

**A Theoretical Explanation of Power and Regime  
in Maritime Resource Security in the Gulf of Guinea**

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**Abstract**

This paper explores the place of theories in analysing threats to maritime resource security in the Gulf of Guinea. Three theories are discussed to explain how to curb the challenges of maritime resource security in the maritime borders of Nigeria, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Sao Tome and Principe and Central African Republic. The overall objective of the paper is to assess the appropriateness of these theories in analysing the extent of threats in the Exclusive Economic Zone of these contiguous countries. The paper adopts content analysis as its methodology. The analysis of the theories shows that the use of realist theory will best explain the activities of external powers in the oil rich maritime domain. This study recommends that the Nigerian government along with other oil producing countries of the Gulf of Guinea have to move beyond ordinary joint naval exercises to upgrade their naval capabilities by building ships and conducting jointly sponsored research on and security projects on how to secure the region from the control of external powers whose interest are solely for the oil and gas expected to power their industries

Key words: Maritime resource security, Realism, Regime, National interest, Gulf of Guinea.

**Introduction**

Theories are tools for explaining a given phenomenon in a systematic way. They could be proven right or wrong with a follow up study. The assumption of a given theory will help in projecting the way a phenomenon is conceived explained and conclusions could be drawn with the probability of precision. Three theories will be explained to analyse the challenges to maritime resource security in the maritime borders of Nigeria, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe and Central African Republic. This will help to assess the appropriateness of these theories on how the governments of these littoral countries could take decision on how to jointly make effort to protect their Exclusive Economic Zone in the Gulf of Guinea which is under the threat of criminals and most importantly external powers. This paper investigates challenges maritime resource security in the Gulf of Guinea. The paper is divided into five sections. After this introduction section two is centred on definition of major concepts. Theoretical issue are discussed in section three. The national interests of oil consuming external powers are discussed in section four. Section five is preoccupied with concluding remarks and recommendation.

**Definition of Concepts**

**Maritime security**

Maritime security belongs to the terrestrial/aquatic realm. It is a state in which a country's territorial integrity, maritime assets, maritime practices, and coastal peace and order are conserved, protected, and

enhanced. Many Countries conceive maritime security as a defence concept, while others equate it with the idea of sound management of the ocean resources and environment, employing the capabilities used in the defense of the state to carry out maritime security activities.

Maritime security relates to the prevention of unlawful acts in a maritime domain, whether they directly impact the country or region in question, or perpetrators in transit. The issue of unlawful acts in a maritime domain of a country and how to prevent those acts is part of maritime security (Gilpin, 2007:2). To broaden our understanding of the concept the United Nations convention on the law of the sea of 1982 states that:

The maritime domain may be described as “all areas and things of, on, under, relating to, adjacent to, or bordering on a sea, ocean, or other navigable water way, including all maritime related activities, infrastructure, people, cargo and vessels and other convergences”. In geographical scope, the maritime domain could be defined as (a) territorial waters, 12 nautical miles from the coast; (b) contiguous zone or coastal waters, 24 nautical miles from the coast; and (c) the Exclusive Economic Zone or EEZ, 200 nautical miles from the coast.

The exclusive economic zone of a country can only be protected by a national navy if the country has the capability to do so as such Gilpin's allusion to the zone exclude the countries of the Gulf of Guinea because their navies do not have the sea power to police their maritime domain within the 200 nautical miles.

Maritime security is an issue classified under maritime security operations. It is all about the security of marine activities. It is seen in a restrictive scope and ambition because most writers associate it with economic activities, illegal immigration, pollution at sea and coastal risks within and around the boundary of a nation-state. Maritime security is the promotion and maintenance of security of the global maritime tradition De Danville (2007). It is a critical element that could guarantee a nation's economic wealth over a long period. It therefore addresses threats of individuals, groups or states that seek to jeopardize or disrupt the security of a maritime domain. On the other hand, an external power could want to pursue an interest in a maritime domain and in this sense it will want its interest to prevail. The guarantee that maritime resource security will be protected by a national navy only applies to a nation that has the same or similar capability with the external power that is competing for influence in her domain.

#### **National interests of external powers**

National interest is an omnibus concept that has varied interpretations. Given the liberal versus Marxist debate the concept has about five strands. The liberal school has the objectivists, the subjectivists and the decision makers; while the Marxists school has instrumental and structural strands. We shall not go into the argument of these schools but we shall point out some of their assumptions. The objectivists in which, Morgenthau belongs assert that the relative power of a state and her perception of herself influences her interest which is reflected in the peculiar circumstances of culture, ideology, history, economic and military capability, hopes and aspirations of the people of a country. The subjectivist see it as preference of the moment which is influenced by what a state wants to achieve while the decision makers see it as parochial interest of foreign policy decision makers. Instrumentalists Marxists see it as the preference of the executive committee of the bourgeoisie; while structural Marxists see it as coincidence of the objective of the bourgeoisie and the ruling class (Chander 1990). Classes of national interests determine the way a state will act or react to issues international politics. Issues that fall into core interest are given utmost attention. They are national security, welfare of the state, and national prestige. Oil and gas needed by the external powers in the Gulf of Guinea falls under their primary interests. This is exemplified by their classification of energy into national security problem. For instance Lubeck, Watts and Lipschutz (2007: 10) posit that America's: “Fears that China is gaining control over African energy resources ...are important to the new emphasis on securitization of energy policy, as well as bureaucratic competition for control over resources among the regional commands of the US military”.

### **Importance of the Gulf of Guinea**

The Gulf of Guinea maritime domain is resource rich maritime border of Nigeria, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe and Central African Republic on the Atlantic Ocean. Oil and gas which are major maritime resources needed for the growth and sustainable development of industrialized and industrializing nations abound in the Gulf of Guinea Region. These resources have made the United States of America Europeans powers, China and India to struggle for access to these resources. This is responsible for the economic and military competitions between the countries mentioned. The Gulf of Guinea serves as alternative to oil supply sources for industrialized nation in the event of face-off between the East and the West which climaxed in the September 11 terrorist attack in the United States of America. Another advantage that the Gulf of Guinea is has that it is an international shipping route as such the problem of passing through territorial waters of unfriendly countries will not be there. Again the countries of the Gulf of Guinea are yet to claim their Exclusive Economic Zones as a result of this the routes are relatively free of encumbrances. There are no narrow shipping maritime lanes (choke points) that expose oil tankers/vessels to pirate attack, shipping accidents or blockades. These are of comparative advantage to nations who would want to invest in oil and gas in the region (Mane 2005).

### **Explaining the theories**

The assumptions and exponents of neoliberal-institutional, regime and realist theories will be discussed to arrive at a decision on which will better suit the analysis of the activities of criminals and external powers in the Gulf Of Guinea Maritime domain.

### **Neoliberal Institutional Theory**

The first theory to be discussed is the Neo-liberal institutional approach. The exponents of this school emphasise the use of soft power. Soft power is simply getting others to do what you want. The school holds that economic, social and other means other than military should be used to command obedience from a weaker nation. Diplomatic pressure, aid and the media should be used to exert force on recipient country. The school is of the opinion that the state is a rational actor that has concern for international economic system in terms of its management. In this sense, the evolution of global governance in terms of regimes and institutions will help state cooperate and benefit mutually from it (Halabi, 2004: 25). The countries in the Gulf of Guinea are being dominated through the use of soft power. They have signed several conventions of the United Nation which binds them.

The Neoliberal institutionalist school agrees to the centrality of the state in international politics. They argue that the realist school's preoccupation with anarchy and power relations has distracted it from conceiving the role of the state in the pursuit of wealth among other functions that the state perform, as such they fail to come to terms with the influence of capitalism which is a mechanism that has helped their countries pursue wealth.

Although, neo-liberal institutional approach is not of the power theory school but it complements the power theory in an effort to look at power from a different perspective other than its display in a raw form. Thus scholars of International Relations use the assumptions of the approach as tool to explain the use of soft power in International politics. For instance it advocates that states should adjust their foreign trade policy in order to meet the demands of other states and those states too should reciprocate. Most often, it is the stronger nations that mostly benefit from this kind of arrangement.

The neo-liberal approach upholds that mutual adjustment enhances success in cooperation. Halabi, (2004: 26-27) argues further about the merit of neo-liberal institutionalism. According to him

... mutual adjustments allows successful cooperation to take place as technological innovations and competitions create pressure for the elimination of outdated internal institutions and the movement toward convergence, bypassing the laborious process of dealing directly with change in domestic

institution. Mutual adjustment is a goal-oriented strategy in which successful cooperation is based on the existence of both common interest and rules.

Neoliberal Institutional school, espouse ideas on aspects of soft power. Nye's, (1990:171) basic assumption is that you get others to 'do what you want'. This is a form of 'cooperative power which translates to recruitment' and that:

Co-optive power is the ability of a country to structure a situation so that other countries develop preferences or define their interests in ways consistent with its own. This power tends to arise from such resources as cultural and ideological attraction as well as rules and institutions of international regimes. The United States has more co-optive power than other countries. Institutions governing the international economy, such as the International Monetary Fund and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, tend to embody liberal, free-market principles that coincide in large measure with American society and ideology. Multinational corporations are another source of co-optive power than other countries.

In furthering the interpretation of power as espoused by neo-liberal institutional school on how states behave, Wagner (2005:3) expands the horizon, "Concepts of hard and soft power can be regarded as two poles on a continuum of power. They also imply different ideas, interaction, and institution, for foreign policy when looking at the fields of politics, security and economy". She explains further that:

Ideally, hard power strategies focus on military intervention, coercive diplomacy and economic sanctions in order to enforce national interest resulting in confrontational policies vis-à-vis neighbouring countries. In contrast to this, soft power strategies emphasis common political values, peaceful means for conflict management, and economic cooperation in order to achieve common solutions (Wagner, 2005:10).

A great power could influence political and military intervention in a weaker country if it wants to exact its influence. This is a practical example of the use of hard power. On the other hand, it could use intergovernmental relations in form of bilateral or multilateral cooperation in the economic or political sphere. This is also a typical use of soft power for influencing the behaviour of neighbours or other states (Wagner, 2005).

The soft power assumptions observed by the Neo-liberal institutional school include ideology, culture and the institution of international regimes. This theory is well espoused with the comparison that it makes but it cannot capture well the analysis on how the Nigerian Navy is challenged by national interest of external powers and other threats to resource security in the Gulf of Guinea. Advocates of soft power fail to note that the possession of structural power could facilitate the use of soft power in world politics as such the strength of soft power is not easily quantified. To look at power from another perspective, regime theory will also be reviewed to see how structural power as embedded in regime theory could pose threat to resource exploitation in the Gulf of Guinea.

Regime theory

The second theory to be reviewed is regime theory. Maritime regime building is an important element in maritime security. Maritime regimes are instituted to take care of threats like crimes, piracy and oil theft that are of international dimension. Valencia, defines regimes as

...Sets of implicit or explicit principles (beliefs of fact, causation, and rectitude), norms (strands of behaviour defined in terms of rights and obligations), rules (prevailing practices for making and implementing collective choice) around which actor expectations converge. A more applied definition treats regimes as multilateral agreements among states that aim to regulate national actions within an issue area (Valencia, 2000: 223)

The significance of Valencia's definition is that it sees a regime as a phenomenon that should be initiated and be allowed to evolve over time. This is for the collective good of all the states involved. It will help in solving common problems, create conducive environment lawful for business among actors in the maritime industry.

To understand the foundation of regime theory, we shall look briefly at the origin:

Regimes originate through a combination of imposition, spontaneous processes, or negotiation. There are four main theories as to why regimes develop and change; structural, functional, game-theoretic, and cognitive. Each captures important features of reality but none offers a satisfactory explanation for the full range of observable phenomenon (Valencia, 2000: 227).

Since regimes are arrangements for seeking compliance to collective decision on challenges facing a region, Valencia's explanation is a combination of several types that could help in taking decision on how a regime could be built from the scratch.

Due to the maritime problems that resources always tend to pose and in order to record greater percentage of compliance, coercion, bargaining and unilateral actions are the common process through which choices are arrived at in resources and environment regimes.

Valencia however, said that the implementation of regime policy is sometimes not only restricted to the problem of compliance, but also of moral issues that include public exposure for non compliance, binding international laws, scientific facts, and normative persuasion. Other mild issues are scientific assistance, financial and technical aid. As a system of governing arrangements, a regime should bring together collection of formal and informal institutions to implement the arrangement in a marine region or a given social structure. This involves structures, functions, objectives, processes and programmes. Valencia's explanation on how regimes are built and operated is relevant to the study of regime arrangements like Gulf of Guinea Coast Guard and Gulf of Guinea Commission which aim at achieving resource security in the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain. However he did not look at the conflictual relationship that regimes tend to perpetrate.

The importance of cooperation as against conflictual relationship is explained by Ghosh (:2004:1). This is to encourage the entrenchment of regimes. He advocates that:

...It is essential that the existing cold war mindset of 'preparing for war in order to ensure peace' be revised to 'if you want peace prepare to cooperate' as a guideline for both military and non-military maritime interaction. It is through cooperation that the challenges to the existing maritime order can be addressed.

Ghosh opines that contiguous littoral states must have a convergence of interest on issues that border on security in order to protect their sea lines of communication (SLOC), minimise or totally prevent piracy, maritime terrorism, curb narcotics inclined-terrorism and terror-crime nexus, gun-running, maritime pollution and oil-related environmental disaster and enhance security against mining. This is because the sea is a platform for the exploitation and transportation of resources. It is influencing the geo-political strategies of nation-states in contemporary time as it has done in the past. Ghosh is preoccupied with only crimes and other illegal activities in the maritime domain, he fails to look at external forces like industrialized oil consuming nations who would want to secure oil supplies to their countries at all cost.

Bulkeley (2004) advocates maritime regime as solution to the challenges to security in maritime domains. The writer is of the opinion that multilateralism through naval cooperation and counter terrorism effort is one of the ways of securing maritime domain. For instance he advocates that "In the private sector, companies such as Marine Risk Management have introduced improved ship-tracking devices that link ships at sea to law enforcement agencies in different countries" (Bulkeley 2004:7). Again, he suggests that "bilateral measures such as mutual visits of patrol vessels, joint training, and coordinated national patrols, but few states are willing to engage in joint patrols that truly unite members of different national navies in patrolling missions" (Bulkeley 2004:8). In addition, "joint patrolling efforts could easily evolve into broader talks on naval cooperation throughout the region" (Bulkeley 2004:13). This author argues that maritime cooperation was supposed to culminate in a full maritime regime. It is advocated that regime building is the solution to maritime and resource security challenge. Bulkeley concentrates on challenges that emanated within a region and external factors are not considered. This is because he was writing about challenges different from that of resource security in the Gulf of Guinea. The peculiarity of the Gulf of Guinea is in the competition by external powers for resources in the region.

Gilpin (2007) has reviewed the challenges to maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. He looks at the regional and international efforts at proffering solutions to the challenges based on maritime governance approach. This focuses on the need for the governments of contiguous littoral nations to come together and act against threats and vulnerabilities in their maritime domain. He advocates for a “fourfold framework that include increased operational efficiency, demonstrable political commitment, heightened public awareness and transparent regulatory systems as strategies for collaboration against challenges in the maritime domain” (Gilpin 2007:6). The fact that he worked on the Gulf of Guinea made his work relevant to this study but he did not see beyond immediate problems in the domain. He fails to see the divergent interest of oil consuming nations as threat to resource security in a maritime domain of the Gulf of Guinea. He wrote from the background of an external power's interest which sees the weaknesses of the oil producing states in the region but does not see how the confrontational competition between external powers constitute impediment to resource security.

Generally regime theory concentrates more on the internal dynamics of a region leaving out the external environment which also has its greater influence on regime building and its success when in operation. Due to the weaknesses of regime theory, realist theory which considers both internal dynamics and the influence of external forces on the behavior of states will be discussed.

### **Realist theory**

The third theory to be reviewed is realist approach. Realism as a theory evolved from the ideas espoused by realist writers like Thucydides and Machiavelli and scholars like Morgenthau and Herz who see power as central to the pursuit of national interest. They reduced political power to pure power struggle. The capacity to control and wield violence is central to their postulations.

Power is seen as ability of a state to influence the behaviour of another state Morgenthau (1948). States seen as regional power mostly dictate the direction of events in their region and even beyond. The way the United States of America dominates the Americas (along with her western allies) through her control of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation shows that power is an important factor in International politics, and a pointer to ways in which states interact with themselves. The advocates of power theory see power in terms of economic domination due to access to resources and military capabilities which are equated with a nation state's ability to influence others. “Neo-realism emphasizes 'hard power capabilities of state, especially their military capabilities and economic strength'. This enables a state to protect herself from interference from another state; apart from exacting influence in her region. This could also translate to global dominance (Wagner, 2005:2).

Realists espouse ideas on the notion that states act on their perceived national interest which is in terms of military security. Therefore, relative gains and power relations control their agenda. They assume that the world is incapable of forming global governance, in the midst of sovereign states. This is because if it is formed, the institution will want to 'prescribe behaviour to states and constraint their manoeuvrability under conditions of state sovereignty and international anarchy'. Even with their position, they still agree that states could cooperate in common spheres such as inter-state trade and investments which require obligation that could bind them. But they affirm that states cannot still escape from anarchy that prevails in the international system (Halabi, 2004:25).

The assumptions by realists that anarchy prevails in the international system inspired Stephen Walt to propound balance of threat theory which serves as tool for predicting how one state could pose threat to another. Aggregate power, proximate power, offensive capability and offensive intentions are indices for measuring the degree of threat that a state poses (Nere, 2009).

Nere explains four determinants that could make one state to constitute threat to another. In the essay he explained that aggregate power

... is indeed a state's capability to potentially threaten a state; in fact, aggregate power include population, technology, and industrial and military capability. Proximate power is a state's geographical location relative to other states, for a states' power wanes over distance, hence, a state that is in close proximity to another state, has the ability to menace a particular states more than a state that is far away. Offensive power is indeed defined as a states' salient offensive capability, which provokes alliances. What is more, a

state that appears aggressive may provoke other states to balance against them based on offensive intentions.

Realists uphold military component of power as a resource needed for the pursuit of national interest. For this reason they always advocate that power must be acquired to sustain national economic prosperity and maintain stability in the world. Morgenthau (1948) saw the way fellow realists viewed the assumptions of the approach and as such cautioned them against dangerous interpretations of events which can create more problems than solving them.

The realist theory asserts that states are always not immune from threat of violence or avarice arising from other states because of high competition. The fact that, there are no reliable constraints imposed by a legitimate authority on states in world politics, powerful states try to secure their territory and in the event pursue goals of influence, wealth and more territory. The realist theory best describes the ways states try to seek security for themselves through struggle for crude oil in the Gulf of Guinea.

The Nigerian navy is challenged by the problem of resource security in the midst of great and emergent powers scrambling for oil resource in the maritime domain of the Gulf of Guinea where it is the most formidable navy; even though it has just 35% capacity to police the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Gulf of Guinea. The Nigerian Navy's capability that is 60% to 65% 12nm territorial waters cannot be matched with great naval powers that are scrambling for its oil in the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain. That means about 188nm of 200nm is left to external maritime powers to secure and with this they justify their presence in the international waters of Gulf of Guinea (Ogunbumi and Oloko 2006).

National Interests of Oil Consuming External Powers

National Interests of oil consuming external powers is a major threat to resource security in the region. This is evident in the ways foreign powers have shown interest in the region through the presence of their military. France for instance has portrayed her interest in the region by her domineering presence. Gbanite (2004:31) points out that:

To protect the interest of France, it has stationed a rapid deployment force approximately to be a Division strength positioned from Senegal to Equatorial Guinea. Most Francophone countries within West Africa have a French Forward Operational Base (FOB) or Home Port Base (HPB) for the French Navy, Airforce and Infantry; all to protect France's interest and that of the ruling party but not necessarily that of the host nations suffering citizens.

In addition, Forest and Sousa point out that there are about fifteen French military training schools in West Africa and Central Africa. They are in Porto-Novo and Quidah, Benin Republic; Attecoube, Cote d'Ivoire; Koulikoro, Mali; Senegal; Ouakam Senegal; Lome Togo; Ougadougou, Burkina Faso; Garoua and Awaé, Cameroon; Libreville, Gabon and Niamey, Niger. Forest and Sousa (2006:204) explain further that "In addition to these French-sponsored schools, there are French advisors permanently placed in many other national military schools across Franchophone Africa".

The aggregate power of France in the Gulf of Guinea is seen in her advanced technology, military power and industrialization. Her control is directly or indirectly responsible for the inability of the two regional grouping (ECOWAS and CEMAC) to integrate fast for their mutual benefit. Because France has defence pact with its former colonies (as ealier stated); it is feeding fat on the selfish nature of those in power thereby posing threat to resource security in the Gulf of Guinea. The sit tight syndrome of leaders like Paul Biya and others who are stooges in her former colonies.explains why France is still holding sway in her former colonies. Again the military pact makes the leaders in those countries to become toys in the hands of their colonial fathers because they will no longer be protected if they refuse to dance to their tune. This explains the aggregate and proximate power possessed by France against coastal states in the Gulf of Guinea who are not her former colonies. Again, France has offensive capabilities and intentions against even its former colonies that may want to block its access to oil and gas supplies from the Gulf of Guinea.

Portugal is another European power that poses threat to resource security in the Gulf of Guinea. It has been reported that Portugal has Marine and Patrol Vessels in Sao Tome and Principe (Gbanite 2004). This is not unconnected with the presence of Crude oil in this small country which is part of Gulf of Guinea. The Joint Development Zone between Nigeria and Sao Tome and Principe could be the interest

of Portugal and hereditary presence is a threat to the National Security of both countries because of its aggregate power which could be used to distort exploration activities. The marine and patrol vessels could be source of nightmare to the two countries because, they are likely to be collecting intelligence report using the military equipment with advanced technology that is beyond that of the countries of the Gulf of Guinea. Portugal is also supplying Sao Tome and Principe with military equipment/logistics. Moreover, as Portugal scrambles for space in the Gulf of Guinea so also are other European Powers portraying their aggregate power in this region and in case of clash of interest the region will be crisis ridden like the Persian Gulf and different factions will be raised in coastal communities and supported to make the place ungovernable.

Russia, Taiwan and Ukarian are competing to supply Angola, Sao Tome and Principe and Equatorial Guinea with military logistics (Gbanite 2004). These countries being supplied military logistics are at the heart of the Gulf of Guinea. The scramble for oil is also the major reason for this and this kind of competition will just fuel crisis which will in turn make the region unsuitable for investment. Furthermore, Libya too portrays her threat to resource security in the Gulf of Guinea through the donation of highly equipped training patrol boats to Sao Tome and Principe. These uncoordinated military aid could set the region ablaze if not controlled.

China and the United States are the countries presently competing for supply of oil to their industries. They have both employed military components as strategy for pursuing their energy security policy which to them is a national security matter. In case of China Gbanite (2004:31) reports that "China is also known to have increased its presence and activities in Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea by gradually taking over the complete training and weapons supply of both countries Armed Forces and Navy". Furthermore, Pan (2006) reports that the Peoples Republic of China provided military training and heavy military equipment to Equatorial Guinea, because of her oil reserve. Chau (2007:39) reports that

In October 2005, the PRC donated \$2 million worth of military equipment to the Nigerian Armed Forces. A team of 21 Chinese was expected to train Nigerian personnel in Nigeria in the use of equipment such as Computers, Airfield Sweeper vehicles, Emergency navigational and light vehicles, and deep sea diving equipment.

Furthermore, China's approach to energy security in Nigeria came up because according to Chau (2007:42-43) 'In early 2006, Nigeria Security source said the PRC (Peoples Republic of China) was becoming one of Nigeria main supplier of military hard ware. They said new supply of military hardware would include dozens of patrol boats to secure the swamps and energy in Niger Delta." The partnership between Nigeria and China is a strategy for securing oil supplies to China and she perceives this as an effective plan against perceived threats from the United States and other industrialized nations in Europe. However, the hazard is that most of the aid is just handed over to Nigeria or other Nations in the Gulf of Guinea without having an understanding of how aid could benefit them in the long run, as such they constitute threat to resources security in the region. The Chinese Government also donated a ship christened NNS Centenary to the Nigeria Navy. The ship will be received by the Nigerian Navy in July 2014 (Nwosu 2014).

Consequently if China continues to train the Nigerian armed forces personnel, the country is not likely to develop its own capacity in the military because it will rely on the nation's giving it support. Again, in terms of military equipment she might not develop her capacity to produce them as such dependence on the foreign military procurement will continue to pose threat to resources security in the Gulf of Guinea. Again, China has been accused of clandestine activities in the Gulf Guinea. Winstone, Bolten and Gore (2007:23) report that "China was the target of criticism for its activities in Gabon, when it was revealed that its oil company, Sinopec had been prospecting illegally for oil, and dynamiting and clearing large tracts of land". This is the kind of illegal activities carried out by industrialized or industrializing oil consuming nations in the Gulf of Guinea but very few cases are being uncovered. Agreements signed by China in the oil and Gas sector in Africa (Gulf of Guinea in particular) are time bombs waiting to explode. This is because Richard Heinberg (n.d) argues that:

American Strategists would prefer to avoid direct confrontation as China's increase share of the global economy and its massive productions of export goods for the US market ensure that open conflict would

inevitably harm both sides. Nevertheless, since China is capable of absorbing a quickly growing share of the available global oil export, economic and possibly military conflict with the US is likely sooner or later.

Heinberg's Warning is a foresight due to the hindsight of what happened during the Cold War. Proxy wars will be fought within and among the countries of the Gulf of Guinea and warring factions will be supported by either the US or China in the nearest future if their confrontation heightens. The evidence to this build up could be observed in China's naval modernization and aircraft carrier development program which is likely to take off between 2015 and 2020 (Johnston, 2008:60-61).

Threats to resource security posed by China in the Gulf of Guinea could be predicted in a short and long term from the foregoing explanation. All multilateral arrangements made by countries in the Gulf of Guinea may not succeed if the sources of these threats are not attended to.

The perceived threat to energy security of the US is responsible for her employment of military component in order to guarantee security of supplies to her industries. Given this dominant interest of the US, Lubeck, Watts and Lipschutz (2007: 10) posit that

After 9/11, American energy security was overtaken by and slowly merged with the amorphous, borderless GWOT. Active counter terrorism displaced earlier emphasis on training for peacekeeping and human rights. Fears that China is gaining control over African energy resources e.g. Angola are important to the new emphasis on securitization of energy policy, as well as bureaucratic competition for control over resources among the regional commands of the US military.

The combat commands of the United States which were product of the cold war began to scramble for the control of African as their sphere of influence due to their search for relevance in terms of the commodity needed by their country to survive. The European Command (EUCOM) with its headquarters in Stuttgart (Germany) shifted its attention to counter- terrorism in Africa. This is because of American's shift to global war on terror which is a reaction to the September 11 terrorist attack on the US. Donald Rumsfeld (former defense secretary of the US) designed a strategic doctrine tagged force transformation. The doctrine based its emphasis on "mobile, lean, flexible forces rotating through a network of lilly pads, located close to conflict centre..." (Lubeck, Watts and Lipschutz, 2007:10). The US Defense Department, Pentagon designed several initiatives for her engagement in the Gulf of Guinea in order to guarantee the supply of oil to her industries. They are:

- (a) Gulf of Guinea Coast Guard
- (b) Pan-Sahel Initiative
- (c) Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative and
- (d) Gulf of Guinea Energy Security Strategy

All these initiatives are pursued by the US Military in the Gulf of Guinea to secure sources of energy as observed by Lubeck, Watts and Lipschuez, (2007:15):

...US military involvement in West Africa has only mushroomed since 2001, focusing on three broad goals: (i) getting U.S. Forces on the ground in order to advise and upgrade the regions militaries in support of the GWOT (ii) Establishing marine dominance in the Gulf in order to secure offshore oil installations and, if necessary, unilaterally defending American energy assets; and (iii) Bridging or subcontracting access to new air and Naval bases, to provide both forward supplies, surveillance and air cover capabilities. As EUCOM's General Jones recently told the Wall Street Journal, "Africa Plays an increased strategic role militarily, economically and politically..." for his command, which now spend '70% percent of its time and energy on Africa...up from nearly none when he took it over three-plus years ago.

Since Nigeria has about 60% of oil deposit in the Gulf of Guinea, General Jones claimed that the US directed its policy on the prevention of terrorists from extending to Nigeria from the North. Lubeck, Watts and Lipschutz (2007:17) report that .Nigeria with international Islamic Terrorism.

Contrary to the claims made by the Defense Department of the US, Lubeck, Watts and Lipschuez (2001:13) report that

Maya Rockeyamooore of Trans Africa forum argues that 'the United States is creating this (military) build-up under the guise of counter-terrorism. The reality is they're protecting the oil resources from encroachment of other nations that are also interested in the oil, such as China. But a naked oil security strategy is too cynical, even for politicians and generals to defend overtly. Hence, the public relations face put on the GWOT's dispatch of Marine and Special Forces to train and advise local armies to police these vast "ungoverned spaces" is rationalized by the claim that terrorists affiliated with Al- Qaeda are threatening American Strategic Interests in Northwest and West Africa.

Again, the glaring threat to resource security in the Gulf of Guinea due to United State posture of self help is evident in the report by Lubeck, Watts and Lipschutz (2007:15)

And local hostility to US base in countries like Nigeria has, thus far, prevented EUCOM from establishing a "Forward Operation Base" in West Africa as they have established in Djibouti. Given these constraints, EUCOM has pursued intervention through, training equipping and activity advising West African Militaries all in the name of the GWOT. This also allows the command to put private contractors, special forces operatives, intelligence agent and support troops on the ground, ostensibly for training, but also for gathering human intelligence, building "interoperability" with local army units as well as for providing cover for clandestine missions.

Before hostilities of indigenou people in the oil providing communities in the Gulf of Guinea against American's Operation of Naval Forward base and the response by the European Command Lubeck, Watts and Lipschutz (2007:16) again argue that:

Even while the Navy laments a shortage of ships and resources, the American Naval Presence in the Gulf has continued to grow. According to Navy Captain Thomas Summer Rowden, head of a 6th Fleet Task Forces on the Gulf of Guinea, US Military activity in the Gulf increased exponentially "from almost no activity in 2004 to 130 'ship days in 2005" with more planned for in 2006. His forces have worked with navies of Sierra Leone, Congo, Cameroon, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Benin, Sao Tome and Principe, Liberia, Gabon, Cape Verde, Senegal and Ghana.

Given the trend of US manoeuvres in the pursuit of her interest in the Gulf of Guinea the US Marine Corps also designed a programme which was also supposed to step up US dominance in the region, Lubert, Watts and Lipschutz further report that:

The Marine Corps is also gearing up for growth in its Africa Deployment. In January 2006, the Marine research centre at Quantico sponsored a conference attended by over 130 participants on "The 21st Century Marine in West and Central Africa". The conference report reads like a recruitment proposal or "jobs fair" detailing the specializations required in Africa. Not to be missed, either is an informative conference presentation entitled "marines in Africa-now and in the future "which provides mandate but nitty- gritty information about job opportunities prior deployments, upcoming trainings, joint task forces, and overall goals for fighting terrorism in West Africa.

In 2007 the US government set up the African Command and restricted the European command to the European Continent. AFRICOM commenced with 1200 to 1500 range of military personnel and \$51 million was budgeted for the 2007 financial year. About \$75.1 million was budgeted for the 2008 financial year. The American Navy is more active in the idea of AFRICOM because the command's major aim was the security of energy resources in the Gulf of Guinea. This is why the Global Fleet station was formed to begin the implementation of the unified defence policy plan.

Mills, McNamee, Lorenzo and Uttley (2007), outline the focus of the US on AFRICOM regarding security of energy expected to flow to its domestic industries:

- a. Border security and control. This involves naval patrol capabilities and technology to regulate movement of people as well as flow of trade.
- b. African Contingency Operation Training and Assistance. \$40-50million annual peace keeping training programme has trained over 92,000 military personnel in Africa.

- c. Excess Defence Article Programme: The programme involves ad hoc transfer of military equipment to countries in Africa. For instance the transfer of coastal patrol vessels to Nigeria and other equipment to some other African countries.
- d. Foreign Military Finance Programme: The programme is about bilateral equipment purchase. About \$ 20-30 million is usually available for bilateral equipment purchase including maintenance and training
- e. National Guard State Partnership. This is a military-to-military training partnership. National Guard Units of the US are paired with those of African countries. For instance Nigeria paired with California, Ghana with North-Dakota, and South Africa with New York.
- f. Gulf of Guinea Program: the US budgeted \$30 million in 2007 to establish regional naval capabilities.
- g. Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Program: an initiative for capacity and cooperation against terrorism. About \$150 million was spent in 2005 and about \$ 300 million will be spent up to the end of 2010.

Prior to the creation of AFRICOM, a bipartisan task force report titled: The Geopolitics of Energy published in November 2000 by the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies pointed out that “the United States, as the world's only superpower, must accept its special responsibilities for preserving access to worldwide energy supply”(Klare 2007:3). The mind-set exhibited in this situation was induced by President Jimmy Carter in January 1980 when he declared that “any means necessary, including military force” will be used to overcome any hostile power that tried to block the flow of oil in the global market (Klare 2007: 3). This is what is known today as Carter Doctrine.

In line with the foregoing thought, President George Bush in 2007 extended the Carter Doctrine to West Africa. In the face of unrest in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, there were disruptions to oil production and that led to the drop in number of barrels produced per day. To address this problem, the Department of Defence in the US provided the “Nigerian military and internal security forces with substantial arms and equipment with the intention that it will quell unrest in the Delta Region (Klare 2007:3). For instance the United States Coast Guard vessel tagged Cutter Chase was donated to the Nigerian Navy and re-commissioned to NNS Thunder after refurbishment in February 2012 (Ukeje and Ela 2013). This donation is not without interest in access to oil in Nigeria.

Again, contrary to the idea of helping Nigeria to control the activities of criminal elements in the Niger Delta, Foster (2007:3) argues that the step taken is a grand strategy of the United States to control resources. He argues that:

It is now widely acknowledged that the world is undergoing a global economic transformation. Not only is the growth rate of the world economy as a whole slowing, but the relative economic strength of the United States is continuing to weaken. In 1950 the United States accounted for about half of world GDP, falling to a little over a fifth by 2003. Likewise it accounted for almost half of the world's stock of global foreign direct investment in 1960, compared to a little over 20 percent at the beginning of this century. According to projections of Goldman Sachs, China could overtake the United States as the world's largest economy by 2039. This growing threat to U.S. power is fueling Washington's obsession with laying the groundwork for a “New American Century.” Its current interventionism is aimed at taking advantage of its present short-term economic and military primacy to secure strategic assets that will provide long-term guarantees of global supremacy. The goal is to extend U.S. power directly while depriving potential competitors of those vital strategic assets that might allow them eventually to challenge it globally or even within particular regions.

Based on the position of Foster, threats to resources security in the Gulf of Guinea could be traced to the externally fuelled centrifugal forces that indirectly control various military and security organizations in oil producing states of the region.

### **Conclusion**

The notion that states act on their perceived national interest in terms of military security has exposed the oil producing countries of the Gulf of Guinea to power relations and control by external powers like the United States of America and China. These external powers assume that countries in the region are

incapable of forming regimes to secure their oil resources as such cannot escape from anarchy that prevails in the international system. This is against the background that oil is a resource that they all need to sustain their economy through industrial activities. Moral restraint is far from it because it is needed for continued existence of these oil-consuming nations.

Furthermore, the strongest navy in the Gulf of Guinea is the Nigerian Navy. It is challenged by the problem of resource security in the midst of great and emergent powers scrambling for oil resource in the maritime domain of the Gulf of Guinea. This is because it has just 35% capacity to police the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Gulf of Guinea. This translates to 60% to 65% 12nm territorial waters and about 188nm of 200nm is left to external maritime powers to secure. In the assumption that anarchy prevails where there is no central authority that commands obedience, the external powers justify their presence in the international waters of Gulf of Guinea. Since the Nigerian Navy cannot match great naval powers that are scrambling for oil in the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain it means that the domination and scramble has no end in sight.

The Nigerian government along with other countries of the Gulf of Guinea have to move beyond ordinary joint naval exercises to upgrade their naval capabilities by building ships and conducting jointly sponsored research on and security projects on how to secure the region from the control of external powers whose interest are solely for the oil and gas expected to power their industries.

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