

The Role of Nigeria in West African Peace Keeping

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Abstract: Peace keeping is a third party intervention which operates with a set of guiding principles that include the consent of the parties to the conflict, impartially and the non-use of force except in self-defense. This research examines the historical development of Nigerian peace keeping mission and her peace keeping role in West Africa from 1990 -2007 using Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau as case study, also the research review the major challenges facing Nigeria peace keeping mission, because in the 1990s, the West African region experienced an outbreak of inter/intrastate conflicts. In many of these studies, the analysts have focused on intervening roles of groups and organizations, such as the United Nations (UN). What this study found missing, however, is an in-depth analysis of the role of individual member states such as Nigeria. The theory of collective security was adopted. The research is qualitative in nature and historical analysis derived mainly from secondary sourced materials was used. The conclusion drawn from the findings revealed that Nigeria plays pivotal peacekeeping roles in the West African sub region and she is also faced with many challenges in the course of her peacekeeping endeavor.

Key words: Peace Keeping • Nigeria • Conflicts • West Africa

INTRODUCTION

Totality of human experience over the years has shown in practical reality that there can be no societal development and human security without peace. Undoubtedly, if the idea and practice of searching for peace are as old as humanity, then it follows that the history of wars and conflict, which are its harbingers is older [1]. Peace is conceptualized not just as the absence of war and commotion but also the presence of justice. This explains why [2] posited that peace has become a value humanity has come to desire greatly.

According [3] "Peacekeeping is the use of international forces as a buffer between warring parties pending troop withdrawal and negotiation". As remarked by Adeniji [4] "Peacekeeping as an operational mechanism of the African Union is a recent innovation". International law codifies that securing international peace is the responsibility of the United Nations. The increasing peacekeeping demands around the globe have overwhelmed the United Nations this underscores the relevance of the Peace and Security Council of the AU. In the view of Kirgis [5]. "Peace keeping consists

essentially of observer mission and lightly armed forces monitoring cease fire, operating in an essentially static mode with the consent of the parties involved".

Peace keeping operation was one of the foreign policies pursued by both the military and civilian administrations in Nigeria and it was geared towards promotion and Protection of national interest, promotion of West African integration, support for African unity and Promotion of international cooperation. Thus, the focus on African as the center piece of the country's foreign policy has always been maintained since 1960. Nigeria first participated in peace keeping operations in 1960 with the deployment of personnel to Congo and ever since, the list of country with Nigerian peace keepers is endless. In the course of this work, the focus would be on West Africa, precisely Liberia, Sierra -Leone and Guinea Bissau. Nigeria successive participation in both the United Nation (UN) and African Union (AU) led peace keeping operations across the world has effectively place it as a regional power house in maintaining peace, security and stability on the continent. Peace keeping is according to Akinterinwa Bola [6]. "One of the novel techniques of conflict Diplomacy which has gained wide currency in

contemporary international era". The concept of peace keeping was developed by the United Nations at the start of the cold war in the late 1940. It could be said therefore that peace keeping operations are essentially practical mechanism developed by the United Nations to control armed conflicts and to facilitate their resolution by peaceful means. It is a third party intervention often but not always done by military forces and police to assist parties in transitioning from conflict to peace by separating the warring parties and keeping them apart. The key thing in global peace keeping is the men and women risking their lives in the interest of peace, Nigeria has more of those people than any other country in the world (The Guardian, May 31,2009). The implication of Nigeria's participation in peace keeping in Africa is that Africa's problem could eventually become Nigeria's problem as some of these countries share boundary with Nigeria. However, Nigeria cannot ignore African problems rather she must maintain the principle of Afrocentrism. Thus, Nigeria's involvement in peace keeping operations on the continent is in line with its foreign policy. This commitment undergirds its determination to participate actively in conflict resolution in every part of the world. The policy of conflict prevention, resolution and management is borne out of the realization of the imperative of peace and security for sustainable democracy and economic development in Nigeria and West Africa sub region [7]. Ayoakinbobola and Tunde Adebawale [8] posited that peacekeeping involves measures that help to create and maintain ceasefires t buffer zones between belligerent states or groups there by facilitating the search for lasting peace through diplomatic channels. Nigeria's participation in international peace keeping has been consistent theme in the conduct of her foreign policy since attainment of independence. In the view of Bobrow *et al.* [9] "While it is true that the country has demonstrated her peacekeeping role in the 1970s and 1990s through the UN and OAU, the decade of the 1990s has witnessed a significant expansion in the circumference of Nigeria's participation in peace keeping operations" The country has sought to give practical expression to its objective foreign policy dealing with maintenance of international peace. Nigeria's involvement in West African peace process stems from her belief that socio-economic development and integration of Africa can only be achieved and attained under the atmosphere of peace and stability. Nigeria has heavily invested huge amount of resources in promoting peace and stability. In promotion

of peace and stability projects within the region, Nigeria for example, strongly believe in the indivisibility of peace, that a threat to peace anywhere in Africa is a threat to peace everywhere in the continent [10]. By extension, an Africa at war and distress is also a threat to world peace and security [11]. Thus, Nigeria's intervention in the promotion of peace and stability was a logical foreign policy corollary to the dedication of its leaders to Africa independence. The country's involvement in conflict riddled areas of West Africa in had cost Nigeria huge amount of resources in the efforts to advance peace and stability in the later [12]. Nigeria for decades has been recognized as the "Giant of Africa" this was perhaps because of its leading role in peace keeping and peacemaking activities across the political landscape of Africa, which fosters peace and regional integration [13].

Statement of the Problem: Conflict has been one of the challenges faced by man since creation as it is an inevitable aspect of human interaction. West African region, has faced a lot of conflict and countries like Nigeria has tried in making sure that peace exist but at the end some challenges tend to hinder their role and these challenges include: problem of manpower, training and doctrine, logistics, funding, Administration, language barrier etc.

Research Questions:

- Why did Nigeria pursue peace keeping as one of its foreign policies?
- What are the significant roles played by Nigeria in ensuring peace in West Africa especially, in Liberia Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau?
- What are the challenges of Nigeria's peace keeping role in West Africa?

Research Objectives: This Research, Seeks To:

- Examine peace keeping operation as one the foreign policies Nigeria pursues and the history of Nigeria's participation in peacekeeping mission.
- Examine the role of Nigeria in ensuring peace in conflict riddled Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea Bissau
- Examine the challenges and limitations faced by Nigeria's contingents in peace keeping operations.

Scope of the Study: The research covers Nigeria's peace keeping role in West Africa: Liberia and Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau.

Significance of the Study: The study is significant because it essentially covers the Nigeria's peace keeping role and the problems associated with Nigeria's peace keeping operation. Conceptually, the study will contribute to the existing literature on peacekeeping in West Africa. The study is also significant from an empirical perspective, since the findings will be relevant to other future individuals (African or global), peacekeeping framework analysis.

Limitations of the Study: Through the course of this research, difficulties encountered were: the conflicting statements from various articles, textbooks, journals etc. and some financial constraints with respect to accessibility of needed data.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study adopts a case study and historical method to analyze the role of Nigeria in West Africa peace keeping. This study evaluates data relating to role of Nigeria in the West Africa. The research also, includes evaluation of historical background of Nigeria's peace keeping mission; it further examines the challenges facing Nigeria's peacekeeping endeavors. The research method is therefore qualitative. However, the qualitative method is used because details from the data generated, for the purpose of analyzing the role of Nigeria in West Africa peace keeping cannot be quantified and also because of the flexibility of qualitative method (That is allows for broader range of utilization of data) unlike the quantitative method of analysis that is commonly used in the analysis of natural science. Besides, quantitative method tends to be more specific (Concern for quantity).

Furthermore, Flexible Qualitative Interpretation Of data Leads to a Holistic View of Past, Present and Future Issues: In using case study and historical approach, the research makes use of secondary data generated from diverse sources. Peacekeeping is a critical subject of research and policy strategy for various political reasons. It is a subject that is widely documented in the conceptual and empirical literature in various disciplines and professions. Therefore, there is a rich and diverse, sometimes complex pool of information on the subject. From the stand point of research methodology, the very sensitive and sometimes controversial nature of peacekeeping as a subject and as an activity implies that diverse methods should be employed in order to gather

the quantity and quality of information that would enable a thorough analysis of the subject especially as it is pertinent for this research.

In this research, most of the documents analyzed were text books magazine, internet articles, and scholarly literature, Information from published and unpublished scholarly work

Research Design: The study considered that role of Nigeria in West Africa peace keeping is plagued by some challenges. Consequently, the research was designed as a case study using the conflict situation in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau to bring out the general challenges facing the role of Nigeria in West Africa peace keeping. The background and the Nigeria's interventions in the conflict shall be highlighted to bring forth the challenges accordingly. Furthermore, the research sought to proffer strategies to overcome the challenges facing Nigeria's peace keeping mission in West Africa to ensure successful peace keeping operation leading to sustainable peace in West Africa.

Instruments for Data Collection: The instruments used for data collection were books, magazines, journals, newspapers and the internet.

Method of Data Analysis: Information obtained was analyzed qualitatively to arrive at the synthesis presented. However, in some instances, historical and case study approaches were adopted. The work relies on secondary source of data which is qualitative in nature.

Historical Background of Nigeria Peace keeping Mission: The concept of "Peacekeeping" as it is presently conceived and applied in the UN system was not originally provided for in the charter of the world body. It is rather a product of the unexpected changing circumstances of the post-world wars and since political organizations are necessarily organic in their development, changing according to the will, which informed them and the circumstances which they encounter, the UN system had no option other than to adapt to the needs of the time. Since its introduction, the concept has received a very prominent place in the workings of the organization. The UN has chiefly relied upon the concept in its effort to maintain international peace and security. The idea that led to the formation of the UN in the first place is summarized in the preamble to the charter. "We the people of the United Nations determined to save the succeeding

generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our life time has brought untold sorrow to mankind ...to practice tolerance and to live together in peace with one another as good neighbor and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security....” This appeal to maintain international peace and security has in fact been the most pressing problem facing the UN. In the same vein, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which is the subject of our study, has no provision for Peacekeeping operation as it is presently used in its charter. It borrowed the idea from the UN system. The history of Nigerian peacekeeping mission began in 1960 when she joined the United Nations. Since then, Nigeria has been committed to the goals, principles and objectives of the United Nations. This is evident in her contributions towards the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security. Beginning with the Mission in the Republic of Congo in 1960, Nigerian armed battalions have meritoriously served in many UN regional peacekeeping missions around the world. Nigeria has been actively involved in various ways in the struggle against disintegration of the African continent. This made her to champion the establishment of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, 1975), the Organization for African Unity [OAU (1963), now AU (2001)], the Non-Aligned Movement, and other organizations concerned with bringing peace to regions and peoples across the world. Moreover, Nigeria contributed significant financial backing, troops and resources that made ECOMOG’s creation possible. Nigeria also spearheaded the military and diplomatic engagements to restore and maintain peace in Congo, Liberia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and a host of other countries. In particular, Nigeria’s reputation as a regional stabilizer, conciliator and peace builder in the West African sub-region—using Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast peacekeeping experience, remains unmatched. Nigeria’s positive and successful intervention in some conflict riddled areas and the restoration of democracy under the auspices of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) made her to be a major player towards global peace, security and stability. Nigeria’s long-term chairmanship of the UN Special Committee against Apartheid; and its leadership of peacekeeping missions in Chad (1979-82), Liberia (1990-98), Sierra Leone (1991-2000), Guinea Bissau (1998-00) and Côtê d’Ivoire (2000) are all reflections of its commitment and role to peace building, peace keeping and conflict resolution. Focusing on

Nigeria peacekeeping mission in West Africa, this research looks at the Liberian, Sierra Leonean and Guinea Bissau crisis and Nigeria’s intervention in installing peace, through ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). The research interest is basically on the contributions of Nigeria to peacekeeping mission around the West African region. Generally, some of the peace initiatives that Nigeria have been involved in includes: Congo (ONUC) 1960-1964, Battalion operations; New Guinea (UNSF) 1962-1963, Military Observers; Tanzania (Bilateral agreement) 1964, Battalion operations; India-Pakistan (UNIPOM) 1965-1966, Military Observers; Lebanon (UNIFIL) 1978-1983, Battalion operations and Staff Officers; Chad (HARMONY I, bilateral agreement) 1981-1982, Battalion Operations and Staff Officers; Chad (HARMONY II, OAU) 1982-1983, Brigade operations; Iran-Iraq (UNIIMOG) 1988-1991, Military Observers; Liberia (ECOMOG) 1990- Division (-) 24 operations; Iraq-Kuwait (UNIKOM) 1991, Military Observers; Angola (UNAVEM II) 1991-1992, Military Observers; Sierra Leone (NATAG) 1991, Training Team; Angola (UNAVEM III) 1992-1995, Detachment; Namibia (UNTAG) 1989-1990, Military Observers; Western Sahara (MINURSO) 1991, Military Observers; Cambodia (UNTAC) 1992- 1993, Military Observers; Somalia (UNOSOM) 1992-1994, Battalion operations and Staff Officers; Former Republic of Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) 1992, Battalion operations and Staff Officers; Mozambique (ONUMOZ) 1992 Military Observers; Rwanda (UNAMIR) 1993, Battalion operations;

Gambia (NATAG) 1993, Training Team; Aouzo Strip (UNASOG) 1994, Military Observers; Israel (UNTSO) 1995, Military Observers; Liberia-ECOMOG; Sierra Leone-UNMIL; and Dafur peace initiative.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Assessment of the Role of Nigeria in West Africa Peace

Keeping: Nigeria has in different ways demonstrated active support initiatives in multiple areas of logistics, finance, strategic operations and even moral action with many states in the sub-region and Africa entirely. A strategic example is the Liberian and Sierra Leonean crises [14].

Since its inception, Nigeria has remained committed to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and by extension; its monitoring group (ECOMOG). Nigeria’s commitment to these organizations is examined in the relationship to her peacekeeping efforts in the West African region.

The initiative for ECOWAS stemmed from a desire by some of the member states, particularly Nigeria, for an economically and politically stable and developing region. In addition to championing the initiative, Nigeria has continued to commit to its existence, operation and by extension, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). Apart from augmenting the goal of total political independence for Africa with both financial and human resource assistance

Nigeria's Peace Effort in Liberia: The immediate history of the Liberian crises can be traced back to 12th April 1980, with the assassination of President William Tolbert and other key officials in his government by Master-Sergeant Samuel Doe, on charges of corruption, neglect of the military and mismanagement of public funds. This unconstitutional action however, received the endorsement of Liberians due to what was perceived as domination and injustice of the minority by the dominant Americo-Liberians in the socio-political and economic landscape of Liberia [15]. The popular support for President Doe by the masses was however, short-lived as he embarked on filling key positions within the civilian and military administrations of his Krahn ethnic group. The growing dissatisfaction with the Liberian administration, in addition to President Doe's alleged interference with the electoral process and the decompositions of the electoral commission, which eventually declared him the winner of the election, added to the existing tensions. The subsequent degeneration of the crisis into a seven years civil war (1989-1999) was later precipitated by the dismissal of Mr. Charles Taylor, a minister in President Doe's cabinet, on charges of corruption. This promptly led to the waging of guerrilla attack from Nimba province in Ivory Coast on December 1989 in an effort to oust President Samuel Doe from power under the umbrella of National Patriotic Front of Liberia. The war exacerbated with the further spilt of Taylor's group known as Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) into another group known as Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) led by Mr. Prince Johnson. The conflict in Liberia soon proved to be a West African regional problem, as evident in the trans-border dynamics of the conflict, spilling into Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Guinea. As the situation worsened with the internecine destruction of lives and property and total breakdown of law and order, the ECOWAS monitoring Observer Group (ECOMOG) initially, composed of six countries: Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea

and Togo and whose primary role was to mediate and restore peace to Liberia was mandated otherwise to peace enforcement in the crisis-ridden region and tasked with the responsibility of facilitating the evacuation of citizens mainly women and children of member-states and other Liberians that were trapped in the war zones. The force was also to establish some form of order through effective policing action especially in Monrovia while arrangement was being made for establishment of interim government. Unable to get a cease fire, the ECOMOG force led by Nigeria landed in Monrovia on 24th August, 1990 under heavy attack from Charles Taylor's NPFL. ECOMOG led by Nigeria fought its way into Monrovia to create a beachhead that enabled the evacuation of many trapped civilians of various nationalities (Vogt 1992). Within a month of landing, ECOMOG's strategy had evolved into conventional offensive, with the aim of driving Taylor's troops out of Monrovia and creating protected buffer zone around the capital city. By November 1990, ECOMOG force led by Nigeria, controlled Monrovia and a cease fire subsequently was established.

It is important to note that Nigeria supplies about 80 percent of the ECOMOG 12000 soldiers. Nigeria was as such considered the test case for regional strategic capability as a future peacekeeper for Africa.

During the first phase of Liberian crisis, Nigeria recorded impressive performance of its acclaimed leadership status in Africa.

According to the Federal Ministry of Information [16] "Nigeria is determined to restore peace by separating the warring factions in a sister country, Liberia, which has been temporarily destabilized and without any legitimately constituted authority". To ensure this commitment, Nigeria has expended huge financial resources to the sum of five billion naira on Liberian intervention operation since 1990 [17].

Nigeria played an unparalleled role in putting an end to the crisis in Liberia; crisis that had the potential to spill over in the neighboring countries. Nigeria contributed immensely to the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), an interventionist mediation force to end the protracted Liberian civil war, where the government of Nigeria puts the financial cost at 8 billion dollars (Over N800 billion) apart from a large number of lost and maimed soldiers in 1987. Nigeria shared the joy of the return to democracy by Liberia. Additionally, The then Nigeria's president, Gen. Babangida served as the Chairman of ECOWAS thrice while the community's secretariat in Abuja a project mainly funded by Nigeria

was completed [18]. ECOMOG led by Nigeria, succeeded in July 1997, after eight years, the force suffered a huge loss both in materials and men in the hands of an intransigent rebel movement. ECOMOG led by Nigerian troops, achieved some level of success and facilitated an internationally acclaimed free and fair election which enthroned Mr. Charles Taylor as the president of Liberia in 1997. The elections were predicated on the Revised Abuja Accord of 1996 by which warring parties agreed, inter alia, to restructure the sectional Armed Forces of Liberia, into a trained national army (ECOWAS JOURNAL, 1997).

The second phase of the Liberian civil war began in 1999 when a rebel group the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), emerged in northern Liberia. In early 2003, the movement for Democracy in Liberia emerged in the south and by June/July 2003, Charles Taylor's government controlled only a third of the country; Monrovia appeared to be in danger of being occupied and devastated. Therefore, Taylor resigned on 11 August 2003 and was flown into exile in Nigeria. ECOWAS started a second peacekeeping operation in Liberia from 9 September 2003; ECOMIL was formed for the operation which started with the deployment of 3,563 troops from Nigeria, Benin, Gambia, Togo, Guinea Bissau, Mali and Senegal under force commander, Brigadier General Festus Okonkwo. ECOMIL was policing Liberian cities of Monrovia and Buchanan, while the rural areas remained uncontrolled. (Citizens for global solution, 2003) In November 2005, Liberia held a successful democratic election under the auspices of the UN. While trying to explain to some observers and commentators who felt that Nigeria should not have given asylum to Taylor, Bolaji Akinyemi said leaders within the international community who negotiated that Taylor should be given asylum are not fools," [19]. On 17 March 2006, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the newly elected president of Liberia, submitted an official request to Nigeria for Taylor's extradition [20]. However, from the way it was played out, Obasanjo's diplomatic strategies greatly helped in the restoration of peace in Liberia.

Nigeria's Peace Efforts in Sierra Leone: The Republic of Sierra Leone is a country in West Africa.

About two years after the start of the civil War in Liberia, the civil war in Sierra Leone broke, it was led by Foday Sankoh and Revolutionary United Front (RUF) against the government of president J.S Momoh. It was believed that the war was supported by Charles Taylor led

NPFL making use of some neighbouring territories. Following a long period of military rule, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah was elected President of Sierra Leone on 17th March, 1996. Little more than a year later, on 25th May, 1997, he and his democratically elected government were overthrown in a bloody coup led by Dissident Military Officers and Rebels from Sierra Leone's long standing insurgency. In March, 1998, a peacekeeping force under Nigerian Leadership entered free town and restored Kabbah and his government.

It is also possible that, given the proximity of Liberia to Sierra Leone, some of the crisis in Liberia, particularly violence against civilians and smuggling of arms and ammunitions as well as some diamonds, had earlier spilled over into Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone crisis was a spillover from the Liberian which was planned by Charles Taylor in July 1991, to revenge against the government of Sierra Leone for aiding ECOMOG with bases and logistics support especially for allowing Nigeria Air Force to conduct bombing missions on his positions from Sierra Leone. On another scenario, the war was perceived as essentially a strategic tussle for securing authority and control of the local economic resources than of national political control [21].

(RUF) invaded Sierra Leone from Liberia in March 1991 with the assistance of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), resulting in several hundred Nigerian troops being deployed to assist Sierra Leone a fellow ECOMOG member, to defend its capital, Freetown [22]. The situation in Sierra Leone after coup degenerated into anarchy and threatened the peace and security of the sub region ECOMOG, led by Nigeria, intervened and flushed the military junta and brought back the ousted civilian government. The conflict in Sierra Leone lasted till 2001 when the peace agreement was signed in Lomé between the government and the Revolutionary United Front, RUF. The holding of parliamentary and presidential elections in 2002 and the stabilization with the support of Nigeria and activities of the UN, led to the return of relative peace in Sierra Leone. It is worthy to note that without Nigerian's quick intervention in Sierra Leone, the conflict would have degenerated beyond proportions. However, ECOMOG led by Nigeria became saddled with the responsibility of defending the civilian government by fighting complex and unending battle with a coalition of rebel forces. The peace enforcement mission in Sierra Leone by Nigerian troops turned out to be war attrition with the RUF and proved a very difficult experience in peace

keeping operation after eight years of fighting, all the parties to the conflict signed an agreement in Lomé, Togo in July 1999, signaling the end of hostilities. In addition Nigeria also contributed about Eighty percent of the troops. According to Mahmoud [23] during the 6 January 1999 rebel invasion of Freetown, Nigerian jets bombed rebel's positions in the capital and its soldiers shell led the outskirts of eastern Freetown. ECOMOG eventually forced the rebels to withdraw from Freetown after more than six weeks with the loss of 3,000 civilian lives and massive destruction of the city by arsonist rebels. About 100 Nigerian soldiers died intervention." [24]. In various accounts of ECOMOG's peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone, several different reports indicated that Nigerian soldiers dominate the mission. However, ECOMOG troops were made up of soldiers from several different military contingents' from different ECOWAS member-states but the Nigerian Contingent made up eighty percent of the force. Nigeria equally suffered huge casualties.

Nigeria spent billions of dollars in the operation that also claimed many lives. So engrossed was Nigeria in this extravagant show of good neighborliness, that ECOMOG at a time, was being equated with the Nigerian Army [25]. The Nigeria's military operation in Sierra Leone was estimated as costing Nigeria about \$1 million per day [26]. President Obasanjo revealed in November 1999 that Nigeria had spent about \$8 billion on the entire ECOMOG operations from 1990 [27].

The Nigeria displayed serious commitment in the resolution of crisis in Sierra Leone. For Nigeria, it has been a mission of relative success based on the exhaustive capital and logistics support spent by Nigeria on regional peacekeeping.

Nigeria's Peace Effort in Guinea Bissau: Conflict witnessed in Guinea Bissau, broke out in June 1998 after President Joa Bernardo Vieira sacked his Army Chief of staff, Brigadier Ansumana Mane over allegation that the top Guinean military officers were smuggling weapons to the rebels in Senegal. More than 350,000 people were displaced and hundreds, most of them noncombatants were killed when the crises erupted. The arrival of more than 600 ECOMOG peace keepers led by Nigerian troop in the former Portuguese colony stemmed the tide of the rebellion and provided a major boost for ECOWAS peacekeeping initiative in the region. Contingents of soldiers were deployed Nigeria to the Capital Bissau. Nigeria ensured that the peace agreement signed at 21st summit of the ECOWAS in Nigeria capital, Abuja and

ratified in Lomé, Togo was not violated. President Vieira stepped down and handed over power to a new 10 member interim government of National Unity headed by Prime Minister Francisco Fadul. The deepening conflict between the government and the military juntas plunged the country into a seven-year political and economic unrest with frequent coups and power transition. (National universities commission and University for peace, 2012). The ECOMOG operation led by Nigerian troop was supported by France. However, Nigeria's role in restoring peace in the country was outstanding in West Africa. What the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau, demonstrated was the enlarging regional spread and implication of the Liberian conflict. It is important to state that Nigeria's regional strategic operation was always enhanced by her huge defense budget and defense expenses which run from US\$2.2 billion in 1999 to US\$2.4 billion in 2000. Nigeria ipso facto stands as the highest military spender in West Africa. (The military balance, 2002).

Challenges of Nigeria's Participation in Peacekeeping Operations: Starting from 1960, when Nigeria began her peace keeping operation, she has encountered a lot of challenges which include the following;

The problem of Manpower: The problem of man power especially in the Nigerian Army became obvious in the 1990s when the country began to experience insecurity. Troops had to be drawn from different units across the country to form up a complete battalion with the required strength that meets the United Nations standards for deployment to the conflict areas. In extreme cases, some personnel were posted to deploying units as late as the time of their departure to the mission area. These individuals were deployed without pre-induction training. Obviously personnel of such ad hoc units that are filled at the last minute for a peacekeeping operation arrive in the mission area without adequate knowledge of each other's capabilities and deficiencies. This created problem of command and control in the Nigeria's participation in peacekeeping operation.

Training and Doctrine: Another major problem facing Nigeria's peace keeping operation in West Africa is that of training and doctrine associated with Peacekeeping Operations. Different countries have different training doctrines for the training of its personnel. The Nigerian Army was faced with the problem of training doctrine for

Peacekeeping Operations. This problem had manifested itself in various operations. In the case of ECOMOG, Anglophone oriented troops were operating alongside francophone troops which further compounded this problem. The armed forces of Nigeria should come up with a suitable doctrine for Peacekeeping Operation. This would impact positively on all aspects (Organization, training, leader development, material and selection of soldiers) of the armed forces of Nigeria's preparations for and conducting peace keeping operation.

Logistics Problems: Logistic problems are another set of hindrance impacting on Nigeria's participation in Peacekeeping Operations. In the face of non-availability of centralize logistical support for ECOWAS sub regional peacekeeping, participating countries suffered shortfalls in lift and other logistical capabilities. As a result, most of them relied on Nigeria which was itself logistically hard pressed. The nature of the logistic challenges faced by Nigerian troops deployed on Peacekeeping Operations include: lack of sufficient quantity of vehicles, lack of adequate medical facilities, insufficient communication equipment and individual soldier "kitting" the successful accomplishment of the tasks of devices [28].

Funding: Nigeria suffered financially during the first intervention in Liberia in 1990. It was always in search of financial support from other ECOWAS members for the mission. Nigeria established an "endowment fund" for the operation with an initial amount of 50 million dollars being proposed. This fund received no contributions. Generally, assistance from other sources was slow in coming. Eventually ECOWAS member states that contributed troops threatened to withdraw from the force for lack of funding. This situation caused Nigeria to single-handedly provide substantial financial support for further ECOMOG operations. The sinking of substantial financial resources to restore peace in other countries while Nigeria's social and physical infrastructures were sorely in need of repair was difficult to rationalize with the public at large.

Administration: Nigeria's participation in Peacekeeping Operations in West Africa had problems in the area of administrations like medical care, burial pay and allowance. Soldiers in deployed units also complained of lack of promotion opportunities and such simple things as not being able to observe holidays. These shortcomings were largely attributed to poor unit and sub-unit leadership. The poor quality of administration in deployed

units has caused significant embarrassment to the Nigerian army and the country in general [29]. Apart from the fact that Nigeria lacks modern sophisticated military equipment to compete favourably with their peers in the international arena, the process of selecting troops to peace missions is also flawed. Some battalions are loaded with clerks, cooks, batmen and orderlies who can barely handle a weapon, but are 'well-connected'. It is not unusual for those in position of authority to influence the selection process, so competence and capability get compromised.

DISCUSSION

The findings in the research has shown much evidence, to support Nigeria's professed motivation and intent for her peacekeeping roles in West Africa, the research showed that Nigeria played a significant role as an ECOWAS member-state. Nigerian foreign policy has been characterized by a focus on Africa and attachment to several fundamental principles: African Unity and independence; peaceful settlements of disputes and regional economic cooperation and development.

Among the Various Problem Encounter by Nigerian Peace Keeping Contingents Are: Firstly, Poor funding, the member states of ECOWAS did not make true their commitment to properly fund the operation of the peacekeeping organization. It was only when Nigeria offered to take up the bills of the operation that the efforts of the operation started to yield positive result and when she was faced with economic problems, it invariably affected the peace keeping operation because the challenges resulted to inadequate funding.

Also, the findings also showed that ECOWAS members have been financially handicapped making the operation to experience poor arms supply, example, during the Liberian and Sierra Leone operation was not in any way pleasant to members of the Nigerian Armed Forces. For example, in Liberia, it had become quite disturbing discovering that some of the arms and ammunition meant for use during the operations were not inspected before they were delivered to the operation areas. In Sierra Leone, most of the weapons were obsolete and were already worn out from their use in Liberia. The basic rifle was still the FN rifle that had been in the Army's inventory since the 1960s. The rifle was no match to the AK-47s used by the rebels which not only fired more rounds per second but could operate effectively under the harshest

conditions Secondly, there were the logistics problems occasioned by different colonial orientation of the force contributing to the sub-regional peace organization. Since the forces that constituted the ECOMOG group were drawn from various West Africa states, with their different colonial experience (The Anglophone and francophone West Africa) there were the language and other cultural problems presented by this colonial experiences which inevitably impacted negatively on the operations of the forces.

Thirdly, Problem of manpower. Troops had to be drawn from different units across the country to form up a complete battalion with the required strength that meets the United Nations standards for deployment to the conflict areas. Obviously personnel of such ad hoc units that are filled at the last minute for a peacekeeping operation arrive in the mission area without adequate knowledge of each other's capabilities and deficiencies. This created problem of command and control in the Nigeria's participation in peacekeeping operation. This was as a result of lack trained and competent military personnel because of underemployment and improper training of the available which will constitute the required number for the peace keeping operation.

Lastly, Problem of Administration. Nigeria's participation in Peacekeeping Operations in West Africa had problems in the area of administrations like medical care, burial pay and allowance. Soldiers in deployed units also complained of lack of promotion opportunities and such simple things as not being able to observe holidays. These shortcomings were largely attributed to poor unit and sub-unit leadership. The poor quality of administration in deployed units has caused significant embarrassment to the Nigerian army and the country in general [30]. Apart from the fact that Nigeria lacks modern sophisticated military equipment to compete favorably with their peers in the international arena, the process of selecting troops to peace missions is also flawed. Some battalions are loaded with clerks, cooks, batmen and orderlies who can barely handle a weapon, but are 'well-connected'. It is not unusual for those in position of authority to influence the selection process, so competence and capability get compromised.

The findings in this research also revealed that Nigeria since her independence, has remained committed to achieving economic and political stability for Africa, especially for the West African sub region, but the Nigeria's intent or rationale for taking the leading role in

peacekeeping in West Africa remain constrain, because in spite of the measures put in place by the Nigerian government in combating conflict the period of 1990 was characterized by waves of conflicts in various parts of West Africa. For instance, the Liberian conflict which engulfed the political system.

Summary: This research projects examined the concept of peacekeeping with special reference to the role of Nigeria in West Africa. Her peacekeeping outfit established to re-enforce peace in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau. The need for this study was informed by the Security Implication of the Liberian, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast crises within the West Africa sub-region. The fact that if the conflict was not addressed the effect of it would spread to other African states and disintegration of Africa. Nigeria had several challenges, many of which were as a result of preexisting problems within ECOWAS. These challenges included: the lack of funds, manpower etc Particularly, because many if not all the member-states, with the exception of Nigeria, genuinely lack the financial means to adequately meet their individual domestic obligation study revealed that, Nigeria has attempted to stay true to her proclamations at independence, Nigeria would subscribe to the principles of multilateralism, peaceful resolution of conflicts and equality of states.

CONCLUSION

The study examined the role of Nigeria in peacekeeping in West Africa, operations since the country's attainment of independence in 1960. Nigeria doubt played a prominent role in the peacekeeping and integrative efforts in the continent and particularly in West Africa. The country's efforts at maintaining peace in some conflicting spots across the globe have also been commended, it should be noted that the human, material and financial losses the country has incurred in these involvements cannot be overemphasized. Hence, having lost more than two thousand (2,000) of its soldiers and expended over \$10 billion, the country was however considered to have lost more than it benefited. Nigeria, given her geographical location in the West African region, she has to continue to play the part of a coordinator, by constantly finding ways to maintain stability. Nigeria has shown herself not only as an important actor within the West African sub-region, but

also discharges responsibilities as regional leader. These positions, as well as the commitment underpinning them, have been expressed more forcefully in the defense of West Africa which in cooperation with other countries within the sub-region and abroad has helped in protecting the social, economic and security sectors of West Africa countries, through her leadership of the ECOMOG operation in Chad and the subsequent ones in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Cote d'ivoire and Sao Tome and Principe, to its active involvement in Mali recently, Nigeria has demonstrated its will, ability and commitment to maintaining peace across West Africa. The country has also demonstrated its resolve for the promotion of economic, political and diplomatic cohesion in West Africa by helping to secure the sub-region as well as rid it of protracted civil wars through her commitment of oil resources.

Recommendations: It is recommended that, Selection process for peacekeeping mission should be done based on merit and competence to ensure optimum result; Part of the resources expended on peacekeeping missions should be channeled for the maintenance of internal security, as every nation has to survive before pursuing other interests in the international.

Nigeria should in view of the importance of maintaining peace and security create a more harmonious and integrated peacekeeping body in its efforts in the process of peacekeeping. In this regard, the forces so envisaged should be established well ahead of any crisis in the sub-region, perhaps in peace time. The forces so established should have common training orientation in peacekeeping.

The troops should also be paid when due and all due. It is sad that when one remembers cases of Nigerian troops just back from peacekeeping missions protesting the nonpayment of their full allowances even when provisions for it has been made only for the troops to be court marshaled at the end. The new Army Chief, General Azubuike Iherjirka has proven himself once again a truly professional soldier in part by pardoning 27 soldiers who were jailed by a military court Marshall for demanding their allowance for a foreign service. All round the world unnecessary delays and shortages in remuneration are known to affect the morale of troops and tempt them into engaging in looting and shabby deals. Previous missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone exposed the inadequacies of basic battle craft expedients like maps, intelligence and communication equipments.

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