be encouraged with even better facilities. Even the US Congress equally reechoed Nigeria's official position in this regard.

And in ignoring these concerns, the Reagan Administration ridiculed the well-meaning response of the US masses. "Even after the report of the Secretary of State Mr. Schultz's own Advisory Committee on South Africa recommended the abandonment of the ill-fated policy for a positive role to bring about 'Good Faith' negotiations" between the blacks and whites in the South African enclave. The UK, West Germany, Japan, France, etc., are other major western states that aid and support the racist regime. The oil and arms embargo imposed on South Africa by the UNO was flouted by them making a mockery of the UN and all other efforts at bringing the regime to its knees.

24. For details, see Ibrahim, A. Gambari, n. 12, p. 17.
For example, according to information published by the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid, "65 international corporations based in eleven countries contributed significantly to the maintenance of apartheid in South Africa; 22 of these corporations were based in the US, 19 in Britain and eleven in West Germany. In all 1,068 multinational companies had holdings in South Africa, 406 of which were based in the US, while US corporations controlled 44 per cent of South Africa's oil industry, 24 per cent of its auto industry and 70 per cent of its computer industry. In the 1980s, the US became the largest of South Africa's trading partners. Overall trade between them rose to R5 billion. South Africa accounted for 53 per cent of US exports to Africa. South Africa provided 55 per cent of US requirements in chrome, 44 per cent of its vanadium, and 39 per cent of its manganese, while 61 per cent of US requirements in cobalt came via South Africa".

On the issue of Namibian independence, Nigeria had continually urged the America government to stop the linkage politics it was pursuing by linking the independence with the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. This was also the stand of the racist government. Cuban troops were in Angola at the invitation of that country's government. The purpose was to delay the independence of Namibia as per the UN Resolution 432 regarding the withdrawal of the racist government from the territory to pave the way for the UN
supervised independence. Nigeria all along had insisted on the observance of this resolution by USA, other western countries, and the multinationals operating and dominating the economic activities of the area.

On the continued occupation of Palestinian and other Arab Lands, Nigeria condemned without reservation Israel's continuing occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories in complete violation of Security Council Resolution 242 and related resolutions of the United Nations Organization. "We can not support any decision or act on the part of Israel to change the status of the old city of Jerusalem. Nor shall we accept any unilateral action by Israel to alter the character of the occupied Arab territories by planning Jewish settlement in them". Israel had refused to accept Palestine as a neighbour and an independent state. It had also annexed African Egyptian land and other Arab territories in July 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Moreover, Israel with USA and other countries support and backing, had repeatedly refused to accept and implement UN Security Council resolutions for Palestine independence and withdrawal of all Arab occupied territories during the wars.


26. Namibia is now an independent country after the UNO supervised election which brought SWAPO to government in 1990.
Whatever stand Nigeria maintained regarding Israel and the occupied territories was in relation to the OAU stand and resolution. This was been reinforced by President Shagari when he said,

"... our position is that the decision to break with Israel was not that of Nigeria alone, it was an OAU decision taken unanimously by all African countries. You (the OAU Chairman and other members of the Heads of State and Government) are no doubt aware that the reason for breaking relations with Israel was not just because of the Middle East, a question which was basically the concern of the Arabs. We acted as Africans because of Israel's continued cooperation with racist South Africa. Israel has further intensified this cooperation with South Africa and we, as Africans have continued to be horrified by this attitude. Israel... has a quarrel with Africa as well...."

On the issue of foreign intervention in the continent, Nigeria has not only done its level best to prevent or minimize their presence but had also warned other African states regarding the danger it poses. In the 15th Summit Meeting in Khartoun, in July 1978, the Nigerian Head of State had told his colleagues that, they had to be quite clear about what they,
"mean by external intervention in the context of contemporary political developments in Africa. Typical examples of the kind we have in mind... are the criminal mercenary-led aggressions against the Republic of Guinea in 1970, and the externally-organized invasion of the Republic of Benin. These are operations purposely mounted in order to protect foreign interests and to subvert the stability and sovereignty of specific African States."

The Nigerian leader however made it clear that African leaders need to make a clear distinction between the above interventions and others,

"in the struggle for independence and freedom the only source of effective support was the Eastern bloc countries. The Soviets were therefore invited in Africa for a purpose and that purpose was to liberate the countries to which they were invited from centuries of cruelty, degradation, oppression and exploitation. Unless we wish an undesirable situation to remain in Africa, we should not be over concerned by the presence of those we invited to fight for specific causes and no more".


29. Ibid.

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From the foregoing, it is of significant importance to mention here that, there is a remarkable change since the late 1970s to 1990s in its perceptions regarding the interventionist activities of outside powers in African affairs when compared to her positions in 1960s and early 1970s as could be deduced from the Angolan crisis of 1975/76 and the Congo imbroglio of 1960 to 1961 for example.

III. PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES, AND MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND SECURITY

Peaceful settlement of disputes and maintenance of peace and security has been upmost in the minds of the Nigerian governments in its relations with neighbours and with other African states and the rest of the world. This is not only in response to the OAU charter and Principles but also, to that of the UNO, the non-aligned movement and other regional or international bodies to which she belongs. This has also been in keeping with its conviction that nation building can not be possible in a world full of rancour and discord. And the only way out therefore is to adhere to these international norms and ethics embodied in the charters and principles of these associations mentioned above, including the Panchsheel ideas and ideals. The Nigerian governments in this regard, despite great provocations by her neighbours like Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and even the Benin Republic, opted for peaceful settlements.
without recourse to war and internationalizing these border disputes. In this way, outside powers and other interventionist states were kept out of the regional issues without their involvement.

From 1960 to 1983 onwards Nigeria has helped or involved in the settlement of disputes in the continent. For example in 1960, she sent troops and police to Congo Kinshasa (now Zaire), in 1964 it sent troops to Tanzania to replace the British forces sent there during the mutiny. She was also involved in finding a solution to the Ethiopia-Somalia dispute. In 1970, it offered military assistance to Guinea following the Portuguese led invasion of that country. In 1971, she was involved in peace initiatives for a solution of the Middle East crisis within the context of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967. In 1974, it mediated between Guinea and her neighbours. And in 1979-83, she was involved in the settlement of the Chadian problem and that between Chad and Libya.

Moreover, Nigeria's mediation in Chad and the careful handling of the delicate situation arising in 1981 due to the killing of Nigerians by the Cameroonian gendarmes by Shagari, brought success to Nigeria despite the urge for direct military action against Cameroon. To the wider

31. Ibid., p. 95.

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continental problems, African states have to recognize "Whether graciously or ungraciously - the leadership of Nigeria. In the OAU, President Shagari was for example, the main influence in preventing the organization from breaking up over the matter of Morocco and the SADR, during the OAU Summit in Sierra Leone in July 1980". As said earlier, Nigeria urges Africans to maintain peace and concord, despite great provocations, which are the requisite for the much needed economic development to end the agony and ravages of hunger, disease, poverty and all that goes with underdevelopment in the continent shall come to an end. For example, there were border clashes with neighbours like Chad, Cameroon in 1981 and 1982. She did not react to this assaults by resorting to the use of force to settle scores with them. Rather, it had always succeeded in mending its relation with these neighbours without involving the OAU. It has been against hegemony and believed in peaceful coexistence relying heavily on the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty, non-interference and cooperation with other states which the OAU Charter demands of member states.

That the country has participated in numerous OAU activities is not deniable, especially in conflict

resolution. According to Zartman, "Nigeria was instrumental in keeping Uganda in the OAU in 1971; in mediating the Ethiopia-Somalia border dispute, and in mediating the dispute between Ghana and its French-speaking neighbours in 1964. It sent troops to Congo in 1960, offered troops to Tanzania and refused troops to Congo in 1964, and chaired the OAU Special Council of Ministers on the invasion of Guinea in 1970. General Gowon was also a Member of the OAU Presidents' Mission to offer proposals for a Middle East solution in 1971, an endeavour that was less successful. In these activities Nigeria has used its prestige and considerable resources to help maintain order in the regional system...."

Nigeria sent non-combat troops to Zaire in 1960, Tanzania in 1964 and Chad in 1982 due to domestic conflicts there. More recently she successfully mediated in the border conflict between Burkina Faso and Mali. The ceasefire agreement, which was eventually put into place, was based on her proposals. In the case of Chad problem also Nigeria has tried to promote a government of national reconciliation in that country. She hosted two conferences at Kano to bring about reconciliation among numerous warring factions in that country. At one stage Nigeria had even cut


34. See, Bolaji Akinyemi, The External Affairs Minister of Nigeria, n. 13, p. 23.
off oil supplies to Chad until the warring factions could reach a settlement among themselves. Likewise, in the case of Western Sahara problem Nigeria, as a member of the so-called "Committee of Wisemen", has been trying to bring about an amicable solution to the problem.

Perhaps, we can best understand Nigeria's contribution to the promotion of international cooperation, having due regard to the charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the words of I.O.S. Nwachukwu when he said that,

"...active participation in the United Nations has been a central feature of Nigerian foreign policy since we became the 99th member of the organization on 7th October 1960. The UN remains a veritable instrument for maintaining international peace and security as well as a forum for the discussion and action on the issues of international economic cooperation and development. The aims and objectives of the organization as set out in the Charter are as valid today as they were over 40 years ago. Nigeria will continue to support those aims in practical terms. We affirm our faith in fundamental Human Rights, Self determination of all people's and territories and the equality of all states, large and small...."

35. Chief J. O. Omoludun, Nigerian High Commissioner to India, n. 17, p. xxi.

In another vein, the Minister reaffirms Nigeria's belief that, "UN is the last hope for all nations to co-exist together in peace and harmony". He observed that, "it was in keeping with this belief that the nation had since joining the body 29 years ago, contributed regularly to the UN budget, as well as, put some of its best brains at the service of the world body". Happily he noted that, "the UN has recognized Nigeria's avid concern in the success of the ideals of the body through the unanimous election of its current permanent representatives, Ambassador Joe Garba to the Presidency of the general assembly..."

All successive governments in the country had not only adhered to the UN Charter but also enforced and upheld the ideals for which it was created. As mentioned in the earlier chapter, it believed in the South-South collaboration and, the North-South dialogue for the creation of a more equitable New International Economic Order (NIEO). The promotion of disarmament, the de-escalation of the East-West tension in concert with other Third-World States as a means of strengthening the Afro-Asian de-colonization process which is conducive and necessary for cooperation, and maintenance of international peace and harmony.

37. I.O.S. Nwachukwu, in a statement to commemorate the 44 anniversary of the 160 member organization on Tuesday, October 24 1989; Daily Times, October 25 1989, p. 4.
IV. RESPECT FOR AFRICAN DIGNITY AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

As a result of her belief and perception, she has been in the forefront for and in the observance of human and people's rights in Africa and the rest of the world wherever they are violated. That is why, it has been clamouring for the boycott of the South African government and the imposition of economic and military embargo against the evil empire as a way of forcing it to amend its local laws that can usher in a democratic government in that part of the world. Nigeria has been requesting other OAU member states not to use the organization's principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of sister-African states as a shield for human rights violations and abuses in the continent. In her view, there is no point in decrying the denial of fundamental human rights to blacks in Southern Africa if Africans equally practice the same thing. In this regard therefore, it behoves on all African states to strengthen their commitment to the total eradication of apartheid by rededicating themselves to the noble ideals and principles of the international human conduct in respecting, promoting, and protecting human and people's rights of their citizens she maintains. If necessary laws should be enacted where non exist or amended to suit the present changed environment to accommodate those ideals and objectives. The rights, traditions, customs, norms and sentiments of the minorities must be respected and protected so as not to
vitiate the existing atmosphere in order that it does not come in the way of the maintenance and respect for the dignity of Africans and, their fundamental human and people's rights.

Moreover, since the coming into force of the African Charter of Human and People's Rights in 1981, it has ceaselessly urged the states, after its ratification by thirty nations, to strictly adhere to its provisions. She is of the opinion that, African states should not fight shy of criticizing members of the organization who violate human rights within their territories. In its own country, the Federal Government has been asserting the primacy of the Rule of Law. The position of the state in this regard could be better understood from Nwachukwu's words when he said that,

"... Nigeria views with consternation the violation of human rights anywhere. We have always defended the rights of all peoples to freedom, equality, social and economic justice. This was why Nigeria was one of the first countries to rectify the African Charter of Human Rights. At the last OAU Summit we supported the decision to site the Headquarters of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Banjul, the Gambian Capital. We believe that such action will enable the commission to begin its important work in earnest and uninterrupted...."

38. Major-General I.O.S. Nwachukwu, n. 34, p. 15.
In the words of President Shehu Shagari, "we in Nigeria believe that so long as one inch of African territory is occupied territory, we remain in bondage, and that wherever a black or African is oppressed, we share the indignity. Nigeria shall work relentlessly to uphold the dignity of the black race anywhere in the world". But while talking of human rights in Africa and Nigeria's position that it is not to be violated, it must be mentioned here that, the records of the successive governments in Nigeria in this sphere domestically is far from encouraging. It is even worse during the military regimes with, rampant violations with quite a sizeable number of arrests and detentions without trials and so on.

To sum up, Nigerian achievements in OAU during the period under study: "Nigeria in the mid-1970s was a state in transition. It had emerged from the post-colonial era of reliance upon the old metropolitan power though still having some colonial hang-ups. It had passed through a devastating civil war. It had discovered and begun to reap the benefits of vast oil resources. Now it was embarking, often with great uncertainty if superficial confidence, upon a new era in its history. The key year of 1975 the mammoth Third Development Plan was launched; a bloodless coup toppled

Gowon and brought in the Mohammed regime - with its October promise of a return to civilian rule in 1979. After 15 years of independence Nigeria was moving forward with increasing confidence in its position in Africa as a whole.40

It was this self-confidence which forced it to abandon the low profile policy which she was earlier characterized as stated in chapter one. This contributed to its leadership role. And here are instances where she had successfully displayed it as deduced from Arnold's writings.

"Nigeria is becoming a power in Africa; some times, as over the EEC issue, acting as its effective spokesman. Important enough strategically and economically to carry growing weight with the great powers, Nigeria plays an expanding role in the councils of the OAU, the Commonwealth and OPEC. All these activities make up its general foreign policy"... thus, "as Nigeria has felt itself becoming an economic giant so, more and more, it has wished to pursue policies commensurate with its power. The development of ECOWAS was its major contribution to African Unity in the period 1970-1975".

He continues his evaluation in the following words:

"Over Angola, the Mohammed regime pursued one of the

most positive leadership that the country has taken over any African affair for a long time. With her recognition of the MPLA government itself, Nigeria went ahead to canvas other African states to persuade them to follow its lead. In the process, its diplomacy was the deciding factor in getting a majority recognition for the MPLA. The Commissioner for Youth and Sports, General Olufemi Olutoye (who also plays a diplomatic role), visited a great number of African states to persuade them over the need for a stand in Angolan issue. The Commissioner for Foreign Affairs Colonel Joseph Garba, as well as the then Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters, General Obasanjo, threw their weight behind the campaign to obtain majority African recognition for the MPLA. Both Olutoye and Obasanjo visited Ghana's Achempong within a week of each other and then followed by a visit by the MPLA Prime Minister, Lopodo Nascimento. Ghana recognized the MPLA, other countries like Libya, Chad and Niger were also influenced by the Nigerian pressure.  

As mentioned earlier also, the reason for leadership in the Angolan affairs by the Mohammed government was, by that time, there existed a vacuum in African leadership over Angola and other issues. Nigeria then was the African state most suitable to fill such a gap and provide a lead. And here, it proved itself worthy and prepared to do so in forthright terms. Secondly, it showed itself determined to

41. Ibid., p. 137.
come out in opposition to South Africa whose defiance of Africa and other civilized non-African states over apartheid and Namibia was now blatantly reinforced by its intervention in Angola. Nigeria was of the view that the racist regime had to be stopped and shown that it could not pursue its aims in black Africa by military force with impunity. Nigeria brushed aside American and western arguments about Russian and Cuban presence in Angola: the Russians had helped Nigeria in the civil war without ending up running the state; but in any case, Nigeria saw it as racist neo-colonialism for the west to instruct Africa about the dangers of accepting Russian assistance. This indicated a new line in Nigerian foreign policy. Thus, "a new and tough approach to an African problem which it was prepared to back up by real diplomatic initiatives, foreshadowed a more active and dynamic continental role for Nigeria".

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OAU

We begin by explaining that, for the Africans OAU stood as the conscience of the continent in so far as the denial of human rights to the blacks in Southern Africa is concerned.

Secondly, the OAU serves as a vehicle of direct moral, military, and territorial support to the African nationalists waging armed struggle in their respective territories. It

42. Ibid., pp. 137-138.
mounts active diplomatic support in the UNO and other international organizations. These efforts were aimed at educating the international public about the evils of the political system existing in Southern Africa, where power is exercised in complete disregard of the African majority, at isolating the Southern African regimes and knowing their allies, and at identifying the UN with the aspirations of the African people in these territories, in the hope that, the UN shall be forced to take direct actions on behalf of the oppressed peoples of Southern Africa.

OAU means so many things to the African people. That accounts for the much hope reposed on it for the redressal of the ills of the continent. It is expected to perform a wide range of duties starting with the liberation of Southern Africa from the clutches of apartheid, racism, colonialism and neo-colonialism; the settlement of internal African disputes and misunderstandings be it in the form of border or intra-state clashes, socio-economic and other issues.

It is in the light of this that, the organization had been termed a unique one. It has, despite all criticisms, gone a long way in meeting the challenges posed to it. This

is made in the back drop of the circumstances under which it came into existence; the condition in which it exists, and the complexity of the African society and issues that it has to face and overcome. The awareness of Africans, of their poverty, under development and dependence all combine in compounding and complicating the environment from which OAU has to operate. This does not mean that it has not failed in certain areas like peaceful settlement of disputes and foreign military interventions, etc.

The achievements of OAU shall contextually be discussed under the following headings; (A) Decolonization, Eradication of Apartheid, Racism, and Foreign Military intervention, (B) Economic and Social Development, (C) Maintenance of Peace and Security in the Continent, (D) Respect for African dignity and People's rights, (E) Development of Education, Science and Culture, (F) Well being of refugees.

1. **DECOLONIZATION, ERADICATION OF APARTHEID, RACISM AND FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION**

Since the inception of OAU, it is in this sphere that much of its time and energy has been devoted. This was mainly due to the urgency attached to these issues by the founding fathers. A Coordination Committee was set up in 1963 itself to oversee the actions taken and their adequacy to the need of the hour. Since then all the activities of the organization in this regard have been carried out by the
The Coordination Committee did its work by organizing diplomatic, moral and material support involving financial aid, military and logistics to the Liberation Movements in Portuguese African territories and in Southern Africa. The question of unifying the freedom fighters who were divided on tribal, personality, and ideological lines was also resolved initially by the Committee. It was through the efforts of the liberation movements that dominated areas like Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, Guinea Bissau, etc. had gained their independence.

The issue of the occupation of Namibia by the South African government and its exploitation with the collusion of the western countries, and the linkage politics of the US government, its western allies and the racist regime has consistently been denounced by OAU. It has equally been insisting on the total acceptance and implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 435 and others, regarding the withdrawal of the South African government from the territory to pave the way for Namibian independence through UN Resolution 439 of 13 November 1978. To OAU, the success achieved in the field by the various Liberation Movements is complementary to the political and diplomatic triumphs achieved by independent African states and the Liberation Movements. Thus, "through the sustained and continued
action of the OAU, supported by friends of Africa and peace and freedom loving people around the world, the UN General Assembly recognized the legitimacy of the liberation struggle launched by African Nationalist Movements. As a corollary to this recognition, the UN General Assembly in its resolution 2555 called upon all Specialized Agencies of the UN to give material assistance to the liberation movements. It was the result of the same concerted action by OAU Member states which led the UN Security Council to hold a Special Session on African territory (28 January to 4 February 1972)".

OAU's commitment to the problems in Southern Africa was reaffirmed at the Ninth Extraordinary Session of the Council of Ministers held in Dar-Es-Salaam from April 7 to 10 1975. The meeting came up with a general declaration on Southern Africa and the Special resolution on South Africa and Namibia stating that,

"...the OAU's full commitment to the objective of total liberation of the continent is unequivocal and unquestionable, whether we are dealing with the struggle against colonialism in Rhodesia or illegal occupation of Namibia or the racist domination in South Africa, the main opponent of Africa is the same: the South African regime...."

It was due to the progressive efforts of the Pan African system that areas like Guinea-Bissau; Cape Verde, Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe gained their independence. And, it is hopefully expected that in not too distant a time, Namibia and South Africa (Azania) shall be free. The continental organization in this way, has continued to be the vanguard of unfinished struggle for the eradication of the last vestiges of colonialism, apartheid, and racism in the continent. No doubt, the African organization has to make Herculean efforts in its endeavours. For, despite the 'good will missions' it has sent out to the sympathizers and supporters of the racist government explaining to them its concerns, and the appeal that they reconsider their stand, the racist government has continued to get support and leverage from the industrialized western states, the Zionist

45. OAU Declaration of Dar-Es-Salaam on Southern Africa EMC/St. 15 (IX), Dar-Es-Salaam, April 1975, pp. 2-3; See also; The Guardian (Isolo-Lagos), 17 July 1989, p. 7.

* Namibia has got its independence in 1990 after the UN Supervised election that brought SWAPO to power. This took place after the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola as insisted mainly by the USA.
regime, and some African states to the extent of circumventing the UN and other world organizations that had given a clarion call for its isolation. This encouragement makes the racist government to be more recalcitrant. In the face of this, the OAU has become a helpless spectator since it is not in any position to enforce its will on these erring African and non-African states. This double standard maintained by these countries can as well be interpreted to mean that they are the enemies of African progress out to destroy the spirit of Pan Africanism, its interests, and aspirations which have become the pride of all Africans.

According to Kapungu,

"the decolonization efforts of the OAU have mainly involved South Africa; Rhodesia; Namibia; Angola; French Somali land (the territory of the Afars, and Issas); Spanish Sahara; the Comoro Islands; the Canary Islands; the Seychelles; and several Islands under Portuguese rule around the African continent. And that, its authority for the support of liberation of the territories in Southern Africa stems from its charter, which establishes as one of its purposes in Article Two, paragraph one (d) ...to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa..." The Charter in Article Three, Paragraph six, commits all Member states of the organization to solemnly adhere to the principle of absolute dedication to the total emancipation of the African Territories which are still dependent. We realize therefore that this issue of decolonization of South Africa was at the forefront of the minds of the Heads of State and governments of Africa which gathered on that fateful day at Addis Ababa the Ethiopian capital for the
foundation conference. Moreover, this became crystal clear from the speeches and resolutions which was heavily and seriously emphasized.

It was in pursuance of this target that, a 'Special Fund' was raised by voluntary Contributions by Members which shall be used to supply the necessary practical and financial aid to the various Liberation Movements. Secondly, a Coordination Committee known as the "Liberation Committee" was established, as stated earlier, to propose the necessary fund and the allocation among the OAU Members, and to coordinate the assistance from African States for the liberation of the Southern Africa. The Liberation Committee has its headquarters in Dar-Es-Salaam, the Tanzanian Capital.

Initially, the Committee comprised nine African states. But presently, it is made up of seventeen states. The Liberation Committee develops the strategy of the OAU support for the total liberation of South Africa and reports back to the Council of Ministers, who makes recommendations to the Assembly of Heads of States and Government. It is this assembly that is ultimately responsible for deciding what role the OAU shall continue to play in the support of

the struggle for the emancipation of Southern Africa. Presently, positive developments are taken place within that sub-region. With the independence of Namibia as stated earlier, South Africa is on the threshold of becoming a democratic society after the recently concluded all white referendum which was in favour of doing away with the official apartheid policy and in favour of a multi-racial democratic society.

The only obstacle therefore to the total elimination of the problems in Southern Africa is the help received by the racist regime from the western nations like the USA, UK, Japan, France, Portugal, etc. Outside this camp, we have the Jewish State of Israel, Malawi under the Octogenarian "son of P.W. Botha Kamuzu Banda", Zaire under Mobutu Sesseseko, the "US darling" who even continues to give support to the Angolan rebels headed by Jonas Savimbi at US government's bidding, unmindful of the sentiment of the Africans, OAU resolution and peace efforts, and its effects on the effectiveness of the organization.

On external military interventions in Africa, while being helpless at times, the African Institution has adopted a policy which seeks to eliminate extra-continental military


interventions and interferences in Africa. For instance, the Second Annual Summit, held in Accra, Ghana in October 1965, categorically urged Member states, "not to tolerate subversive activity directed from outside Africa against any Member state". They were also to "oppose collectively and firmly by any means at the disposal of Africa every form of subversion conceived, organized or financed by foreign powers against Africa, the OAU, or against its members individually".

Moreover, Member states have been urged from time to time to desist from any such acts within their states that may lead to external military interventions. States of the organization have been requested equally not to carry on any activity against one another that may warrant foreign interventions. Rather, they have been directed to amicably settle such disputes amongst themselves or bring them before the association for adjudication. Since then, most of the states have been adhering to this directive while others like Zaire, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia etc. are still recalcitrant.

II. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The organization accepted the challenge posed to it in this regard as the continent was replete with problems of underdevelopment and dependence inter-twined together in hydraheaded forms. As a result, concerted efforts have been made to make the continent self-sufficient, self-reliant and, move to the level of mutual dependence from over-dependence on the industrialized western nations. But even then nothing concrete or remarkable had taken place despite all expectations to the contrary. This resulted in the Heads of State and Government adopting the African Declaration on Cooperation, Development and Economic Independence on May 23 1973 at Addis Ababa-Ethiopia. It contained the aspirations of the Africans for mobilization of the continental resources in order to stimulate intra-African trade which could lead to a rapid transformation of national economies geared to raise the standard of living of every African and increase welfare activities. Having recognized the urgent need of the hour, the African states endeavoured also to harmonize their policies with regard to international agencies like the UNCTAD, UNIDO, ILO, IBRD, IMF, World Bank, etc. Consequently, they started claiming better trade terms and full participation in a new International Monetary System, and redefining the unfavourable old economic order. This equally accounts for their going in for trade concessions and adjustments giving
This also accounts for the 1980, Special Economic Summit held in Lagos where certain plans were drawn up for tackling the socio-economic problems of the Continent. The outcome of the Meeting was the acceptance of the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) as well as the Final Act of Lagos (FAL). Its adoption by the African leaders meant that by the year

* The Key features of the Lome (I) convention are as follows:

1. Privileged access to the EEC market of the ACPS including those products covered by the Community's Common Agricultural policy (CAP). Most of the goods also enjoy duty free entry.

2. A compensatory fund called STABEX (Stabilization of Exports) was created to meet the fall in market prices suffered by the ACPS in their exports of primary commodities to the EEC.

3. A development Assistance of 3,390 million ECU by the EEC to the ACPS for the entire period of the convention.

4. Industrial cooperation to promote a better international distribution of labour in favour of the ACP states.

5. Joint EEC-ACP institutions to ensure the execution of the provisions of the convention.

Lome (II), retained the major features of Lome I with a few improvements. An important addition made in this convention was Mineral Exports (MINEX) which like STABEX was intended to stabilize the export earnings of the mineral products of ACP states. MINEX covered copper, bauxite, aluminium, manganese and phosphate. The EEC, however, rejected the inclusion of eight more minerals under the cover of MINEX as desired by the ACPS.
2000, the continent would have established a Common Economic Community with the coming into effect of the African Common Market. This development as envisaged shall lead to a political integration of Africa. The Summit Meeting came to the conclusion that the continent being greatly blessed with resources must galvanize its wealth together for the upliftment of the continent. In this way, "Africa's huge resources must be applied to meet the needs and purposes of its people, Africa's almost total reliance on the export of raw materials must change ... Africa must cultivate the virtue of self-reliance ... efforts towards African economic integration must be pursued with renewed determination in order to create a continent-wide frame work for the much needed economic cooperation for development based on collective self-reliance...."

It may be important to observe here that, the LPA and FAL were adopted in an atmosphere of immense optimism. Oil price at that time was high. It was universally expected that other export commodities and minerals will do what OPEC did for oil price. This was reflected in the bold programme of action and declarations. As a result, it was noted that, Africa's almost total reliance on the export of raw materials must change ...

materials must be changed as the continent cultivated the virtue of self-reliance. Strategies were outlined as a follow-up action in this regard. Equally, industry was regarded as crucial to development and thus, the period 1980-1990 was declared as the Industrial Development Decade in Africa (IDDA). It was expected that after the completion of this period, sub-regional and regional industrial development would be complete or near total realization.

It is interesting to mention here that, the idea of setting up an African Economic Community by the year 2000 was contained in a declaration of the OAU adopted by the 14th Session as far back as 1977. This means that, the organization and the African leaders were well aware of the dangers of dependence. Thus, they were able to comprehend that their association with the western industrialized states was biased against them as it was based on discrimination, inequality, inequitable distribution and neo-colonialism. And for a realistic cooperation that stood for their equitable interests, it was pertinent for them to agree to work for broadening intra-continental unity, understanding, and trade links and, setting up regional economic association.

Special Economic Summit, is by far the most comprehensive matters that the OAU has produced'. That, "in its one hundred and thirty (130) pages, the Plan presents proposals in such diverse areas as transport and communication, trade and finance, environment and development, the transfer of technology and the development of scientific skills, and the role of women in development".

In the process, he however came out with certain suggestions that could make the LPA effective for the realization of the needs of the continent, as stated in the preamble. They are :

(A) Africa's huge resources must be applied principally to meet the needs and purposes of its peoples.

(B) Africa's almost total reliance on the export of raw materials must change...

(C) Africa must cultivate the virtue of self-reliance...

(D) As a consequence of the need for increased self-reliance, Africa must mobilize its entire human and material resources for its development...

(E) Each of Africa's State's must pursue all-embracing economic, social and cultural activities that will mobilize the strength of the country as a whole...

Efforts towards African economic integration must be pursued with renewed determination in order to create a continent-wide framework for the much needed economic cooperation for development based on collective self-reliance....

In the words of I.O.S. Nwachukwu, "...the efforts of the OAU in promoting socio-economic development of the continent are noteworthy. The adoption in 1980 of the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA), aimed at accelerating the pace of socio-economic development of the continent through collective-self reliance, is a clear manifestation that Africa is not short of ideas. What we lack is effective implementation. The recently adopted Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPR), as well as the on-going attempts at mapping out a collective strategy for effectively tackling the problem of African indebtedness, best exemplify the untiring efforts of the organization in this important area...."

Finally, the OAU General Secretariat keeps close cooperation with the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank (ADB), other regional and international institutions and jointly works with them in

53. Ibid., p. 182.
54. I.O.S. Nwachukwu, the External Affairs Minister of Nigeria, n. 35, pp. 5-6.
drawing up proposals on economic and social development. In the sphere of transport and communication, it is also in league with several regional and extra-regional organizations working together on intra-African projects such as the Pan-African Tele-communications; African Civil Aviation; Inter-African Air-line, ; Inter-African Railways. It is hoped that the construction of the trans-African highway from Mombasa to Lagos, for instance, will be of great economic advantage to the African nations as it shall go a long way in improving and providing the much needed boost in transport and communication links for the safe movement of goods across the continent. Before these measures were taken, it may be mentioned that, throughout the 1960s, adequate measures were not taken to promote transport and communications. It was only in the 1970s and 1980s that, the importance of this to economic development was recognized. And in March 1977, the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of Ministers adopted a resolution calling for the declaration of a Decade for Transport and Communications. "This resolution was endorsed first by the Economic and Social Council secondly by the General Assembly of the United Nations which accordingly proclaimed the Transport and Communications Decade for Africa, 1977-88. This resolution was subsequently adopted by the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Monrovia in July
Moreover, in its progressive efforts to promote intra-African trade, the African regional system has organized an All African Trade Fairs (AAFT). These were considered to be the continent's tactical instruments of organization for the establishment of a new economic order. It afforded the African states the opportunity to convey to the entire world that they have arrived economically by exhibiting their best produce.

In assessing the performances of OAU in relation to peaceful settlement of disputes within Africa, we have to take into consideration the composition, Charter, the African environment where it operates, and the extra-African situation under which it has to exist or cohabit especially its competitive nature. It is in the totality of this realization that we acknowledge its usefulness. In conflict resolution therefore, the record of the OAU is very poor despite the fact that, in settling most of the issues non-African countries were not involved. Nevertheless, it had resolved the boundary problems between Morocco and Algeria; Gabon and Equatorial Guinea; the Ethiopia - Somalia - Kenya triangular border dispute; and that involving Burundi and Rwanda over refugee cases in both States (see appendix eight for details).

Other problems that were resolved are Somalia-Ethiopia and Benin-Niger. Moreover, through direct diplomatic negotiations and the use of good offices of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, OAU has been able to bring reproachment and harmony between Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya; Chad and Libya. It also reconciled Nigeria with the other four Member states (Tanzania, Zambia, Ivory Coast, and Gabon) which recognized the secessionist Biafra during the 1967-70 Civil War.

In most of the inter/intra African conflicts, the use of good offices is resorted to as an easier way of resolving the quarrel as soon as the parties involved agree to a roundtable conference. For instance, during the tenth Summit Meeting at Addis-Ababa in 1973, Emperor Haile Selassie reconciled Presidents Amin of Uganda and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. A "Peace Pact" was also signed in the process whereby, both agreed and undertook to see to it that, their territories were not used as a base of subversion against one another. Uganda also accepted responsibility for the deaths of twenty-four Tanzanian nationals killed, and agreed not to demand the ejection of Obote from Tanzania. Equally, as far back as the 1960s, the frontier differences between Algeria and Morocco had also been settled through the Ethiopian and Malian Good Offices.

The OAU Good Offices Committee also mediated in the Arab-Israel dispute regarding the occupied Egyptian land and the PLO issue. It also was successful in taking the racist South African government to the International Court of Justice over Namibia where it obtained judgement in favour of Namibia against the continued presence of the South African government in the territory. Moreover, assistance was given to Tanzania during the army mutiny as stated earlier. Peace was also restored in the territory.

At the UN, the OAU Member states are able to harmonize and coordinate their policies especially its diplomatic and political cooperation at the UN Assembly. As a result, they constituted a body that has held the balance of power between the former Eastern and Western bloc powers.

The Pan-African institution has become a source of inspiration, hope and confidence to Africans as well as blacks in diaspora, particularly as it represents the determination of Africans to take the destiny of the continent into their own hands. Most of the misunderstandings are internally settled without having to carry it to that world body. In this way, it upholds the ideals as written in the articles of the UN Charter which enjoins all regional organizations to first attempt to settle their local differences before bringing them to the
The peace-making provision of the Charter is only invoked when, neighbouring states are at odds with one another as a result of border disputes or direct interference in the internal affairs. The Mediating Commission in such a situation is always headed by an impartial Head of State. For instance, Houphouet Boigny of Ivory Coast acted as the middleman between Niger and the Benin Republic. Kaunda of Zambia headed the meeting between the leaders of Kenya and Somalia in 1968. Jomo-Kenyatta also mediated in one of the disputes between Uganda and Tanzania. Equally the border dispute between Guinea and Senegal was discussed by the two governments at Monrovia in the neutralizing presence of their numerous neighbours.

In peace-keeping efforts, the Pan-African body is not lagging behind. Henry Wiseman acknowledged the importance and usefulness of the Organization in peace-keeping and conflict resolution when he wrote that, the founding fathers of the OAU were motivated by pragmatic determination and utopian images of a future Africa. Hence, "their success in

57. See "Articles 52, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59 and 60 of Chapters VIII and XI respectively of the Charter of the UN and Statute of the International Court of Justice", (New York : Office of the Public Information, n.d.), pp. 28-32; See also, Articles VIII, XIX and XX of the OAU Charter and Rules of Procedure, op. cit., p. 10.

establishing the organization as the central institution to monitor, guide and order future of the African system of states". He adds that, its primary task would be "to avoid, contain or otherwise manage conflicts so that, the continent could move forward into an era of relatively peaceful cooperation and development".

In the words of I.O.S. Nwachukwu, "...in the area of conflict resolution the OAU has also made an impressive impact. It has mediated effectively in a number of intra African disputes and has successfully reduced tension in some conflict situations in Africa such as the Somalia-Ethiopia dispute over the Ogaden region, the Angola - Zaire conflict, and the Ethiopia - Sudan disagreement, to mention but a few ....

III. MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE CONTINENT

Nevertheless, OAU's record has been very poor in resolving disputes within African states. B.D. Meyers shares this view with others. He states that, "nowhere else is OAU's weakness more clearly exposed than in matters relating to the maintenance of peace and security in

59. For more details see, Henry Wiseman, in Yassin El-Ayouty and I William Zartman (eds.) The OAU After Twenty Years, op. cit., p. 123.

As an instrument of conflict management among its members, the OAU is not for collective measures against any of them or against an outside aggressor. It possesses no disciplinary powers over any erring member. While it is only a Coordinator of African policies on regional problems, it is not a defence alliance. In this context, Domenico Mazzeo points out that, "Article 11(C) of the OAU Charter affirms as one of its main purposes to be, the defence of its members' sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence, and requires member states to coordinate and harmonize their general policies regarding defence and security providing for the establishment of a Defence Commission. But these provisions have not been accompanied by any collective security treaty as the Arab League Collective Security Pact of June 1950. And as the Charter does not contain any provision for collective security, member states take it upon themselves to come to the assistance of other members in the event of

61. B.D. Meyers, 'Intra-regional Conflict Management by the Organization of African Unity'. *International Organization*, vol. 28, n. 3, Summer 1974, pp. 345-374. The term 'disputes' in this work refers to the process of disagreements or collusion of interests and ideas which may or may not be accompanied by physical violence. 'Domestic disputes also refers to situations where the actual violence of the dispute is confined to the territory of country. But it does not mean the absence of extra national or extra State factors in the conflict situation as seen in the Angolan Conflict for example.

aggression.

Of course, the Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration Commission was created as a means of bringing about the peaceful solution of intra-African conflicts. This was a major aim for which the OAU was created. But regrettably, "African countries have so far declined to use a quasi-juridical instrument for the management of intra-African disputes, preferring a more political approach. The Commission has thus been inactive to the point that suggestions were made to abolish it. In practice, attempts to solve intra-African conflicts have been mainly undertaken by the two major political bodies of the organization: the Assembly of Heads of State and the Council of Ministers. The Assembly's function has been either to endorse mediation efforts by individual, or to create adhoc committees for that purpose. Through its special sessions, the Council of Ministers was particularly active in the management of intra-African disputes in the early years of the OAU. Out of eight special sessions held during the first ten years of the organization, six took place between November 1963 and December 1965.


64. Domenico Mazzeo, n. 60, p. 67.
IV. RESPECT FOR AFRICAN DIGNITY AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

On Fundamental Human and Peoples' Rights, the achievement of the organization is immense. Though, it was not until the 16th year of its existence that it formally addressed itself to the issue of the protection of human rights within the member states. In July 1979, the 16th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Government, which met in Monrovia (Liberia), called on the OAU Secretary-General to organize a meeting of experts to prepare a draft of an "African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights" providing for the establishment of bodies to promote and protect human and people's rights as a follow up action of their Decision 115 (XVI).

The Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights was adopted by the eighteenth Assembly of Heads of State and Government, on June 1 1981, at Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, with reaffirming the pledge they solemnly made in Article two of the said Charter to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa, to coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa.

This signifies that it was the responsibility of the OAU to encourage the promotion and protection of human

rights within Member states. It has not only adhered to the principles on Human and Peoples' Rights and Freedoms as contained in the declarations, conventions and other instruments adopted by it, but also, those of the Non-Alignment Movement and the UNO.

Edward Kannyo is of the view that, as far as the OAU is concerned, the issue of human rights shall always merit high attention. He maintains that, "important segments of African societies, such as academics, lawyers, journalists, the clergy, and trade unionists, have committed themselves to the defence of human rights. That in addition, the international environment in the form of the United Nations' human rights organizations, and the international media will willy-nilly keep the subject of human rights alive in the African consciousness...."

Moreover, Article 62 of OAU Charter on human and peoples' rights, states that, "each state party shall undertake to submit every two years, from the date the present charter comes into force, a report on the legislative or other measures taken with a view to giving

66. Article one states that, "The member states of the OAU parties to the present charter shall recognize the rights, duties and freedoms enshrined in this Charter and shall undertake to adopt legislative or other measures to give effect to them", ibid., p. 6.

effect to the rights and freedoms recognized and guaranteed by the present Charter.

It may be worthy of note to observe here that, the most tyrannical leaders in Africa have been removed from their posts the OAU though did not do any thing to have them removed. While in power, the activities of these men were just an affront to the African personality. They are people like Idi Amin of Uganda, who is believed to have executed thousands of his citizens. He is thought to be in exile now in Saudi Arabia. Another, is the former notorious president of Equatorial-Guinea, Macias Nguema. He has since been assassinated. He not only killed hundreds of his people but also looted and destroyed his country's treasury before fleeing. Yet another is the exiled Central African Republic head of State now in Cote D'Ivoire. He was overthrown and convicted after the much publicized trial in absentia in Bangui, amongst other things for seriously violating human rights in his state. He had ordered the execution of school children protesting against the edict on school uniforms.

which became another extra-burden on their parents.

Secondly, most of the military regimes that come to power in the continent by non-democratic means are now showing some concern in the observance of Human and Peoples' Rights in their respective states. It can be said therefore that, a genuine concern for the protection of these rights is manifesting across the face of Africa. This of course, is not to affirm that the continent is totally free from human rights violations and abuses.

V. DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, SCIENCE AND CULTURE

In the field of Education, Health, Science and Culture, the success of the organization has been tremendous. The Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (STRC) as OAU body and one of its Regional Offices, has been promoting scientific and technical cooperation among Member states. These include agriculture, oceanography, fisheries, biological, industrial and technical research, training of intermediate staff, and encouragement of the exchange of higher grade research personnel. The eradication of Livestock diseases such as rinder pest and the encouragement given to research into African medicinal herbs are done

also by the sub-regional offices attached to the STRC, which deals specifically with such problems as vital as Animal Health, Soils, Physio-sanitary questions etc. existing in various parts of the continent.

In the field of Culture, it has played a big role in reviving the All African Cultural Festive which was held first in Algiers in 1969 and in Nigeria in 1977 with arrangements for subsequent ones. It has given the Member states an opportunity to realize and understand their economic and industrial potentials when the All African Trade Fair was held in 1973 at Nairobi. The first workshop on African Folklore Dance and Music was organized at Mogadiscio - Somalia in October 1970. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the organization, at its Ordinary Session held in July 1970 at Port Louis, Mauritius adopted a Cultural Charter for the African continent. The aims and objectives of which are as follows:

(A) To liberate the African Peoples from socio-cultural conditions which impede their development in order to recreate and maintain the sense and will for progress, the sense and will for development;

(B) The rehabilitation, restoration, preservation and promotion of the African cultural heritage;
(C) The assertion of the dignity of the African and of the popular foundations of his culture;

(D) The combating and elimination of all forms of alienation and cultural suppression and oppression everywhere in Africa, especially in countries still under colonial and racist domination, including apartheid;

(E) The encouragement of cultural cooperation among the states with a view to the strengthening of African Unity;

(F) The encouragement of international cultural cooperation for a better understanding among peoples within which Africa will make its original and appropriate contribution to human culture;

(G) Promotion in each country of popular knowledge of science and technology; a necessary condition for the control of nature;

(H) Development of all dynamic values in the African cultural heritage and rejection of any element which is an impediment to progress.

In the sphere of cultural neo-colonialism, the African Unions' bellicosity is well understood. We are aware that, mass media is used for distorting the real facts for propagating war, racism, and hatred amongst states by the imperialist powers in an effort to protect their global and

expansionist interests particularly where it is threatened. The major news agencies of these advanced states like the Associated Press (AP) and, the United Press International (UPI) of USA, Reuter of Britain; Agence France - Press of France etc; having monopolized the mass media, use this advantage to provide distorted outlook of events in Africa and the rest of the developing nations; thereby most of the time, ignoring their socio-economic progress and achievements. As if that is not enough, the owners of these news empires use this means of distortion, "to destroy confidence between nations, justify encroachments on human dignity, distort the ideals and cultural values and traditions of the peoples and deny their basic rights".

Aware of the harmful effects of this, the OAU came out in support for a New International Information Order which shall go a long way in enhancing mutual understanding, security and cooperation between the countries of Africa and the World; had vigorously endeavoured to correct and overcome this type of existing imbalance in the international dissemination of news in view of its adverse effects on the continent by creating and establishing the Pan-African News Agency (PANA) in 9 April 1979. The contributions of the PANA in the international sphere has been magnificent as a result. For it has rectified to some extent the biased image of Africa as created by the Western

new agencies. Besides, it has enabled the voice of Africa 71 to be heard all over the World.

Moreover, it has made efforts to let the international community realize the actual dimensions of the disastrous condition of Africans and, to effectively give more vitality to its progressive endeavours to alleviate the consequences of the grave economic conditions existing in Africa including, the struggle against the policy and practice of apartheid, the illegal occupation of Namibia, and the struggle of the Namibian people for self-determination, national independence and freedom, the situation in the Middle East and the Palestinian problem. This is no mean achievement though much is still expected from PANA as its aims and objectives are yet to be fully realized. All these has been possible through the publication of true facts and the situation as they are rather than distorting them and presenting wrong impression of the issues involved.

VI. WELL BEING OF REFUGEES

On the problem of African refugees, the OAU is aware of its international dimensions and, has taken adequate steps to tackle this menace in the continent. As a result many African refugees have been provided with educational and job opportunities. Moreover, a Convention Governing Aspects of


Refugees Problems in Africa was adopted by the OAU Heads of State and Government in September 1969 at Addis Ababa-Ethiopia. Under the terms of this convention, a refugee's status and rights of asylum are accorded to refugees by all independent African countries. Africa has about 6.3 million refugees, half of the world's total. They cut across the continent. Majority of them are from Ethiopia, Somalia, Chad, Sudan, Mozambique, Angola, etc.

To sum up, Nigeria has benefited immensely from its membership of the OAU. It has used the OAU as the launching pad for furthering her foreign policy and diplomacy. It has also served as the testing ground for the achievement of its national interests. Equally, important is the fact that the OAU during the Nigerian Civil War stood by the Nigerian Federal Government and maintained that whatever happened was an internal affair of Nigeria. It also did not recognize the secessionist Biafra. It sent humanitarian relief to victims of the conflict especially children, women and old people. And most importantly, it prevented a large section of African states as well as outside powers from both

73. Article II of the OAU Convention on Refugees states that, "No Longer are refugees subjected to rejection at the Frontier, return or expulsion, which would compel them to return to or remain in a territory where their life or freedom would be threatened".


75. For details, see Olajide Aluko, n. 30, p. 90.
recognizing and taking sides in the war which would have
gone a long way otherwise to prolong the war. That it
failed to prevent the war from taking place by resolving
the crisis should have been understood from the limitations
placed on it by Nigerian government and its own structure
and mechanism for settling conflicts within the member
states.

On the political issues facing the organization and the
continent ridden, in 1983, by too many conflicts
particularly the question of legitimacy of the Habre regime
in Chad regarding its seating in the OAU, the Heads of State
and Government in their twentieth Summit Meeting held in
Addis Ababa to settle the impasse, were able to do so by
according recognition to it and, allowing it a place in the
group. That effort brought to an end the thorny
misunderstanding. Moreover, the question of hosting all
meetings of the Organization at its headquarters in Addis
Ababa was also agreed upon to prevent any future unwanted
hindrance in organizing meetings by rotation from one
national capital to another and, the question of dissent by
fiending not to be in terms with the host country and such
like matters.

In the same manner, the Western Sahara incident was
resolved. At the diplomatic level, other member states were
in favour of the recognition and admission of SADR. Its
admission resulted in the increase of its members to fifty
The issue of SADR's admission had earlier almost broken the regional group if not for the spirited and selfless efforts of Nigeria. Though, Morocco one of the parties involved in the Western Sahara crisis and, a founding member decided to resign its membership in frustration due to this recognition accorded to SADR. The rarity of this action by Morocco became the main political gain of SADR and a loss for the former.

Nevertheless, in the words of John J. Stremlau, "Lagos has used the organization to extend its own influence in the continent, to keep external powers at bay, and to block moves towards the support of Biafra, the former secessionist region". "In response to a suggestion that Lagos withdraw from OAU at an earlier time when it was likewise encountering enormous difficulties, an internal policy paper predicted that without the organization many more states would fall upon each other's throats and that Africa would become a battleground without an umpire for the big powers. Reduced to a lone wolf, the memorandum noted candidly, Nigeria cannot hope to effectively shield herself from international intrigues either by her size or natural resources".

In all, the contribution of Nigeria to the achievements of OAU objectives could best be summoned up in the words of Akinyemi. He said:

"...the status, whereby, one out of every five Africans is a Nigerian puts Nigeria, inevitably, at the forefront of African affairs. There can be no question that Nigeria has discharged its African responsibilities creditably. We have remained faithful to the goals and ideals of African unity, and have made Africa the centre-piece of our foreign policy. Inspite of our relative size and resources, we have eschewed interference in the internal affairs of other African states, and have bent over backwards to demonstrate to our neighbours that we have neither expansionist nor hegemonic intentions. Furthermore, we have been ever ready to lend our good offices in a mediatory capacity in regional conflict situations".

Akinyemi continued by saying that,

"...Nigeria's positive role in the Southern African Liberation Struggle is already boldly emblazoned...substantial diplomatic and financial support to the liberation movements through generous contributions to the OAU Liberation Fund, and through direct bilateral grants to the liberation Movements themselves and the Frontline States...The Nigerian Permanent Representative to the United Nations was made the Chairman of the UN Special Committee for Action Against Apartheid, a post which Nigeria has held for 20 years..."
In addition, Nigeria has earned the status of a "Frontline State", alongside those countries which actually share geographical proximity with the troubled spots of South Africa... In 1975, we successfully swayed the OAU in support of the MPLA on the question of Angolan independence... In 1979, we employed the nationalization of British Petroleum assets as a diplomatic lever in favour of the Zimbabwean Nationlists in the Lancaster House Conference on Zimbabwean independence... We have not rested on our laurels, but have added our considerable diplomatic weight to the international lobby for the imposition of mandatory and comprehensive sanctions against South Africa...."

But, while affirming the contributions made by Nigeria to the achievements of the goals of the OAU, we are tempted to ask whether Nigeria has actually done much for the organization when compared to her economic, geo-political and strategic importance and position in the continent. In attempting to answer this question, we may realize as well that it has not done it's utmost rather, she is gaining immensely from the membership as stated earlier. In any case, Nigeria still has a long way to go as long as challenging situations arise especially in view of the fact that she is still very new in the leadership game. But the most obvious challenge focuses on her economic dependence on the western industrialized states which makes it impossible for her to assert herself properly due to lack of retaliatory powers she does not possess. That accounts for

78. Ibid., pp. 25-26.
her bending backwards at times in the form of compromises in an attempt to derive the maximum benefit from the industrial west. The situation is aggravated for her due to its failing economic power arising out of her total reliance on export of oil because she is not in a position to determine and influence the price thereby, exposing her vulnerabilities to the vagaries of the international environment.

Its position is made worse by the fact that, most of the African states are backward and under-developed. They are easily influenced and enticed by the promises of more aid by the former colonial masters and other industrialized nations. This forces them to maintain flexibility over issues that require rigidity and steadfastness. And in Nigeria's efforts to correct this anomaly, she comes into a head-on-collusion with the industrialized western nations. This brings about the collusion of interests and in the process inadvertently leads to the obstacles in her leadership role.

As for OAU, it has been able to achieve much for the continent despite the fact that much is still expected from it. Issues like the Namibian, Angolan; Guinea-Bissau, Zimbabwean, Mozambiquean independence, etc., which were issues confronting the organization in its earlier years were given adequate attention, resulting in the independence of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Zimbabwe, etc., while
it is hoped that Namibia would soon gain its independence.
Others like, apartheid and racism, support to liberation movements were equally accorded the desired urgency as these have been issues which faced the continent and OAU from the beginning.

According to the USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Africa,

"...the OAU has acted as Mediator in resolving political conflicts between Algeria and Morocco; the Somali and Ethiopia, etc. The OAU pursues a policy of isolating the Racist government of South Africa. On the initiative of African States, the Security Council adopted several resolutions sharply condemning the government of South Africa and its supporters. It also called for effective sanctions against their racialist policy in the Southern Africa... The OAU has shown maturity and cohesiveness in dealing with various continental and regional issues. Its pronouncements have assumed a definite character of unanimity and decisiveness thus giving the OAU a major role in World Affairs...."

In the words of Rajiv Gandhi, "... the establishment of the OAU a quarter of a century ago was an act of outstanding statemanship inspired by the aspiration of the

Note: Namibia has already got its independence since 1990 as stated earlier.

independent states of Africa to consolidate the unity of the continent, to strengthen the political and economic independence of its member-states, to provide a forum for resolution of continental and regional issues free from external interference and to seek the eradication of the last vestiges of colonialism from African soil. Over the last twenty years, the OAU has grown from strength to strength and has executed its responsibilities with a maturity and cohesiveness that have made its voice both decisive and authoritative in Africa and World Affairs...."