CHAPTER - II

FOREIGN POLICY OF NIGERIA : DETERMINANTS AND OBJECTIVES

In Chapter I, it was briefly outlined as to how and why the Nigerian foreign policy was transformed from a Low-keyed Low-profile policy between 1960 and 1970 to one of diversification, dynamism and action after 1970. More particularly from 1975. In this Chapter an attempt has been made to outline the total framework of the Nigerian foreign policy with a view to understand this shift in the policy and to delineate in the subsequent chapters the role Nigeria played in the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In order to do that, the determinants, the objectives of Nigerian foreign policy, have been discussed and a brief assessment of Nigeria's foreign policy 1960-83 has been made.

DETERMINANTS AND OBJECTIVES

I. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND : COLONIAL LEGACIES :

The roots of Nigerian foreign policy are to be found in the colonial legacy. One of the most important periods of Nigerian history was the sixty-year British rule. The entity and concept of a Nigerian Federation was entirely the British creation. The name "Nigeria" was coined by the wife of the author of the indirect rule system, Lord Luggard, who, brought together the two British protectorates of the Northern and Southern Nigeria in 1914. This resulted in
the Federal form of government in Africa's most pluralistic society. The imposition of a common government meant a Parliamentary form of government patterned on the West Minister. English as the lingua Franca, the educational, legal and financial systems, the concept of local government, and regionalism before the creation of States were among the British legacies bequeathed to Nigeria. "The Balewa government became the beneficiary of all the treaties negotiated by the British government on behalf of Nigeria during the colonial period, thereby marking out the immediate lines of Nigeria's external relations".

Another significant historical fact was the peaceful transfer of power to the people without much acrimony as compared to other occupied now independent states like India, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Mozambique, Angola, etc. This could be explained in terms of Nigeria's complexity, the statemanship of both the Nigerian and British leaders, the peculiar federal system of government and the regional power structure.

Furthermore, the close fraternal ties developed with the western nations, besides this U.K. influenced her


relations with former British colonies. This was as a result of the unity generated among the members of the old generations of educated nationalists from ex-British West African and other African States like Ghana (Formerly Gold Coast), Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Kenya, Tanzania etc. The associations which helped in furthering these close relationships between the nationalist leaders were the short-lived National Congress of British West Africa (NCBW), formed immediately after the First World War, and the much more durable West African Students Union (WASU) formed in London. The existence of these associations helped in settling inter-state problems, and enhanced the ideals and principles of Pan-Africanism.

Further, most of the present and past ruling elites of Nigeria had their training in either Britain or USA. These included the high echelon civil servants, military and police officers, press-men and most teachers in the institutions of higher learning. This is one of the reasons why Nigeria and Britain (and other Western nations) continue to have close relations despite the differences in perception over colonialism and apartheid in Africa. It also accounts for the provision of technical assistance by the UK to Nigeria to the tune of about 6 million (pounds) annually, soon after independence and up to the 1970s. She

3. Ibid., p. 178.
equally continued to offer training facilities for Nigerians in her numerous institutions. For example, in 1972, it was estimated that there were about 6,000 Nigerian students in the UK, of these 552 were in different universities. The actual number of army officers trained in Britain is not known, but Nigeria is believed to have the largest number of foreign trainees in British military institutions after Australia.

Another historical import of the British colonialism is the economic policy that was closely linked with the west. This is proved by the fact that the Britishers had dominated Nigerian economy for a long time till early 1970s when the USA overtook them. It resulted in total dependence of the country on Britain and other western industrialized states. This was in total disregard of her professed nonaligned policy and at the cost of her relations, economic and otherwise with the former East European Communist states and China.

Finally, before the British imperialism in Nigeria, the country was made up of different ethnic groups, tribes, and religions with varying civilization and cultures. The amalgamation of the country on January 1, 1914 due to economic expediency, and the consequent federal structure did not end the problem of rivalry and domination amongst the three core tribes (Hausa-Fulani, Ibo and Yoruba).
unintended consequences of this artificial union out of diversity manifested itself in the alleged domination of the Hausa-Fulani by the Ibos and some sections of the South over the Federal government and vice versa. It also remotely contributed to the avoidable gruesome three year civil war (from July 6 1967 to January 12 1970) in the country as these three major groups struggled and contested for power and equally refused to be dominated, over shadowed or outmanoeuvred by any tribe in the power game exceptionally the Hausa-Fulani and the Ibos who were the main contestants.

This diversity has greatly hampered the practice and pursuit of the country's foreign policy for the realization and achievement of her perceived national interests and obligations due mainly to their varying ethnic and parochial interests. Thus one group may like a cordial and harmonious relationship with one or two particular states while, the others may kick against it as it may not be in their favour. We have for example noted how the conservative north disregarded and ignored the establishment of diplomatic relations with the former USSR and the Communist bloc states because of their dislike of communism which they perceived as revolutionary, and if allowed to grow might erode their dominant power and position in the affairs and government of

the country in favour of the Ibos and the Yorubas. This brings to focus how tribal interests and sentiments usurp the national interest.

2. GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS:

Nigeria, often referred to as the "Giant of Africa", is larger than any country in the Western Europe. It lies along the Gulf of Guinea in the West Coast of Africa, and its size is comparable to four states (Texas, Michigan and South Carolina, and the District of Columbia) of the USA combined together. It covers an estimated area of about 373,000 sq. miles and is bounded on the South by a dense Coastal Swampy Forest, and on the North by the Southern reaches of the Sahara desert. She got her independence on 1 October 1960, almost 100 years after the Lagos territory was ceded to the British Crown by King Dosummu. It became


a sovereign state in 1963 after renouncing its dominion status. It had an estimated population of about 34 million at the time of self-rule presently, the population is approximately 100 million (though no official census has been carried out for than two decades). It is important to note that, Nigeria being the most populous state in Africa, out of every four Africans one is a Nigerian.

Thus, Nigerian's location and size give her a central position in West Africa and African politics. It becomes imperative for Nigeria as a state with its size, resources, and geographical location to regard itself as a great power in the continent and the World at large.

Nigeria's pre-eminence in terms of its resources over other African states is so great that all the major powers outside the continent, recognize its position. Being the most populous country in the continent, with her size and location in the West African sub-region, Nigeria enjoys a

8. Nigeria after more than two decades conducted a census in November 1991 which puts the official population figure to be about 88.5 million.

9. The size of Nigeria's population is in dispute. The UN has projected a total Nigerian population of 63 million in 1975, or about one-fourth, the total number of black Africans (United Nations, Urban and Rural population 1950-1985, ESA/P/W.P33/RWI, September 22 1970). The Nigerian census arrived at a total of 83 million for 1973, implying rates of population growth for some areas that are impossibly high. Because the population of a state may affect its political weight or share of revenue under Nigeria's Federal system, there is an incentive to inflate the numbers.
certain position in her relations with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the OAU, other African States, and the western powers at large especially the USA, France and Britain.

Nigeria's boundaries with her neighbours, like most of the international boundaries of former colonial areas, were arbitrarily marked during the period of the "Scramble for Africa" at the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885. Obviously therefore, these boundaries were not natural in the true sense of demarcation by striking physical features of separate distinctive cultural groups. This unhealthy definition brought together diverse entities with its implications in the foreign policy of the country. In the same way it is, of great importance to mention here that, an important portion of the southern part of the Benin Republic (Nigeria's western neighbour), is inhabited by the Yoruba speaking people, and a large area of Niger Republic (the northern neighbour), is inhabited by the Hausa speaking people. Since Nigeria has no territorial ambitions, no irredentist leadership had come up to make this an issue in its foreign relations. This may be attributed to the fact that she has accepted her frontiers as were left behind by the colonial masters. Secondly, there is the influence of both the British and French colonialism on the political elites who differentiate neighbouring French and English

10. Frederick Schwarz, Jr. n. 1, p. 11.
speaking territories as wholes rather than have pre-colonial cultural or tribal bonds that may transcend or fragment those regions.

Furthermore, Nigeria, has been influenced in not carrying out irredentism to claim back these territories passed over to both Benin Republic and Niger Republic, due to her maintenance of four principles in her relationship with neighbours. They are, the sovereign equality of all the African states; respect for the independence, sovereign and territorial integrity of every African State; the non-interference in the internal affairs of other African states as a means of promoting African unity as stated in OAU charter. Nigeria, surrounded by small states has preferred to follow a low-profile, low-keyed foreign policy for fear of being labelled expansionist and hegemonistic. The same accounts for her low military security perceptions until the introduction of the east/west rivalry into the continent which in turn ushered in the arms race.

3. DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS:

The demographic factors can be discussed under two headings: (a) Cultural (b) Composition, and distribution.


13. For details, see Article II and III of the OAU Charter.
A. THE CULTURAL FACTOR

Nigeria is a highly pluralistic society. This has naturally influenced her foreign relations. Nigeria, being at the linguistic, cultural and religious cross-roads of tropical Africa, is a microcosm of nearly two thirds of the African continent. Her people represent Africa's ethnic and cultural heterogeneity in its richest and most diversified form. It is the confluence of the major language families of the sub-continent. Nigeria's societal base comprises indigenous societies ranging in scale from the smallest autonomous village tribe to the largest kingdoms and empires of pre-colonial Africa. Within Nigeria, there are varieties of sects ranging from the Christian and Islamic sects, to those of African traditional religions.

The consequences of these cultural and traditional diversities are too many. Firstly, Nigerian unity has been threatened by the absence of strong feelings of patriotism and national integration. The country is afflicted with intense local parochialism, sectionalism, tribalism, and other fissiparous tendencies. This situation accounted greatly for the civil war which took place from 1967 to January 12, 1970.

The existence of this diversity has also contributed to the spirit of ethnic and religious tolerance among Nigerian political leaders to a great extent. Her religious composition provides the basis for external connections that are relevant factors in Nigeria's foreign policy. More than sixteen million Christians inhabit the country. Of the remaining nearly half are Muslims. This has strengthened the spiritual and fraternal relations between Nigeria and the Islamic States like Saudi Arabia, etc.

The elites after imbibing western culture were conservative and oriented towards the west. Though the foreign policy attitudes and perceptions differed significantly from those of the articulate sections of the Southern and Northern population but, they did not want to adopt a more vigorous and assertive foreign policy postures because of their desire to retain their influential positions in the government as well as within their tribes. Since majority of them, belong to the three core tribes.

B. COMPOSITION AND DISTRIBUTION FACTOR

The size and geographical distribution of Nigeria's ethnic groups have immensely affected the development of the country's political system and pattern of politics. The latter, in turn has had a very great bearing upon the nature

of Nigeria's foreign policy. The three major groups before the creation of states in 1967 (the Hausa-Fulani, Ib0, Yoruba) have more than fifteen million people each. Each of these tribes has a great number of cultural core areas within their tribes. Each section has provided a secure political base for one of the three major political parties. This trend was also witnessed during the elections for both the first and second republics. This was the direct outcome of the British policy of divide and rule in Nigeria which led to the formation of a federation of Nigeria.

Because of the high density of Nigeria's population, and it being an agricultural society, there is much pressure on the land. As a result of the unemployment and the rapid expansion of education, a number of people have migrated to other areas within and outside the country for employment. This movement of the people has helped in developing a sense of unity and oneness to some extent amongst the Nigerians. Those who migrated for work outside the state pose a special foreign policy problem between Nigeria and these countries. The same thing could be said of those countries having a great number of Nigerian students. Among these countries are Cameroon, Equatorial-Guinea, USA, UK, India, France, etc. The condition of employment and the treatment meted out to these Nigerians working abroad has been of some concern to the Nigerian government. Diplomatic activities between Nigeria and the governments of the host countries
are undertaken to remove the irritants.

4. THE ECONOMIC FACTORS:

Economically, the country is neither self-reliant, nor self-sufficient, or industrialized. It was basically an agriculture based society and economy at the time of her nationhood. Mechanized farming was still at its nadir, though food production in this period was sufficient for the population and exports also picked up. It exported items like Groundnuts, Cocoa, Coffee, palm oil, Cotton, Rubber, palm kernel, Soya beans, etc. They formed the bulk of its foreign exchange earnings. Before and immediately after the civil war, the economy had depended on the export of these primary products. By 1962, oil export, which yielded 34.5 million naira, accounted for about 10.2 per cent of the total export revenue of 338 millions (naira). Despite its corrupt practices, the civilian government of 1960-66, encouraged agriculture and tackled industrial growth in a systematically planned manner. The situation was such that the few factories in existence then were mainly dependent on the agricultural products of their neighbourhood for raw materials.


The nature of the economy was such that at times there were no surpluses for large scale importation of luxury items or for deployment in expensive high technology projects. Anyhow, food was in abundance and inflation very negligible. At 47 million naira in 1962 and 57.6 million (naira) in 1970, food imports were only 14 per cent and 6.5 per cent respectively of the export revenues for both years. Continuing from where the colonial administration ended, the government of the First Republic built seaports, airports, roads, the Kainji Hydro-Electricity Scheme and, the nation's four universities. The first Five Year National Development Plan (1962-68) was hindered by the coup of 15 January 1966 which directly or indirectly later plunged the country in a nightmare.

Within this period, the country was never a major borrower though its first such attempt was in 1968 when it borrowed 6.6 million naira from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) due to the war. By 1971, its debts to the IMF were only 10.6 million naira. This amount was insignificant when compared with her resources.

Foreign investments also contributed immensely to the development of the country though the 1967-70 crises hindered its progress. The total foreign private investments from the years 1967 and 1968 were 948 and 1,200 millions (naira) respectively. Out of this, the U.K.
contributed the lions' share of 482 and 522 millions (naira) respectively. They were in the form of subsidies to Nigeria by U.K. multinationals like, the United Africa Company (UAC) and Lever Brothers Limited. It was not until 1966 that other western nations, like the USA, and West Germany started paying attention to Nigeria. They were convinced of her rich economic potentialities and, therefore, a good trading partner.

The USA's share of private investments at this period was 15.4% (132 million naira) compared to the UK figure of 53.3 percent. But by 1968, the USA had increased her percentage from 15.4 to 20.3 totaling about 206 million naira. Surprisingly, within the next decade, the USA's investment percentage had outgrown that of the UK and the USA had usurped UK's position as the foremost trading partner of Nigeria.

To a great extent economic interests have been paramount in Nigeria's foreign policy. Nigeria's level of poverty and underdevelopment made rapid economic development an absolute imperative of her domestic policy. Inspite of all its natural wealth, Nigeria is no where regarded as an economic power for the reason that it lacks an industrial establishment commensurate with her abundant natural resources. Nigeria's comparative economic backwardness and dependence has made foreign aid and external assistance
indispensable. Accordingly, the politico-economic objectives of foreign aid could only be achieved through non-aligned policy and principles. This is because, it could ensure the diversification of the sources of aid as well as prevent the exercise of political pulls and pressures by any one of the super-powers. It may not be an over statement to argue that economic factors have been in the background to Nigeria's policy of non-alignment like all other third-world and developing states.

Since the early 1980s, Nigeria's economy is in a depressed state and has been facing problems. This was as a result of the mismanagement and the inept administration of the Shagari regime that left the country with a whopping debt of $25 billion. Otherwise, Nigeria's economic growth potential is high. The country in the words of Olajide Aluko, "has now become the fastest growing single national market in the whole of Africa. For during the 1970-71 period, the total value of private investments was about 25 million pounds, far beyond the plan target of about 165 million pounds. Although the income per head in the country remains small (it was estimated at just over $126 in 1970) there can be no doubt that it is much better than in most other African countries". The country is endowed with


19. See, Olajide Aluko, n. 2, pp. 183-84.
relatively fertile land adequate for its population. The latter is sufficiently dense to be a positive factor in development. It has substantial mineral resources especially petroleum. Oil contributed nearly half of the growth rate of 12 per cent for the 1971-72 period. Presently, its contribution has doubled more than that. It is the single largest contributor today. Equally, it has high hydro-electric potentialities in its river systems. But unfortunately, Nigeria hopelessly depends upon one export commodity which is petroleum. Gone are the days of Cocoa, Palm oil, Cotton, Groundnut pyramids and their exports, etc. As a result, development of agriculture and other infrastructure like the establishment of tool industry to aid industrial take off have been ignored by the government. Not much incentive is given to the farmers. Due to this agriculture, has been abandoned for white collar jobs as it was discovered not to be yielding the required finance and due to lack of social recognition to the farmers. Hence, agriculture is still at the subsistence level. Rather, Nigeria now imports most of her agricultural foodstuffs and needs. Petroleum accounts for about eighty five percent of the country's export earnings.

The actual problem in the development of Nigeria's economy is therefore not the lack of resources and manpower. It is that of capital, government incentive, dedicated, determined and trained manpower. For this, Nigeria is like most other African and non-African third world states which are heavily dependent upon industrialized nations. This dependence has both psychological and political consequences, which constitutes a crucial element in the foreign relations of Nigeria and other African States.

5. POLITICAL SETTING:

Nigeria's history since independence, has been dominated by the question of national unity. This had been the result of parochial loyalties of the major groups to their tribes rather than to the state. Of course, this situation was the creation of the British colonialism which perpetuated it through divide and rule policy to maintain its hold in the country. The division of the country in 1900 into three unequal parts on the tribal basis did not settle the issue of minorities as they felt that their interests and even safety would be in jeopardy in the hands of the majority tribes. Moreover, the amalgamation on 1


January 1914 due to economic expediency, and the subsequent federal structure, did not end the problem of rivalry and domination amongst the core-tribes (Hausa-Fulani, Ibo, Yoruba). The unintended consequences of this artificial union out of diversity manifested itself in the alleged domination of the Hausa-Fulani by the Ibos and some sections of the south over the federal government and vice-versa. This conflict of interests between the leaders of these sub-nationality tribes over the distribution of power and resources, the nationalist sentiments, that had grown with the national independence, got eroded. The consequences of this conflict were the first and second military coups of 15 January 1966 and 29 July 1966 respectively.

To reduce the conflicts twelve states were created by the Gowon Administration on 26 May 1967. But already, the seeds of discord had been sown. And on 30 May 1967, three days after the announcement of the creation of the new states, Lt. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu, a leader of the Ibo tribe, announced secession of the tribe from the rest of the country and formation of the independent Republic of Biafra. This unpleasant situation led to the gruesome three-year civil war (from 6 July 1967 to 12 January 1970) in the

country. These domestic conflicts brought to an end the coalition government at the centre and the country ceased to be world's fourth largest practising democratic state, - the status gained at the time of independence. One remarkable result of 1966 coups was that they brought about the institutionalization of military rule in Nigeria.

Before the emergence of the military rule on the scene in 1966, there were three aspects of Nigerian political framework that are important to understanding her non-independent foreign policy: Firstly; the federal constitution formally gave autonomy to the three regions; secondly, the competitive system, with the rival regional parties competing in periodic elections and with a free press; thirdly, the federal government remained a coalition of elements representing differing political orientations. This situation greatly affected the foreign policy of the country and its effectiveness. The parliament devoted little attention to foreign policy. There was no parliamentary committee on foreign affairs. Neither were the parliamentarians ever interested in foreign policy issues due to their little knowledge of foreign policy. As a result, foreign policy issues were debated in

25. Also see, Michael Crowder, n. 4, p. 260.
an ad-hoc manner. Of course, briefings were always done at party caucuses.

The parliament in Nigeria's first and second republics did not play an active role in the making of foreign policy. This was because of their ignorance and lack of interest. Therefore, the prime minister and the president had upper hands in this area. So, it could be concluded that the parliament never made use of its powers and it played no role in formulating the foreign policy.

The coalition government in power at both periods equally affected the effectiveness of the foreign policy because the parties that formed the government had their own interests to protect. The parties in coalition because of their background had varying perceptions of the foreign policy. Consequently, the ruling governments of both Balewa and Shagari became ill-informed or carried out the policy as it suited them. The unpreparedness of the foreign ministry contributed to the unpalatable and unenviable functioning of the government on foreign policy. The coalition parties were Northern people's Congress (NPC) and National Convention of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) (1960-1966), and National Party of Nigeria (NPN) and Nigerian People's Party.

Finally, the personality of the prime minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa contributed to the lack lustre foreign policy. His conservativeness and that of his party - the Northern People's Congress (NPC) at that time - were in the way of a pragmatic and dynamic foreign policy for the country. Even during the Second Republic the situation was not different from that of the First Republic. That was why the policy tilted once again to the west and displayed absence of dynamism.

During the military government, foreign policy depended upon the whims of the military elites. Since the general public did not play active role in foreign policy-making, it remained in the hands of the few elite groups. That is why during the First and Second Nigerian Republics, personality factor played a significant role.

6. PUBLIC OPINION:

Public opinion, according to Joseph Frankle, also shapes the foreign policy of most of the states. This is true if it is clear and well articulated. It is a significant factor in developed and democratic states. In Nigeria, the influence of public opinion in shaping its

foreign policy is marginal. It was more so during the military rule. The press and mass media did not play much role as they were government owned. Only those few like the Concord newspaper and Magazines, News breed, etc., owned by private individuals played a positive role. The only exception was during the Murtala/Obasanjo period when the government's position regarding the Angolan crisis was influenced greatly by the public opinion in the country. Another instance of the role of public opinion in influencing the foreign policy of the country is in relation to the problem of apartheid, racism and the situation in the entire southern Africa. Here, both the domestic and international public opinion had been against this. As a result the government of Nigeria fashioned its policy regarding the Southern African problems to be in tune with the internal and external public opinions. Nevertheless, the first instance of the influence of public opinion on the policy of government was on the question of the military pact with Britain soon after the independence of the country on 1 October 1960. The denunciation of the agreement grew in and outside the parliament and the government had to abrogate it in 1962 on the eve of the All African Conference called by the government for deliberations on the Southern African problems. The Balewa government was well aware that as long as this pact was in existence the chances of the country playing a leadership role in African affairs would
not be there. The entire African enlightened opinion, while expecting Nigeria to play the leadership role in the continent, was against the military agreement. With the agreement still standing the government may not be independent and free enough to struggle for the benefit and welfare of the peoples of the continent. Another example is the new foreign policy philosophy which the domestic public opinion helped in bringing about and shaping. In most other case public opinion has played an insignificant role as the government does not heed it in formulating and executing its foreign policy.

7. NATIONAL CAPACITY:

By National capacity we mean the military preparedness of Nigeria, its logistics, technological and modern means of communication. Though, its economic development and the enlightened political institutions also determine the national capacity. Nevertheless, a policy is doomed if it does not strike a balance with the national capacity.

Unfortunately, for Nigeria, there are many constraints in this regard. They are: the heterogeneous nature of its society including its religious pluralism and tribalism that cause domestic political disorder; the country's under-development and her economic dependence which increases her vulnerability to outside influences; its low level of technological know-how; the weakness in her military
potential; the small sizes of her neighbours and their endemic fear of Nigerian domination and expansionism; the incidence of neo-colonialism and interventionist powers in the internal affairs of African States. According to Ali A. Mazrui, due to the instability caused by periodic coups, the religious differences between the Christians and their Muslim counterparts since independence till now, with the important role which they play, the level of technology all these have forced Nigeria to rely on outside powers for many basic technological products both military and civilian. This has reduced her international influence, and constrained Nigeria from playing an effective role in OAU.

EXTERNAL FACTORS

Nigeria, like every other state, while formulating her foreign policy, has to keep in mind such elements as international organizations, international law, and the treaties that create international environment. This international environment influences world public opinion. These form the dynamic of international politics. This has been discussed under three heads: First, international organization; Second, world public opinion, and Third, reaction of other States.

A. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

The international organizations have been playing important role in shaping foreign policy of states including
Nigeria. She obviously has to take note of the International Law, Treaties, and Contracts, agreed upon and signed; so that, their violations may not jeopardize its policies. For example, Nigeria is a member of the UNO; Commonwealth of Nations; NAM; OAU; OPEC; ECOWAS; etc. As a member of these organizations, she participates, deliberates, and is involved in their numerous activities that go to improve the living conditions of the people of Nigeria, Africa and the rest of the world. They thus act as constraints on the Nigerian foreign policy objectives. For instance in 1960, the Prime Minister of Nigeria Abubakar Tafawa Balewa in his speech before the UN General Assembly after Nigeria was unanimously accepted and admitted as the 99th member of UN said:

"First, it is the desire of Nigeria ... to remain on friendly terms with all nations and to participate actively in the work of the UNO. Secondly, Nigeria ... has absolutely no territorial or expansionist intentions. Thirdly, we shall not forget our old friends and we are proud to have been accepted as a member of the Commonwealth, but nevertheless, we donot intend to align ourselves as a matter of routine with any of the power blocs. Fourthly, Nigeria hopes to work with other African States for the progress of Africa and to assist in bringing all African territories to a state of responsible independence".

The purpose of this is to highlight Nigeria's pledge to abide by the UN Charter and the International law and norms in the practice of its foreign policy. Moreover, it adheres to international treaties like the laws of the Sea and bilateral or multilateral treaties signed between it and other countries. It takes note of them and ensures that it does not in any way violate them in formulating and pursuing its foreign policy objectives.

B. WORLD PUBLIC OPINION:

World public opinions as we know and understand it today is very dynamic. It swings and changes like weather, and as waves and tide which are mostly unpredictable. Though, it is only occasionally that it influences the foreign policy. Most of the time, it is only when the domestic public opinion supports the world public opinion that, it can to a large extent become an important determinant of foreign policy. For example, and as stated earlier, Nigeria's stand and policy towards apartheid and racism in Southern Africa is influenced by world public opinion which decries it as a sin against humanity. The domestic public opinion is also against it. So they both act as a booster to the government's pledge to secure the eradication of this problem in Southern Africa. The press and mass media forms part of the world public opinion. Anyhow, the role of propaganda machinery, the absence of
free press, especially during the military rules due to gagging and censorship; the level of illiteracy and awareness in the society and economic backwardness of the country has tended to mar the real effect of public opinion on foreign policy.

C. REACTION OF OTHER STATES:

In formulating its foreign policy, Nigeria like most other states developing and developed, takes into account the interests of other states especially her immediate neighbours. This came into prominence soon after the civil war. Ivory Coast, for example, recognized Biafra. Other African states like Gabon, Tanzania, and Zambia also did the same. Moreover, Nigeria's neighbours are relatively small and poor states. As a result of Nigeria's size, human and material resources, these states need to be reassured from time to time, that Nigeria has no expansionist intentions in the sub-region, they fear her domination and expansionism. So in planning its foreign policy Nigeria has to take into account the reaction of these states.

Moreover, there are countries like Britain who do not like the rigid stand of Nigeria regarding the Southern African issues. There are others like France who feel threatened by Nigeria's size, wealth, and influence in West Africa and the entire continent as their base is being eroded due to her leadership role and would therefore see to
its dismemberment. In the same vein, there are countries which are enthused over Nigeria's stand regarding the issues involved in Southern Africa. As a consequence, they support Nigeria on these problems. Such countries are India, Sweden, Australia, former USSR, China and other erstwhile socialist states. So in the articulation and operationalization of its foreign policy the country takes note of these reactions.

THE OBJECTIVES OF NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

The constitution of Nigeria articulates the following objectives of Nigeria's foreign policy:

(a) The prosperity and the progress of the country;

(b) The establishment of Nigeria as a pre-eminent and great power in Africa through its leadership in OAU and African affairs;

(c) Fight against all forms of colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid and racism;

(d) Non-involvement in power blocs or military alliances, and promotion of non-alignment;

* During the civil war, France not only provided money for the purchase of arms and other supplies to the rebels but, between September and October 1968 supplied the rebels with up to 300 tons of arms Weekly which, helped to lengthen the period of the war. France also, influenced some Francophone African States like Ivory Coast and Gabon to support the rebels.
(e) Solicitations of foreign aid from all quarters for economic development as the country cannot develop in isolation;

(f) Active roles in NAM, UNO, the Commonwealth of Nations, OPEC and ILO;

(g) Promotion and support to the cause of disarmament, especially the prohibition of manufacture, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons.

General Obasanjo identified "The permanent and fundamental foreign policy objectives" of Nigeria as follows:

1. The defence of our sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity;

2. The creation of the necessary political and economic conditions in Africa and the rest of the world which would foster Nigerian National self-reliance and rapid economic development. This would facilitate the defence of the independence of all African countries;


Note: The 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has remained suspended in part, since the Military take over in December 1983.

3. The promotion of equality and self-reliance in Africa and the rest of the developing world;
4. The promotion and defence of social justice and respect for human dignity, especially the dignity of the black man; and
5. The promotion and defence of world peace.

The above foreign policy objectives may be discussed as under:

I. National Security Interests;
II. Economic Interests;
III. The question of African Decolonization; Apartheid, Racism, and the Dignity of Africans;
IV. Common African Economic and political interests;
V. Global interests of the country.

I. THE NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS:

Nigeria has certain interests and values which need be maintained, preserved and protected under any circumstances as they are synonymous with the existence of the state. It is therefore not unexpected that, the security of the country serves as the primary goal of Nigeria's foreign policy which cannot be compromised under any conditions. It is an article of faith to which the society gives its consents. The treaties, contracts and alliances which it concludes with other states rest on this objective. The issue of national security is not limited to only
territorial integrity or security of national boundaries. It basically has to include the stability of cultural and political institutions, beliefs and values. For instance, it is the responsibility of the government of the day to ensure the safety of its citizens from external invasions, non-violability of its territories, borders through air, land or sea by forces inimical to her existence. This means having an alert, prepared and highly professional, devoted and equipped armed forces that can wade off any surprise attack or invasion. This equally includes possession of the state of the art arms.

Moreover, the government must be in a position to preserve and protect the intellectual and property rights of the people; their cultural artifacts; museums, archaeological monuments of national importance and interests of the people and country against any external and neo-colonial influences, subjugation or domination. As a result, Nigeria has to pursue its foreign relations in such a way that these interests are preserved, maintained and protected.

Nigeria is equally aware that its security also hinges on the security of its neighbours. And as a result, it had started taking interests in the happenings in these neighbouring states which previously she was not doing. The states are Benin, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Equatorial
Guinea. Moreover, this dominates its foreign policy formulations especially in view of the fact that two of her neighbours - Benin and Niger Republics are homes of two Nigerian tribes separated due to the artificial boundary demarcation by the imperialist powers during the 1884-85 famous Berlin Conference. This can easily be an issue for an irredentist policy by any Nigerian leader. Though, the country adheres to or maintains a status quoist position regarding the boundary situations as they were before independence.

According to A.B. Akinyemi, minister for external affairs,

"Nigeria's national interest can, therefore, be identified as predicated on the nation's military, economic, political and social security. Anything that will enhance the capacity of Nigerians to defend their national security must be seen as being in the national interest. Anything that will promote Nigeria's economic growth and development is in the national interest. Anything that will make Nigeria politically stable is also in the national interest. Conversely, anything that will make Nigeria militarily insecure, that will militate against the country's economic growth and development, and which will make it politically unstable is against the national interest."

"Nigeria's national interest, as defined here, finds justification in certain principles which have formed Nigeria's foreign policy since independence, and which successive administrations, whether military or
civilian, have maintained and pursued, albeit with varying degrees of commitment. These principles include, in broad terms, the preservation of our territorial integrity; the promotion of peace and stability in our sub-region and in Africa; respect for the charter of the OAU, especially those aspects of the charter pertaining to the inviolability of inherited frontiers; and the strengthening of African solidarity through sub-regional and continental organizations such as the ECOWAS and the OAU. Other objectives of Nigeria's foreign policy are the decolonization of Africa and the eradication of apartheid and racial discrimination. We have sought to achieve these objectives through direct support for African Liberation movements, and also through the instrumentalities of the United Nations and other international organizations such as the non-aligned movement to which we belong”.

Nevertheless, there are limits on Nigeria's capability regarding the protection and maintenance of its national security interests. This may be due to the interests of her neighbours; observance of treaties, alliances hither to signed; adherence to the principles and charters of sub-regional, regional or international organizations like the ECOWAS, OAU, Commonwealth of Nations, UNO, Non-alignment, etc.; its low level of technological development; economic backwardness; the activities of the imperialist and neocolonialist powers; and most importantly the problem of national unity/domestic political disorder.

32. A.B. Akinyemi, Balance and Credibility in Nigerian Foreign Policy, (Lagos) 1986, pp. 3-5.
II. ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY:

The fundamental aim of Nigeria's foreign policy, as has been observed, is the promotion of her economic interests. This has been given a central place by the constitution of the country while referring to foreign policy goals in view of the dismal level of economic development of the country. With independence in 1960, the economic development of the country has become a pre-requisite for any incumbent government. In this way, the policy of the government is framed and pursued in such a way that people's expectations are realized to a great extent. As a result of the desire to be a land of plenty through economic development, maintenance of high level of technological know-how and industrialization, Nigeria advocated sub-regional, regional and continental economic cooperation. She was active in bringing about the establishment of the River Niger Commission (RNC), the Lake Chad Basin Commission (CEB), and ECOWAS. All these were for the economic development of the sub-region. Nigerian foreign policy-makers are aware that, the economic development of the country is an important factor which goes paripassu with political development and serves to enhance and cement the national unity which thereby, is crucial in the evolution of the nation-state. So, the policy is pursued in such a way that this could be achieved within the shortest minimum time to reassure the citizens that their expectations could be achieved.
The economic development interests is identified as predicated on its economic security. Anything that will help in the rehabilitation and restructuring of its domestic economy and, "promote her economic growth and development". It was as a result that capital aids in the form of technology, trained manpower, and machinery which, became a relevant factor in its relationship with the west, socialist bloc, and Africa.

The oil boom in the country in the 1970s brought about a shift and redefinition of its foreign policy in her attempts to free itself from the west by, trying to carry out development activities that will uplift itself and the continent from the level of under development. This was in relation to its economic development interests. Moreover, it feels that, she cannot be prosperous in isolation of her poor neighbours.

It is therefore in her national interest to promote development, cooperation and understanding in its sub-region. It is through the promotion of these ideals that the barriers imposed by colonialism can be broken. In the process, both Nigeria and Africa shall overcome their economic underdevelopment.

33. Ibid., p. 4.
III. THE QUESTION OF AFRICAN DECOLONIZATION, APARTHEID, RACISM AND DIGNITY OF AFRICANS:

The objective to fight against all forms of colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid and racialism has been enshrined in the Nigerian constitution. Apartheid and racism, as we know, has been an insult to the dignity of the African personality as well as a threat to global peace and harmony. Colonialism equally is a slap on the face of the Africans as it implies that they are not capable of managing and governing themselves. Presently, this is the issue that dominates the politics in Southern Africa. As a result, this has dominated much of Nigeria's diplomacy until date since independence and shall continue to be so till these problems are eliminated totally. Nigerian official position on these issues has been that no African is free until the blacks in southern Africa and the world over are free from the obnoxious policies of apartheid, racism and colonialism. The crusade against South African racism has been central to the Nigerian foreign policy during all the successive regimes in the country as it was the long term objective to which Shagari for example during his tenure in office attaches the greatest significance.34

Due to the stand of the Nigerian government on the issue of apartheid, racism, and decolonialization, it uses the opportunity afforded to it as a member of the Commonwealth and the United Nations to see that the South African government is boycotted in all international activities and cooperations to force it to rescind its abnormal policies. The government also gives military and material support to the liberation movements in these dominated areas to carry out arms struggle against these imperial rulers. At the same time, it ensures whether the problem is settled amicably without losing sight of the importance of armed conflicts. In addition to this, diplomatic support is given to the liberation movements to boost their morale. This is done in conjunction with OAU. There is convergence of interests of Nigeria and OAU which affords Nigeria the privilege and opportunity to play a leadership role in OAU and African affairs. So Nigerian foreign policy is so planned that it attempts to erase the problem of apartheid, racism, and colonialism in Africa and in the process restore the lost dignity of the Africans.

35. Nigeria in 1991 initiated a debate in OAU about the desirability for a reparation from the former colonial masters for losses and damages suffered during their rule in the continent.
IV. COMMON AFRICAN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INTERESTS:

The elimination of colonialism, racialism and apartheid are objectives which Nigeria has in common with all Africa. However, the political stability of Africa and her economic development are other objectives which are common to all African countries.

In her efforts at overcoming the vulnerability of African countries in nation-building in regard to their underdevelopment, economically and politically, Nigeria is of the view that, the states of the continent must come together in one form of grouping or the other under sub-regional or regional arrangements. It therefore seeks the cooperation of all the countries in this regard. She is doing this because it is aware that no state can develop in isolation of the other. And since the economic and political problems of the continent are unique to it, it is pertinent that they come together to jointly overcome them. The question of nation-building is not an easy one and to reap the full benefits of development they must put their resources together.

While doing this, Nigeria knows too well that it is for her own interests. Moreso, it is in realization of the fact that, no matter how wealthy and great she may be, without cooperation from other African countries, it shall encounter difficulty in her efforts to play leadership role and
nation-building. This accounts for her voting behaviour in ECOWAS for example, and encouragement given to the establishment of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (CBC) and the River Niger Commission. The objectives of Nigerian foreign policy, with this background, inevitably include economic, cultural, social and political cooperation. That is why, Nigeria aids African states and has bilateral cooperation with countries like Benin and Gambian Republics.

It is in relation to her African foreign policy objectives and its national interests which aim at the total development of the continent that she hopes to achieve a common currency for the ECOWAS States, the political integration of the West African sub-region, the African Common Market as envisaged by the 1980 LPA, and the total economic and political integration of Africa. This to her must come through the OAU and cooperation of other African states.

V. GLOBAL INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY:

These include full participation in the maintenance of world peace and harmony, disarmament, global economic, political and security. As a non-aligned state, it believes


in disarmament as a means of maintaining world peace which shall usher in a better economic cooperation for the welfare of all. It has stood for detente between the two power blocs as a means of bringing an end to armed race and de-escalation of tensions in the world before the break up of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc. And as a peace loving state, stands for peaceful use of nuclear technology for the benefit of mankind, and the destruction of all weapons of mass annihilation.

COMMON FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS OF AFRICAN STATES

The African states do not have specific global interests. But, it does not mean that they are not concerned with global issues such as world peace, and fundamental human rights. While they are not involved in cold war, they have been affected by the injection of bipolarism and ideological warfare in internal African affairs as could be seen in the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa. This is not to their continental interests as developing states. It was in view of this that, they adopted non-alignment as the basis of their foreign policy vis-a-vis the power blocs. The ideals and principles of non-alignment were included in the OAU Charter.


Of course, the major areas of common interest of the African states lie within the continent. They are concerned presently with the issue of unity, stability, independence and economic development of their countries. That is, the African states want to see that their territorial integrity and political stability, which has been under constant strain as a result of tribal rivalries and loyalties, is maintained. They want to promote cooperation among African states to overcome neo-colonialism, and to bring about quick economic development. In the words of Aluko, "the implications of all these economic disabilities for the foreign policy of the African states are serious. Without any strong economic base at home, none of them could really afford to pursue really vigorous or adventurous policies abroad for long. It is their economic and military weakness that has made it almost impossible at least until now to pierce the armour of colonial and racist regimes in Southern Africa".

Other issues of common interest among African states are the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, and the problem of Namibian independence which act as determinants of their foreign policies.

Finally, they are all members of the organization of African Unity (OAU). They pledge their allegiance and support to the Charter of the organization. They seem to have accepted it as the only instrument through which peace and unity could be maintained in the continent. Also, they have taken the organization as a forum for expressing their opinions on African, and non-African issues. The continental body is perceived by them as the defender of their cause and interests outside the continent. Therefore, African states plan and pursue their foreign policies so as to be in harmony and in consonance with the aims and objectives of the inter-African union.

EXECUTING THE FOREIGN POLICY

Having discussed the determinants and objectives of the Nigerian foreign policy it would not be out of place to make an assessment of the execution of Nigerian foreign policy during the period under reference. For this purpose the period is divided in three phases which are clearly marked out. Phase I: 1960-66; Phase II: 1967-1975; Phase III: 1975-1983.

PHASE I: 1960-1966

Before independence of the country in 1960, both the internal and external policies were planned and executed by the British imperial power the way it suited their interests. But since independence on 1 October 1960, the
domestic and external policies of Nigeria have been in the hands of the citizens - the new Nigerian ruling elite. They took off from where the colonial masters stopped. From 1960-66 the foreign policy of the country was planned and implemented by the Balewa Administration and was marked by Low-keyed and Low-profile approach. It was borne out of the personal traits of the conservatism of the Prime Minister, and a political leadership which was interested in maintaining close ties with the West. As a result, the image of the country was that of a moderate, almost a conservative state. Of course, it did abrogate the defence treaty with Britain in 1962 and opposed the French Saharan nuclear tests.

The administrative base for the making of Nigeria's foreign policy in the early 1960s was very small and ill-equipped compared to the status of the country in the continent. There were hardly any policy position papers, discussions and decisions assumed the features of ad-hoc reactions to events after telephone conversations and Low-profile traditions. Further, the then Nigerian government claimed to be non-aligned, and to follow the five principles of international conduct - the Panchsheel. But in spite of

42. Mazi, Ray Ofoegbu and C.S.A. Ogbuagwu, New Philosophy of Foreign Policy of Nigeria, in A.B. Akinyemi (ed.), Nigeria and the World: Readings in Nigerian Foreign Policy, n. 15, p. 120.
all its declarations on non-alignment, it was unable to overcome the constraints of culture, economic and military ties which bound it to the Britishers and the capitalist world and kept it away from the socialist bloc. Even in the development of navy and airforce, assistance and reliance was placed on Britain and West Germany. These two countries were members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). As a consequence, Nigeria's foreign policy during the time of Balewa from 1960 to 1966 lacked dynamism, pragmatism and action, and was by and large pro-west rather than non-aligned.

After independence in 1960, thoughts on foreign policy favoured friendship with all nations that, reciprocated such a good gesture. These was, however vaguely defined to sustain the Balewa government's decision to remain closer to friends known to colonial Nigeria, especially Britain and the Commonwealth. 'It was suspicious of breaking new grounds with the socialist states or even among the non-English speaking Afro-Asian States' because of the natural conservativeness and interests of the Hausa-Fulanis from where the Prime Minister hailed and which sought to be protected and preserved. Not only that, 'they see the Britishers as comrades-in-arms who are prepared to maintain their traditions and help to preserve and conserve the

44. Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, n. 28, pp. 56-58.
status-quo*. They were therefore friends to be trusted. Anything outside that was not acceptable and taken to be against their sectional interests. Communism by them was regarded as revolutionary and they did not want it as it could affect their power base and position. The same notion was held about the non-English speaking states. Hence, their attitudes towards the socialist states and the non-English speaking nations. This is an example of how sectional or tribal interests took precedent over the national interests in Nigeria.

As the 'mouth piece' of the west in African affairs, and in view of her domestic political environment, Nigeria's role in the continent was that of passivity. This was accentuated by its Low-keyed, Low-profile foreign policy philosophy that was pro-west. As a result, it paid lip-service to African issues contrary to expectations and, the opportunites which its great human and material resources provided. And in the words of A. A. Nwankwo and S. U. Ifejika ; "the country's foreign policy was hydra-headed. Honest foreign investors were scared away by the bad political climate generated by unhealthy regional competition, adventurous ones exploited the situation for their own ends. The 10 % bribe to politicians was an open secret. Far from living upto the expectation that it would be 'Africa's bastion of democracy and stability', Nigeria had made herself a laughing-stock in the eyes of the
European nations and disgrace to African states. Naturally, the Nigerian citizens were completely disappointed, and thoroughly ashamed of their citizenship. This was the nature of Nigerian foreign relations before the fall of the government in 15 January 1966. But, despite all these, the West and the USA were unable to provide her with arms during the Civil War. France, for example, supported the secessionist Biafra because it felt that a united Nigeria poses a threat to its interests not only in the West African sub-region but in the whole of the continent.

PHASE II 1967-1975:

With the change of regime from Balewa to Gowon the Low-profile policy did not undergo any major change. It continued to be pro-west and lukewarm towards Africa and African issues till the civil war (1967-1970) forced a rethinking on the foreign policy. The neighbours and other


* On January 15, 1966 a group of young army majors led by Major Chukwuma Mzeogwu overthrew the government of Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa in a military coup. With the faltering and failure of the revolution on January 17, 1966, General Aguiyi-Ironsi became the head of State. But on July 31, 1966 General Ironsi was overthrown in a counter-coup led by northern Junior Officers. As a result, for three days, Nigeria was left without a leader and government. Later, Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon was chosen as Supreme Commander and Head of State as a concensus candidate by the coup leaders.
African countries like Ivory Coast, Gabon, Zambia and Tanzania supported the secessionist Biafra and the western allies refused to sell arms which were needed by Nigeria to win the war and maintain its unity and integrity. This led to the realization that low-key low-profile and pro-west policy could not help Nigeria to defend her unity, or to realize her foreign policy objectives.

Thus, "the harsh realities of big power politics and would-be intervention in its affairs taught her the most practical lesson of all as far as foreign policy is concerned: that other nations will only help in order to reap advantages for themselves; otherwise they oppose (in the hope of obtaining advantages elsewhere) or remain neutral. From the end of the war Nigeria essays into foreign affairs have shown a marked lack of rhetoric and a sensible understanding of the bases of power. It is Nigerian economic strength (the market it offers and its oil) which provides its major weapons in foreign affairs". 46

So, the civil war forced the Nigerian government, to abandon the Balewa government interpretation of friendship in order to move forcefully into the socialist bloc and the Afro-Asian group of states. Friendship with the socialist


states started in a vigorous form with a formal visit by Anthony Enahoro the then Federal Minister to USSR. After the war, in its efforts of reconciliation, reconstruction, and rehabilitation, the diversification of policies continued and did not end with the ending of the civil war. This diversification meant a partial change in foreign policy. There was less dependence on Britain and other western industrialized states. Nonetheless, the Low-profile policy continued which was the result of the much hated conservative policies of the Balewa government. But, it was in August 1975 that a total change of policy occurred with the overthrow of Gowon and ascension of Murtala Mohammed to the leadership ladder. This new foreign policy philosophy resulted in Nigeria fully adhering to the principles and objectives of non-alignment which stood for dynamism and was action oriented. This new foreign policy philosophy equally brought about leadership in actions and thoughts which hitherto were lacking and later led to her victories in international politics.

**PHASE III: 1975-83:**

The Nigerian foreign policy underwent a sea-change during the Murtala / Obasanjo regime from August 1975 onwards compared to that of Balewa and Gowon regimes from 1960 to July 1975.
Murtala Mohammed was the right leader with the kind of political vision and understanding - charismatic and evangelising and ready to accept the challenges posed by the country's peculiar situation with a statesman-like approach in all things. With the exception of Murtala, no leader in Nigeria has ever came forward who was totally acceptable to the various peoples of the whole country. He therefore became the first ever Nigerian leader the people were not interested to know where he came from. He was a nationalist to the core as well as dynamic and action-oriented. It seemed as if he read the minds of the people. He never hesitated to give them what they desired. It was this aspect of his nature which manifested in the new policy philosophy of the country under his administration.

The dynamic quality of Murtala Mohammed's leadership combined together with certain factors (referred to in Chapter I) to bring about the change in the Nigerian foreign policy. The relative peace and stability, the new found confidence due to the oil wealth, the bitter disappointment with the west during the civil war, the frustration with the UNO on its inability to solve the problems of Africa particularly, the changed environment within Africa specially the leadership vacuum - all combined together to give a new turn to the Nigerian foreign policy. The important features of the new policy were (i) a shift from pro-west position to diversification of her ties to include
establishing links with the former USSR and the socialist bloc, and playing an active role in the non-aligned movement (ii) making Africa the centre-piece of her policies, and identification of her interests with the larger interests of the African continent. This led Nigeria to give active support to the liberation movements in Africa, and her recognition of MPLA, and to play active role in OAU, and the African plan for regional economic cooperation.

It stood for the inviolability of the existing boundaries and, the principles of self-determination and the downfall of apartheid in South Africa. That is why it sought and pursued vigorous action against racism and neocolonialism, active support for the liberation movements in Southern Africa. On this also, it increased diplomatic, financial and material support to the liberation movements. It made consistent efforts for the restoration of peace and harmony in Chad, the thorny issue of the Western Sahara, and that of the Palestine and Israel. President Shehu Shagari said: "consistent with the foreign policy objectives of this Administration since it came to power, our principal objectives in dealing with fellow African countries have been four fold: First, the strengthening of African solidarity through continental, and regional organizations and institutions like the OAU, ECOWAS and the African Development Bank (ADB). Secondly, the promotion of peace and stability on the African continent, and security in our
sub-region by re-emphasizing our commitment to the principles of respect for provisions of the OAU charter, especially those relating to the inviolability of inherited frontiers, sovereign equality and territorial integrity of all countries and peaceful accommodation and settlement of all disputes, without foreign interference. Thirdly, support for the right of people to self-determination and freedom from colonial and foreign subjugation, and for all authentic national movements in their struggle for independence. Finally, unwavering support to all efforts to destroy the obnoxious apartheid system, racial bigotry and prejudice...."

The new policy linked Nigeria's security to the security and stability of its neighbours. That is why it frowned at the presence of any hostile leader in any of the neighbouring state. Such a leader it was felt would not waste any opportunity in sabotaging and endangering its security at the behest of the outside and interested powers. This accounts for her increased financial assistance to these poor neighbours who preferred money to good neighbourliness. It is the same conviction that she was against the internationalization of African issues and, the meddling by the interventionist powers in the internal

affairs of African states. This underscores her belief in peaceful settlement of disputes as a means of keeping away such powers. This stand propelled it to seek for peace and harmony amongst the warring factions in the war torn Chad, and an end to armed race in the continent.

The new leadership also recognized the cultural dimension of diplomacy. So the information centres of the country were beefed up. The country encouraged experts in visual and performing arts to visit foreign countries so as to propagate the vibrant and dynamic cultures of the country. In this sphere also, the leadership believed in the preservation and maintenance of its cultural heritage, Nigeria being a "home of 2,000 years of cultural civilization which manifested itself in the famous NOK, IFE, Igbo-Ukuri and Benin Sculptures and figurines". The new leadership did not accept the cultural imperialism despite the fact that Nigeria was the creation of colonialism. And, it was difficult for the country to break the cultural link with the former imperial masters.


50. The name Nigeria (Niger-area) emanated from the River Niger which traverses the country from North West to South. A cross roads of Africa since ancient times, this area consisted of many republics and princely states which formed part of what was known as the belt of the Great Empires of the Western Sudan.
Thus, Nigeria under the new leadership became actively involved in African affairs and, sought to "influence the course of events on the continent. There is a broad national opinion amongst the informed elite in support of these features. And the five political parties that contested the July-August 1979 elections basically accepted these goals because of the consensus opinion." 51

A sober appraisal of the Nigerian foreign policy would show that it fell short of the great expectations reposed in it. The weaknesses were the result of inadequate knowledge of real politick within the period of the first republic; the personality traits of the leadership up to 1975; non-involvement of the parliament in foreign policy making particularly in the pre-1966 coup periods; the nature of the federal constitution before the creation of states that gave more autonomy to the three regions in almost all spheres; the competitive party system with the rival regional parties competing in periodic elections and with a free press; and the federal government remaining a coalition of elements representing different political orientations in both the two republics; the roles of the interest groups like the pro-Arab group which has remained active since independence till present. All these factors

affected the performance of the government in international relations and, therefore hindered the achievement of its foreign policy objectives.

Nevertheless, despite these obstacles, Nigeria continued to keep pace with the developments in the international environment and moved a step forward in the realization of her foreign policy goals. In the area of decolonization, apartheid and racism, it had done profoundly well. During the first five years of the 1970s Nigerian leads on Southern Africa had a great measure of modifying effect upon British policies. Within this period also, it moved rapidly closer into the radical camp. It quarrelled with Britain over the November 1971 Home-Smith proposals for Rhodesia, together with a number of Afro-Asian states, Nigeria demanded the expulsion of the Republic of South Africa from the British Commonwealth; the country's statesmen and political leaders, expressing the will of millions of Nigerians repeatedly denounced the inhuman policy of racial discrimination against Africans practiced by the facist-minded rulers of South Africa; it gradually increased its backing for the various liberation movements; it applied sanctions to Rhodesia; it turned down the tempting South African offer of a deal (gold for oil); it gave qualified support to the Kaunda-Nyerere detente exercise that started late in 1974, and its recognition of MPLA at the end of 1975 was probably decisive in
influencing the course of events that followed, etc. All these goes to explain its expanding role in the continent.

In the fields of economic cooperation, it performed very well. A clear example was her becoming associate member of the EEC in 1966, and in 1975 the spokesman of the ACP states thereby, bargaining for equitable trade terms which later led to the signing of the Lome I convention of January 1975. Its founding and funding father role in the establishment of the ECOWAS in 1975 was another pointer to this. The treaty which produced this represented a major step forward for Africa as a whole as well as for West Africa in particular. The community when fully operational should be in a better position as envisaged to obtain a far better conditions in trade deals with the developed economies of the EEC and North America, especially for its raw materials, than previously.

In the spheres of world peace and disarmament, Nigeria had not done badly. This can be deduced from its active roles in OAU, the Commonwealth of Nations, the Non-aligned movement, the United Nations. For example, as a member of the non-aligned group, Nigeria favoured the elimination of all arms of mass destruction and an end to arms race which had increased tensions globally and were a threat to world peace.