

Historicising the unchanging face of Nigeria's Foreign Policy Thrust from 1960 to 2015

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ABSTRACT: Foreign policy is a tool. It is a means to an end, but not the end itself. What a nation gets from foreign policy on the international scene is dependent on its skill in negotiating, applying force and bargaining appropriately. In Nigeria for instance, foreign policy is seen as definitional or doctrine, and as such, using foreign policy thrust to advance the wellbeing of the country remains problematic. Since independence, the guiding principle of Nigeria's foreign policy thrust has remained a reflection of its perception of the international political system. A constant feature that has remained central to Nigeria's foreign relations posture has been Africa, with pre-occupations concerning fighting colonialism, then obnoxious apartheid policy in South Africa and the discrimination of black peoples in the African continent and elsewhere in the world. Nigeria's foreign policy like those of countries all over the world is geared towards attaining the foreign policy objectives of the country's leadership and its teeming population. Unfortunately, this expectation by the judgement of many informed Nigerians is yet to be fully achieved. The Nigerian Federal Government has often been accused of Big Brotherism and a Father Christmas outlook with little or no reciprocity. It must be noted that states relate globally in the conduct of inter-state relations. In this relationship, the international system provides a potent stage and theatre for Nigeria to come up with defined goals and collective concerns. Despite its clear goals and strong points, there is still a general feeling that Nigeria's foreign policy plank is punching below its expected weight. Between 1960 and 2015, different foreign policy thrusts have been adopted with little or no reasonable result. This paper therefore examines the various foreign policy thrusts adopted from 1960 to 2015. And attempt to identify reasons why each of these Foreign Policy Planks could not live up to expectation, bring out why each of these foreign policy plank could not live up to expectations. Historical methods will be used in the collection and collation of data.

Keywords: Afrocentric principles, citizen diplomacy, concentricism, foreign policy, national interest.

INTRODUCTION

It is a statement of fact that most states seek to attain different aspirations in the course of administering their independent countries. A number of these aims and objectives can be accomplished by successive administrations on their own (without resorting to any other states), while others can only be achieved with the collaboration and active support of other similar entities beyond their boundaries. All the activities in the form of actions or reactions, dealing with such issues requiring collaboration and dynamic cooperation of others beyond the precincts of a given state for their accomplishment, are

all collectively within the domain of foreign policy.

It is difficult if not impossible to state a tailor-made definition of foreign policy. This is because; scholars of international relations have not been able to formulate a universally acceptable definition of the concept given the changing nature of power politics in the international system. The consensus among scholars is that foreign policy is the conscious behaviour of a nation-state towards the external environment. Foreign policy is a tool in the hands of a state to achieve stated objectives. It is a means to an end. The state defines the end. It is on this premise

that, Nigeria made efforts to adopt varying foreign policy stances with a view to improving the wellbeing of the country (Nwankwo, 2013). Foreign policy is an embodiment of national goals to be attained and the means for attaining them. The relationship between national objectives and the resources for achieving them is the recurrent subject of statecraft. This is where skills for achieving desired goals become central (Pham, 2007). Foreign policy enables states to identify certain political, economic and military interests of concern and pursue them through different channels (Celenk, 2015). This can be achieved provided the state is skilful enough to take advantage of its foreign policy plank.

While foreign policy is generally conceived as external facing, and for determining a country's identity outside, the results are often in the form of domestic progress. The major goal of Nigeria in international relations is the achievement of domestic needs and strategic interests. On this premise, the Nigerian government engages in bilateral or multilateral relations as a way of acquiring the support and services of other states towards controlling affairs that occur outside its precincts, but which have implications for them. Strategic interest has driven and influenced Nigerian foreign policy since independence. The strategic interest is not always readily obvious to the casual observer. A lot of Nigeria's assistance particularly her assistance to her African brothers has often been Big Brotherism and an exercise in wastefulness. Successive military and civilian governments in Nigeria had adopted one foreign policy plank in their respective administrations with a view to achieving stated objectives. For instance, Nigeria has adopted Afrocentricism, Concentricism, Isolationism, Economic diplomacy, Citizen Diplomacy and shuttle diplomacy since 1960. This paper is divided into three parts; the introduction, the various foreign policy planks of successive administrations and the conclusion.

NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY THRUST FROM 1960 TO 2015

Africa as the centrepiece which is also known as Afrocentrism as a foreign policy thrust was birthed at independence. The foundation of Afrocentrism as a well enshrined policy thrust was laid by the first Prime Minister of Nigeria, Sir. Abubakar Tafawa Balewa in an official statement said to have been issued on August 20, 1960. As earlier stated, this policy thrust which has dominated discussions on Nigerian foreign policy was adopted after Nigeria's independence in 1960 based on certain considerations; the concern for African issues as the cornerstone of Nigeria's foreign policy stems from the fact that should Nigeria fails to show needed concern to African plight, be it conflict or otherwise, other interests outside the continent might be encouraged to dabble into African affairs with the potential of eroding Nigeria's leadership role in the continent; relatively better resource profile

of the country, geographical factors and of course, the crave for regional hegemonic role. These were at the heart of Nigeria's Africa Centered Foreign Policy, particularly in the West African Sub-region where potential conflicts could spill into Nigeria. Eyebrows are however raised as to the scale and intensity of Nigeria's assistance to her African brothers and the fact at time one-time payments in assistance have far outweighed four years budget. Coupled with this, there has been little or no reciprocity for Nigeria's wholehearted commitment to the African cause. Indeed, in many instances, benevolence has been reciprocated with scorn and ridicule. On the strength of these and other considerations, Afrocentrism has guided the conduct of Nigeria's foreign policy as a fundamental objective and successive administrations have since 1960 pursued it with varying degrees of emphasis (Piate and Eminue, 2022).

The Afrocentric posture of Nigeria's foreign policy thrust manifested itself when the country demonstrated enormous commitment to the fight against colonisation and racial discrimination to which many Africans were subjected. Nigeria shouldered the collective responsibilities of Black Africa by providing the rallying point from where she mobilized and deployed her moral, diplomatic and financial resources for the decolonisation and liberation of Africa leading to the independence of Angola in 1975, Zimbabwe in 1980, Namibia in 1990 and South Africa in 1994. Aside from this, many iconic frontline leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and others were offered asylum in Nigeria while scholarships were granted to South African youths. It was equally diplomacy on the basis of its Afrocentric policy that drove Nigeria to play a leading role in the formation of the defunct Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963.

In the peace-keeping milieu, peace support and keeping operations were central to Afrocentricism. Peace-keeping recorded incredible success on many platforms including the United Nations (UN), the defunct Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the military wing of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). It must be noted that Nigeria's involvement in peace-keeping operations began barely a month after independence when in November 1960, she provided UN Peacekeepers to Congo. However, in spite of the sterling performance in peace keeping and assisting liberation movements, it is disappointing to know that, Nigeria is not reaping the desired benefits of her outstanding efforts (Eze, 2011). This has made Afrocentricism to be greeted with serious questioning and condemnation over the years. This involvement of the country in peace keeping operations in many troubled African countries during the period has undoubtedly drained both material and human resources of Nigeria without reciprocal benefits in return.

It was very sad to see how Nigeria faced opposition from those countries that benefited from her 'Big Brother Posture'. For instance, it was discouraging at Nigeria's bid for a non-permanent seat in the United Nation Security

Council in 2009 where Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo, who were not Candidates for the position, voted for themselves. It was a case of discarding their votes instead of casting for Nigeria. Again, Ghana, South Africa and Egypt were also scrambling for the proposed UNSC Permanent Seat against Nigeria and these three countries also benefited immensely from Nigeria's benevolence. For instance, Nigeria had once supplied electricity on behalf of Ghana to Togo and Benin Republic; Nigeria earned many enemies in the international political system because of her firm policy against Apartheid policy in South Africa and finally, Nigeria mobilized amazing support for Egypt during the 1973 Yom Kippur war. An assessment of Afrocentricism revealed that it does not reflect domestic realities and Nigeria does not command the respect and cooperation of her foreign policy humanitarian disposition it deserves. Since the commencement of Afrocentricism, the country has expended so much with little or no return at all. The consensus among scholars is that Nigeria's African centrepiece policy has remained essentially altruistic. This is in sharp contrast with United State's foreign policy posture. For instance, during the military campaign in Iraq in the wake of the unilateral invasion to unseat Saddam Hussein, the United States, after the war skillfully went back and rebuilt Iraq with a view to benefitting from its huge crude oil deposit. The United States was so skilful that no other country benefited from the rebuilding of Iraq. This is what has been missing in Nigeria's foreign policy posture over the years (Okpokpo, 2002).

Perhaps, one of the most daunting situations and stumbling blocks during this period of Afrocentricism was the personalization of the foreign policy process by successive administration. For instance, the foreign policy of Nigeria in the hey days of Sir Tafawa Balewa was but, a reflection of Balewa's personality and character, rather than the collective concerns of the citizenry. It is instructive to note that, one of the major instrumentalities in the conduct of Africa as the centre piece was the aid programme which the country has pursued since independence. This was possible due to the oil wealth. Almost all the countries of Africa had obtained one form of assistance or the other from Nigeria. The main focus of the assistance had been Nigeria's neighbours, the West African sub-region and frontline states, the freedom fighters, national disasters and other parts of Africa. This was the situation of things when the economy was booming (Adebayo, 1983). Again, it is also clear that part of the problem of Afrocentrism has to do with the neglect of the domestic scene. The deplorable internal Nigerian situation characterised by infrastructural deficit, unabated corruption, insecurity, mass poverty, unemployment, capital flight and just to mention but a few are not in consonance with Nigeria's commitment to addressing the same issues on the African continent.

Yet another foreign policy thrust introduced in Nigeria was concentricism. The first time Nigeria had a guiding

the principle in her foreign policy was during the period of when Dr Ibrahim Gambari was appointed the Minister of External Affairs. It was the first time Nigeria had a coherent foreign policy philosophy. Before this period, Nigeria's foreign policy was ad hoc in nature. In a bid to revitalize the country's external relations, Dr. Ibrahim Gambari was appointed the Minister of External Affairs. Dr. Gambari had earlier accused the leadership of the Second Republic of playing the role of a diplomatic parasite, vague and too bureaucratic and more so, the administration of the Second Republic did not practicalise Afrocentricism as Nigeria's Foreign policy stance. Concentricism is a policy that was designed to consciously place Nigeria at the centre of her foreign policy, followed by Nigeria's immediate neighbours.

At the epicentre of the concentric circles are the national economic and security interests of Nigeria. The West African sub-region constituted the next important circle in Nigeria's external relations. This was followed by the circle of relations with individual countries and inter-governmental organisations in Africa as well as the rest of the international political system. This foreign plank preaches that, Nigeria must benefit from its relations with nations in the international political system. It was based on this policy that Nigeria spear-headed the establishment of ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in 1987 in order to ensure peace in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Nigeria spent a huge amount of money in peace-keeping missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone, but unfortunately, when it was time for the country to benefit from the reconstruction of Liberia and Sierra Leone, the country lost out. Nigeria was not skilful enough to use it as a tool to build her economy. It was obvious that the principle of reciprocity was thrown to the dogs. It must be noted that, in international relations, the principle of reciprocity states that, benefits or penalties as the case may be that are granted by one state to another should be returned. This implies that Nigeria should have incurred or benefited from enormous gains from her 'Big Brother Posture' towards fellow African countries, but unfortunately, the contrary was the case. Buttressing this, it is on record that Nigeria contributed 12,000 out of the 13,000 ECOMOG troops deployed to Sierra Leone between 1998 and 1999 aside from huge amounts of money spent. Against the principle of reciprocity within the realm of international politics and the conduct of multilateral relations, in 2009 both Liberia and Sierra Leone voted against Nigeria's interest in the Non-permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council (Akinterinwa, 2000).

As usual, Nigeria was set aside during the rebuilding of Liberia and Sierra Leone after their civil wars, no Nigerian construction company or human resource firm were offered a contract in both countries for rebuilding and reconstruction as a way of compensating and recouping the huge human and material capitals spent on peace-keeping in both countries. It was obvious that Nigeria could not take advantage of the military deployment and

spending in diplomatic terms. This unfortunate situation is a sharp contrast to the United States Foreign policy stance. An apt instance of reciprocity in international politics and conduct of multilateral relations among state actors could be derived from Nigeria-United States' relations in the hey days of President Olusegun Obasanjo. While Obasanjo lobbied the then President of the United States, President Clinton to put in a word with the Paris Club to consider the forgiveness of Nigeria's debt, Clinton reciprocally extracted a promise from Obasanjo to prevail on OPEC to reduce the soaring crude oil price in the International economic system. This diplomatic skill is what is missing in Nigeria's foreign posture over the years (Piate and Eminue, 2022).

Economic diplomacy was also employed as a potent tool in the conduct of international politics especially by General Ibrahim Babangida's regime. As part of the government's strategy of economic diplomacy, several steps were taken by General Babangida at the foreign policy level, complemented by a host of domestic measures. The economic diplomacy especially during the era of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) did not only increase the extraversion of the Nigerian economy but also became a potent contraption for capital flight (Asobie, 2002).

Following the commencement of the Fourth Republic in 1999, Nigeria's foreign plank wore a new look. The regime preceding the Fourth Republic had damaged the image of Nigeria within the international political system and this perhaps prompted Chief Olusegun Obasanjo to make a conscious effort to manage and better the battered image of late General Sani Abacha. The foreign policy posture of General Abacha between 1993 and 1998 was Isolationist and confrontational in nature and as such earned him more enemies than friends among the comity of nations within the precincts of the international political system. While still maintaining Afrocentricism, Nigeria's image was marred by extra-judicial killings of the foremost environmentalist and human rights activist, Ken Saro-Wiwa, and eight other Ogoni, resulting in Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth of Nations (Faseke, 2000).

However, the return of the democratic system with Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as the President witnessed Nigeria's conscious attempt at restoring her battered image on the international scene through the instrumentality of '**Shuttle Diplomacy**,' the commencement of the fourth Republic as well as the focus on '**Economic Diplomacy**' which sought to attract Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) and partnership from the Western World for the purpose of engendering economic advancement. Obasanjo's decision to employ the services of Shuttle diplomacy was occasioned by obvious limitations and constraints on Nigeria's ability to compete on the global scene because of her lack of domestic economic capacity, weak social infrastructure following colonial rule, low export prices and decline in terms of trade, coupled with the burden of debt servicing, economic mismanagement and lack of advanced

technology (Piate and Eminue, 2022). It must be noted that President Olusegun Obasanjo was well noted for his shuttles in a bid to forge bilateral and multilateral partnerships that sought to advance development within Nigeria and also to ensure the peaceful co-existence among state actors in West African sub-regions. Equally central in Obasanjo's Shuttle Diplomacy were the restoration of Nigeria's battered image by the previous regime, and the securing of debt reduction from the country's creditors. It was in a bid to achieve the above that President Olusegun Obasanjo was said to have made a total of 113 foreign trips to western industrial nations between 1999 and 2000. It is important to state that, Obasanjo's administration before the external debt was reduced, adopted a number of strategies to overcome the obstacles, which includes, but were not limited to being more regular in external debt repayment (Ogwu and Olukoshi, 2002), taking measures to reduce corruption and rent seeking, improving transparency and accountability in governance, creating and nurturing democratic institutions; instituting a programme of macro-economic reform directly husbanded by international financial institutions; engaging in active advocacy within the framework of the Commonwealth of Nations, the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. It is gratifying to state that, one of the laudable achievements of Shuttle Diplomacy was the successful reduction of Nigeria's external debt. It was during this period that Nigeria successfully got America and some other Paris Club Creditors to sign agreements on debt relief. It was part of the success stories of Shuttle Diplomacy that, in October 2005, Nigeria and the Paris Club announced a final agreement for debt relief worth \$18 billion. The creditors had cancelled \$18 billion and Nigeria repaid \$12 billion. Most of the \$18 billion was registered as aid, and the deal was completed in April 2006, when Nigeria made its final payment (Piate and Eminue, 2022).

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows into Nigeria increased during the period. While President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration was credited for its huge success at restoring the battered image of Nigeria within the international political system in spite of the daunting internal challenges, Shuttle Diplomacy was punching below expectation as the country's external debt kept increasing before the expiration of the administration in 2007. The Shuttle Diplomatic stance would have been skillfully used to better the lots of the country; rather, it was an opportunity to waste Nigerian resources, especially on trips. One would have expected that, Shuttle Diplomatic posture would be translated to note foreign Investors, increase our foreign reserves, strengthen our currency and above all, position Nigeria boisterously among the comity of nations. While Obasanjo's debt relief mechanism as a way of revamping the sinking economy of Nigeria does offer some prospects for Nigeria's development, that is burden-lifting in the form of debt servicing and capital flight from Nigeria which has hindered economic growth, and by

extension boost investment in human welfare, especially in the areas of health, education and infrastructural development, debt relief also constitutes a threat to Nigeria's development. This stems from the fact that the conditionalities associated with the past that worsened Nigeria's debt problem such as privatisation, deregulation, and economic reform remain largely intact within debt relief policies and concessional measures proffered to Nigeria, which debt relief typifies, have not altered the underlying inequalities in the structure and composition of the prevailing world order (Okpokpo, 2002). Again, it appears nothing has changed in the country as debt relief as an outstanding achievement is an aberration. This is because the condition that led to huge debt accumulation remains intact, as the administration that followed was almost at the mercy of Nations and Institutions to sustain her budget.

The late President Umaru Yaradua's administration that followed tried to tilt foreign policy focus to '**Citizen Diplomacy**' in a bid to identify with the interest of Nigerian citizens and the protection of the welfare of Nigerians both home and abroad (Ogunsanwo, 2009). This citizen diplomacy was described by scholars as welfarist foreign policy plank. Citizen Diplomacy as a foreign policy thrust of the Yar'Adua's administration was announced by then Nigeria's Foreign Minister, Chief Ojo Madueke in 2007 while addressing the opening ceremony of the conference in foreign policy and Nigeria's economic development organised by the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA). This policy as postulated and popularized by Ojo Maduekwe, Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2007, centred on the principle of reciprocity, which implies that, the manner in which Nigerians are treated by a particular country would determine the manner in which Nigeria would treat the citizen of that country (Lawal and Aluko, 2016).

The major pillars of Citizen Diplomacy were aptly capture by Akinterinwa when he stated;

...(a) Nigeria and Nigerians should be at the centre of Nigeria's foreign policy; (b) Nigeria's foreign policy must meet her development aspiration and objectives in a manner that impacts more directly on the lives of the citizenry; (c) Nigeria's foreign policy must seek a synergy with domestic policy to ensure that the former benefits ordinary Nigerians. Indeed, the boundary between domestic policy and foreign policy has collapsed into national security for collective well-being of Nigerians; (d) In line with the servant-leadership philosophy of Mr. President, Nigerian missions abroad must actively engage the Nigerian community and Nigerian diaspora and render quality consular and other services as a matter of rights, duties and obligations; (e) Foreign policy making and implementation must be democratized to

involve Nigerians from all walks of life, and not left for a small circle of experts and practitioners alone; (f) Every foreign policy endeavours must meet the litmus test of determining the extent to which it protects and advocates what is best for Nigeria and what will best benefit the Nigerian people; (g) Nigeria should be guided by the principle of reciprocity or diplomacy of consequence in its interactions with the rest of the world; and (h) Nigeria and Nigerians will not accept being criminalised by the international community simply based on the despicable conduct of a few of their nationals. Due recognition must be given to the remarkable feats and tremendous contributions of Nigeria and Nigerians to world civilization, socio-economic and scientific development, as well as international peace and security (Akinterinwa, 2010)

Late President Yaradua's ambition was to enhance citizen welfare and national image-building. And so, the policy opined that Nigeria should be the number one stakeholder and the first beneficiary of external engagement that the country embarks upon. Perhaps the major incredible result of Citizen Diplomacy was recorded on the diplomatic row between Nigeria and South Africa, where about 125 Nigerians were deported for allegedly presenting fake yellow fever cards by South Africa. The government of Yaradua swiftly responded by returning about 100 South Africans trying to enter Nigeria following the ugly incident. Good as Yaradua's Citizen Diplomacy was even within its shortest period, the challenges encountered made all the efforts fruitless (Mbachu, 2007). As welfarism being inherent in Citizen Diplomacy, it was considered people-oriented. Indeed, it was a step further in the right direction. Put together, citizen diplomacy was construed by Nigeria under late President Yar'Adua to mean that Nigeria's foreign policy will henceforth be focused on the Nigerian citizens at home and in the diaspora and that this is not necessarily a departure from the country's traditional approach to foreign relations in which Africa is taken as the centrepiece, however, the policy is rebranded to focus on the citizen (Satow, 1966).

Regrettably, an assessment of citizen diplomacy under the late President Yar'Adua shows that it was not entirely satisfactory given the cases of maltreatment of Nigerians both at home and abroad. This stems from the fact that, as a foreign policy thrust; citizen diplomacy was to put the interest of the Nigerians at home and abroad at the heart of the country's national interest. Despite the introduction of Citizen Diplomacy, there have been tales of how Nigerians living abroad were maltreated in countries where they are found. Also, there have been several instances of Nigerians in several countries languishing in prisons, on death row, deported, marginalized, detained, tortured, and

most of the time, the reasons are unknown. Equally daunting during the period, more often than not, there have been cases of unfair treatment of Nigerians. For instance, in 2010, some Nigerians in Togo were detained unjustly and treated with harsh and severe inhuman conditions for offences they did not commit except for being Nigerians. The Afrophobic popularly known as xenophobic attacks in South Africa especially the May 2008 incident was horrendously terrifying. Nigeria's citizens and their businesses were the major targets in the 2008 attack which claimed over 62 lives and displaced several others. Many lost their properties and their shops were looted, which is an indication of an orchestrated attack on the business of Nigerians in South Africa (Uhomobhi, 2012).

The failure of citizen diplomacy was also noticed here in Nigeria by fellow Nigerian citizens. The average Nigerian is treated badly by the ruling class with the instrumentality of the law enforcement agencies. A succinct example is the Nigerian Police Force constitutionally entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining internal peace and security have in all ramifications become agents of terrorism engaging in extra-judicial killings, arrest, and detention of innocent citizens, extortion of multifarious dimensions and brutality. These are just a few in the myriads of ugly cases of citizen ill-treatment by the Nigerian security agencies. It is against this backdrop that one can conveniently state that, citizen diplomacy as a foreign policy thrust of the Yar'Adua's administration could not translate to the desired economic development of the Nigerian state. This was obviously a big blow to citizen diplomacy as a foreign policy plank. It is therefore not surprising that the policy was vehemently greeted with condemnations by scholars of international relations (Piate and Eminue, 2022).

While in acting capacity as President of the Federal Republic, President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, following the demise of President Yaradua, in an attempt to assure the state actors in the international system, that Nigeria is secured and available for investments in spite of the obviously disturbing challenges, employed the services of shuttle diplomacy with a view to revamping the bleeding economy. Economic diplomacy prominently featured in Acting President Goodluck Jonathan's Shuttle Diplomacy leading to the re-negotiation and review of several bilateral agreements and most importantly, the brokering of new ones during the period. Cases in point were the Bilateral Joint Commission with Indonesia, India, Singapore and Malaysia. Also as part of his conscious efforts to redeem Nigerian image in the international arena at the same time rescuing the domestic economic challenges, President Jonathan appointed career Diplomats as Ambassadors to Nigeria's foreign missions (Lawal and Aluko, 2016). Unfortunately too, in spite of the laudable efforts of President Jonathan in the conduct of bilateral engagements, the obviously avoidable failure of the country to skillfully maximize the use of these resources has accounted for its ineptitude in diplomatic engagement.

CONCLUSION

The paper x-rays Nigeria's foreign policy from 1960 till 2015 bringing out the major foreign policy thrust adopted by successive governments. Judging by the above, Nigeria and its past leaders have consistently been pursuing its domestic development goals independently of its foreign policy so that the nation's foreign policy has not been translated into a source of national domestic development; consequently, the nation suffered serious development challenges. It was obviously noted that the military era of General Ibrahim Babangida and that of General Sani Abacha wreaked havoc on Nigeria's foreign policy. The return to civil rule in 1999 did not help much in improving the situation of Nigeria's foreign policy as it continued to subject it to internal and external stress as noted in the paper. It has also been shown that Nigeria's foreign policy has for the most part been the same from independence to date with emphasis on Africa as its centrepiece without any corresponding gains. The major source of failure is this moralist point of view which bathed the big brother posture. Therefore, Nigerian foreign policy actors should ignore the Big-brother approach for more beneficial approaches in the quest for relevance in the international political system.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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