

**NIGERIA'S DEFENCE, FOREIGN POLICIES AND  
HEGEMONIC ROLES IN WEST AFRICA**

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**Abstract**

This paper examined the Nigeria's defence role, foreign policies and hegemonic roles in west African crisis Using ECOWAS and ECOMOG as a regional body for West African defence .West African Countries had long being struggling to reassert their independence and pave way for accelerated economic growth, putting the deprivations of the colonial era behind through the promotion of cooperation and integration in the continent, mobilization of self – reliance policies and sustaining development strategies in order to cope with the problem of insecurity ,which arises from different crises, that is affecting West African State. This paper attempted an evaluation of Nigeria's Defence, Foreign policies and hegemonic roles in West Africa. Territorial Defence has been an outstanding challenges of West African States before and after the formation of the ECOWAS and ECOMOG as a regional body for the West African defence.

Key words: Nigeria's Defence Policy, Nigeria's Foreign Policy Hegemony

**Introduction**

Globally, the defense policy of any country remains an embodiment of its security priorities, which includes an assessment of its strategic environment ,threat analysis, the resources and allocation for the maximum realization of its national interests .However ,the realization of any sound defense policy must involve a critical evaluation of national resources ,economic and industrial capacity, strength and Weaknesses and technological attainment and the general level of injustice and equity.

In the light of the above, Aligwara(2009:73-74),submits that, any serious national defense policy must be hinged on the fact that the indigenous economic structure offers a foundation for the organizational and technological progress of the military, as the major instrument of national defense in particular and other vital sectors of national development like agriculture and social empowerment in general.

According to Nigeria's Defence policy(2006:25),Nigeria as a nation, shall sustain a sufficient defence capability and express her intentions according to the prevailing circumstances so as to ensure that potential aggressors are kept in no doubt of the willingness to use the Armed Forces and all weapons available. The policy document further affirms that, force modernization and development would be given priority in order to acquire basic deterrence capabilities From the above fact, it is obvious that ,deterrence and force projection are the main elements and principles which underpin national defence policy of Nigeria.

Eze(2011:123)posits ,”Nigeria's policy is yet to properly articulate how the country will attain the independent capability for deterrence and it's employment as a principle of national defence”.It is unwise to assume that the existing military infrastructure provides sufficient deterrence against potential aggressors, in the absence of a strong and self-propelled indigenous technological and industrial base .In addition ,Eze(2011:123)opined that, Nigeria is ranked among countries with the lowest national defence capability in the world, for reasons that are not farfetched, the basic ingredients which make countries independent are absent .Countries with well built defence capabilities have a well built economic ,industrial and technological base to support the defence infrastructure like the armed forces and arms industries. There is no gain saying the fact that, Nigeria operates a weak and royalty oriented economy that is characterized by the absence of strong and self supporting industrial and technological capacity.

Mbachu(2011:16)argues that, the impact of technology on modern warfare is very profound .The advent of sophisticated high-tech electronics ,improvement in fire power and ranges of weaponry had transformed the nature and scope of warfare in an unprecedented manner. Therefore, Research and Development ( R&D)continues to show the way for future enterprise, be it military or non-military issues.

The importance of mediation as a Peace building tool in any society today cannot be overemphasized. Since gaining independence in the 1960s, Nigeria has played a major role in peace advocacy and conflict resolution and has sought to manage its inter-state relations under the framework of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other bilateral arrangements with its immediate neighbors. The role of Nigeria in the resolution of conflicts has been vigorous. The ECOWAS mechanism for conflict prevention, the Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED, 2002), the Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance of Defence (1981), and the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001) are all mechanisms for the resolution of both domestic and regional conflicts. Some of these protocols have led to the establishment of specialized institutions such as the Mediation and Security Council, Defence and Security Commission, ECOMOG, the Council of Elders, and the office of Political Affairs, Defence and Security (PADS) (Nuhu,2014).

### **Literature Review**

The main terms in this work are Nigeria's Defence policy, Nigeria's Foreign policy and Hegemony. Nigeria's defence policy:

Ogunedo (2011:29) clarified that Defence policy is accepted as the foundation upon which a nation's security is built. Adding “it is a plan of action adopted or pursued by a government to protect a country against potential enemies, harm or danger. It also- includes all strategies adopted for the preservation of a nation's sovereignty and her continued economic and socio-political values and development”. The primary foundation of a nation's defence policy is derived from the concepts and policies of national security. In line with Nigeria's constitution, the internal security is maintained by the Police, Intelligence and para-military agencies while the military exclusively secures her territorial veracity and boundaries. Yet, when the internal security becomes too volatile the military is engaged; response to internal and external threats faced by a country is determined by the choices between the military and non-military

options available, hence there is interwoven relationship between security and defence. Additionally, national security policy is the direct feeder of the national defence policy of a country. The Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) in the U.S rightly observed that “At the heart of a Defence White Paper is the government's concept of national security” (Nwolise, 2011: 404, 419).

In order to trace previous attempt at having a defence policy, Vogt (1990: 96,100, 101,105 &106) dissected the history of Nigeria defence policy and asserted that the country operated for many years without a clear and codified defence policy owing to the evolution of the Armed forces. Nigeria at independence did not envisage any serious external threat and was against the formation of an African high command, signed a military pact with Britain from 1962 to 1964. The military was essentially involved in a peacekeeping mission in Congo and internal security operations in the 1960s before the outbreak of coup d'états and the civil war. He explained that the Nigerian civil war expanded the size and shape of the forces yet it lacked the conception of role it was expected to play. “The post-civil war era has witnessed several reorganizations and modernization plans for the various arms of the armed forces based on different doctrines.” He added that there was no framework of a national defence policy. However, the Chadian crises of the early 1980s brought about a reassessment of Nigeria's threat perception coupled with the involvement of France and Libya in the conflict. There were other security problems which the lack of coherent response could not address, such as the Maitatsine crises in Kano, Yola, Kaduna and Bauchi between 1980 and 1984, the 1986 University of Jos student's unrest and Nigeria's membership of the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) in 1986 among others.

Nigeria's Foreign policy:

According to Legg and Morrison (1971) “foreign policy is a set of explicit objectives with regard to the world beyond the borders of a given social unit and a set of strategies and tactics designed to achieve those objectives”. This understanding subscribes to the designation of plans and clear cut strategies for actualization of those plans. It is idealist because it fails to take cognizance of the contingencies in the international system in terms of the unpredictability of behaviors of international actors.

Another definition of foreign policy emerged from the obvious shortcoming of the above view. This view was well articulated by Vital (1968). To him, “foreign policy implies rather a field of related but distinct actions and issues in which there neither is nor can be foreign policy”. According to his thesis, the realities of states” behavior entail decisions and policies being formulated in a disjointed fashion, largely in response to immediate pressures and events, in a number of separate structures and issue areas. Thus, Frankel's (1964 and 1975) conception of foreign policy “as a dynamic process of interaction between the changing domestic demands and the changing external circumstances” is apt in the light of occurrences in contemporary global political order.

### **Theoretical Framework For This Study**

The Concentric Circles Model Theory was adopted as a theoretical frame work of Analysis for this study .Concentric circles theory has come to stay in socio-economic analysis .The theory was first proposed by a sociologist, Ernest Burgess in 1925.One of the notable benefit of this theory at it's Inception was that, the theory was the first to explain the urban structures arose naturally, without planning subsequent developments have made the theory applicable in diverse areas of study. Various attempts have been made to apply this concentric circles theory to foreign policy making and analysis. Ibrahim.A.Gambari(1989),asserts that, “ a country's foreign policy revolves around it's national interests. Nigeria is not and cannot be an exception to this. While Africa remains the centre piece of our foreign policy. We cannot operate within a series of concentric circles which now effectively guides our behavior on the African and World scene. The inner most of the circles of national interests involves Nigeria's security territorial integrity and political independence and that of the neighbors of Nigeria”.

Hassan Saliu(2011), has aptly put it in real focus, the place of this theory in the analysis of Nigerian Foreign Policy; “There has been an increased interest in adopting the concentric circles model theory in analyzing Nigerian foreign policy, since the time of Ibrahim Gambari as external affairs minister of Nigeria between 1984 and 1985.He has often argued that more will be gained if scholars and policy makers develop the layered approach to the study of Nigerian foreign policy .By this, it means that Nigeria's interest in global affairs should be located in the physical Nigeria and her immediate neighbors in west Africa, larger Africa, then the rest of the World and international organizations. This, Ibrahim Gambari and others who believe in the thesis of concentric circles argued, is the best way for Nigeria to go in protecting her interests”.

The adoption of the concentric cycle model for the nation's foreign policy in the mid-1980s tried to prioritize foreign policy objectives but still putting emphasis on West Africa (MFA, 2011). However, under President Obasanjo, since 1999, Nigeria shifted from concentricism to globalism following the argument by Lamido Sanusi, Minister of Foreign Affairs (1999-2003) that Nigeria stands to benefit from globalism as thrust of its foreign policy. Another foreign minister, Ambassador Adeniji argued that the Concentric Circle Model should be constructive and beneficial, and be predicated on a tripod of complementary strategies: articulation of Nigeria's interests within a given concentric circle, articulation of appropriate techniques for promoting and defining such interests within that concentric circle and evolving techniques that will make the Nigerian people the first beneficiaries of such a foreign policy (Akinterinwa; 2004:454).

Hegemony: It is “ἡγεμονία *hēgemonía*,” in the Greek language, meaning leadership and rule, it is an indirect form of government, and of imperial dominance in which the hegemony (leader state) rules geopolitically subordinate states by the implied means of power, the threat of force, rather than by direct military force (Hassig,1994). In Ancient Greece (8th century BCE – 6th century CE), hegemony denoted the politico–military dominance of a city-state over other city-states (Chernow & Vallasi, 1994).

In the 19th century, hegemony denoted the geopolitical and the cultural predominance of one country upon others; from which derived hegemonism, the Great Power politics meant to establish European hegemony upon continental Asia and Africa (Bullock & Trombley, 1999). In the 20th century, Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) developed the philosophy and the sociology of geopolitical hegemony into the theory of cultural hegemony, whereby one social class can manipulate the system of values and mores of a society, in order to create and establish a ruling class *Weltanschauung*, a worldview that justifies the status quo of bourgeois domination of the other social classes of the society (Chernow & Vallasi, 1994; Upton, Kretzschmar & Konopka, 2001).

In the praxis of hegemony, imperial dominance is established by means of cultural imperialism, whereby the leader state (hegemony) dictates the internal politics and the societal character of the subordinate states that constitute the hegemonic sphere of influence, either by an internal, sponsored government or by an external, installed government. The imposition of the hegemony's way of life an imperial lingua franca and bureaucracies (social, economic, educational, governing) transforms the concrete imperialism of direct military domination into the abstract power of the status quo, indirect imperial domination (Hassig,1994). Under hegemony, rebellion (social, political, economic, armed) is eliminated either by co-optation of the rebels or by suppression (police and military), without direct intervention by the hegemony; examples are the latter-stage Spanish and British Empires, the 19th and 20th century Reichs of unified Germany (1871-1945), and by the end of the twentieth century, the United States(Kissinger, 1994; Schoultz,1999 ).

### **Nigeria's Hegemonic role in West Africa**

By the mid-1980s, Nigeria's foreign minister and former academic, Dr Bolaji Akinyemi, even launched a much publicized bid to achieve what he termed as a 'middle power' status in world affairs. On the grounds of Nigeria's newly acquired oil wealth and influence, he and other Nigerian policy makers started calling for a Monroe doctrine that would spare West Africa from external (then mostly French) military interventions and promote, as an alternative, the concept of Pan Africana, namely the idea of conflict resolution among Africans and through African solutions (Mazrui, 1967). It was Biafra's secession attempt (1967-70) that initially prompted Nigeria to launch regional initiatives designed to counter French and Ivorian support of the rebels, circumvent international sanctions on arms deliveries and more generally, counter the effects of international mobilization in favor of Biafra's independence. Once the war was over, Nigeria's diplomatic initiatives towards the establishment of the 15-member Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) played a decisive role. Nigeria's diplomatic activism was then largely stimulated by geo-political considerations, namely the perceived need to increase Nigeria's standing and influence among the Francophone West African states. Gowon (1966-1975) multiplied bilateral diplomatic contacts, in the context of which the Federal Government took financial stakes in joint industrial projects. He also established solid credentials as a regional leader when, after reversing Nigeria's initial hostility to the opening of negotiations towards the future EU-ACP Lomé Convention, he took the lead in the negotiations (Bach, 1983: 605-623).

Nigeria was comforted by its oil resources and a favorable international environment; she was able to extract key trade and aid concessions from the Europeans. Within a few weeks after the signing of the Lomé Convention, the charter establishing ECOWAS was also signed in Lagos amidst much enthusiasm. This momentum was quickly lost when, following Gowon's overthrow in July 1975, Muritala Mohammed's abrasive regional and continental diplomacy revived Francophone fears of the Nigerian 'bully'. Nigerian expectations that ECOWAS would offer a conduit for the expression of its influence were frustrated by consensus-driven decision making processes, repeated delays in the implementation of decisions, and the Francophone member-states' behavior as a bloc, cemented by their common belonging to the Communauté des Etats d'Afrique de l'Ouest (Fawole, 2003; Gambari, 1978).

During the second republic (1979-1983) Nigeria had to take external loans in order to alleviate the effects of declining resources, the cost of Nigeria's hegemonic ambitions was reassessed. Lagos had 'gained little that was tangible ... failed to institutionalise the capabilities that would have allowed Nigeria to take advantage of the inroads made between 1973 and 1983' (Myers, 1991: 337). Frustration grew among Nigerian policy-makers for what ECOWAS had come to stand for, that is an organization substantively funded by Nigeria but with little operational capacity and disappointing returns. This climaxed when, in January 1983, a government expulsion order compelled between one and two million immigrants, most of them West Africans, to leave Nigeria amidst chaos and confusion. By April 1984 another sign of Nigerian exasperation was prompted by flourishing cross-border trafficking with Francophone neighboring economies. Nigeria's land boundaries were sealed by the army for a period which would last sixteen months. During 1985, another expulsion order also meant that another wave of about 700,000 'illegal aliens' had to look for safety in 'home' countries where some of them had never lived (Bach, 2007: 305-306).

The establishment of ECOWAS, once viewed as an opportunity to build up Nigeria's hard structural power through trade and investment, has become an illustration of the limited reach of state-sponsored projects. A flurry of new economic and commercial agreements were concluded with West African states in the seventies but their impact on official trade flows has been of little significance and federal government participation in joint ventures with Benin Republic (the sugar plant at Savé and the cement

factory at Onigbolo), Niger (supply of energy from Kainji dam, uranium project of Afasto-East), Guinea (shares in the capital of the Mifergui Nimba iron ore project) were never underscored by private cross border investments. Over three decades after the establishment of ECOWAS, Nigeria's hub and spokes interactions essentially proceed from the dynamics of so called informal cross border trade and networks. Regional infrastructures, despite noted improvement, are highly inadequate and poorly maintained. It is yet too early to surmise what will be the spillover effects of the 620 miles long offshore pipeline that is being built so as to supply Togo, Benin and Ghana with Nigerian natural gas. The scale and cost of the West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP) certainly operate as an unprecedented incentive towards the harmonisation of regulations and energy policy orientations among the states concerned (Bach, 2007: 305-306).

The initial decision of ECOWAS to intervene in Liberia (1990-1997) occurred in a post-cold war world where US unwillingness to intervene and restore order in Monrovia created what Nigeria and some West African leaders saw as a window of opportunity for experimenting Pax Africana on an ad hoc basis. At the instigation of the Nigerian president, Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1993), ECOWAS heads of States resolved in May 1990 to form a Standing Mediation Committee (SMC). Babangida's influence also played a key role in August 1990, as the SMC agreed to form an ECOWAS Cease-Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) for the purpose of ordering a cease-fire in Liberia, establishing an interim government and holding general elections within a year. The motivation of Nigerian president Ibrahim Babangida was a mixture of personal inclination - Samuel Doe considered him as his mentor - with broader geo-strategic concern at the significant backing that Charles Taylor had been receiving from Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Libya (Gershoni, 1993: 21-43; Ellis 1999: 162).

The roles of the Nigeria's defence in Liberia, as parts of its foreign policy created temporary solution to the conflict after seven years of unrest in Liberia as a result of ECOWAS intervention in 1990. Nigeria's diplomatic, financial and military involvement shaped processes and outcomes in a decisive fashion. Within a few weeks of the dispatch of ECOMOG forces, their failure to prevent the gruesome execution of Doe by rebels enabled Nigeria to impose durably its lead on the conduct of operations: the Ghanaian field commander was replaced by a Nigerian and, from September onwards, he and his successors were all Nigerian appointees who took their orders directly from the Nigerian Ministry of Defense (Prkic, 2000: 262). Nigeria also kept providing the bulk of troops (75% of the 11,000 ECOMOG troops by 1993) and funded an estimated 90% of the cost of operations. ECOMOG operations were formally accountable to ECOWAS but the Secretariat and the Authority had in effect no controlling hand over engagement (Adebajo 2002: 48).

Meanwhile, such domination did not mean, however, that Nigeria had the military capacity to impose its own solution. Nigerian troops, although they had initially been able to expel Charles Taylor and his NPFL (National Patriotic Front of Liberia) forces from Monrovia in 1990, were unable to re-establish control over an estimated 85% of the Liberian territory. Peace-keeping operations suffered from severe financial and logistical handicaps and, despite some ECOMOG success, the rebellion could not be crushed. The ECOMOG was not seen as impartial by the parties involved in the conflict. Francophone ECOWAS-member states were also wary of what they saw as an attempt by Nigeria to promote a Pan Nigeriana, a situation that contributed to the revival of the Francophone-Anglophone divide. Since conference diplomacy also failed to create sustainable political solutions, the option of a strictly sub-regional treatment of the conflict had to be reconsidered (Mortimer 1996).

It was equally observed that, in Liberia, Nigerian involvement was decisive since the bulk of ECOMOG II was formed by Nigerian troops and all force commanders were Nigerian. Once more, Abuja's military and financial contribution was low compared to other states' to the extent that it could 'brush aside ...

continued diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis and pursued a military solution instead' (Berman & Sams, 2003: 46). In February 1998, this was manifested through Nigeria's decision to take advantage of its control over ECOMOG and expel militarily RUF forces from Freetown, thus enabling the reinstatement of President Ahmad Kabbah on 10 March. Internationally, the decisive contribution of the Abacha regime to the restoration of democracy in Sierra Leone was, however, obscured by the Nigerian military junta's domestic agendas. Abacha's promotion of democracy in Sierra Leone deflected international pressure at a time when the country was suspended from Commonwealth meetings decertified by the US on account of drug trafficking and confronted with (weakly enforced) international sanctions. More tersely, military involvement in Sierra Leone also meant that 'Abacha and his generals could continue to divert millions of dollars ... while billing them as ECOMOG expenses' (Adebajo, 2002: 92).

Danjuma (1990) had suggested that the commitment of the developed nations to African states will continue to dwindle, thus freeing the developing states to take decisions concerning their security. It was also argued that external powers have no compelling strategic reasons to display much of an interest in West Africa in the post-cold war era to warrant their intervention (Oche, 2011: 183). However, in recent years, events in the area, including the domestic security problems of many West African states, threats posed by the super powers and transnational organized crime groups to Western interests and the need for the Western powers to protect their economic interests in the Sahel/Sahara region and in the Gulf of Guinea, the expanding environment for the Global War on Terror (GWOT), the many oil and gas discoveries, the established solid mineral wealth of the region and of course the market they represent, have attracted greater attention from the Western powers.

The U.S., the EU, especially France, have great interests in the security situation and security policy of West African states. French interests have deep roots in the colonial and neo-colonial relationship with several West African states. There is extensive French military, economic and political presence across the sub-region in a manner that actually pose an obstacle to Nigeria's effective leadership role in the sub-regional security policy. The U.S., the UK, and the EU as a whole, have great stakes in the economy of the sub-region and are also concerned about the growing influence of terrorist groups, including AQIM, that have increasingly targeted citizens of western countries particularly France. Others include the emerging powers China and India whose interests revolve around natural resources and markets. They remain focused on gaining access to the mineral resources of the sub-region and on investment possibilities. Libya under the late Col. Muammar Ghadaffi has also shown a very high interest in the political affairs of the sub-region, having been identified as a factor in the Charles Taylor insurgency and the Fodey Sankoh uprising in Sierra Leone. Algeria has also had to extend its security influence deep into the Sahara to contain the activities of Al Qaeda elements in the sub-region (Alli, 2012:78).

Generally, all these powers are trying to gain control over the natural resources in the region from Mauritania to the Gulf of Guinea and far into the Sahara and with the discovery of oil in Northern Mali, and in Niger, the scramble for influence in the area by extra-African interests is likely to increase further, thus complicating the security situation in the region and undermining the role and influence of sub-regional powers like Nigeria. According to Lohmann (2011: 12), international actors take such high interest in the security situation of the sub-region because of the worldwide linkage of drugs, arms and human trafficking, and the fact that the events in the central Sahara are affecting Europe and the U.S.

Furthermore because of the search for natural resources such as gas, oil, uranium etc., organized criminal activities pose great threats to the prospects of economic development in the sub-region and are direct threats to the dream of a Trans-Sahara oil and gas pipeline to Europe thus requiring greater involvement of the powers in the management of the security of the sub-region West African states

under threat of domestic security problems, TOC and terrorism are themselves becoming more open to broad security cooperation with the U.S. and its allies and are increasingly receiving U.S. assistance in line with the growing interest of the US in the sub-region stretching from the Gulf of Guinea to Mauritania. When the U.S. launched the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) as a kind of security assistance project for African states it was coldly received (Yoroms, 2010).

Nigeria's leadership is also a clear statement about the capability of African states to resolve African problems. In this regard, Nigeria's role is so fundamental, because it both determines the direction of security policy and provides the backbone for its implementation. The successful interventions of ECOWAS in Liberia and Sierra Leone under Nigerian leadership have shown that, given the necessary political support, African states could successfully manage their security challenges. The general direction of Nigerian involvement is now informed by a broadly defined foreign policy objective, built on a specific perception of its national role, documented in its National Defence Policy, and informed by conventional perspectives about security threats (Alli, 2012: 84-85).

#### Decline in Nigeria's Defence and Foreign policies and Hegemonic role in West Africa

The performance of ECOMOG in Liberia was not particularly impressive. It had exacerbated tensions among member-states, while prolonging the crisis and contributing to its regionalization. The event, nonetheless, earned the Nigerian military dictatorship valuable international kudos. Indeed, throughout the second Clinton administration, US concern with curbing the spread of conflicts in Africa was mitigated by wariness that this should translate into entangling commitments. This meant backing regional 'anchor' states who, like Nigeria, were 'willing to take losses and sustain deployments'. In spite of the growing opprobrium that surrounded the Nigerian military dictatorship, Washington officials working with West Africa had 'scrambled to circumvent the legal restrictions, on bilateral military relations with Nigeria, as soon as they were enacted. Although there was no precedent for providing aid directly to a regional organization, procedures had also been quickly put in place to provide assistance to ECOMOG. Between 1996-1997, as international sanctions against Nigeria's Abacha dictatorship (1993-1998) climaxed, the US government also worked through contractors to send trucks, radios and helicopters to the Nigerian troops in Liberia' (Leatherwood, 2001: 24, 20-21).

The ECOMOG intervention in Sierra Leone offered another testing ground for Nigeria's projection of military force. One of the side effects of the war in Liberia was its spill over into Sierra Leone. After the president of Sierra Leone had endorsed the Nigerian stance over the formation of ECOMOG, Nigerian troops and Air Force had started using Freetown as a staging post to operate in Liberia, a situation that prompted Taylor to support Foday Sankoh whose Revolutionary United Front (RUF) invaded Sierra Leone from Liberia in March 1991. ECOMOG forces were still based in Sierra Leone when the civilian government of President Kabbah was overthrown by a military coup supported by the RUF on 25 May 1997. Kabbah's subsequent request for Nigerian assistance was promptly endorsed by Nigeria's General Abacha who then chaired ECOWAS. On 27 June, the Council of Ministers decided to engage in diplomatic consultations with the military junta while adding that the possible use of force should not be excluded were these to fail. No tangible results had been achieved when, on 29 August, the Authority agreed to the establishment of ECOMOG II, a force that was mandated to assist in creating a 'conducive atmosphere' towards the 'early re-instatement of the legitimate government of Sierra Leone', including the supervision of ceasefire, monitoring of violations and enforcement of the economic and military sanctions that were simultaneously decided by the Authority (Bach, 2007: 308).

Notwithstanding what Nigeria may have put in place, there are institutional weaknesses within ECOWAS including inadequate resources and lack of administrative and military capability which



militate against and indeed undermine Nigeria's leadership role. While it appears that the military components are being progressively addressed, the non-military components have not been properly articulated in a manner that is responsive to the emerging security challenges at home and in the sub-region and application of socio-economic and political engineering to address defence and security matters since the use of militarism to address security matters is no longer appropriate for the kind of security challenges being faced domestically and in the sub-region as a whole. Meanwhile, Nigeria's role in sub-regional security is highly personalized, driven by the President rather than a well-articulated strategic vision. This is a phenomenon which started under the Babangida military regime and its policy on the Liberian conflict. This tendency has continued under the democratically elected regime of President Obasanjo, who put his personal stamp on foreign policy as well as on defence and security policy. Presidents Yar'Adua and Jonathan have also largely defined the content of Nigeria's security policy in the sub-region according to their image (Alli, 2012: 23).

At the same time, as noted by Sanda, since Nigeria still has no single focused and comprehensive security policy, every security agency has its own security policy that drives its operations. With this comes a lack of effective coordination among the different security and government agencies and the ensuing inter-agency rivalry. However, Nigeria's leadership role in the sub-regional security policy could be seen through its peace-keeping and peace-support, peace building and mediation activities; and through efforts aimed at curbing cross-border criminal activities, piracy; consolidation of democratic rule and support for economic development, and importantly, through the strategic security training it offers to the armed forces of many member states of ECOWAS (Alli, 2012: 23-24). In the wake of the Somali crisis (1993) and the genocide in Rwanda (1994) and the reluctance of the powerful members of the United Nations Security Council's (UNSC) to approve new UN missions for Africa, the African regional and sub-regional organisations were forced to develop their own security mechanism (Adebajo;2004: 3). This step was also informed by the need for greater cooperation, political will and commitment among the fifteen, largely weak West African states with very ineffective national security capabilities.

The AU security architecture is informed by the new security threats and provides for collective approach to the security challenges of the continent, accepting the sovereign equality of all members and a prominent position for Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), South African Development Community (SADC), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The AU framework, which was set up in 2002, has a Peace and Security Council (PSC), a permanent body on peace and security with the responsibility for managing collective security and working in cooperation with RECs. The AU Commission also has a Peace and Security Directorate. There are provisions for an African Standby Force made up of multinational brigades drawn from the RECs - ECOBRIG for West Africa, SADCBRIG for Southern Africa, EASBRIG for East Africa and a North African brigade and a Central Africa Brigade. Another brigade, the 6th is being planned for the AU Headquarters with a capacity for between 15000 and 20000 troops (Alli, 2012: 30).

Articles 16 of the AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) protocol for example provides that regional mechanism shall be part of the security architecture of the Union, which has the primary responsibility to promote peace security and stability in Africa. There is also the Panel of the Wise, officially launched in 2007, the Early Warning System with its Situation Room and a Special Fund for security. In addition, ECOWAS has many experts, put together under the West African network for democratic governance, a regional network of institutions and experts working on security policy and advising the ECOWAS Commission (Alli, 2012: 30).

There is also a West African Network for Peace providing strategic insight into the various security challenges facing the community. The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is another important measure in the efforts to promote security on the continent generally. It is designed to have several levels and was meant to help strengthen African capacity for crisis prevention, conflict transformation, and consolidation of peace. In 2010, new security threats such as organised crime, piracy and drug trafficking were added to the issues covered by the APSA framework. The international community has resources and capabilities which over the years have been of great help to African conflict management and the promotion of peace and security. The EU for example is using the Cotonou Agreement and an array of other instruments to support the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Nigeria serves as headquarters to the ECOWAS brigade, which was mandated by APSA, whereas the Nigerian Army 130th battalion in Calabar is the standby force for ECOWAS. In March 2011, the EU High Representative presented a draft EU Strategy for security and development in the Sahel with the main objective of coordinating and linking security and development, a very important yet inadequately appreciated dimension in the emerging security challenges in Africa generally, considering that most of the conflicts and emerging security challenges have their origin in the poor socio-economic condition of the people and the poor democratic culture and lack of good governance (Alli, 2012: 31).

### **1.5 Conclusion and Recommendation**

In Nigeria today, peace building has increasingly assumed a priority position in good governance policymaking. The need to mainstream peace building in development has arisen owing to the realization that conflict disorders in the country continue to jeopardize efforts to combat poverty. The dominant role in the mediation of the crises between Liberia and Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso and Mali, and Togo and Ghana are some of the clearest indications of this peace building role; the biggest effort to date is probably the case of the conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon over the Bakassi Peninsula. Here and elsewhere in West Africa, local peace building initiatives are playing an increasingly important role in resolving conflict.

There is no doubt that Nigeria plays a critical role in the making of sub-regional security policy and in its implementation: any time Nigeria does not participate or support a particular security policy initiative, this policy is bound to fail. This is due to the considerable leverage Nigeria brings to the table in terms of military capabilities, strategic clarity and focus, material resources, as well as enormous political and diplomatic clout. Nigeria's leadership is also a clear statement about the capability of African states to resolve African problems. In this regard, Nigeria's role is so fundamental, because it both determines the direction of security policy and provides the backbone for its implementation. The successful interventions of ECOWAS in Liberia and Sierra Leone under Nigerian leadership have shown that, given the necessary political support, African states could successfully manage their security challenges.

The general direction of Nigerian involvement is now informed by a broadly defined foreign policy objective, built on a specific perception of its national role, documented in its National Defence Policy, and informed by conventional perspectives about security threats. Based on this, national defence architecture has been put in place, again informed by the philosophy and doctrine in line with conventional thinking, developed largely by the military establishment. The lack of Good Governance has been recognized as a major source of security challenges that ECOWAS states are being confronted with. Accordingly, while conventional security measures should continue to be improved upon, new frameworks ought to be developed to address the changing character of security challenges, particularly to human security. The civilian political leadership should also be more engaged strategically and meaningfully in the defence and security issues, while more serious efforts should be made towards

improving inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination for success in a world increasingly challenged by insecurity.

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