
STATE INSTITUTIONS IN FOREIGN POLICY: INTERROGATING THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE'S PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS, 1960- 2005

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Political units throughout human history have been propelled mainly by the common goal of pursuing their enlightened "self-interests." This is no less true in the contemporary age when international relations and diplomacy are shaped by the compelling need to pursue national interests through well-calibrated foreign policy objectives. This is the motive of states in the international system to build domestic institutions not only for the social purpose of delivering goods and services to citizens, but also to deploy such institutions as the architecture of external relations and diplomacy. This paper examines the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) as an example of such state institutions deployed as instrumentality for the attainment of Nigeria's foreign policy objectives. This discourse investigates the nature and content of Nigeria Police's international peacekeeping activities, and argues that though the NPF has had the maintenance of security and order within the domestic space of Nigeria as its main responsibility since its inception, it still functions as an instrument of foreign policy, and through its participation in international peacekeeping operations across the world, the nation has successfully achieved some of her foreign policy goals. This is a notable example of how states in the contemporary international system have skillfully engaged their domestic institutions—not formally established for external relations purposes—for the promotion and attainment of their foreign policy objectives and national interest.

Keywords: Nigeria, Police, Peacekeeping, Security, National Interest

Since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, which serves as the foundation for modern international relations, foreign policy has focused on four major objectives: security, autonomy, welfare, and status/prestige. Other considerations, like protection of ethnic, ideological and/or religious interests, as well as the increase of global influence, have thus become mere footnotes or addenda.

Pieces of evidence of such less obvious objectives can be found in the Arab states' involvement in the Palestine/Israeli face-off, Pakistani stake in Indian-Kashmir crisis, American open and, at times, clandestine support for Israel, and the Soviet Union's support for East European countries during the Cold War era. These objectives assume different shapes and nuances in different states depending on the priorities of circumstance and the available quantity and quality of resources. However, the one thing in common is that all states recognize the need to pursue those objectives—particularly security—for overall strategic advantage. In the contemporary global system, the business of inter-state relations has assumed an all-embracing dimension such that any resource of a country can be made relevant and engaged as an instrument in the processes realization these external relations. The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is one such institutional resource that Nigeria has utilized to achieve its state objectives by deploying its officers in international peacekeeping missions. The significance of this involvement aided Nigeria in achieving its foreign policy goals of security and status between 1960 and 2005.

Origins of the NPF

The NPF, originally established in the late nineteenth century by Great Britain to protect its colonial interests in Nigeria, automatically became the official police of the newly independent state following the independence of Nigeria in 1960. Upon the country's independence, the main responsibility of the NPF was the maintenance of law and order within the federation.² Since 1960, however, the NPF has had an important secondary responsibility of international peacekeeping. NPF officers have participated in more than twenty international peacekeeping missions under the auspices of the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), Organisation of African Unity (OAU), and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).³ On other occasions, NPF officers were involved in peacekeeping operations under bilateral agreements with countries such as Tanzania in 1964, Chad in 1978, and others.⁴ For these activities, the NPF won international accolades and brought honor to the nation.

Literature Review

Although the NPF has been extensively researched, previous works of literature have been limited to examining its historical background and development as a law enforcement agency and its credibility in discharging its

1 Solomon Tai Okajare, *Understanding Foreign Policy Studies* (Akure: Pearlsberry, 2008), 28-49.

2 The Nigeria Police Force, *A Handbook of General Information*, (Lagos: Force Headquarters, 1981), 7-8.

3 Nigeria Police Force, *Police News*, vol. 3, (Abuja: Force Headquarters, 2006), 74-75.

4 Nigeria Police Force, *Police News* 3, 74.

constitutional responsibilities. The study of the NPF as a peacekeeping force or as an instrument of foreign policy has rarely been conducted in the academia. Sunday G. Ehindero's *The Nigeria Police and Human Rights* traces the origin and development of the force, examines corruption in the police, investigates the challenges of community policing in Nigeria, and explores the implication of these on the protection of human rights in Nigeria.⁵

Emmanuel C. Onyeozili's "Obstacles to Effective Policing in Nigeria"⁶ similarly examines the challenges hindering effective policing in contemporary Nigeria, tracing the root of these problems to colonialism. Onyeozili demonstrates how British colonial interests influenced the establishment of the colonial police and "demonized, discredited, and supplanted the traditional system of policing" in Nigeria. The post-colonial state has not been able to reform the corrupt police system handed down by Britain, and thus, the domestic corruption persists. Consequently, the inefficiency of the police in the discharge of its constitutional duties has led to a lack of public confidence and trust in the police, and such inefficiency has led to the emergence of ethnic militias as substitutes—a dangerous development to law enforcement and democratic process in Nigeria.

Likewise, Etannibi Alemika's "History, Context and Crises of the Police in Nigeria"⁷ surveys the development of the NPF from colonial era to the contemporary period, exploring why and how the interests and dispositions of the political class in colonial and post-colonial periods affected the performance and the public perception of the NPF. The colonialists that established the nucleus of the NPF did so in order to protect and promote the economic interests of Britain, therefore greatly lacking the Nigerian public's respect and trust. Accordingly, the current NPF lacks effectiveness due not only to their overzealousness in protecting and promoting the political class, but also to numerous inherited structural constraints and organizational inadequacies, which include "poor training, poor remuneration and working conditions, scarcity of and poorly equipped office and residential accommodation, inadequate transportation and communication facilities, obsolete firearms and inadequate ammunition within the Nigeria Police Force." As a means for Nigeria to have responsible and efficient police, both the government and the local communities need to work together to develop a broad "strategy for the

5 Sunday Gabriel Ehindero, *The Nigeria Police and Human Rights*, (Jos: Ehindero Press Nigeria Ltd., 1998)

6 Emmanuel Chudi Onyeozili, "Obstacles to Effective Policing in Nigeria", *African Journal of Criminology and Justice* 1, (2005): 32-54.

7 Etannibi O Alemika, "History, Context and Crises of the Police in Nigeria", Paper presented at the Biennial Retreat of the Police Service Commission on the theme: *Repositioning the Nigeria Police to Meet the Challenges of the Policing a Democratic Society in the Twenty-First Century and Beyond*, held at the Le Meridian Hotel, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, November 1-4, (2010)

development and sustenance of anti-corruption measures, transparency and accountability in the Nigeria Police Force.”

Using the system theory, Olawale Idowu’s “Corruption, the Police and the Challenges of a Free and Fair Election in Nigeria” explores the nexus between the corruption within the NPF and politics. The problem of electoral malpractices in Nigeria is compounded by corruption, and this persistent corruption in the NPF is the greatest obstacle to a credible electoral process in Nigeria. The activities of the police, positive or negative, continue to affect the democracy and governance in the country.⁸

Samuel Iornenge Zumve’s “Community Policing in Contemporary Nigeria: A Synthesis of Models”⁹ probes into the problems of community policing in contemporary Nigeria. Using a historical materialist approach, Zumve traces the source of the current challenges of community policing to the very establishment of the police by the British colonial administration. The British goal of furthering their own objectives in Nigeria undermined the NPF since its inception. After the independence, post-colonial Nigeria has yet to succeed in community policing owing to the gulf of mistrust and disaffection that have persisted between the public and the police. Zumve therefore suggests reorganizing the police and integrating some agencies of the indigenous social control system into the community policing project as a way to correct this in contemporary Nigeria.

Most literature on the NPF are largely colored by the writers’ concern and desire to expose the bane of responsible community policing in the country. Even where efforts have been made to discuss the NPF as an international peacekeeping agency, such efforts are brief, only mentioning the NPF’s contribution as a part of other broader discourses. For example, Harry Ford’s “Evaluating the Operational Effectiveness of West African Female Police Officers Participation in Peace Support Operations: The Case of Ghana and Nigeria” analyzes the capacity of West African police institutions in recruiting, training and deploying female police officers to international peace support missions with the primary intention of not only facilitating the participation of more female police officers but also making them increasingly effective in peace support operations.¹⁰ Although the work views the NPF as an international peacekeeping agency, the discussion does not focus on Nigerian foreign policy

8 Olawale Idowu, “Corruption, the Police and the Challenges of a Free and Fair Elections in Nigeria,” *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Clarion, Pennsylvania, <http://www.pearsoncentre.org/History>, (2010): 52-63.

9 Samuel Iornenge Zumve, “Community Policing in Contemporary Nigeria: A Synthesis of Models,” *Journal of Educational and Social Research* 2, no.9, (2012): 132-139

10 Harry Ford, “Evaluating the Operational Effectiveness of West African Female Police Officers’ Participation in Peace Support Operations: The Case of Ghana and Nigeria”, (Accra, Ghana: Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, 2008), *Occasional Paper*, no. 23

goals. Thus, the present study represents a shift from the above traditional focus on the NPF as it focuses on the police within the context of the nation's foreign policy. However, it should be added that while there have been some impressive efforts in recent times to bridge the gap of discrimination against female police officers, the state of this issue in 2005, the temporal limit of this study's scope, still remained such that the Nigerian Police, like many of its counterparts all over the world, was still largely male-dominated. The NP has a staff strength of about 371,800, in which women constitute only four percent and only eight percent of the officer cadre.¹¹ These statistics indicate a great amount of under-representation. Consequently, only a negligible few of them have been deployed on peacekeeping missions. Yet, with the impact of Beijing Conference, the UN Resolution 1325, and such other protocols, the female representation would seem to have improved slightly, even if still disproportionate to the huge female population. For example, in 2016, fifty-seven female police personnel were deployed on international peacekeeping missions.¹² It is largely believed that, when deployed, these female personnel always give good accounts of themselves. As Ghimire has argued, "Female peacekeepers have both endogenous and exogenous effects. They are more sensitive, sympathetic, and well-mannered within mission and they better maintain gender relationships."¹³

Conceptual Clarification of Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping is a crisis control mechanism, in which a force is placed between two or more belligerent groups in the attempt to restore peace with the responsibility of monitoring the compliance of the warring parties to the terms of a pre-determined ceasefire.¹⁴ The intention is to create an enabling atmosphere, within which a permanent end to conflict can be negotiated as the parties involved are likely to be irreconcilable as long as they remain in active armed combat. Peacekeeping is a confidence-building mechanism meant to reassure the warring parties that ceasefire agreements will not be disrupted.¹⁵ Thus, the trust of the factions in the peace broker and by extension the process is very important as these will largely determine the success of

11 See Nigeria Police Force, *Police Service Commission Gender Policy for Nigeria Police Force*, (Abuja: Force Headquarters, 2010), 3

12 Jimeta Lawal, "Police deploy 300 personnel for peacekeeping in 2016", *Vanguard*, February 5, 2017. Accessed on 6th September, 2018.

13 Ghimire Bishwambhar, "Contributions and Challenges : Female Participation in UN Peacekeeping Missions," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 7, no. 3, (2017): 207-213.

14 Margaret Aderinsola Vogt., "The Problems and Challenges of Peace-Making: From Peace-keeping to Peace Enforcement", in *The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt at Regional Peacekeeping*, ed. Margaret Aderinsola Vogt (Lagos: Gabumo Publishing Co. Ltd., 1992), 147.

15 Vogt, "The Problems and Challenges," 147-148.

the process. Essentially, both parties involved in the crisis should be ready for ceasefire and settlement, the atmosphere of negotiation and settlement should be sufficiently convivial, and the parties should find the peace-maker worthy of their trust. These three aspects are cardinal to the success of any peacekeeping initiative.

Most of the time, this is done with the initial consent of the warring parties as this is very crucial to the success of the peace effort and the safety of the peacekeepers. However, it needs to be stressed that this principle is sometimes violated. For instance, despite the objection of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) to a Nigerian-led peacekeeping mission in Liberia, due to the suspicion that Nigeria's Babangida administration was a major supporter of its adversary, Samuel Doe, Nigeria still went ahead with the mission, leading other West African powers as peacekeepers to Liberia.¹⁶

Despite strong international condemnation, the UN could not prevent Nigeria's action. The inability to prevent such action stems partly from the world powers' lack of interest in putting their soldiers on African soil to end the crisis initiated by Africans, especially when Africa's strategic significance in international politics had been drastically reduced following the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and the emergence of international liberalism as well as the shift of focus to the Middle-East, which because of its large oil deposits, had become a more economically important region than Africa.

Another important principle is that the sponsors of peacekeeping operations and their peacekeepers are expected not to exhibit any form of prejudice in discharging their responsibilities as such prejudice may cause the feuding parties to trust the peace process less. According to Yamalli,¹⁷ this factor is fundamental because the effectiveness of any peacekeeping operation depends on the anticipation and assessment of the warring factions. However, the levels of objectivity of the peacekeepers and their sponsors are largely determined by their preconceived opinions on the crisis. Thus, the most acceptable peacekeeping operations are the ones conducted under the platforms of international bodies such as the UN and AU. They promise to be more neutral than any smaller arrangement.

Peacekeeping operations are also expected to avoid the use of force except as a last resort to safeguard the peacekeepers themselves. This idea is reinforced by Article 2 (4) of the United Nations Charter which prohibits the use

¹⁶ Adekeye Adebajo, *Liberia's Civil War: Nigeria, ECOMOG, and Regional Security in West Africa* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), 51.

¹⁷ Nurullah Yamali, "The Use of Force for Collective Security and Peacekeeping at the End of the Twentieth Century," 5. Accessed on October 14, 2018, <https://www.justice.gov/e-journal>

of force.¹⁸ A major challenge arising from this is that ‘self-defense’ is largely subjective and is left to the discretion of the peacekeepers. Serious problems may arise when peacekeepers have pre-formed opinions or position on the crisis. Therefore, this principle and the ones mentioned above are measures that are critical to the success or failure of any international peacekeeping operations.

Peacekeeping as a modern mechanism of international peace was gradually developed by the UN, following the adoption of the provisions contained in Chapter VI, Articles 33:1 of the UN Charter, which states that:

1. The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.¹⁹

International peacekeeping was first conducted by the UN in 1948 when the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation established by the UN Security Council Resolution 50 (1948) was deployed to the Middle East during the Arab-Israeli War, and since then, it has become one of the most effective instruments of conflict management.²⁰

An Overview of the Fundamentals of Nigerian Foreign Policy Interest

The foreign policy interest of any nation represents the goals, purposes, or objectives that nation seeks to attain through its external relations, and, unsurprisingly for most nations, these goals are multitudinous.²¹ Nigeria had a long list of foreign policy objectives during the period under review. Shortly after independence in 1960, Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa—while making speech on Nigeria’s foreign affairs on the floor of the House of Representatives—highlighted the goals of the nation’s foreign policy to include the defense of her sovereignty, economic development and well-being of her citizenry, eradication of colonialism and all forms of foreign domination in Africa, promotion of global peace, promotion of the rights of all blacks and other oppressed people,

18 James A. Green and Grimal, Francis, “The Threat of Force as an Action in Self-Defence under International Law,” *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* 44, (2011): 286

19 See “Chapter VI, Articles 33 (1) of the UN Charter,” *Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice* (San Francisco, 1945), 8. Accessed on 17th October, 2018. <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/uncharter.pdf>

20 See “UN Security Council Resolution 50, 1948,” *United Nations Security Council Resolutions* (New York: UN Security Council, 1948), 20-21. Accessed on 17th October, 2018. [https://undocs.org/S/RES/50\(1948\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/50(1948)).

21 Kalevi Jaakko Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992), 83.

promotion of African unity, and non-involvement in the Cold War among others.²² This was a recapitulation of his speech to the United Nations General Assembly on October 7, 1960 when Nigeria was admitted as the 99th member of the global body.²³ Despite that, between 1960 and 2005, the country had eight political transitions, there was no significant alteration of the above list of interests by any of the administrations, except in their approach to them. For example, national security, promotion of world peace, promotion of African unity, etc. featured prominently as parts of the foreign policy objectives of all the administrations. While it is clear that Nigeria had a long list of foreign policy goals, prestige is the only one considered here because it was the primary foreign policy objective achieved by the participation of the NPF in international peacekeeping. Furthermore, it has also continued as a major national interest of the country that is hardly pronounced by the government. In addition, prestige has been given little academic attention.

Despite the fact that countries rarely declare prestige as a foreign policy objective, it has always commanded a major consideration in their foreign policies. During the Cold War, prestige had an influential impact on the Soviet-USA rivalry. For the most part, the two countries operated under the influence of self-imposed responsibility of protecting other (smaller) powers within their orbits. This deepened the arms race and other elements of the war. Also, a keen observation shows easily that the American foreign policy actions in the Middle East during the Bush years were driven more by the penchant to show off American military-industrial eminence, which is known as 'Fortress America'. This mindset was rekindled in the recent Donald Trump's disposition to China and the complex issues in the Korean Peninsula. On some of Trump's actions in response to Syria's use of surin gas, North Korea's threat to continue the testing of intercontinental missiles, and the ISIS, Bruce Thornton argues that "these bold moves alerted the world that the days of America "leading from behind" are at an end. And they have achieved something important for every foreign policy no matter its ideological compass: restoring our country's damaged prestige."²⁴

As for Nigeria, prestige has always been viewed as a way to obtain political and economic hegemony in Africa—particularly, West Africa—and relevance or influence in global politics. It is important to note that the obtainment of prestige places a nation in a position of influence, which can aid the attainment of other

22 Femi Otubanjo, "Introduction: Phases and Changes in Nigerian Foreign Policy," in *Nigeria since Independence: The First 25 Years, volume X, International Relations*, eds. Akinwande Bolaji Akinyemi et.al. (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1989), 4.

23 Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, "Maiden General Assembly Statement at the United Nations," (New York: 7th October, (1960). <http://redesign.nigeriaunmission.org/maiden-speech-at-the-un/>

24 Bruce Thornton, "Prestige as a Tool of Foreign Policy," *Defining Ideas: A Journal, Hoover Institution*, June 12, 2017. Accessed on October 20, 2018. <http://www.hoover.org/research/prestige-tool-foreign-policy>.

goals. Nigeria, at different times, has made efforts with the aim to ensure African development and enhance its own prestige. For instance, efforts to bring about an end to colonialism and apartheid policy in Africa, such as the moral and financial support for the promotion of African interests particularly through OAU Liberation Fund, had begun right from the First Republic under late Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa.²⁵ At every point, Nigeria had demonstrated its strong commitment to Africa-centered foreign policy. This commitment was taken a notch higher under General Obasanjo regime's (1976-1979), with its recognition of the Agostinho Neto-led Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), as the legitimate government against Western-sponsored Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the Front for the National Liberation of Angola (FNLA)²⁶ brought her international recognition not only among Africa nations but all over the world. In what can be termed "the scramble for Angola" in which USA, for example, massively deployed money, men, and materials through the sagacious diplomacy of Henry Kissinger and the ruthless clandestine operations of the CIA, Nigeria was still able to lead other members of the OAU to assert the readiness of Africa to claim its place in the comity of nations. Because of the apartheid South Africa's predictable opposition to the advancement of the African cause. This elevated Nigeria to the leadership position in the struggle against colonization and apartheid policy in Africa such that colonial powers like Britain and France were always conscious of Nigeria's opinions about their policies on Africa.²⁷ These activities were successful in carving a sphere of influence for Nigeria in international politics. Also, the economic assistance rendered by Nigeria to less developed nations, such as concessionary oil prices and financial assistance to Benin, Togo, Namibia, South Africa, and Niger, among others²⁸, all served as image promoters of the country, especially among the Third World nations. At a time, Ghana and Togo owed Nigeria over 30 million dollars in a ninety-day oil

25 Aluko Olajide "Nigeria's Role in Inter-African Relations with Special Reference to the OAU, *African Affairs* 72, no. 287, (1973): 145-162.

26 Solomon Tai Okajare, "A History of Nigeria's Foreign Relations, 1960-2000", in *Essays in Contemporary Nigerian History*, eds. Stephen Oladipo Arifalo and Gboyega Ajayi (Lagos: First Academic Publishers, 2003), 174-178. See also Falola Toyin and Heaton Mathew, *A History of Nigeria*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 261-26

27 Details of Nigerian diplomatic efforts in this regard can be gleaned from Wilmot Patrick, "Nigeria's Southern African Policy, 1960-1988," *Current African Issues* 8, (Uppsala, Sweden: *The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies*, (1989): 5-9. See also Garba Joe, *Diplomatic Soldiering: Nigerian Foreign Policy, 1975-1979*, (Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 1987), 101-122.

28 Aluko Olajide, "Oil at Concessionary Prices for Africa: A Case-Study in Nigerian Decision-Making *African Affairs* 75, No. 301, (1976): 425, 431.

concessionary deal.²⁹ Among many of these African states, Nigeria is seen and respected as a big brother nation.

More significantly, her leadership role in the establishment of The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and sustenance of the organization brought her prestige more than material gains. ECOWAS remained the most important channel with which Nigeria established not only her economic but also political hegemony in West Africa. For example, since the establishment of ECOWAS in 1975 for the main purpose of economic integration and development among member-states, Nigeria has been playing pivotal roles in all its activities particularly in terms of removal of all known impediments to free-flowing trading among members. The historic establishment of ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in 1990 against the backdrop of political turmoil in Liberia, and later Sierra Leone, was also significant in explaining Nigeria's pivotal status in West African inter-state relations. This body, which serves as the military wing of ECOWAS, has been sustained mainly by Nigeria's contributions in terms of money, material and human resources.³⁰ All of these activities were detrimental to the national treasury, but they brought Nigeria honor and made her relevant in global politics. Thus, many times, it would appear that Nigeria did not materially benefit from large commitments of human and material resources but rather a closer observation of such situations often reveals that Nigeria benefitted in other ways. Nigeria's continued commitment to these projects over many years showed the importance of prestige in its national decision making.

International Peacekeeping and the Attainment of Foreign Policy Interest

Nigerian international peacekeeping history is as old as the Federal Republic of Nigeria itself. Barely a few weeks after the country's independence, Nigerian police officers were in Congo (now Zaire) between October 1960 and December 1965, performing admirably and acting in line with the nation's principle of promoting international peace and stability.³¹ For a newly independent country with all of the political, economic and cultural challenges that go with independence and post-colonial legacy, seasoned observers might have expected the government to concentrate just on addressing those challenges and focus on building the Nigerian nation. However, the move towards

29 Ola Temitope, "Nigeria's assistance to African states: What are the benefits?," *International Journal of Development and Sustainability* 6, no.2, (2017): 54-65.

30 Osakwe Chukwuma and Bulus Nom Audu, "The Nigeria-led ECOMOG Military Intervention and Interest in Sierra Leone Crisis: An Overview," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 8, no.4, (2017): 107-116.

31 Francis Chigozie Chilaka and Odoh Samuel Ituma, "Nigerian Peacekeeping Operations Revisited," *Singaporean Journal of Business Economics and Management Studies* 4, no. 2, (2017): 4-5.

peacekeeping was strategic; it provided Nigeria the opportunity to successfully make its presence felt in international politics and diplomacy.

Following the sterling performance of NPF in the UN Mission in Congo in 1960, against the backdrop of Nigeria's status as an emergent, newly independent state, the NPF participated in about twenty international peacekeeping missions between 1960 and 2005. The participation of the NPF in international peacekeeping missions provided Nigeria the opportunity to promote international peace, a major goal of its foreign policy. The promotion of international peace went a long way to influence the global perception of Nigeria in the period. The idea of promoting international peace was constantly advanced by different Nigerian administrations as a justification for their approval of the participation of the NPF in international peacekeeping missions. For a newly independent country in a web of political, economic, and cultural challenges, one would have expected the government to concentrate just on addressing those challenges, which were banes of nation-building. However, the move was strategic to Nigeria in the sense that it provided her the opportunity to successfully make her presence felt in the international politics and register her name among important nations of the world.

International peacekeeping missions in West African countries such as Chad (1981), Liberia (1993), Sierra Leone (1998) and Sudan (2005) were measures to indirectly ensure Nigeria's security. Nigeria's support and participation in those international missions were relevant to her own security since those crises had the potentials of spilling over into the region. Nigeria's porous borders, especially in the northern part of the country, always made it vulnerable to security challenges from spreading conflict. In the 1980s, a considerable number of Maitatsine's jihadists that destroyed lives and properties in Kano came from Nigeria's immediate neighboring countries Cameroon, Chad and Niger. The Babangida and Abacha's administrations justified Nigerian interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone on the basis that they had the potential of spreading to Nigeria and other parts of West Africa if necessary actions were not taken.³² Although the real intentions of the two regimes concerning the interventions are still subjects of debates, recent security-related issues in West Africa have demonstrated the strong potentialities of local crises developing into regional problems. The recently identified links between Nigeria's Boko Haram and other global Islamic radical terror groups have validated this claim. Right from independence, this reality often dictated Nigeria's dispositions to some international issues, especially

32 Report of Tribunal of Inquiry on the Kano Disturbances, (Lagos: Federal Government Press, 1981). See also *The Guardian*, November 1, 1990, 9.; *Daily Times*, March 25, 1992, 19.; and *This Day*, March 31, 1995, 1-2.

those involving the security of Nigeria's close neighbors, which had groups that shared cultural and religious affinities with some groups in Nigeria.

Despite Nigeria's security needs, the primary benefit of Nigerian international peacekeeping missions to the country was international recognition. Through the NPF's international peacekeeping operations, Nigeria established herself in a position of importance in terms of regional, continental and world leadership. For example, there was strong communication between the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the NPF on issues concerning peacekeeping operations and exchange of information and technicalities. This was a professional relationship, which could not have existed if Nigeria had not possessed the relevant resource (NPF). INTERPOL is the second largest inter-governmental organization after the UN. It was established in 1923 with the primary objective of enabling cooperation among police organizations across the world: a means of controlling international crimes. The police body adopted INTERPOL as its telegraphic address in 1946 and fully adopted that acronym as its name in 1956.

Between 1960 and 2005, for instance, a considerable number of officers of the NPF served and performed credibly in about 19 UN peacekeeping missions around the world.³³ According to INTERPOL reports in 2006, Nigeria was ranked as one of the highest contributors of police personnel to the UN peacekeeping missions.³⁴ Close work with the UN for more than fifty years shows that the NPF is an international symbol of excellence, bringing honor to the nation.

The achievement of the NPF in its international peacekeeping efforts largely influenced the establishment of the Peacekeeping Department (now known as the Directorate of Peacekeeping) at the Police Force Headquarters in Abuja in 2005 by the Obasanjo's administration (1999-2007). The Department was and is still being charged with the responsibilities of explicitly training police personnel for international peacekeeping operations and facilitating robust communication between Nigeria and the outside world, including the UN and other relevant international peace promoting bodies such as the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, Ottawa, Canada.³⁵ These responsibilities they handle allowed Nigeria to establish itself in a position of leadership and influence in Africa.

33 The Nigeria Police, *Police News* 3, no. 5, (Abuja: Force Headquarters, 2006), 68. Further details on INTERPOL can be gleaned from <https://www.interpol.int/About-INTERPOL/History>

34 *Vanguard*, September 29, 2012. Accessed on October 18, 2018. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/09/29/>

35 Nigeria Police Force, *Police News* 4, (Abuja: Force Headquarters, 2006), 74.

Nigeria's African leadership was further bolstered by the role of the NPF in assisting other African nations in the area of capacity building.³⁶ The NPF was at different times in Congo (now Zaire), Sierra Leone, Cameroun, Gambia, Kenya, Botswana, and Liberia, and others training and providing logistics to their police establishments.³⁷ The West African Police Chief Committee (WAPCCO) further allowed the NPF and Nigeria to influence its African neighbors. WAPCCO is an international police organization formed by West African police forces in 1997 to jointly fight trans-national crimes such as inter alia armed robbery, drug, and human trafficking.³⁸ The NPF maintains a heavy influence on the affairs of WAPCCO due to its wealth of international experience and Nigeria's material wealth. Nigeria maintains a leadership role as the chief financier of the organization, placing it in a strategic position to control many decisions of the body.

Following the brutal killings of Ken-SaroWiwa and his eight kinsmen by General Sanni Abacha,³⁹ Nigeria was largely ostracized from global affairs and exiled from the Commonwealth. Even during this so called 'dark age' of Nigerian political history, which lasted from 1993 to 1998, the NPF, through its international peacekeeping operations, remained one of the few international channels through which Nigeria could communicate with the industrially advanced democracies of the world such as the US and France. Despite Nigeria's pariah status, the demand for the NPF in international peacekeeping missions never waned. In fact, this led to the tagging of the NPF as the best police in Africa and one of the best globally in the 1990s.⁴⁰ As further marks of honor, the NPF and a good number of its officers received several accolades for their meritorious service and display of excellence and gallantry in international peacekeeping missions. Although many of these awards were received by individuals, they represented Nigeria in those missions and their activities, and the products of those activities affected the international image of the nation.

While the NPF's honorable acts elevate Nigeria to some degree, the dishonorable acts of the NPF also reflect upon the nation. In 2005, some officers of the NPF, including a senior officer, were involved in a rape case while serving in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This crime was a breach of

36 Abiodun Daniels Famoye, "The Police and Nigerian Foreign Policy, 1960-2005: Peacekeeping Operations in Historical Perspective" (B. A. Project, Department of History and International Studies, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Nigeria, 2007), 2.

37 Famoye, "The Police and Nigerian Foreign Policy", 2-3

38 Prosper Addo, "Cross-Border Criminal Activities in West Africa: Options for Effective Response," (Accra, Ghana: Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, 2006), *Working Paper* no. 12, 15-17.

39 Kolawole Dipo, "From Isolation to Globalization: Transformation of Nigeria's Foreign Policy from Abacha Regime to the Obasanjo Administration", *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences* 3, No. 6,(2005): 874-875.

40 Nigeria Police Force, *Police News* 4, 74.

the UN code of conduct that attracted penalties⁴¹ as well as dent on the good reputation of the NPF/Nigeria only partially mitigated by the quick response of NPF management. They quickly withdrew the whole contingent, investigated the matter, and punished the erring officers as appropriate.⁴²

Strong disparities existed between the domestic and international performances of the NPF. The NPF, which was a symbol of gallantry and excellence internationally, was domestically known for their harassment and exploitation of Nigerians, especially the poor, and extra-judicial killings.⁴³ One of the major reasons for this double standard was the discrepancy in the conditions of services of domestic and international operations. While describing the working condition of international missions, a policeman who had participated in international peacekeeping operations, explained thus:

When you are there, you have everything to work with. All equipment is at your disposal... so you asked yourself what makes me not to perform? It is not that you want to go from here to there and they will say there is no fuel or that the vehicle has broken down... The UN for example has made it so superb for you to achieve your result; what you need is a little effort to achieve. And everything you do, how little it is, they appreciate it and send a commendation letter to you... even at the greatest risk, you will be happy to take the risk, because you know that if you die your family can never be poor again... so you will just say... why don't I die for my children to make it? We are talking of big money... and not empty promises... it is going to be paid immediately. *(The informant pleaded for anonymity.)*

Additionally, while erring officers on international missions were promptly tried and sanctioned, erring officers at the home front often escaped punishment mainly because of the systematic corruption, which characterized the whole of the Nigerian public sector. Consequently, the certainty that no criminal would go unpunished always made NPF officers cautious and responsible while on international assignment. The manner in which the constituted authorities respond to crime in terms of investigation, apprehension of culprits, and enforcement are the Nigerian government, and internationally, where the relevant authority is a credible international organization like the UN.

41 Nigeria Police Force, *Police News* 4, 75.

42 Nigeria Police Force, *Police News* 3, 72.

43 Open Society and Network on Police Reform in Nigeria, "Criminal Force Torture, Abuse, and Extrajudicial Killings by the Nigeria Police Force", (New York: Open Society Institute, 2010), 53-64.

Conclusion

While the primary duty of the NPF is to keep peace and order within Nigeria, its secondary duty of international peacekeeping became an important responsibility as Nigeria's avowed commitment to global peace and security now overlaps with its crucial national interests. The force, however, performed admirably and created a prominent place for itself and the countries in search for international peace. Although the international assignments did not hinder the NPF from discharging its domestic responsibilities, neither did the admirable performance of the NPF internationally positively influence their domestic ability. The effective engagement of the NPF as an institution to achieve some of Nigeria's foreign policy goals typifies a strategic practice among states in the contemporary international system of deploying state institutions for foreign policy objectives. Examples of this practice are rife. The United States is known in foreign policy and diplomacy circles for severally deploying the FBI and CIA as critical parts of its foreign policy architecture. The UK also uses Metropolitan Police as a major state institution of its foreign policy. The State of Israel deploys Mossad, its national intelligence agency, as an important state institution in its foreign policy system. Such was also true of the defunct Soviet Union, which made effective use of the KGB as a crucial foreign policy and national intelligence service agency from 1954 up to its historic collapse in 1991. Through this foreign policy decision, Nigeria has gained some level of status and prestige such that in many international fora Nigeria's image has been positively presented. Connected with this image is the steadily rising profile of Nigeria as the undisputed "Giant of Africa". Beyond this lofty profile, Nigeria has been able to strengthen her case for a seat in the UN Security Council through her commendable contribution to peacekeeping operations as partly handled by the NPF. To sustain and improve upon the outstanding track records of the NPF in international peacekeeping operations, there is the compelling need to reform the institution through regular updating and education of its personnel on emerging international relations issues and global realities as well as the trend of change and continuity in Nigeria's foreign policy objectives.