



THE POLITICS OF EXPANDING THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP AND THE PROSPECTS FOR NIGERIA TO REPRESENT AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria is identified as one of the most powerful country in Africa. The country attained her independent status from the great Brittan on 1st October 1960. Since then, Nigeria has been contributing both her military and material resources to the promotion of international peace and security. Empirical studies have revealed that, Nigeria is among the top list of troop contributing countries in the world under the UN peacekeeping operations. Similarly, Nigeria has organized and sponsored peacekeeping operations in Africa under OAU (now AU) and ECOWAS. Hence, Nigeria is been described as a country with the most intimidating credentials in terms of peacekeeping operations in Africa. Nigeria has participated in not less than 45 peacekeeping operations around the world. This study examined the politics of UNSC reform and possibilities of Nigeria emerging as a permanent member of the UNSC representing the voice of African continent. This empirical qualitative study gathered information through unstructured interview from fifteen (15) respondents who are drawn through purposive sampling. These professionals are drawn from the academic environment, professional military, officers, senior police officers, senior civil servants, and experienced legislative members. Because of the nature of the study, the identities of our respondents were not disclosed throughout. The study reveals that Nigeria has the highest records of participation in peacekeeping operations in Africa. Hence, anytime the expansion of the UNSC is open, Nigeria will be one of the most favoured candidate from Africa. However, with all the peacekeeping operations credentials of Nigeria, the study revealed that it commitments alone cannot be enough to guarantee the ascension of Nigeria to the UNSC permanent seat. Nigeria needs to effectively organize her internal political and socio-economic environment in order to compete favourably with other contenders from Africa for the seat of the UNSC, such as South Africa, Egypt Ghana and Senegal.

Keywords: United Nations, Security Council, Peacekeeping operations ,expansion, permanent membership.

1. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Organization (herein after refers as UN) was established in the year 1945 at the end of the Second World War (1939-1945). The world experienced a vulnerable destruction of life and properties in the aftermath of the Second World War. Barely two decades before the Second World War the world suffered a deadly crisis between 1914-1918

described in global parlance as the First World War. The experienced of the First and Second world war made the victorious to gathered at San Francisco from April to June 1945 to deliberate on the future of the international political system and how to secure the world for the survival of mankind and ensure the socioeconomic development of the earth. The San Francisco discussion dwelled on how to evolve a security system under collective arrangement that will save the world from the scourge of war. At the end, UN came into existence with a collective security arrangement where all nations agreed to collectively put their efforts together to confront any aggressor country/state in order to safe all.

The UN came into force with six principal organs (the UN Charter, 1945), such as the General Assembly (GA), the Security Council (SC), the Secretariat, the Economic and Social Council (ESC), the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Trusteeship Council (TC). Of all these organs, the UN Security Council (UNSC) remained the most important organ of the UN in which the decision of the organ is binding on all the members of the UN. The organ is saddled with the main responsibility of establishing the UN; that is, the maintenance of international peace and security. The idea of establishing the UN by its founding fathers (the victorious allies) is to “maintain international peace and security, and to that end, to take effective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace...” (UN Charter, Chapter I, Article I, 1945).

The membership of the UNSC is limited to only 15 countries unlike the GA in which all members of the UN are represented making it the largest congregation amounting to 193 members as of today. At the inception of the world body, the UN in 1945, it has 51 members in which all the 51 sovereign countries were automatically members of the GA while the SC was made up of only 11 members (as of 1945) with powerful five (P5) as permanent members of the council with veto power of all issues except on procedural matters and the remaining six (6) as non permanent members. The leading P5 are the victorious allies that defeated the Axis of Powers (Germany, Italy and Japan) in the Second World War. These countries with permanent membership of the UNSC vested on them by article 23 of the UN Charter are; The (People’s) Republic of China, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) now Russia, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA). Not only these countries are permanent members of the UNSC but they have veto power over every issues table before the SC except on procedural matters. The non permanent members of the UNSC are elected for a term of two years only

However, the membership of the GA steadily increases from 51 to 193 between 1945 to date. As the number of sovereign nations increases in the world, the membership of the GA is affected. But the SC membership is not like that. Since the inception of the UN in 1945 only once the membership of the SC was expanded in the year 1965 (Imobighe, 2012). In 1965, the membership of the UNSC increases from eleven (11) to fifteen (15). The amendment affected the non permanent members only from six (6) to ten (10), while the permanent five (5) remained same since 1945.

Nations states continue to agitate for the expansion of the UNSC to make it more democratic and inclusive. The present arrangement of the UNSC make it very difficult for countries to air

their grievances to the world body as the membership of the UNSC was limited to few clubs of powerful countries with veto powers capable of frustrating any resolution that is not in consonant with the interest of the P5. They can easily veto it. While it is obvious that this arrangement was not democratic, but it served the situation of the time when all that mattered to the founders of the UN Charter was to produce a powerful military organization that would coerce absolute and total compliance and whose authority over matters affecting global peace and security could not be threatened by any single power (Imobighe, 2012).

The frivolous application for the veto power by the permanent members of UNSC particularly during the period of the Cold War called for moral justification for the continued existence of the veto power. The geometric increase in the number of the UN membership from 51 in 1945 to 193 at present also raise some valid questions; the need to expand the membership of the coveted UNSC to accommodate more countries to make the UN more democratic and just; to give some countries a sense of belonging in the affairs of the UN; the emerging powers in the region of Africa, Asia and other part of the world are seriously agitating for a representation in the UNSC.

This study focuses on the relevant of the UNSC under the present global structure of international political system and how the council may be expanded to accommodate more emerging countries. The prospect of Nigeria going to represent Africa in the expanded membership of the UNSC is the main focused of the study.

Nigeria attained independent sovereign status from the Great Britain on 1st October 1960. Since then, Nigeria joined the UN and made numerous contributions to the promotion of international peace and security which is the main cardinal objectives of establishing the UN in 1945. In the last 57 years of Nigeria's independent status, the country had participated in not less than 40 peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the UN and other bodies like the OAU and ECOWAS. She committed over 250,000 troops and over \$13billion in the promotion of peace and security around Africa and the world at large (Gambari, 2004, Nwolise, 2007; Imobighe, 2012).

2. THE RELEVANT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC)

The important of peace and security cannot be overemphasizing. Peace and stability is the bedrock of socio-economic and political development of any society. Generations upon generations of mankind were confronted with conflicts of different degree and magnitude. Mankind suffered seriously from damages encountered during these conflicts; destruction of life running into millions and properties worth billions (Schlesinger, 2003). History has shown that mankind sat down 'four times' in search of workable peace formula that will bring peace and stability on the world stage for the survival of man. The first time was, at the peace of *Westphalia in 1664* after the devastating thirty years of war; the second was after the Napoleonic wars at the *Congress of Vienna in 1815*; the third time was in *Paris in 1919* at the end of the First World War; the fourth time was the *San Francisco Conference of 1945* by the end of the Second World War (Schlesinger, 2003). Of all these arrangements above, they collapsed, except the San Francisco Conference which produced the world body, the UN and so far its survive over 70 years of existence as of today (15th July, 2017). Similarly, not only the UN existed this long years but it has impacted enormously on the life of mankind and the

enhancement of international peace and security. It has brought unprecedented modernization and general redefinition of international political system (MacQueen, 2011).

The preamble Charter of the UN made it abundantly clear the role of the organization. Without any ambiguities, it's stated that, the fundamental objectives of establishing the UN is to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war which twice in our lifetime brought untold sorrow to mankind". The UN had six principal organs as mentioned earlier. But one single organ of the UN appears very strong and serve as a driving force of the organization since inception; the UNSC. The UN was established primarily to promote peace and stability based on the concept of Collective Security; the multilateral maintenance of international security rather than by sectional actions on the part of individual states or competing military alliances (MacQueen, 2011). The drafters of the UN Charter were very conscious of the weaknesses of the organizations that existed before the UN like the League of Nations (LN). Therefore, the founding fathers of the UN gave enormous powers to the UNSC under article 39, 40, 41 and 42. Thus, from the beginning, these articles gave the Security Council the responsibility of determining when a condition will warrant Collective Security action by the members and what strategy that action will take (Gambari, 2012; Imobighe, 2012; Saliu, 2016).

As we stated earlier at the introduction of this work, the composition of the UNSC is lopsided in favor of the founding fathers of the UN who defeated the Axis Powers (UN Charter, Article 23,). The P5 has a special status of not only permanent members of the UNSC but have veto power over every issue except on procedural matters. This special recognition was given to the P5 because of the role they played in ending the Second World War and their military mighty at that time. Understandably, during that time, no single power in the world would want to confront the world body on any matter where the P5 have common agreement. The P5 are therefore seen as the police men of the world. They are very instrumental in determining numerous decisions of the UN. More so, the resolution of the UNSC is always final and binding on the Members of the UN. Unlike the GA, the resolution of the GA is not binding on the members. Heads of government and Presidents of countries converged at the oval shape house of the UN in New York City to deliberate on issues without mechanism for enforcement. They are more as an advisory body to the UNSC.

Other members of the UNSC that described as non permanent members with no veto power are equally influential and therefore being a member of the UNSC carries a lot of prestige and reputation. It automatically confers on UNSC members a distinctly a unique status of belonging to the coveted club of small but powerful countries (fifteen in number) that deliberate and take binding resolution on behalf of the UN on all issues touching global peace and security (Imobighe, 2012). Therefore, is a privilege to be a member of the UNSC. Hence, any country that wants to influence anything in global politics must first struggle to penetrate into the club of the UN Security Council. Authoritative and active roles in the world can only be played in the UN through the UNSC.

The general Assembly is more of a parliament of the world body (the UN) where important issues such as promotion of international cooperation, budgetary allocations and requirements of specialized agencies are discussed and passed. Members of the GA are entitled to a single

vote irrespective of their population size, economic wealth or political power. In other words, all members have equal status and one vote. The GA has no mechanism for enforcing her resolution on the members of the world body. The GA is more like a fraternity of heads of states where political leaders converged every year and passed resolutions to the mercy of the Security Council.

The UNSC was envisaged as the central organ of UN. It is saddled with the basic function of the UN. Hence, the UN Charter confers on the members with enormous responsibilities of action with respect to the peace and security of the world (UN Charter, chapter VII, Article 39-51). All members of the UN agreed to make their armed forces available to the UNSC for the promotion of international peace and security under the concept of the Collective Security. This is captured very clear under article 43 of the UN Charter *‘All members of the United Nations, in order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, undertake to make available to the Security Council, on its call and in accordance with a special agreement or agreements, armed forces, assistance and facilities, including right of passage, necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security’*. While chapter VI of the UN Charter deals with pacific settlement of disputes through the subtle means of negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangement (such as ECOWAS, NATO, EU, AU) or other peaceful strategies of their own choice; chapter VII of same UN Charter empowered to UNSC to take measures necessary to ensure restoration of order and peace even if it means the use of military approach as shown on article 42 of Chapter VII; *‘should the security council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations blockade, and other operations by air, sea or land forces of members of the United Nations’*

The explicit empowering of the UNSC to use the military option to ensure promotion of international peace and security made the UNSC a unique organ of the UN and this feature also made the UN a distinct world body from its predecessor; the LN. MacQueen (2011: 18) captured this unique feature of the UN concept of Collective Security as *“it is at this point that the similarities between the collective security concept of the League and the United Nations begin to disappear”*.

With all this powers vested on the UNSC, the non permanent members has very limited role to play in actual sense. The council will pass a resolution on the basis of 9 votes out of 15 with a concurring voice of the P5. In any case, where the P5 are not in affirmative common position, the resolution is null and void. This brings us to the idea of veto power. The P5 has the exceptional veto power to turn out any resolution passed by the council. The used of veto by the USA and USSR during Cold War period had seriously scuttled the activities of the UN for many years. The reason is clear, instead of the P5 coming together for the peace of the world which the UN was established, the Cold War have brought so much rifts and disagreements among the most commanding states of the world-the USA and USSR. These rifts affected the UNSC and it relevance in the management of global disputes. Since the

Korean War and the return of the USSR representative to the UNSC on August 1, 1950, the Security Council has faded into the background (Palmer & Perkins, 2010). However, by the end of the Cold War and eventual collapsed of the Berlin wall and the emergence of US as the most powerful country in the world by late 20th century; the relevance of the UNSC rekindle. Because of the importance of the UNSC, the non permanent membership is keenly contested by nations. The central importance bestowed on the permanent members of the UNSC by the Charter to the exclusion of the other parts of the organization, evident in empowering them as policemen of the world (MacQueen, 2011).

Based on the numerous developments that occurred between 1965 to dates, sovereign independents nations seek for the reformation of the UNSC to accommodate more members of the world body to make it more democratic and inclusive. The called for the reformation include re-evaluation of the special status accorded to the permanent members, the veto power. This will lead us to the next part of this work; agitation for expansion of the UNSC.

3. AGITATION FOR EXPANSION AND REFORMATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) MEMBERSHIP

The UN was established 72 years back with 51 members who were signatories to the Charter at San Francisco City of the United States. But with unprecedented ascension to independence of several other countries in the 1960s; the membership of the UN significantly enlarged by the admission of the new members mostly from Asia and Africa into the fold of the world body (see UN Charter, Chapter II Article 4). Presently, the UN has about 193 members. With the enlargement of the UN membership from 51 in 1945 to 193 in 2017, other numerous developments happened to the UN but the UN Security Council membership had only 4 additional non permanent members in 1965. At the inception in 1945, the Council had only 11 members. After 20 years of the UN existence, the council admitted only 4 members as non permanent members. The new members of the UN felt terribly underrepresented in the UNSC.

Africa, with the largest number of independent states about 54 has no permanent representative in the UNSC. Similarly, Asia with 44 sovereign states has only China as permanent member of the UNSC. While, Europe with only 47 countries has 3 permanent representative and finally, USA represent the 23 countries of North America (Mapsgalaxy, 2017). This lopsided nature of the permanent members of the UNSC necessitated the agitation for the reformation of the council structure to accommodate more countries in order to give it a democratic picture for good governance.

Since the increase of the membership of UNSC in 1965 from 11 to 15, several attempts were made for the expansion of the council membership but yet not successful to date. In 1980, an attempt was made through a joint efforts put together by African-Asian-Latin American submission to the General Assembly. The proposal seeks for the increase of the membership to 21 from 15. The additional six should remain non permanent members. Under the plan, noted by Imobighe (2012), five of the six additional non-permanent seats were to be distributed among these three regional groups, while the sixth was to rotate among all regional groups with the exception of the Asian group. That campaign did not seek to alter the veto power of the P5. Under that plan, the permanent members still will have maintained

their status and own the privilege of exercising veto power. However, it did not see the light of the day because the five permanent members were not willing. Therefore, it was scuttled. Without the support of the P5, no reform can take place in the UN Security Council and the UN at large.

During the era of Boutros Boutros-Ghali as Secretary General of the UN, he attempted the idea of the reformation of the Security Council but it suffered similar fate just like earlier attempts. But the Ghanaian born diplomat and former UN Secretary General put forward a proposal during his tenure for the reformation of the UN Security Council. The UN is faced with series of challenges in the 21st century. Therefore, the call for the reformation got high momentum. A panel was set up by Kofi Anan to specifically look into the challenges facing the UN on wide range of issues with a view of recommending solutions. Sixteen Members High Panel was constituted by the Secretary General in 2003 and submitted its report on December 2, 2004 (Blum, 2005). The issue of Security Council reformation had the most attention of the members. Therefore, in their report, they made far reaching recommendations on the expansion of the Security Council to accommodate more members. In the recommendations of the Panel; members were very conscious not to hurt the sensibilities of the permanent members of the council. They made the following recommendations; plan A and plan B

Under plan A, the Security Council membership can be expanded from 15 to 24. The P5 will retain their original status of permanent membership with veto power intact. The new 9 additional members will have 6 as permanent members without veto power and the 3 will be non-permanent members. See the diagram below for the distribution of the seats based on the regional arrangements of plan A as recommended by the Sixteen members high panel constituted by Kofi Anan

Under Plan A

S/N	Continents	PWVP	PNVP	NPM	Total
1	Europe	3	1	2	6
2	America	1	1	4	6
3	Africa	-	2	4	6
4	Asia Pacific	1	2	3	6
	TOTAL	5	6	13	24

Key

1. **PWVP** stand for Permanent Members with Veto Power
2. **PNVP** stand for Permanent Members No Veto Power
3. **NPM** stand for Non Permanent Members

Source: see Blum, 2005; Imobighe, 2012

In plan B, the Panel made a recommendation for the increment of the council membership just like in the Plan A; from 15 to 24. However, the variation between plan A and plan B is based on the distribution of membership on regional arrangements and membership status. Under plan B, the P5 will continue to remain permanent members of the council with their veto power unbroken. 8 new members will be given renewable term of four years each. The 8 seats will go to the four regions equally- Europe (2), America (2), Africa (2) and Asia-Pacific

(2). Then, the 11 seats membership be distributed to the regions on two year term non renewable. The distribution of the 11 membership seat of the two year term without renewal is as follows; three to Asia-Pacific, one to Europe, four to Africa and three to America. See diagram below for clear understanding of the distributions.

Under Plan B

S/N	Continents	PWVP	FYTR	TYTNR	Total
1	Europe	3	2	1	6
2	America	1	2	3	6
3	Africa	-	2	4	6
4	Asia Pacific	1	2	3	6
	TOTAL	5	8	11	24

Key

1. **PWVP** stand for Permanent Members with Veto Power
2. **FYTR** stand for Four Year Term Renewable
3. **TYTNR** stand for Two Year Term Non-Renewable

Source: see Blum, 2005; Imobighe, 2012.

The Panel was very conscious of the role of the P5 in the promotion of international peace and security through their military mighty and financial contributions. The UN in the 21st century cannot actually be the same with the UN in the 1945 and 1960s. Therefore, the campaign for the reformation of the UNSC was very imperative considering the emergence of new hubs in the global political system. The international political environment continues to witness the rising of new states with economic viability and military capabilities second to none except the USA (Blum, 2005). Countries like Japan and Germany are making significant contributions to the UN budget and they are more like inferior nations when it comes to crucial decisions particularly under the UNSC where they are not permanent members.

The report of the Kofi Anan panel tried in striking a balance between *contributions* and *representativeness* as observed by Blum (2005). This twin factors were the major hallmark of consideration by the Panel in coming up with arrangements as shown in the diagram above. Some states are making considerable military contributions to the promotion of the central objective of the UN; promotion of international peace and security. But when it comes to financial muscle, they are not counted as contributors to the UN financial needs and budgets. States like Nigeria, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Rwanda may be categorized under this group. Similarly, Japan is one of the major financiers of the UN budget, the second highest contributor to the UN financially after the US. Germany is also among the top countries that add serious value to the finance of the UN budget. But these countries have limited number of their personnel on the field for peacekeeping operations compared to Nigeria and other countries mentioned above like India, Pakistan etc. The issue o representativeness was observed by the Panel considering the size and population of countries and regions. Indonesia is one of the most populous countries in the world but has limited economic power with poor capital income; hence, they cannot afford to make any meaningful financial contributions to the UN budget. So, the Panel strikes a deal by studying the structure of the world carefully

and observing the two factors-namely; contributions and representativeness to come up with the above recommendations.

In all the plans (A & B), they recommended the increment of the council from 15 to 24 with equal distribution of six seats to each region comprising of Europe, Asia-Pacific, America and Africa. The good news for Nigeria and Nigerians, in both plans, Nigeria featured on top as a preferred candidate that would represent Africa. In both plan A&B, the Panel recommended Nigeria and any other country between Egypt and South Africa for a permanent seat without a veto power (Blum, 2005). The contribution of Nigeria in the promotion of international peace and security cannot be overemphasized. Since the attainment of sovereign independent status in 1960, Nigeria has been at the forefront collaborating with the UN and other global actors in the advancement of peace and stability for the development of mankind. Nigeria has been a member of the UNSC four times before now (non permanent member). No any African country that attained that position. This will lead us to the next part of the work that argued Nigeria as a giant of Africa and deserved that position anytime the Security Council deems to be expanded.

4. NIGERIA AS A GIANT OF AFRICA

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the most populous black nation in the world. With over 180m people (NPC Projection, 2016), the country attained independent on 1st October, 1960 from her former British colonial master (United Kingdom). Nigeria joined the world body (the UN) few days after attaining sovereign status on 7th October, 1960. The intention of Nigeria to join the UN is basically to chart a new course for the new country in the scheme of global affairs. It is the intention of Nigeria to adopt multilateralism in her transactions with international community built on the basis of her national interest (Gambari, 2005; Akinterinwa, 2012). With the size and strategic location of the country, couple with her abundant natural and human resources, many people in Africa look at Nigeria as a country that will bring prosperity not only to West African region but the whole of Africa as a whole (Gambari, 2005).

Shortly after independence, the country has evolved a foreign policy built on good neighborliness. The country was then determined to project and protect the interest of not only her immediate neighbors but the entire African continent (Gambari, 2008, Saliu, 2016). Nigeria wielded serious influence on the activities of African countries in global affairs. At a point, as noted by Saliu (2016: 142), Nigeria “unilaterally determine the course of action for Africa.” The diplomatic influence of Nigeria around 1970s and 1980s cannot be overemphasize. The period 1970s and 1980s is been described as the golden age of Nigerian foreign policy (Gambari, 2004; Akinterinwa, 2012). The leadership of Murtala/Obasanjo regimes has been adjudged as the best era of Nigeria’s external relations. Nigeria took several authoritative and assertive decisions on the world stage. The country leads the struggles against apartheid regimes and decolonization of several African countries (Gambari, 2004; Gambari, 2008)

The oil receipts of Nigeria in the 70s were the major catalyst that gave the country the impetus of dictating and directing the local affairs of the African countries on the world stage. There was no way Nigeria would have been able to confront the western world on the issue

of decolonization and on apartheid in Africa without having massive earnings coming from her oil explorations (Saliu, 2016). The huge oil money and international activities engaged by Nigeria around 1970s and 1980s succeeded in elevating the status, credibility and capabilities of the country on the international scene and making her one of the most powerful country in Africa and relatively a notable country in the communities of third world nations (Otubanjo, 1989).

Nigeria was at the forefront in the formation of Non Alignment Movement (NAM) in the 1960s which was basically established to protect the interest of third world countries and new emerging nations that were not willing to be identified with either western capitalist countries under US leadership or the communist bloc under the leadership of the defunct USSR. Nigeria in the 1970s spearheaded the promotion of liberation of African countries by using her huge oil revenue. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU) became an instrument of liberating African nations from the clutches of colonialism and western exploitation. OAU successfully launches Nigeria on the world stage because of her several interventions that led to the decolonization of numerous African countries and liberation of some from apartheid regimes such as Angola, Zimbabwe, and South Africa etc. Nigeria equally led the formation of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975 which tried in galvanizing economic integration of the Sub-region. ECOWAS gave birth to EOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in the 1990s which was built principally to promote peace and security based on African approach on the African soil. ECOMOG was brainchild of Nigerian government in the 1990s aim toward promoting peace in the trouble countries of Liberia and Sierra Leone (Nwolise, 2007). Nigeria used her resources both in terms of capital and human in the advancement of international peace and security. Nigeria joined the UN immediately after attaining independence in October 1960 with the objective of promoting the basic role of establishing the UN; promotion of international peace and security based on the principle of collective security as enshrine in the UN Charter.

A serious study of the philosophy underlying Nigerian foreign policy would show clearly that the country subscribes to the idea of multilateralism which demonstrates the conduct of Nigerian foreign policy through channels that involve several countries. It is on records, that no country in Africa that contributed in the course of peace promotion in the world like Nigeria. The country had participated in nt less than 48 UN peacekeeping around the world under the auspices of the UN alone. Nigeria has made an impressive record of global peacekeeping operations. However, her starling profile has been biased to Africa (Saliu, 2016). This could not be a surprised to any keen observer of global politics and African politics in particular because Nigeria perceived herself as a giant of Africa and a principal actor in determining political direction of the continent since 1960s (Osuntokun, 2005; Saliu, 2012). A careful study of Nigeria's record of peacekeeping participation shows a clear concerned for African continent. The obvious reason cannot be far fetch than her pursuit of African peace policy centered on Africa first before any other interest. If Nigeria failed to show concern for African countries, other interest outside the continent would interfere into African affairs which might affect the leadership role of Nigeria in the continent (Saliu, 2016).-

Nigeria's role in the promotion of international peace and security cut across the latitude and longitude of the world. In other words, Nigeria played important role in peace advancement that cut across bilateral, multilateral, continental, regional and sub-regional divide of the world. The participation of nations in the promotion of international peace and security was not a money venture driven policy but rather a prestige. Nigerian peacekeepers have earned several accolades from the UN for wonderful meritorious services. The involvements of Nigeria in peacekeeping operations have boosted the prestige and prospects of the country to represent Africa in the prestigious club of UNSC in the event the expansion of permanent membership of the council is open for considerations.

Nigeria as the giant of the African continent has the potentials of leading the African countries to greater height. Many political observers of international politics have argued in favor of Nigeria to represent Africa in the expanded membership of UNSC. The criteria of becoming a member of the UNSC though very cumbersome but Nigeria have shown some characteristics features and credible capabilities of joining the UNSC.

5. NIGERIA IS THE CREDIBLE COUNTRY TO REPRESENT AFRICA IN THE EXPANDED UNSC

The significance of the UNSC in international political system and in international peace and security in particular cannot be overemphasizing. Membership of the council among the non permanent members is usually keenly contested. Securing the non permanent membership for a just period of two years is a privilege status that many countries of the world aspired to join but few were opportune. There is no single organ of the UN that wields so much power like the UNSC. The council wields so much power which determined the faith of several nations through their numerous resolutions. The UNSC as observed above have limited number of membership with the P5 having permanent status with other 10 members elected for a period of two years only.

Since the emergence the UN in 1945, there are several agitations for the expansion of the council to accommodate the newly independents countries particularly during 1960s which saw the proliferations of numerous countries as sovereign nations. The council witnessed its first and only expansion of the membership in 1965 when it was increase from 11 to 15. As the membership of the UN continues to enlarge, agitation for the reformation of this important organ of the UN continue to generate debate among the political class and the academia.

In the 21st century, the move for the reformation of the UNSC continues to gain momentum, particularly for its enlargement to accommodate the growing number of emerging states in third world countries. No doubt that Nigeria will have some challenges in her quest for permanent membership of the UNSC as proposed by numerous committees and at different international sittings.

However, looking at the credentials of Nigerian state in the area of peacekeeping operations and compared with her competitors in Africa such as South Africa, Senegal, Ethiopia, Libya, Kenya Algeria and Egypt are far less. If Africa will have a slot in the expanded UNSC, Nigeria will be the most deserving country in the continent. Similarly, if the consideration is

to give Africa two slots, Nigeria for sure would take the first slot before considering any other country in the continent (Imobighe, 2012). Huge literature have been written acknowledging the credibility and capabilities of Nigeria to represent the continent on the enlarge UNSC (Akhigbe, 1998; Akinterinwa, 2005; Uwimana, 2006; Akindele, 2011). The intimidating credentials of Nigeria’s role in the UN peacekeeping can be observed from her numerous participations in the promotion of international peace and security around the world and Africa in particular under the UN and other regional bodies like the OAU, AU and ECOWAS. See the list below showing the missions participated by the Nigeria state in both UN led peacekeeping operations around the world and other bodies from 1960 to 2016 .

LIST OF THE PEACE MISSIONS IN WHICH NIGERIA HAS PARTICIPATED AND CONTRIBUTED TROOPS FROM 1960 - 2016

S/N	Name of Mission	Period	Remark
1.	UNOC-United Nations Operations in Congo	1960 –1964 (UN)	Concluded
2.	UNSF-United Nations Security Force in West New Guinea	1962 –1963 (UN)	Concluded
3.	UNIPOM- United Nations India – Pakistan Observation Mission	1965 –1966 (UN)	Concluded
4.	UNIFIL – United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon	1978 –1983 (UN)	Concluded
5.	UNDOF – United Nations Disengagement Observer Force in Syria	1974 to date (UN)	Ongoing
6.	UNIMOG – United Nations Iran/Iraq Military Observer Group	1988 –1991 (UN)	Concluded
7.	UNAVEM I, II & III – United Nations Angola Verification Mission	1989 –1999 (UN)	Concluded
8.	UNTAG – United Nations Transition Assistance Group (Namibia)	1989 –1990 (UN)	Concluded
9.	UNAMIR – United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda	1993 –1996 (UN)	Concluded
10.	MINURSO – United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara	1991 to date (UN)	Ongoing
11.	UNIKOM – United Nations Mission Iraq – Kuwait Observation Mission	1991 – 2003 (UN)	Concluded
12.	UNTAC – United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia	1993 –1993 (UN)	Concluded
13.	UNOSOM I & II – United Nations Operation in Somalia	1992 –1993 (UN)	Concluded
14.	UNOMOZ – United Nations Operation in Mozambique	1992 –1994 (UN)	Concluded
15.	UNPROFOR – United Nations Protection Force (Yugoslavia)	1992 –1995 (UN)	Concluded
16.	UNCRO – United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia	1995 –1996 (UN)	Concluded
17.	UNMIBH – United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina	1995 –2002 (UN)	Concluded
18.	UNASOG – United Nations Aouzou Strip Group (Libya/Chad)	May–Jun 1994 (UN)	Concluded
19.	UNMOT – United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan	1994–2000 (UN)	Concluded
20.	UNPREDEP – United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (Macedonia)	1995–1999 (UN)	Concluded
21.	UNTAES –United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium	1996–1998 (UN)	Concluded
22.	UNAMSIL –United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone	1999–2005 (UN)	Concluded
23.	MONUC – United Nations Organization Mission In The Democratic Republic of The Congo	1999–2010 (UN)	Concluded

24.	MONUSCO – United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	2010 – Present (UN)	Ongoing
25.	UNTAET – United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor	1999 –2002 (UN)	Concluded
26.	ECOMIL – ECOWS Mission in Liberia	Aug. to Oct. 2003 ECOWAS	Concluded
27.	OPERATION HARMONY I Chad (OAU)	1979 –1980 (OAU)	Concluded
28.	OPERATION HARMONY II Chad (OAU)	1981 –1982 (OAU)	Concluded
29.	ECOMOG – ECOWAS Monitoring Group-Liberia	1990 –1997 ECOWAS	Concluded
30.	UNMIK – United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo	1999 to date (UN)	Ongoing
31.	ECOMOG – ECOWAS Monitoring Group in Sierra Leone	1997–2000 ECOWAS	Concluded
32.	UNMIL – United Nations Mission in Liberia	2003–To date	Ongoing
33.	AMIS – African Union Mission in Sudan	2004 – 2007 (AU)	Concluded
34.	UNAMID – African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur	2007 To date UN/AU	Ongoing
35.	UNMIS – United Nations Mission in Sudan	2005 – 2011 (UN)	Concluded
36.	UNOMIG – United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia	1993 – 2009 (UN)	Concluded
37.	UNMEE – United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea	2000 – 2008 (UN)	Concluded
38.	MINURCAT – United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad	2007 – 2010 (UN)	Concluded
39.	ONUB –United Nations Operation in Burundi	2004-2006 (UN)	Concluded
40.	UNOCI – United Nations Operation in Cote D'Ivoire	2004 to date (UN)	Ongoing
41.	UNMISS – United nations Mission in South Sudan	2011 to date (UN)	Ongoing
42.	UNISFA – United Nations Interim Force in Abyei	2012 to date (UN)	Ongoing
43.	ECOMIB- ECOWAS Mission in Guinea Bissau	2012 - date ECOWAS	Ongoing
44.	AFISMA – African – Led International Support Mission in Mali	2013 to date (AU)	Ongoing
45.	MONUSCO- UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo	2010 to date (UN)	Ongoing
46.	MINUSMA- UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali	2013 to date (UN)	Ongoing
47.	UNSOM- UN Assistance Mission in Somalia	2013 to date (UN)	Ongoing
48.	MINUSCA- UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic	2014 to date (UN)	Ongoing

Source: Department of Peace Support Operation, Army Headquarters, Abuja.

Similarly, Nigeria can boast of senior military officers who commanded various UN missions around the world as force commanders and chief military observers. In addition to UN missions, Nigeria equally led numerous ECOWAS and AU missions across the continent. No country in Africa has the history of military commanders commanding UN missions like Nigeria. Below is a list of gallant Nigerian army officers who distinguished themselves in service that made the country very proud in the world of peacekeeping operations. Starting from the famous first ever UN peacekeeping mission in Congo in 1960 to the latest one in Central African Republic (CAR).

**NIGERIAN ARMY FORCE COMMANDERS/CHIEF MILITARY OBSERVERS
DEPLOYED IN VARIOUS PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS: 1960 - 2013**

S/N	Field Commanders	Code	Mission	Country	Duration
1.	Maj Gen JTU Ironsi	ONUC	UN	Congo	1960-1964
2.	Maj Gen G Ejiga	OP HARMONY	OAU	Chad	1982
3.	Maj Gen DN Dogonyaro	ECOMOG	ECOWAS	Liberia	1990 – 1991
4.	Maj Gen E Unimna	UNAVEM I	UN	Angola	1991
5.	Maj Gen CA Garuba	UNAVEM II	UN	Angola	1991 – 1998
6.	Maj Gen RM Kupolati	ECOMOG	ECOWAS	Liberia	1995
7.	Maj Gen Ishaya Bakut	ECOMOG	ECOWAS	Liberia	1991 –1992
8.	Maj Gen T Olurin	ECOMOG	ECOWAS	Liberia	1992 –1993
9.	Brig Gen JN Shagaya	ECOMOG	ECOWAS	Liberia	Sept –Nov 1993
10.	Maj Gen J Inienger	ECOMOG	ECOWAS	Liberia	1993 –1996
11.	Maj Gen E Opaleye	UNAMIR	UN	Rwanda	1993 - 1994
12.	Maj Gen SVL Malu	ECOMOG	ECOWAS	Liberia	1996 – 1998
13.	Brig Gen MM Khobe	ECOMOG	ECOWAS	Sierra Leone	1997
14.	Maj Gen T Shelpidi	ECOMOG	ECOWAS	Liberia	1997 – 1999
15.	Brig Gen Bamaili	UNAMSIL	UN	Sierra Leone	1999
16.	Maj Gen O Mujaperuo	ECOMOG	ECOWAS	Liberia	1999 – 2000
17.	Maj Gen ML Agwai	UNAMSIL	UN	Sierra Leone	2001 – 2002
18.	Maj Gen S Iliya	MONUC	UN	DRC Congo	2003 – 2005
19.	Maj Gen FO Okonkwo	UNAMSIL/AMIS	UN/AU	Sierra Leone/Sudan	2004 - 2005
20.	Lt Gen JO Owonibi	UNMIL	UN	Liberia	2004 – 2006
21.	Maj Gen CRU Ihekire	AMIS	AU	Sudan	2006 - 2007
22.	Maj Gen NFK Aprezi	AMIS	AU	Sudan	2007
23.	Gen ML Agwai	UNAMID	UN	Sudan	2007 - 2009
24.	Lt Gen CI Obiakor	UNMIL	UN	Liberia	2006 – 2008
25.	Maj Gen NFK Aprezi	AMIS	AU	Sudan	2006 – 2007
26.	Gen ML Agwai	AMIS/UNAMID	AU/UN	Sudan	2007 – 2009
27.	Maj Gen Obi	UNMIS	UN	South-Sudan	2010 – date
28.	Maj Gen CI Obiakor	UN Military Advisor on PSO in New York	UN	HQ UN	2008 – 2010
29.	Maj Gen SU Abdulkadir	AFISMA	AU	Mali	2013 – date

Source: Department of Peace Support Operation, Army Headquarters, Abuja.

One major attribute for consider ring nations in joining the UNSC is the contribution of member states to the enhancement of international peace and security as it is the cardinal objectives of setting the UN. From the figures presented above, Nigeria is noted to have the most intimidating credentials in Africa and therefore, has the highest prospect of representing the continent in the expanded UNSC anytime soon.

Over the last 57 years, Nigeria has committed more men and material resources toward keeping peace and security in Africa and elsewhere than any other country in the African continent (Saliu, 2016). For Nigeria, the expected dividend from these enormous investments in peace building is not actually fiscal reward or international accolades but a promise to joined the UNSC as a permanent member representing African continent anytime the premier council is considered for expansion. In Africa, the Nigerian state has spearheaded robust and vigorous military and diplomatic engagements to reinstate and preserve peace and stability in a number of countries across the continent and elsewhere in the world.

Considering these huge contributions in the maintenance of regional peace, given its enormous human and natural resources, given its experience and capabilities in conflict management, and given the changing nature of world conflict, the Nigerian state stands in better position to be the first country for consideration to represent Africa and black nations in the Security Council. Thus, it is on the basis of aforementioned; it become very imperative to grasp the historical significance of the ongoing United Nations reforms efforts, and for us to correctly locate Nigeria's rightful position in this reform process as a member of the UNSC.

From the interview conducted, the opinion of the experts is that, Nigeria deserves the position to represent African continent in the UNSC but there is need for the country to do more in the area of her internal democracy and the issue of corruption which persistently continue to draw the country backward. One of the expert say, Nigeria deserves the position based on her previous sacrifices and contributions. But he quickly intervenes by saying that those things (UNSC permanent membership) are not given by mere ascription, there are certain criteria. The expert lamented that Nigeria contributes less than 1% to the UN budget, therefore, he advised Nigerian government to inject more fund in peace building in order to increase her chances of representing the continent anytime the UNSC membership is open for expansion. He attributed the new leadership in Nigeria under President Muhammadu Buhari has boosted the integrity of the country around the world. The P5 are major factor to be considered on who become a member of the UNSC. The new leadership in the country commands the respect of those leaders who sees Nigeria as regional and continental leader. Nigeria requires the support and cooperation of the P5 to beat her other competitors in Africa particularly South Africa and Egypt. Nigeria should not just assume that the P5 will give Nigeria support without playing her diplomatic game correctly. He cautions Nigeria leaders to be wary about white supremacy over blacks and the politics of francophone countries. He lamented that "they may likely support and prefer South Africa or Egypt." (Anonymous, interview conducted on 11th January 2017 in Abuja, Nigeria) Nigeria need to work hard: with her population size, resources, contributions to PKO and sacrifices in keeping the peace on behalf of the UN in Africa and elsewhere, she is the best country to represent Africa in the reformed UNSC.

Another peacekeeping expert who wishes to remained anonymous stress that Nigeria has credibly performed excellent in the area of PKO. However, he says PKO is just a component among the criteria for joining UNSC. There are several other conditions that Nigeria is far away from meeting. These includes: the pervasive corruption in the country, poor governance, poor records of human rights and above all fragile security system. He said other contending countries in Africa like South Africa has more subtle records of human rights and stable political system with economic stability. Equally, he acknowledged that Egypt and Ghana will not easily relinquish it to Nigeria on a platter of gold. In other words, they are going to give Nigeria tough times. Nigeria has all the potentials it takes to lead Africa to a greater height. But the county he asserted is engulf with poor political leaders who are extremely very greedy. He advised Nigerian political elites to concentrate on ensuring good governance at all cost that will strengthened her domestics conditions and get rid of corrupt practices. With all the potential leadership features ascribed to Nigeria and her natural

resources may not be a guarantee that Nigeria would proceed to be an automatic member of the UNSC. The politic of super powers will be a great determinant factor. Therefore, Nigeria need to put her house in order by deploying her natural resources to lobby other countries to support her candidature or else it will be a mirage.

The seat of UNSC is highly sensitive and political as observed by one anonymous interviewee. He believed that other countries that contribute largely to the UN budget are not members of the UNSC. He mentioned countries such as Germany, Japan, and Canada. He observed the contributions of Nigeria towards peacekeeping as a factor but cannot be guarantee because according to him, UNSC is a game of super powers that involves high stake competition. However, he acknowledged the starling performance of Nigeria in the realm of PKO which would be of great advantage to the country when a comparative study is conducted with other countries like South Africa, Egypt, Ghana and Senegal. Nigeria need to very strategic in the game of UNSC permanent seat membership. Our internal democracy need to be strengthen through the observance of fundamental human rights, the need for an improved social services and complete eradication of systematic endemic corruption.

In a similar vein, one of the respondent assert that, the commitments of Nigeria to the UNPKO since independence to date has been a plus to the Nigerian state when she want to seek membership of the UNSC permanent seat. He contends that the combined records of South Africa, Egypt, Ghana and all other African countries put together cannot overweight the records of Nigeria. He said in the interview, at one point in time, Nigeria has fulfilled all the requirements of becoming a permanent member of the UNSC except democratization. Today (15th July, 2017), Nigeria is practicing democratic governance since 1999. That a democratic Nigeria stands ahead of any African country to represent the continent in the reform UNSC. It has been observed that western nations have reduces their troop's contributions to the UNPKO in African countries. Therefore, Nigeria quickly grasp the opportunity by doubling her efforts in increasing the supply of troops in all UN missions in the continent to ensure there is no gap created by the shortfall from the western countries.

However, another peacekeeping expert has mixed feelings about democratizing the veto power of the UNSC. In his candid opinion, "I don't see the power to veto to be democratizing in the immediate". There is going to be some incremental reforms in the UN which may include the Security Council. He contends that the super powers are still the super power; nothing has really changed in his believed except, the emergence of China over the time. Therefore, Nigeria should not expect the immediate expansion of the UNSC to the extent of acquiring the coveted veto power. Nigeria has all the features of hegemony power in Africa and there is need for Nigerian leaders to collectively put the country on the right path than struggling for the position of the UNSC permanent seat. Whether we like it or not, Nigeria is a regional hegemony in terms of its resources, power and population. All Nigeria need right now is to translate those features into strength. We have other countries that contribute resources to the UN, such countries are Japan, Switzerland, Norway, Canada Germany, and Finland but no troops. In the opinion of the respondent, Nigeria will be the best country to represent Africa in the Security Council where crucial decisions that affect the world are taken. Considering the records of Nigeria in the advancement of international peace and

security, Nigeria is the most qualified nation in Africa to sit by the side of the great powers and make decisions for the propagation of global peace and stability.

But in the opinion of another expert, Nigeria should not continue to depend on her past glories for the position of the UNSC permanent membership anytime it is open for expansion. Nigeria is going to have stiff opposition from her other sister African countries. No doubt, Nigeria has exceptional records compared to any other country in Africa in terms of PKO, but that alone cannot guarantee the ascension of Nigeria to this coveted club of powerful countries in the world. more so, the politics of Anglophone and Francophone countries in Africa may likely play a vital determinant factor on who will emerge to represent Africa in UNSC. The chances of France and all her colonial allies in Africa coming together to support one of theirs may be very high. This cannot be the same with Nigeria and her ex-colonial master, the Great Britain. The internal politics in the UN among the P5 will highly influence the results of who represent Africa in the expanded Security Council. Therefore, Nigeria should concentrate much on settling her internal security challenges and other social needs of her citizenry than campaigning for the UNSC permanent membership.

6. CONCLUSION

The contribution of Nigeria in the area of peace building and maintenance around the world and Africa in particular cannot be overemphasize. One fundamental feature of Nigeria's external relations on the globe is her commitments and laudable efforts in the promotion of international peace and security through the instrumentality of the peacekeeping operations, Nigeria demonstrate unique efforts in Africa through her troop's contribution in peace missions around the world. Nigeria became increasingly active in peacekeeping operation around the globe immediately after the end of the Cold War period. Any study of Nigeria's foreign policy and external relations that devoid capturing her role in peace maintenance is null and void to the extent peacekeeping operation is missing (Sanda, 2012). The history of Nigeria's participation in peacekeeping operations is dated back to 1960 with her first appearance in the Congo mission (ONUC). The over five and a half decades of Nigeria's independent, the country had participated in not less than 48 peacekeeping operations in and outside Africa. Most of the peacekeeping operations involves by Nigeria were led and sponsored by the UN. Although Nigeria in some instances had also demonstrated courage, military and economic strength by leading OAU (now AU) and ECOWAS missions in Africa.

There is no doubt; the study has revealed the impressive records of Nigeria in the field of peacekeeping operations. No compromised, Nigeria has one of the most intimidating records of peacekeeping operations that supersede any other country in Africa. Most of the countries that are likely to compete with Nigeria into the race of who represent Africa in UNSC have far below records when compared with Nigeria. In fact, the combined records of South Africa, Egypt, Ghana and Senegal in terms of global peacekeeping put together cannot be near Nigeria. However, Nigeria should not continue to keep glorifying her past records and assume they will get the UNSC permanent membership seat easily. The politics of UNSC permanent seat is a high stake phenomenon. The intense politics in the UN cannot be taken

for granted. Those involved in playing it in Nigeria must be ready to play it with vigor, dedication and all seriousness.

Nigeria has faced several oppositions from other African countries even in some positions that ordinarily Nigeria would have emerged without competition but always is not the case. Nigeria should work hard to ensure she remain the preferred candidate for the position. Nigeria is required to put her house in order by eliminating all the security challenges bedeviling the country. Pervasive corruption in Nigeria will be detrimental factor to Nigeria's journey to join the club of powerful countries in the world. Corruption is one of the major factors that affect the economic growth and development of Nigeria thereby retarding the country. Though, Nigeria has returned to democratic rule since 1999 but the history of human right violations and observance of rule of law in the country is still at its lowest ebb. The loggerhead between the three arms of government in Nigeria particularly the executive and legislature is not healthy for a country that wants to join the crop of few influential nations in the world. Therefore, there is need for a total and comprehensive separation of powers between the three arms but equally maximum collaboration and supportive of each other between the three arms for good governance and efficient service delivery.

Essentially, Nigeria government and her diplomats spread across the globe should work out modalities that will allow them penetrate the principal factors that are likely voters in order to win their votes. Nigeria should concentrate heavily on winning the support of African countries because the election may likely to be conducted in the General Assembly of the UN. Nigeria should not forget the influence of the P5 and other relevant countries. The preference of the five powerful countries is very crucial. Nigeria should work hard to ensure she garner the support of all the P5 so that none of them uses her veto power against her candidature.

Though, the general enthusiasm for the enlargement of the Security Council has diminished but Nigeria should not lower her tempo in the politics of strategizing to be the most favored candidate from Africa anytime it is consummated. Generally speaking, reforms are never attained on platter of goal. More so, is going to alter the power configuration of the world. in other words, any change in the UNSC membership, status and number will automatically affect the prestigious status occupied by the P5 in the global politics of 'who is who'. Therefore, no matter how long it takes, the highly expected reform will one day crop up. Nigeria as a credible country in Africa should not relent in building up her support base both locally and internationally.

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