Strategic Decolonisation: A New Vista for Africa's Diplomacy

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Abstract

This paper examined the scourge of neo-colonialism in post-colonial African states and the challenges to development. It established that decolonisation is still a major task for the continent in order to surmount its development challenges and discussed strategic decolonization as a window of opportunity in this wise. Previous works have measured severally the subject of neo-colonialism to the extent that it is clear and widely acceptable that neo-colonialism is a threat to the African continent. However, there is scarce research on what sort of response Africa, or those states faced with neo-colonialism, should have. Naturally as decolonisation was to colonialism, neo-decolonisation should be the response to neo-colonialism. This paper made the case for a complete solution to colonialism in all of it forms, hence the articulation of Strategic Decolonisation and its intricacies which would squarely and objectively address all forms of colonialism in the most beneficial way by application of the resources of diplomacy. The paper largely relied on secondary sources and adopted qualitative descriptive analysis. It further identified that African states would not succeed in overcoming the well orchestrated frameworks of neo-colonialism which manifest in unfavourable bur plausible financial arrrangements leading to economic dislocation. Only an equally well coordinated system would surmount such challenge By demonstrating how the current state of underdevelopment validates the

assertions of the presence of neo-colonialism, this work opens up the discussion on Strategic Decolonisation and posits methods in this novel thinking and strategy to address the challenges of decolonisation and categorically describes the benefits accruable from this practice.

1. **Introduction**

Are the challenges of the African continent the result of colonialism and its modern manifestations which are multifarious as opined by several scholars? (Rodney,1972, Harris,1987) Is the African continent still subjected to colonialism today? The evidence speaks for itself. Africa is the world's second-largest and second most-populous continent (second, in both regards to Asia), with the youngest population among all continents, imbued with vast resources, known and unknown, explored and unexplored, exploited and unexploited, it is an obvious misnomer that the continent still accounts for wanton poverty and the most squalid conditions globally. This certainly is not squarely an issue of governance and leadership or the presence or absence of democracies. It is possibly an effect that is actively caused.

The independence of most African states in the mid 20th Century was heralded as a great advancement as these newly independent states were immediately absorbed into the Comity of Nations. The United Nations declared the 1960's as the decade of Development and thus there was a recognition of the progress made by African states in their attainment of independence and their advances towards nation-building (Ajaegbo, 1984). The case was different. Wars and strife sprung throughout the continent. Economic challenges, political pitfalls and ethnic squabbles gradually saw a return of European influence on the continent through alliances of sorts and outright military and economic interventions and manipulation as will be discussed in this paper. Essentially, colonialism ended one phase and commenced another (Ocheni & Nwankwo, 2012).

2. Neo-Colonialism: Fact or Fiction

There is no denying the fact of colonialism. Although it was justified by glamorous titles among the colonisers as "civilizing mission" and "white man's burden" among others, the manner in which this was done, the damages inflicted on the people, the extraction of resources, the shameless ruthlessness, racial deconstruction and erosion and the overall dilapidation that was bequeathed to Africans thereafter is certainly undeniable (Boahen, 1985). But does neo-colonialism exist?

Recall that colonialism was characterized by the dismantling of the perennial political and economic systems in Africa and the reordering of Africa's economies to the sole benefit of the metropolitan capital. After independence, what remained was poor political and economic structures across the continent. This created several problems for these newly independent countries who were immediately thrust into various forms of civil strife and economic squabbles (Olukoshi, 2004). The major response from the erstwhile colonisers was simply the formation of pacts, alliances and arrangements that sought to continue the perpetration of the systems that existed under colonialism (Mawere & Mubaya,2017, p.14). The Common Wealth, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, Annual Summit of France and African Heads of State are on a plausible pedestal of association among free and equal members which in reality is often different. Particular defence cooperation treaties between France and its former colonies or between Britain and former colonies paint a clearer picture of the distinct desire for supremacy which the colonizers retained even after the declaration of independence.

Similarly, the end of World War II, saw the establishment of the United Nations Organisation as well as the Bretton Woods organizations. This implied the emergence of new power and economic structures on the global scene. African countries, still under colonialism and which, thereafter,

struggled with the complexities of post colonial nation-building, had no say in the process which was to superintend globally (Olukoshi, 2004). With limited political stability, faulty economic systems and sporadic civil strife across the continent, not much could be achieved in terms of reorientating the economy.

International recommendations, sourced at global converges like the United Nations General Assembly are often seen to be probably skewed or even dishonest (Alli, 2016). Background arrangements appear to show favouritism to the more developed zones of the globe. For example, the international system which consistently preaches free trade and open markets conspicuously confers privileged positions to some sections of the globe. A simple case in point is the fact that the major and permanent members of the assessment group for every new entrant into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) include entities that have often been tagged as perpetrators of an unfair international market system like; The European Union (E.U.), The United States, Canada, and Japan. Nigeria identified early on, that this sort of arrangement was not propitious to the aspirations of the continent and after joining the Global Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1960, did not participate actively until it was certain that the organisation could support the aspirations of development (Ministry of External Affairs, 1991, p. 32).

Secondly, the huge discrepancy in economic capacity between wealthy nations and regional groups on the one hand, and their developing counterparts on the other, specifically those in Africa makes a compelling case. Developed nations only contribute infinitesimally and inconsequentially to Africa's development agenda and still impose a series of squelching conditions that only serve to weaken the already poverty-stricken countries. One begins to evaluate the apparent duplicitous nature of development aid policies and packages. What naturally arises are questions concerning the intent of such development aid packages and

whether or not they have any guarantees for Africa's development prospects.

Two cases to explain the foregoing.

a) The budget of the European Union in 2014 stood at €142,690,290,000.00. The European Union is an organisation that encompasses 28 countries in Europe with a combined population of about 500 million. For the same period, the African Union comprising of 54 countries with a combined population of about 1.11 billion who bear the brunt of crises and poverty in the international scene had a budget of $308,000,000. Simple calculations will show that at these rates, the European Union budget is more than able to fund the entire budget of the African Union for beyond the next four hundred years. (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/annual/index_en.cfm?year=2014)

b) Similarly, according to a news report, The United States government reported that it had spent over 2 trillion dollars by 2013 to prosecute the war in Iraq over the previous 10 years (Trotta, 2013). That sum is roughly the equivalent of the entire budget of Nigeria, the most populous black nation, for over 60 years. This same U.S. government had previously declined to assist the Nigerian government with essential military hardware to abet the insurgency within the north-east of the country using Nigeria's human rights record as an excuse.

Can Africa's priorities for developments be covered under such arrangements? This question arises especially as the priorities of Africa and Africans appear to be in contradiction to the priorities of those who are seemingly her benefactors. The scale, volume, pattern and lobe sidedness of assistance that has been displayed since the inception of independence leaves much to doubt with particular reference to the claim by the West of being desirous of the development of Africa. The western style of intervention on the continent and the entire arrangements that perpetuate

subservience and domination certainly begs the question as to whether or not colonialism is over?

3. Decolonisation of Free States- What to do?

What pattern should decolonisation adopt? Certainly, it would be impractical and completely unnecessary to consider force for the obvious reason that the forces and structures of neo-colonialism are not the creation of forceful conquest and they are also not physical structures. They exist as agreements, covert and overt that have skewed the ideologies, programmes and projects of developing countries to the benefit of external forces and powers. To go about this sort of decolonisation, the same patterns must necessarily be adopted. This work describes it as 'Strategic Decolonisation'. It is not called neo-decolonisation because it does not only seek to respond to this phase of neo-colonialism alone, it rather seeks to put a finite end to the complex structures that are currently available or that may be construed in the future for the purpose of exerting influence over Africans and African states for the benefit of external influences and the detriment of Africa.

Strategic decolonisation is the application of the diplomatic machinery and paraphernalia of a state with the view to garnering support and resources (local, regional and international) towards addressing the lingering neo-colonial impediments to development. It consists of identifying specific issues requiring attention and not just the elimination of external actors from the African scene. It is a system of generating germane partnerships and building bridges that would rest neither on a colonial heritage myth nor on the rhetoric of deprivation but on purposeful convergence of ideas, ideals, policies and aspirations in mutually beneficial and sustainable arrangements. Strategic decolonization proposes the use of negotiations and renegotiations, alliance structuring and restructuring, technological capacity building, knowledge development and transfer among others.

Why is Strategic Decolonisation necessary? When we note that, Africa has been influenced, coerced, led and misled into different arrangements which were meant to guarantee 'development' for them, but which have produced results in the opposite direction, the necessity of Strategic Decolonisation becomes manifest (Murphy, 2005). There are several conflicting and divergent agendas at the behest of external influences, in the form of some erstwhile colonial master like France or Britain, like the or a present-day altruistic benefactor like China. The result is that even Africans cannot come up with unified arrangements and patterns in attending to their issues.

Strategic decolonisation would indeed be far-reaching and mutually advantageous as this new thinking would question the status quo, x-ray contemporary arrangements (often called neo-colonial arrangements) and appraise their merits and demerits based on the aggregated felt-needs.

Diplomats from developing countries hold the responsibility to build broad international consensus and agreements around these goals as they remain the major pushers of foreign policy objectives. Even in this age of instant global communications, neither the presidents nor their foreign ministers can, on their own, achieve these goals. They have to work through their diplomats whose vast and professional experience in the art of diplomacy becomes very useful. This paper therefore, examines and interrogates the patterns of post-colonial strategic patterns of development in Africa through the prism of diplomacy. To this end, this paper is divided into three sections; first is an assessment of the patterns of linkages of post-colonial African economy created by the colonial system, thereafter the elements of strategic decolonisation are discussed in depth followed by a conclusion.

4. Patterns of linkages of post-colonial African economy created by the colonial system

Colonialism created a number of patterns and strategies indented to control the African economies during and After political independence. The most

glaring and blatant expression of neo-colonialism is manifested in the skewed economic arrangements that dot the entire globe and that have kept African Nations in abject poverty. In the 1950s and '60s, France succumbed to international pressure and "offered" independence to French colonies of Africa. Although the Paris government accepted formal declarations of independence, it called on African countries to sign an agreement that effectively sustained colonisation to date. This was the agreement to introduce the French colonial currency FCFA (Franc for French colonies in Africa), maintain French educational and military system, and establish French as an official language (Koulibaly, 2005).

The CFA Franc is the denomination of the common currency of 14 African countries members of the Franc Zone. This currency, which is a brake on the emergence of these countries, was created in 1945, when France ratified the Bretton Woods agreements and proceeded with the implementation of its first parity declaration to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It was called at the time "Franc of the French Colonies of Africa".

With this arrangement, 14 African countries are still obliged to maintain 85 percent of their foreign exchange reserves at *La Banque de France* in Paris. This means that their entire economy is under the direct control of the French Treasury. The countries concerned do not have access to this part (85 percent) of their reserves. Similarly, the 15 percent left of their reserves is insufficient to cater to their demands which compels them to request loans from the French Treasury at market price. Amazingly, this arrangement has continued Since 1961 (Koulibaly, 2005). In essence, Paris controls all foreign currency reserves of Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon.

Also, these countries must each year transfer their "colonial debt" for infrastructure built in France. In this regard, France collects another 440

billion euros a year from its former colonies. The government in Paris also has a right of first refusal on all newly discovered natural resources in these African countries. Finally, French companies must be given prime consideration in the awarding of all state contracts in its former colonies. As a direct consequence, most, if not all, assets in the areas of supply, finance, transportation, energy, and agriculture remain squarely in the hands of French companies. The foregoing validate the need for renascent efforts at decolonisation.

If we consider the decade of independence we see clearly evidence of major growth in the continent in general. "Between 1965 and 1980, sub-Saharan Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head, (at constant prices) grew at an average of 1.5 percent per year."(Bode, 1988,144) Africa was also taking a major place on the international scene. There was a renewed dynamism in unravelling the inequitable global economic order. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was one of such avenues through which the international economic order was to be addressed (Mortimer, 2007,8).

The dynamism shown by newly independent African countries manifested in an early concert of developing countries globally. A case in point was the first meeting of developing countries which was held in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955 (Mortimer, 1984) This meeting paved the way for the adoption of resolutions described as "an augur of a future protest against the subordinating stays of the developing countries in the international system (Mortimer, 1984)." In essence, there was firm demand for a reworking of the unfair global systems that had been maintained even while African nations were gaining independence. These developing countries called for responsibility for the colonial past, and commitment towards development.

These measure were borne out the realization that the momentum that had birthed independence was not a figment of a global conscientiousness of the ills and anomalies of colonialism but rather the push for an end of a European imperial order to make way for the emerging liberal order. In essence, America desired to dethrone Europe and enthrone itself. This is why African nations have been subjected to suffocating terms and conditionalities in an unwholesome international economic and political system (Murphy, 2005) If the reverse was the case, we would not have seen the racial segregation that persisted in the United States after the so called Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Atlantic Charter.

Obviously, Europe still desired to wrest whatever influence it could muster. Newly independent African states in general, and the francophone bloc in particular emerged as an opportunity. Cloaked as an arrangement to foster development, the Yaoundé conventions of 1963 and 1969 as well as the Lomé conventions thereafter gradually stringed African nations into agreements that crippled whatever industries were budding in the early years of independence while ensuring that Africa's markets accorded priority to Europe. Needless to say, France was the initiator of this agreement.

The European Economic Community (EEC) having gradually progressed from the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), with funding from the United States under the Marshall Plan had established a budding industry. Africa had no such opportunity. Rather the continent was swooped into entanglement, alliances and spheres of influence that stifled progress and created a downward spiral out of which African states are yet to free themselves. This is why Strategic Decolonization is quintessential.

5. Elements of Strategic Decolonisation

Strategic Decolonization as has earlier been described is made up of a number of elements which should basically constitute the elements of the

diplomacy of developing countries, especially those in Africa. It comprises Agenda-Setting, Consensus Building, Strategic Planning, Resource Mobilisation and Outcome Monitoring. It proposes a purposeful engagement with all nations of the world on equal footing and basically unravel those arrangements that are not beneficial and create better and more beneficial arrangements globally. Whatever arrangement is consolidated by diplomacy can also be dismantled by diplomacy.

5.1 Agenda-Setting

Diplomacy is the most effective tool in global agenda-setting and Nigeria has been at the fore of setting agenda for the development issues and aspirations of Africa. Nigeria might, however, have taken a back seat in this regard. This is attributed to the economic challenges of the country (Orjiakor, 2017) but more especially to the absence of a national diplomatic strategic plan. A typical example of agenda-setting was when Nigeria led the continent on the path to ensure total decolonization in the continent, an example of which was the use of her Security Council seat in 1976 to push for the unanimous adoption of UNSC Resolution 385 (1976) which called for an end to the highhandedness of the South African Racist regime in administering Namibia. Another case in point was when the Gowon administration reached out to Nigeria's neighbours in West Africa with the quintessential message of synergizing and the eventual creation of a regional organisation.

An attestation to the effectiveness of the agenda-setting activities of the time was the success in the establishment of the organisation. It would be recalled that there were a variety of oppositions and challenges to this initiative, most specifically with the rival French programme which was geared towards eclipsing the Nigerian driven agenda. Besides, there was the issue of France's opposition to the Festival of Black Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in 1977. Not only did she oppose she also encouraged several other African states of the Francophone bloc to boycott that activity, but

apparently, France failed in this regard. Successive French administrations have actively fought against inclusive regional cooperation programmes in Africa that are led by Nigeria or which just have mere Nigerian participation.

This was to ensure a clog in Nigeria's ascendancy in West Africa. In 1962, de Gaulle foiled the establishment of a customs union, led by Olympio of Togo. This agreement would have affected Nigeria, Togo, Niger, and Benin. President Georges Rene Pompidou also frustrated initial efforts chiefly by Nigeria and Togo in the founding of the Economic Community of West-African States (ECOWAS).

Greater integration within Africa can have as its key objective to promote a large scale increase in agricultural productivity. At the moment, it is a given that the continent holds viable prospects for food production and the attendant mechanization of agriculture which would certainly lead to a major transformation. Were this experiment of creating an industrial society, even one which is based on agriculture, to be properly considered and implemented, there would be a significant departure from the historic limitations which the continent has suffered. The challenges of food scarcity would be a concluded matter within the continent.
Industrialization in agriculture would create large food surpluses enough to cater for the urban population and to even meet export purposes. The entire world, both on land and in the sea, is scoured for raw materials and further energy sources to supply industry, there is no need for Africa not to have an agenda in this regard. And diplomacy is key in bringing this to prominence and eventual actualization.

African states must not operate in isolation of each other, they must not prefer extra-continental arrangements to the ones they provide for themselves. Africa needs to realise that the foundation of national power (continental power) is economic buoyancy.

5.2 Consensus Building

Consensus building is crucial for the attainment of any diplomatic objective. Nigeria has demonstrated leadership in gathering fellow African states around a common cause. From decolonisation, to stalling the ideological stratification of the continent, including reprimanding of permanent members of the United Nations Security Council for using the veto to stop the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations in 1987. The result of this concerted effort was the total liberation of the African continent from the shackles of colonialism. Africa was again able to wrest considerable pressure against the remnant of oppressive foreign elements in the continent in the form of the Apartheid regimes of South Africa and the Portuguese strongholds in the continent. Similarly, after joining GATT on 18 November 1960, Nigeria did not participate actively in the body until the Tokyo Round (1973-1979). Nigeria saw the GATT reciprocity rule as being unfair and incompatible with the protection of small industries and developing economies.

In modern times, however, has Nigeria been active in rallying fellow African countries on the path towards collective growth and development? The earlier instances of Nigeria's inability to even master the situation in the West African region is something worrisome. The country needs to be able to rally fellow African countries and by extension other countries and not to project her interests alone.

Immediately after the Nigeria-Biafra War, the then Nigerian Head of State General Yakubu Gowon toured neighbouring countries to express appreciation for their support during the war. As part of the tour, a series of bilateral agreements were also signed. A friendship also began between Eyadema of Togo and General Gowon which was pivotal in the establishment of the Economic Community of West African States in 1975. Certainly, there was resistance from the Francophone bloc which sought to establish a parallel body. General Gowon indeed attributes the success of swinging the Francophone states to support the founding of the

organisation to the good relationship he had with President Eyadema as well as the "good neighbourliness" which Nigeria had demonstrated to its neighbours. Gowon noted that Cameroun was unrepentantly apprehensive of Nigeria's intentions to form the regional body and opted, instead to establish the Central African Economic Community. From the friendship built up with Togo, both leaders were able to woo, albeit with some difficulty, Niger and other Francophone countries.

The English speaking countries of Liberia, Gambia, Ghana, were coming able to converge and eventually, with the consent of the Francophone countries themselves accepting the idea of establishing the community, there was strong resistance especially from countries like Ivory Coast they wanted to Form the Entente. During the period Nigerian diplomats were sent across the region to discuss the fine details of the base agreement which was to become the treaty of Lagos. It should be noted that a great deal of the success that was achieved in setting up the organisation would very well be attributed to the camaraderie that existed between the leaders of West African countries at the time. The decision to launch the organisation was concretized at a summit in Lagos.

President Houphouet-Boigny, who never attended any meeting that was not Francophone, attended the meeting and enjoyed it. During that meeting, Houphouet Boigny was fascinated and interested in the prospects of economic cooperation by his appraisal of the volume of business that could be created and the wealth also. He thereafter most actively put his full weight behind the ECOWAS. It is a task of diplomacy to develop friendships and partnerships geared towards the promotion of Nigeria's foreign policy objectives.

5.3 Strategic Planning

Perhaps the key task of diplomacy is to articulate plans in furtherance of the development agenda. Like the New Partnership for Africa's

Development and the Africa Union Agenda 2063 already receiving several accolades. A very important attribute for good diplomacy itself is that of grand strategy or the design and clear definition of a nation's grand vision of itself and its goal in the international arena. A grand strategy would spell out the purpose and objectives of the state, and its ideas for the future and a clear understanding of the requirements for the achievement of those goals. Winston Churchill observed that those who possess a definite body of doctrine and deeply rooted convictions based upon it will be in a much better position to deal with the shifts and surprises of daily affairs than those who are merely taking short views and indulging their natural impulses as they are evoked by what they read from day-to-day. (Churchill, 1948, p. 210)

Without such a clear vision and framework, diplomacy would only be a fiesta of cocktails and parties for African countries, including Nigeria. Sule Lamido, Foreign Minister of Nigeria (1999-2003) lamented just after a few months in office that it seems most Nigerian diplomats are more concerned with issues of etiquette than ideological and identity issues in Nigerian foreign policy. As far as he was concerned, it was lopsided orientation which he also described as "fork and knife diplomacy" (Onoja et al., 2008, p. 63). His grouse at the time was wrongly directed. The issue should have been with the conception of a proper grand strategy for Nigeria's diplomacy and not just with the demeanour of Nigeria's diplomats. Indeed the vibrancy of Nigeria's diplomacy experienced during the '70s was based on the presence of guiding principles and overarching objectives that drove the foreign policy exertions of the country.

A strategy would be key in the selection of diplomats and the kind of training they receive to equip them for their various assignments. The success of diplomacy springs from the presence and effectiveness of the strategic goals set. Similarly, good policy and strategy are bound to fail if the diplomat is bereft of the requisite skills to enable him to be effective and

competent in the discharge of his functions. The opposite is also true: a good diplomat will fail if the strategy is flawed or even absent. Thus the selection of good diplomats is part of the strategy and the artistry and creative genius of good diplomacy.

To briefly consider the explanation given by Robert Greene, strategy, is like a chess game the master, does not becloud his judgement with the sole consideration of the move at hand and reacting squarely to the move of his opponent. He must keep the entire chessboard in perspective and consider deep into the future, crafting overall strategy, using the moves of the pawns now to set up those of the more powerful pieces later (Greene, 2006, p. 158).

Diplomacy must be able to provide long term directions, goals towards specific targets and there have to be measurable indicators and milestones to peg measurable landmarks by consistently engaging stakeholders across a variety of spheres. Strategy is an all-encompassing concept. The deployment of national power is also an essential component of strategy and strategic planning. Diplomacy can be coercive and involve the employment of threats or limited force to persuade or lead an opponent to call off or undo an action. Coercive diplomacy is not the same as deterrence, which employs threats to dissuade an opponent from undertaking an action that he has not yet initiated. Coercive diplomacy requires some force of a limited nature to persuade another actor to reverse an intention or a course of action. The strategy of coercive diplomacy advocates employing measured force to demonstrate resolve to protect one's interest and the credibility of one’s determination to use more force if necessary.

The strategy of coercion in diplomacy as tricky as it is dangerous. Threats or limited force may be resisted or even backfire, triggering conflict or an unplanned war. Just imagine the result of the attempt by Georgia to coerce Southern Ossetia. The reaction of Russia should have been anticipated

while the leadership of Georgia over-estimated the assistance they could get from NATO and the US. The crises in the area were not envisaged by Georgia.

Perhaps the necessity of strategic planning is very well demonstrated by the situation in Libya after the fall of Gadaffi. Not only has Africa lost a viable source of support for Africa's programmes, the continent is now faced with a protracted crisis with no solution in sight. Strategic Planning does not presuppose that Diplomacy is a futuristic venture but it is hinged on the fact that a country's exertions on the international scene should be based on the calculated aspirations of nation-states.

When a United Nations action on Libya was being debated, Nigeria was not only present at the security council but also voted in support of the United Nations action which today has manifested in the continued instability of the country and has created a hub for insurgency as well as a breeding ground for a variety of vices. While Europe is okay to make payments to the Militias that hold sway in Libya for them to prevent Migrants from getting into Europe from Libya, Nigeria is currently faced with a complete surprise in that the country has no response to the shame and horror that affects the migrants (many of whom are Nigerians) stuck in Libya. Diplomacy must be concerned with deep projections into the future. It is clear that a simple analysis of the situation in Africa as at that time would have revealed a couple of things.

First, that the unrest being experienced in the Maghreb was not entirely caused by the people, the role of external actors in that regard would have been very easily identifiable. Fromm the fact that several leaders of those uprisings were foreign-trained and also based in western countries. Similarly, it is clear also that the use of social media in proliferating the messages for change was anything but nationalistic. There is hardly a nationalistic social media movement. Once it is on social medial the

possibilities of external interference move from 'possible' to 'obvious'. This work is not speaking of the overt and completely illegal interference of a sovereign state in the affairs of another like the 2015 address of President Obama to the Nigerian public just before the election (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxk9mxURChw). One is easily reminded of the recent accusations of Russia meddling in the 2016 US presidential elections.

Second, there appears to have been evidence of an increasing desire by western leaders to oust Muammar Gaddafi. His ideas had often been termed radical but it had begun to take new roots in Africa with the hope that his radical nature would be abandoned for a more consensual option (Adeoye, 2016). Gadaffi had always preached the same One-Africa doctrine as Kwame Nkrumah. The potency in this doctrine is one that is yet to be fully appraised. This may, as well, be the saving grace for indeed the entire human race as the consistent moral and ethical drift of the rest of the globe suggests a gradual sojourning into primitivity. It would be recalled that earlier in this work all civilizations are seen to be doomed to that fate. Among the early challenges to francophone interests in Africa as noted by France were Libya and Nigeria (Adotevi, 1964). This is assertion is further strengthened by the fact that the resolution 2021 action against Libya was largely carried out by France.

An Africa that desires to independently manage its affairs is a chill pill to several sectors of the globe. Even its mere discussion evokes profound controversy. It was hence not a surprise to notice the extent to which Western military strategists had made it a point of duty to identify the nerve centres of Libya's military architecture and what would be needed to bring down the Gadaffi regime even in the early 90s. They made detailed appraisals of Gaddafi's defenses and arsenals, including airforce installations, intelligence bases, tank regiments, ground troops, command and control centres, logistics hubs, key infrastructure, and administration.

The fact that Gaddafi was the major bond that held the different people of Libya together was completely discarded and once he was ousted, the country completely fell apart. What is being proposed for Libya now is a unity government. At the moment such a system can only be imposed. If this is not in place Libya would breed the sort of pandaemonium that would slowly creep and decimate Africa, except, of course, the West decides to intervene again on its terms. Is that not the neo-colonialism script at play again? It is a subject of diplomatic embarrassment that Africa did not underscore the significance of western intervention in the Arab spring. If Nigeria and South Africa, as elected members of the Security Council at the time, had properly assessed the import of such a western initiative the case would have been different. Nigeria would potentially suffer the backlash more and should have had a more critical analysis of the situation. With a shaky economy (although touted as the largest in Africa whereas what should be considered is strength not size) and strategically part of a security triangle that runs from the gulf of guinea to North Africa. (Osita, p. 104) the country needs to be concerned with the happenings in North Africa also. Trans-Saharan Trade routes stretching into Murzuk and Fezzan which are still in existence today show that that area is of significance to Nigeria.

Interesting to note is the fact that Nigeria's delegation to the United Nations was approached by diplomats of the Russian Federation who outlined the need to avoid the planned intervention in Libya. According to some members of the UNSC at then, had Nigeria agreed, that resolution would not have been passed. The repercussions only began to manifest when there was an increase in the sophistication and scale of Boko-Haram attacks immediately after the fall of Gaddafi. Even NATO grade weapons were being used in Boko- Haram onslaughts.

Similarly, when Nigeria signed on to the Nuclear-Non Proliferation Treaty, was it for or against its national interest? A strategic analysis would have underscored the limits that act would impose on our technological

advancement. Maybe Nigeria would have completely solved her power challenges if nuclear energy was developed and properly utilize but that signing completely shuts us out of that opportunity, possibly forever. We are not however suggesting that Nigeria's diplomacy is completely devoid of strategic foresight as indeed any country could face the same challenge. Europe should have foreseen the potential crises that were to befall them if the Syrian crisis was not properly handled. The matter did not need to be solely handled by the indecisive Obama administration as Europe is geographically linked to Syria. As the crisis festered,

*5.4 Resource Mobilisatio*n

One of the major hindrances to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals for African states and perhaps the most significant challenge in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals is the absence of resources. In this regard, in the build-up to the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, financing became a crucial component through the Financing For Development (FFD) conferences. Resource mobilisation involves taking responsibility, individually and collectively, and proactively maximizing strategies for the tools and competencies required for the promotion of development activities. Each unit, state or nation must demonstrate a sense of responsibility to collaborate and show a common sense of ambition in pooling resources. This would be helped by an increase in awareness of the benefits of the desired course of action. The imperative of the task or the desired outcome must be at the fore and remain at the core of all activities. This will, in turn, serve to consistently appraise all parties to make their due contribution of materials and efforts required for the actualization of set goals.

It is hardly conceivable that parties who claim to be part of an idea or an agenda are often unwilling to contribute to the success of the idea to which they belong. That has often been the case with the AU, ECOWAS and indeed several other African multilateral organisations. Members are

hardly able to meet up with their financial obligations even when very serious considerations have been given. More often than not, it is just a few countries that cater to the organisation. The AU, for example, is an organisation that is comprised of 54 African countries as of today. On average, only about 67 percent of assessed contribution is collected annually from the Member States. About 30 Member States default either partially or completely on average, annually. This creates a significant funding gap between planned budget and actual funding, which hinders effective delivery of the African Union's agenda. (https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/31953-file-faq.pdf).

In ECOWAS, between 2003 and 2011 for instance, Nigeria contributed $918.7 million (₦138 billion) to the running of the Community, followed at a distance by Ghana at $225.7 million (₦ 34 billion), and Cote D'Ivoire at $107.5 million (₦ 16.1 billion).For years, Nigeria has contributed between three to six times the combined contribution of the other members put together. That ratio rose recently to over 60 percent of ECOWAS' total revenues, with the introduction of community levies, according to data showing annual state-wide contributions.

The foregoing is a poor reflection of how diplomacy should be run. Pundits argue that the case of ECOWAS glaringly shows the porousity of Nigeria's diplomacy and sheer failure to master the dynamics that prevail in West Africa. One can only ask if the country is unable to understand its immediate neighbourhood, how can it aspire to be a major player within the continent and beyond?

5.5 Outcome Monitoring

Modern diplomacy has developed into several types and suits a variety of purposes. With the expansion of interaction among actors on the international stage, the states, and the growing intensity of relations which

now cover every imaginable aspect of life, development diplomacy needs to be employed in the areas of outcome monitoring and evaluation.

One of the major developments in the past century is the development of a democratic nature of diplomacy. This was brought about by the triumph of the theory of equality of states. The erstwhile aristocratic and feudal assertions were abandoned in favour of an open democratic engagement that sees all states as equal actors. Importantly, democratic diplomacy is also associated with open rather than secret diplomacy which used to be the norm a few centuries ago. Revolutionary Russia under Lenin began to publish all agreements between Tsarist Russia and other states which were at the turn of the 20th century considered secret arguing that the people had a right to know the agreements and treaties their governments were signing. Similarly, in 1975, the apartheid regime in South Africa staged an intervention in Angola from its illegal base in South West Africa, then president of the United States, Gerald Ford sent a circular letter to all African Heads of States and Governments who were gearing up for the summit of the Organisation of African Unity in January 1976, in which he urged then strongly not to condemn the South African action in Angola having failed to condemn the Cuban intervention troops who were invited to Angola by the Angolan authorities the Murtala Muhammad administration's decision to publish the circular letter was new to the diplomatic practice. But thenceforth, and much aided by the media involvement in diplomatic functions, communiqués and agendas are now readily available to the public.

It is this trait of diplomacy that makes it most apt in being employed for the monitoring of outcomes. Essentially, after states have come up with decisions, those decisions must be easily and readily available to ensure that they are properly and effectively evaluated.

Another important development in modern diplomatic practice is the development of a Conference or Parliamentary framework to the Art of Diplomacy. Beginning in the 20th century, particularly after the First and Second World Wars, there was a radical transformation of the international regime, as evidenced in the increase in the number of state actors in diplomacy. This, in turn, led to the rapid proliferation of international organisations and revamped the need for continuous consultation on a multilateral basis bordering on a diversity of issues. As a result, there has been an astronomical growth of such multilateral platforms. This has given rise to conferences or parliamentary diplomacy, with its specific challenges and procedures. This feature of modern diplomacy involves at least four factors:

i) continuing organization with enduring interests;
ii) regular public debate;
iii) rules of procedure;
iv) formal conclusions or resolutions secured through a simple majority in some cases two-thirds majority.

The United Nations is a key body in the subject of Conference diplomacy as it provides the biggest platform for multilateral diplomacy, hosting at its meetings thousands of delegates from all the member countries and related organizations. We also have regional bodies, like the AU, OAS, the EU, ASEAN, Arab League; sub-regional groupings like the ECOWAS, SADC, Arab Maghreb Union, and special groups like the G8 among others.At this multilateral level, there are ad-hoc or permanent meetings of several actors or international organizations on issues of key global concern – health, environment, and food among others.

One needs to understand the vista of opportunities such modern dimensions in diplomacy could secure for countries who take diplomacy seriously. At earlier times, diplomacy was bilateral; there were limited opportunities for consultation with several countries on a wide range of

topics as we do today. Multilateral diplomacy is now the major characteristic of modern international engagements. Today, few issues can be purely defined as bilateral. Even if an issue is bilateral, the resolution would require multilateral efforts. This began in the 19th Century when states started the settlement of common legal, economic and technical problems through multilateral efforts. Later, permanent organs were set up to manage such issues: International Telegraph and Postal Union, Patent Rights, Trade Marks and so on. We can all see the complexities of contemporary international life and the value of multilateral approach to all the issues of international political, economic, security, technical, environmental, and socio-cultural relations.

Personal Diplomacy is also worthy of attention. It is also known as Summit diplomacy and it involves heads of state, ministers of foreign affairs and other high ranking officials of the state. It has become a very important and indispensable vehicle for securing agreements on a wide range of issues. Personal diplomacy is considered very useful by political leaders, who employ it to seal agreements on a wide range of issues. In the contemporary world, any leader desirous of great achievements domestically, has, of necessity, to travel extensively. Lloyd George expressed his view on the practice as follows: *" If you want to settle a thing, you see your opponent and talk it over with him. The last thing to do is to write him a letter"* (Melissen, p. 2).

This is perhaps a justification for the frequent travels of President Obasanjo. There is a school of thought though, which suggests that personal or summit diplomacy should only follow serious negotiations already carried out by only trained diplomats and not Ministers or even heads of state for obvious reasons of need for specialized knowledge, clarity, and depth.

All these machineries explored above serve to bring parties around the table and should serve as a mechanism to monitor commitments and

agreements. The Africa Peer Review Mechanism is a classic example of how diplomacy can contribute to development through monitoring and evaluation.

Conclusion

The bane of development on the continent which has been noted as neocolonialism requires a proper response. If Africa is to overturn the challenges it presently faces today, the need for concerted continental action to rework the mischievous global patterns that have kept it underdeveloped is manifest. Unfortunately, these arrangements which require unravelling are not central on the global agenda. The more advantaged sections of the globe appear not to be perturbed by these anomalies. The economic hostage taking that France has carried out on African states, the political and social interference on the continent of Africa has benefited the entire Europe by contributing enormously to the current account balance of the Euro-zone countries. Yet, populism is on the rise and only African countries can step up to this herculean challenge.

Strategic decolonisation provides a workable template to guide Nigeria's and Africa's diplomatic engagement on the international scene in a manner that will be effective and that will bring about the necessary outcome of liberating the continent from the remaining vestiges of domination.

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