

Repositioning the Nigerian Foreign Policy for the Coming Multi-World Order

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Abstract:- Nigeria's foreign policy is afro-centric in nature, with focus significantly on the prosperity and non-interference approach to its fellow African countries. Nigeria has supported her counterparts in difficult times to achieve success. But the rivalry, lack of support, and persistent pull-down syndrome, Nigeria has experienced over the decades in Africa, has prevented Nigeria from achieving the desired potentials of becoming a developed and renowned regional hegemon. As the present international structure changes towards a totally new structure, conceptualized as a multi-world order, the need to reposition the Nigerian foreign policy to reflect her domestic interest is imperative. Although the idea of a multi-world order stands contrary to the Nigerian foreign policy, the coming multi-world order is one that, economic partnerships, diplomatic ties, and international alliances between divergent actors in complex division and gatherings are needed to achieve economic growth. However, each perspective directs to a credible future, neither captures fully what the future holds. The qualitative method of data used critically examined the genesis of the current international structure as one with multiple 'orders' embedded within a whole international arena. The theoretical predictions show that with the 'multi-order world', the liberal order will continue, and may even be strengthened domestically but its international reach will be greatly reduced. The paper argued, the solution to the multi-world order is the urgent need for Nigerian foreign policy-makers and scholars to note that the coming multi-world order will be radically unlike, requiring new mental thinkers and strengthen institutions and the acceptance of variety in both power and doctrine in order to survive. It concludes that the challenge ahead is to forge and sustain existing and new forms of relationships to manage the multi-order world.

Key Words: Foreign Policy, Multi-Word Order, Economic growth, Diplomacy, Nigeria.

I. INTRODUCTION

Despite the decline of globalization in 2008, international relations and the world order continues to witness rapid changes. The world is gradually facing a new norm of global multi-orders from the emergence of divergent superpowers dishing out orders and creating issues from one global pole to the other, thereby causing increased conflicts and difficulty in decision making and conflict resolutions. This has greatly affected states and non-state actors' dealings with respect to trade relations, diplomacy, and economic growth. Foreign policy is the common goal that pilots the activities and strategic relations and activities of one state interaction with other states. It is mainly a government's blueprint on its interactions with other nations considering, basically its

domestic needs, the behavior of other nations, and effective plans on how to derive economic benefits from this interaction at the global milieu. The Nigerian foreign policy pre-dates the era of the Benin Kingdom, the Igbo Kingdoms, the Hausa emirates, and Yoruba empires. But diplomatic relations emerged with the coming of the colonial masters who in 1847 established the consular authority and the famous amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914. Thus, bringing Nigeria into the diplomatic arena as a dependent state. Foreign Policy is a set of principles that define the objective of a given state pursues in the process of its interactions with other international actors. This also connotes the strategy or planned course of action, related to external relations developed by decision-makers aimed at achieving specific goals. Although repositioning the foreign policy of any nation, the emphasis is usually made more often on the geography and external threats (Idahosa, 2017). However, many scholars have argued that domestic factors play a pertinent role in Foreign Policy using tools such as diplomacy, wars, alliances, and international trade to achieve their objectives. Nevertheless, the focus of the Nigerian foreign policy is known to be Afrocentric which means Nigeria will be looked at through the spectacles of Africa by the world. Also, for any fruitful engagement with the international community, Africa must be seen to put forward a united front. Just as the sayings goes "Charity they say begins at home". Also, paramount on the fore is the safeguard of a nation's national interest in propelling its foreign policy to achieve its national interest and security. However, the reason for Nigeria's foreign policy has remained an increased argument between its citizens. Hence, the burning puzzle on how Nigeria can reposition its foreign policy to meet the contemporary needs of an increasing and demanding multi-world order in the international arena. According to studies, a stable world order is a rare thing. When one does arise, it tends to come after a great convulsion that creates both the conditions and the desire for something new (Haass, 2019). It requires a stable distribution of power and broad acceptance of the rules that govern the conduct of international relations. It also needs skillful statecraft, since an order is made, not born. Also research has it that, no matter how ripe the beginning conditions or strong the initial desire, sustaining a world order demands creative diplomacy, institutions that function, and effective action to tweak it when situations change and support it when challenges arise. Similarly, the state of international affairs will greatly impact the future of the world to maintain economic growth in the face of growth in

population and increasing expectations. So, is Nigeria as an independent state fit and prepared with the instruments or modalities that could cushion the smooth running of diplomatic and economic activities as regards rules of engagement as the multi-world order increasingly unveils its horns in the international realm? This paper employs a descriptive method of inquiry to analyze the impact of the coming Multi-world order on Nigeria's foreign policy. Providing an insight into the understanding of the factors that are contributing to the increasing influence of international relations and how Nigeria can reposition its foreign policy to meet its domestic goals. There is a general agreement that major changes are in the oven, and that there have been questions about the international world order for the past seven decades. The most puzzling of the entire scenario is the concept of how weak and incomplete order is produced and maintained. However, it is unclear as to what should be done for rescue and if this fails, what might be a substitute for the current order since we all have not been prepared for the coming multi-world order. This paper seeks an understanding of the emerging changes in the international order, how and what can be done to ensure a tranquil transition to a brand-new global order that is characterized by institutions, power, and principles in diversity. In order to contribute to the existing field, the paper offers a theoretical view using the Hedley Bull's theory of order, institutions, international system and international society to demonstrate the changes taking place and how Nigeria's foreign policy can be repositioned to face the future. To achieve this, a probe into what order means and an in-depth search into the components that constitute the current world order will be investigated to identify the potent components that should be preserved, reformed and replaced, considering the necessary institutions in existence, that are likely to meet the facilitation and demand of sustained cooperation in a strategic arena where traditional approaches appear to be losing steam. First, the paper outlines a few competing narratives on what kind of global order is in the making. Although each contributes with valuable insights, neither can offer a complete picture of what kind of international order may result from the current changes, because neither considers fully how and where the order is constituted and maintained. Second, it turns to a conceptual inquiry into what is meant by order and how and where the order is produced and reproduced. The paper utilizes insights from English School theory to differentiate between order as a condition characterized by the achievement of three fundamental goals related to life, truth and property and order as an object constituted through a set of activities and practices linked to a specific set of values and institutions. The latter is what is often described as 'the international order', but confusingly it is also functionally equivalent to Bull's key concept of international society.

Third, in order to explain the challenges of a multi-world order, I focused on the components of socio-political elements, international integration and military elements which constitutes the international system. Fourth and lastly, I

demonstrate that the current elements of the international arena are different from that of the past. Thus, the next international system may likely consist of several orders with multiple overlapping and diverging traits nested within an overall international system in which a complex network of 'inter-order' relationships will determine the character of the future. The paper concludes that, with the challenges ahead, Nigeria will have to join her counterparts in pushing to safeguard the liberal international order, while also forging new and many different forms of relationships to manage the coming multi-order world.

II. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION: NIGERIA FOREIGN POLICY AND THE MULTI-WORLD ORDER

The Nigeria foreign policy since the era of Jaja Wachukwu in 1961-1965 as the first foreign affairs minister has been characterized mainly of Africa as its pivotal focus and as a regional power giant. This has been exhibited in Nigeria's capability to exercise hegemonic might for Africa's independence and unity, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-intentional and non-alignment or interference in the internal affairs of other nations in the region, etc. A multi-world order is that which power is shared among at least three or more important poles with the concentration of wealth and military capabilities and the ability to block or interrupt major political plans that can pose as a threat to their major interest. It is also known as the distribution of power among more than two countries with almost the same amount of economic, cultural, and military influence. Hence, some scholars may be correct when they argue that there are two predominant accounts of the liberal order's crisis: one suggesting the crisis is one of US-led post-war international order, the other unpacking the crisis as a legitimization crisis of the deeper institutions of modern international society. Some of these accounts argue about the crisis of international order as that which largely tallies with the views of the legitimization of the institutional crisis; and that accounts of the American power crisis and US-led international order are much closer to arguments on the crisis of the international arena. This is very pertinent to keep in mind because, it is much easier to evaluate whether there is a breakdown in the international order, or it is all about perception and changes in the international environment. Since the onset of the twenty-first century, almost every major global crisis from the war on terror, to the financial crisis, then Arab Spring, can be used as a case study in this context. Also, within policymakers and academia, there are claims that the liberal order concepts are in fact and not yet global in scope. However, one of such is the Iraqi war since 2003, known as 'a war of liberal hubris', based on the premise false universal and desirability of liberal values. All of the above, along with the rise of populism and the quest for politics of identity (Donald Trump and Brexit's election win have showcased the symbols of this trend). For the above enumerations of the multi-world future, What strategies should then small states pursue to assure their survival and increase their economic development and political influence? Nigeria has to rise up to the role to constitute a "scholarly

think tank” to develop its policies and economies efficiently and effectively to gainfully open up to the entire world and reposition its foreign policy for the multi-world future and militate against failures just as its counterpart, China.

III. EVOLUTION OF NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY

The evolution of the Nigerian foreign policy cannot be analyzed without first, defining what foreign policy is. This is known as the common goal that pilots the activities and strategic relations and activities of one state interaction with other states. It is mainly a government’s blueprint on its interactions with other nations considering, basically its domestic needs, the behavior of other nations, and effective plans on how to derive economic benefits from this interaction at the global milieu. One could infer from the above that foreign policy is the expression of a nation’s national goals and how such goals are related to other nations. Thus, the evolution of Nigerian foreign policy could be examined in two perspectives, namely pre-colonial era, and the post-independent era. The pre-colonial era brought into existence the entity called Nigeria, starting with the amalgamation from 1914-1960 when Nigeria was still been nursed by its colonial British master, while the post-colonial era is from when Nigeria gained her independence to date. However, for the purpose of this paper, I will focus mainly on the post-colonial period because this is the period Nigeria started exhibiting interest in her foreign policy. Before now, the paramount interest of the British masters was the key interest of Nigeria. All orders came from the majestic Queen in England who is the head of government and all administrations were aware and kept this as a trend. But after independence, Nigeria witnessed a formulation of a foreign policy that was truly indigenous and with focus on the desires and needs of Africa. Although, with the advent of new governments, it has undergone modifications from one form to another. Also, since 1960 when Nigeria got her independence, her foreign policy has continued to change from one leadership to the other, although with the same substance. Many have argued that safeguarding our national interest has remained constant in the foreign policy of Nigeria; however, the blueprint for such safeguard has varied from one leadership to another. This means in the pursuit of foreign policy the various leadership has the same objectives and goals but in divergent ways. From the Sir Tafawa Balewa’s administration on October 1st, 1960 to President Muhammadu Buhari’s administration on May 29th, 2019, the formulation and the execution of Nigeria’s foreign policy till date has been carried out by all the administrations through the Federal Ministry of foreign affairs. All of them have chased the same national interest taking a cue from the prevailing international and domestic relations which are a great determinant to the responses and actions of foreign matters. The nature of the decision structures and processes greatly determine foreign policy behavior, in some situations, periods, and on some issues. In other circumstances, the impact of the decision structures and processes on foreign policy behavior may be moderate or negligible. The nature of decision structures and

processes is just one of the factors that determine foreign policy behavior (Inamete, 1990). Other factors are the nature of the international system, national attributes and capabilities, the nature of the political system and the governmental framework, and the personal characteristics of the political leaders (Inamete, 1990). Thus, one can state, therefore, that the evolution of the Nigerian foreign policy actually commenced at the gain of her sovereignty as an independent state from her colonialist since a dependent nation has no interest of hers except that of her colonial lords.

IV. THE ORIGIN OF MULTI-WORLD ORDER

The multi-world order is a new trend in the international relations arena. It dwells on “mega changes” in the economic, political, social, and cultural activities and other aspects of possible interactions and relations among and between nations. This factor has remained a key attribute of politics since it emerged as a phenomenon of social and scientific thinking where the order has been one of the central elements of politics since its emergence as a social phenomenon and as a scientific discipline. The Westphalia and modern notion of politics in the international arena are particularly oriented towards the concept of order, its advent, transformations, and sustainability. Also, the sources of the order’s legitimacy or its material foundations have, naturally, been changing in accordance with historical forces that have shaped it, but the notion itself has never lost its significance. Although, perceived either as a goal, a situation, or, within social sciences, an analytic tool. But its paramount importance in the context of conducting social relations or their systematic explaining and understanding has rarely been questioned. Also, the end of the cold war in the 1980s is no exception to the accelerated nature of this trend in the modern history of international politics (Lisanin, 2017). Today, we are all witnesses to the dramatic upturn and sweeping trends of events across the international environment. Whether it is due to individual factors or the interaction among existing and new actors, the magnitude of change in social, economic, political, technological, and health spaces are enormous and have greatly influenced the hegemonic peace and stability the world has enjoyed over the past decades. The speed of change is such that, distortion is now the norm. This can be seen with the United States’ withdrawal from the Climate Change Agreement of 2016, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, that emerged from Wuhan, China in 2020, and the United States’ denouncement of its relations between the World Health Organization, also in the year 2020. The extent of shifts in the status quo and disruptions are greatly altering the reality and the patterns of the world we live in. Political parties and individuals who have been democratically elected with decisively closed agendas are strengthening their bases, in the accepted bulwark of liberal values, the center of the global economy is no longer situated on either side of the Atlantic, but increasingly on the east side. Similarly, globalization is being interrupted by a “negative geopolitical narrative of growing protectionism,” but is rapidly picking up pace digitally; for the first time in human history, the majority

of the world's population – 60 percent – lives in countries with fertility rates far below what is required to replace each generation (Ritika and Harsh, 2018). It is argued that the pace of change is also amplifying the impact of disruption in our lives. The world's population is increasing faster than ever from 250,000 years to reach one billion, to over 100 years to reach two billion, to just 33 years to reach three billion, to mere dozen to cross seven billion. The pace and spread of innovation, technology, and diseases continue to quicken from 50 years after its invention for half of the American homes to have a telephone, to 38 years after its invention for the radio to attract 50 million listeners, to Facebook's first year seeing six million users and within the next five, over 600 (Ritika and Harsh, 2018) and to the sudden and rapid spread of the Covid-19 pandemic across 196 territories and countries in all continents. According to Ritika and Harsh, the data is cementing its status as the new currency of business and governance given its explosive growth. 2013-2015 saw more data being created than in the entire history of the human race, and in the next two years, 1.7 megabytes of new information is expected to be created every second for every human being on the planet (Ritika and Harsh, 2020). That global institutions, politics, and norms are in flux is a given today. What functions are these mega-scale interruptions playing in this period of transition? Authoritarian and populist spread across the world is aiding a very sound and solid foundation to the end of the post-Second World War liberal international order. Thus, Asia is becoming the largest world trading region and is introducing alternate economic visions (Belt and Road Initiative) and institutions and everting the economic order led by the west. The rise of China and the economic shift south and east, is stimulating certain geographic spaces as theatres for geopolitical convergence. The pervasiveness of increased technology is fast modifying technology giants into global actors with an influencing stake in the world order, thereby encouraging a shift undeniably to multi-polarity.

V. CHALLENGES FOR THE NIGERIA FOREIGN POLICY IN A MULTI- WORLD ORDER

As the liberal order begins to exhibit signals of decay with incessant crisis on the international stage and with the emergence of a multi-world order, there is no doubt this is going to influence greatly the activities of nation-states, especially Nigeria at the international arena in the aspects of diplomacy and socio-economic partnerships, international alliances and military capacity. These challenges are enumerated below.

5.1 *Economic Partnerships*

The gradual demise of the Concert of Europe is reoccurring today as world order has struggling to cope with shifts in power thereby affecting the socio-political sectors of governments across many countries of the world. The rise of China, India, Russia, and the appearance of many medium powers such as North Korea and Iran have rejected the most relevant aspects of the order. Also, the emergence of non-state

actors like terrorist and drug cartel networks have posed a danger to order between and within nations. In Nigeria, this has grossly affected the statecraft and foreign policy perspectives. The socio-political and technological context has also changed in several relevant ways. The rise of Globalization has left destabilizing effects, starting from terrorism to climate change, pandemics and has aided technology into far many hands than ever before, with people and groups willing to disrupt the order by creating socio-political inequality on the citizens. These can be traced back to global recession crisis in 2008, loss of jobs caused by technology and trade, high flows of migration, and the ability of the social media to spread controversial hate speeches, and the current 2020, global Covid-19 pandemic that has left many populations unemployed and nations destabilized. Notably, Nigerian leadership under President Buhari has embarked on series of diplomatic trips in recent times, these have led to the signing of agreements on identification, recovery, and repatriation of illicit funds and its stranded citizens in foreign lands during the Covid19- pandemic, back to Nigeria. This has no doubt enhanced economic growth as funds stolen and stashed overseas will be invested within for the benefit of the citizens. However, with the present instability at the global stage, how is this sustainable?

5.2 *International Diplomacy and Alliances*

The liberal world order is revealing its signals of decay. Authoritarianism is on the increase not only in the obvious countries like Russia and China but also in Turkey, Philippines, and Eastern Europe. Global trade and alliances have heightened, but current meetings and debates of trade talks have ended with no results or agreements, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), The United Nations (UN), and the World Health Organization (WHO) has been unable to handle most of the world's most pressing challenges today, including the theft of intellectual properties, non-tariff barriers, the withdrawal from international agreements and the alleged concealment of viruses/ diseases. Similarly, the increased resentment towards the United States' exploitation and the imposition of sanctions on erring countries as a result of the dollar, trade wars, and the country's accumulation of debt has gained momentum. Also, the Security Council of the United Nations now has little relevance to most of the global crisis, and international groundwork has failed more widely to deal with the challenges of globalization. The Security Council has failed in the action to hold governments accountable to the mandate to protect its citizens, thus, the world is ridden with genocide as never before. The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty that allows only five member states to acquire nuclear weapons now has nine and many more are on the way since the structures for checks and balances are weakened. The EU, which is by far one of the most important regional arrangements, is battling with Brexit and disputes over sovereignty and migration. These have affected stability around the world and Nigeria is not in any way free. From 2015-2020, it is obvious that, in the middle of the above-mentioned chaos, Nigeria is still committed to the promotion

of peace and security in Africa. Nigeria's greater desire for economic integration in Africa has led the government to strengthen business relations with Morocco by signing two agreements that are strategic on the Morocco-Nigeria Regional Pipeline initiatives. This will go a long way to impact an average of three hundred million people, with the aid of electrification projects in West Africa. However, what strategies is Nigeria putting in place to ensure the stability of its foreign policy within Africa in the wake of the multi-world order?

5.3 Military Capacity

Although interstate wars are currently far from the norm, ethnic, religious, and separatist clashes involving warlords, opposition movements, and corrupt administrations are rife. Conventional warfare has given way to hybrid warfare, and other informal forms of military conflict (Schulze, 2017). In the multi-world order, the threat from terrorism will expand as groups master new technologies and use them to their advantage. There exist various global terrorist groups such as ISIS in Iraq, Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, Al-Shabaab in Somalia, the Boko Haram in Nigeria, and many others. Although terrorism in Nigeria has not been completely defeated, we are told it has been decimated significantly. The decline in the governability of the current international system has shifted emphasis on security and stability. This is notable in the previous engagements such as the Nigerian military deployment of troops by the Anglophone countries of the Economic Committee of West African States (ECOWAS), to keep the peace during the Liberia civil war in the 1990s. This mission was led by the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), which was dominated by the Nigerian army. There was also an ECOWAS and UN deployment to Angola, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Yugoslavia. In 2003, the Nigerian government further committed troops to Liberia to provide an interim presence by the detect of the United States pending the arrival of the United Nations Military (UNMIL). This led to the pressured removal and exile of the Liberian President, Charles Taylor to Nigeria. By 2004, the Nigerian troops were deployed into Darfur, the capital of Sudan to lead an African Union force in protecting the vulnerable civilians. Nigeria also began to deploy troops as part of the African-led International Support Mission to Mali in 2013. Study shows that the Nigerian military has contributed not less than twenty thousand police officers and troops to numerous United Nations missions since 1960. The United Nations India-Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM) was in 1965 and in 1978, the United Nations Interim Force Lebanon (UNIFIL). Subsequently, in 1988, the United Nations Iran-Iraq Observer Group (UNIMOG), was committed to supervising Iran-Iraq war in a ceasefire, former Yugoslavia in 1998, including East Timor in 1999 and in 2004, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The Nigerian Military has at least shown it regional and international presence in various capacities. In view of this, it is worthy to note the position they occupy and their relevance in the scheme of affairs at the international

stage. However, in all the above-mentioned successful engagements and responsibilities, when Nigeria indicated interest and contested for a seat in the United Nations Security Council, most African countries did not rally round to support her to win. On the other hand, the status of the Nigerian military apparatus by now is supposed to be at par with the United States military and should be a parameter for other regional members in Africa. The Nigerian military should at present, be able to design and fabricate their military hard and software to stand a multi-world order, not importing military equipment or armament from foreign nations. It is paramount that Nigeria manufactures her weaponry and reduce the over-dependence on other countries. If this is the case, what alliances is the Nigerian military making in case of fallout? To remain on steam, they must be ready to interact with other actors on the international stage through professional statecraft and negotiations and knowledge of prevalent technological development to enhance growth and sustain relationships in the international arena.

VI. CONCLUSION

As the globe is on the way to a new world order that we do not know yet, the disorder has become the new norm, and the world is in a continuous state of disarray. Most notable in this crisis is that the sovereignty of states is more emphasized and reconfirmed as the main building block of international relations. Similarly, technology and trade wars and economic sanctions are foremost on the international plan. International institutions, norms, and agreements are increasingly falling apart. Also, the tensed relationship between China and the United States is geopolitically increasing with new technologies dominantly nurturing new forms of capabilities and influence for violence. Thus, international relations have become more unpredictable. This scenario does not leave variant options for cooperative action. In the military, states have returned to unilateral primitive security policies as those during the Cold War. However, to overcome these unpredictable concerns is for Nigeria to put in a global framework to ensure stability measures to reposition the country's foreign policy objectives. As changes in the mix of international power are raising tensions both at the national and global levels, thereby affecting the stability of the world order. Also, since power is known to be addictive and lacks predictability and clarity, Nigeria must rise to do what is in her best interest, by forming alliances and collaborating with the various countries at any given time and by pulling out as it deems it fit her advantage, as the balance of power can shift, sometimes violently, within and between regions. Also, just as maintaining the world order is dependent on effective action and effective special statecraft, good policy, and proactive diplomacy can help Nigeria to determine how the decay unfolds, what it brings, and how to prepare. Nigeria must wake to the acceptance and responsibility of the decline of the world order. It must look inward and domestically in order to fashion policies and also put in place institutional measures that will enable its appearance on the global stage with military might and as a fast-growing economy like its

counterpart, The Asian Tiger (China). The paper concludes that Nigeria needs to work on its core values, both on hard power and norms. Nigeria must form a regional hegemony with global reach, strengthen institutions, and make policies to derive benefits. In the face of the global spread of disorder, the projection of Nigeria foreign policy through the media, forums of policy, international institutions, educational and cultural programs, in order to attract the elites of targeted countries, and also create international governance structures or standards, for a viable and sustained foreign policy.

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