

The Coterminous Between Foreign Policy and National Interest: A Nation in Perspective

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Abstract: This paper assesses the coterminous between foreign policy and national interest. The nation in perspective is Nigeria where the elite interests function largely as the national interest even in a period of increasing domestic challenges. The question therefore: is the coterminous between foreign policy and national interest not directed at achieving those goals that give state and its broad range of citizens security and better life? The paper adopts content analysis as analytical tool. It relies heavily on secondary materials and observational method as means of data gathering and applies elite theory to argue that Nigeria is a class society where primordial interests prevail in most circumstances, above national interest. Recommendation is that for Nigeria's foreign policy to be responsive to domestic needs it must be coterminous with national interest.

Key words: Coterminous • Elite • Foreign Policy • National Interest • Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Foreign policy and national interest are coterminous [1]. While foreign policy is a policy that defines, stipulates, guides and determines different actors' relations in the international system, national interest is the claims, objectives, goals, demands and interests actors always seek to preserve, protect, defend and secure in relations with other actors. Implicitly, national interest is the sum total of a nation's interest including its values and beliefs and foreign policy stands as the means through which this can be achieved. Logically it can be argued that achieving national interest is the very essence of foreign policy. However, the concern of this paper is that while some actors in the international system are bent on achieving actually national interests, in the case of Nigeria, increasing domestic challenges seem to contradict the coterminous of foreign policy and national interest. It appears that Nigerian foreign policy makers and implementers have forgotten that actions of international actors, in this case sovereign states, are largely influenced by both domestic and external variables [2]. As argued by Okolie, foreign policy of a given state is the continuation and extension of its domestic counterpart. By this, it means that bold foreign policy pursuits are sustainable to the extent of the domestic foundation, vision and mission [3].

Perhaps, Nigeria's increasing domestic challenges especially those of Bokoharamism, economic recession, Niger Delta militancy, militia activities, kidnap cases, exponential poverty, corruption worsening food insecurity and hidden hunger, high foreign exchange rate, the unknown president's health status etc. have culminated into being constraints to our national interest attainment currently. In the past, similar factors have militated against effective domestic environment in Nigeria. For example, President Buhari's foreign trips abroad in the form of shuttle diplomacy just like those of former President Obasanjo's appear to have largely failed to attract meaningful foreign resources to the point of helping Nigeria out of recession through direct foreign investment and meaningful employment opportunities for overall national economic expansion. To this end, it is plausible that domestic interest is efficacious to the extent of the realization of its foreign policy mission while foreign policy on the other hand reinforces the sustainability of national interest. They are to a large extent mutually coterminous.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The main facts used in this paper are derived from secondary sources. As a qualitative research, it only founded on critical content analysis. It anchors its

discourse on historical facts and scientific observation of changing historical situations as evaluated in the study. For example, the study observed how the effects of Structural Adjustment Programme of the 1980s, though of historical significance, brought untold hardship on quality of livelihood of Nigerians in the same way as current economic policies on FOREX appear to be affecting lives and business across the nation and regionally.

Theoretical Explanation: Elite theory in political science is a theory of the state which seeks to describe and explain the power relationships between two opposing classes, the leader and the led, dominant and the dominated in contemporary society. According to Amucheazi [4] elite theory's origins lie most clearly in the writings of Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941), Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), Robert Michels (1876-1936) and Max Weber (1864-1920). Mosca for example emphasizes the ways in which tiny minorities out-organize and outwit large majorities, adding that "Political classes-Mosca's term for political elites-usually have a certain material, intellectual or even moral superiority over those they govern [5]. By Mosca's recognition of the existence of what he calls political class (Now widely used in Nigeria), elite theory become ripe to be applied in the examination of the coterminous of foreign policy and national interest in Nigeria. The reason is that a variant of class known as the elite in Nigeria rightly fits into Mosca's political class only that its members in the country largely do not seem to have moral superiority like those in some other countries. Lee Kwan Yew of Singapore, Nelson Mandela of South Africa to mention a few are examples of leaders with moral superiority. They sacrificed selfish and other parochial interests for national interest attainment through personal sacrifices. That is superior morality not an acclaimed one.

In a similar vein, Centre for the National Interest [6] considers the elite as the most important group a country can boast of, a consideration which stems from Robert Michels argument that the oligarchs are the power elite that controls decisions at political, bureaucratic and economic spheres [7]. Thus, Dowse and Hughes [8] adds that prevailing public policies reflect elite values which may be summed up as, preserve the status quo. With this power and class positions, the elite determines resource allocation and distribution in the state as they suit the interest of the group. To this end, Dudley [9] conceives foreign policy as a combination of aims and interests pursued and defended by the given State and its ruling class in its relations with other States. More inclusively, as Eze [10] perceives it as "Class that controls or wields political power shapes foreign policy and does so, as expected, in accordance with its own interests; even

though these might be rationalized ideologically or through sheer propaganda, as the interests of the entire state."

In sum, the theory helps analyze the interplay and the intertwining significance between foreign policy of nations and national interest. Suffice it to argue that if a nation is not investment friendly for the sake of self and group interests, who then can trust such leaders and their domestic environment as to risk capital investment or intervention except those who help to water the political gimmicks of the regime. In other words, the assumption is that policy pronouncement reflects more as a gimmick than a policy thrust [11]. In this case, the coterminous of foreign policy and national interest in Nigeria needs to be examined for the reason that while national interest describes and prescribes foreign policy [12] there is an expectation that foreign policy should aim to drive national interest and not class and other parochial interests. The questions arising from the above therefore are, whose interest does Nigeria's foreign policy serve? In essence, is the coterminous of foreign policy and national interest effective in Nigeria as in some other countries? This paper from this point, shall examine the coterminous between foreign policy and national interest using Nigeria as the nation in perspective.

Conceptualizing Foreign Policy and National Interest as Partners in Progress: Foreign policy and national interest have partnered for a long time before now due to the fact that both, not only being key concepts of international relations, are coterminous. To this end, even when the concept of national interest is conceived by some scholars as being slippery, it is still being used to describe and prescribe foreign policy [13]. This does not mean however that the existence of national interest per se naturally translates to the existence of foreign policy [14]. As pointed out in Ministry of External Affairs [15] using America because as Nye Jr. argues, without a sure sense of national identity, a state may not be able to define its national interests.

In the same vein, Niworu [16] perceives national interest as a key component of foreign policy due to the fact that it affects the ideals, goals and values pursued, actualized and propagated through the framework of the latter:

In fact the extent to which foreign policy is achieved depends largely on the quality, character and disposition of the policy makers, the capacity of the economic structure, the motivation, capability and psychological disposition of the political leadership, level of socialization/enlightenment of the dominant actors, goal-oriented behavior internalized by the political

leadership, ... prevailing international regime... and existing global and internal alliance patterns, as well as internal and external public opinion on the given issue [17].

The Realist school argue that foreign policy of a nation is formulated based on its national interest, a point which convinced Hans Morgenthau for example to opine that, the meaning of national interest is survival-the protection of physical, political and cultural identity against encroachments by other nation-states, (<http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com>). Thus, national interest can be described as the blood and soul of any nation's foreign policy, a description which fits into the expression of national interest by the French as *raison d'état* (<http://i.word-com/dictionary/national%20interest>). As the Commission on America's National Interests declared in 1996, "National Interests are the fundamental building blocks in any discussion of foreign policy.... In fact, the concept is used regularly and widely by administration officials, members of congress and citizens at large" [18]. The implication is that, foreign policy statements as argued by Nwosumba [19] are no more than articulating the general policy that forms the basis of government decision makers' actions in foreign affairs; in such foreign policy articulation, government decision makers declare the national goals, interests and priorities which they consider to be of primary concern to them in international affairs. Arguably, the argument of Eze [10] is considered parochial because it seems he followed the elite definition of national interest as essentially what the ruling class says it is. It is myopic to conceive national interest from this parochial stance considering that Nwosumba [20] had decades before now defined it as a sum of a nation's interest including value and beliefs and not a class interest. Class interest may be hidden in foreign policy of a nation with an informed public as in the US unlike in Nigeria where primordial interests of the elites most often supersede those of the people in general. To buttress this fact, Ogunsanwo [21] stresses the fact that national interest is too important to be left solely to the geopoliticians, elected officials must play key role but if an informed public disagrees, experts cannot deny the legitimacy of public opinion.

In all, it is not about making foreign policies that favor one class or section or religion, it is all about the collective interests of the people(s) hence America's respect for public opinion, a practice that puts its citizens at the centre of its domestic and foreign affairs. Thus, it is one thing to make policies and quite another thing to implement them Okolie [22] and yet another thing to know who the policies benefit entirely. In urging Nigeria to emulate the Singaporean experience where the possession

of a dedicated good and dependable leadership accounted for the phenomenal, economic growth of the nation in a few decades after independence, Ahom point to the fact that the Singaporean leadership starting with its first Prime Minister was more concerned in raising the living standards of the people other than the general economic growth of the country which tried to raise the Gross National Product (GNP). The reality however, is that Singaporean foreign policy and national interest are in a state of coterminous like those of United States for example as the results are high self esteem and better life for all their people in short and long terms. The question arising from this background therefore, remains, whose interests does Nigeria's foreign policy serve?

Whose Interests does Foreign Policy Serves?: The Centre for the National Interest clearly state and reaffirms the prerogatives of America's foreign policy insisting that ".... It is about America about America's interests" [6]. This captures the core interests that drive USA's foreign policy as well as some other nations that the leaders mean well for all their citizens. It is strongly argued that the United States decisions to go in for the development of more destructive weapons have always been justified in the name of national interest, just as China justified its border dispute with India and the defunct Soviet Union as attempts to secure its national interests. In another development, Olusanya and Akindele [23] refers to the South Korean example of economic development policy and commitment to ensuring that every dollar earned in the country was sacredly directed to the importation of critical machinery and other inputs to industrialization was of prime national interest. In this regard, misuse of foreign exchange for anything short of industrial development was prohibited or strongly discouraged through import ban, high tariffs and exercise duties. To ensure the realization of its national economic policy, Korean government tightly controlled foreign investment while blocking access to those areas considered sensitive to strategic national interest. South Korea as we know moved from the background of less national resource endowed country to create wealth for the state and citizens alike and added value to resources through broad and sound policy objectives and implementation. In the case of Nigeria, it is extremely difficult to discern and determine whose interest Nigeria foreign policy serve because of the gulf of disparity and contrarities between the national interest as public policy that is made by and for the people's overriding interest and elite interest as the subterfuge of the nation's foreign policy. It is rather auspicious to examine what guides Nigeria's national interest as heralded by its foreign policy.

By and large, the significance of the analogies above lies more on the fact that foreign policy, as argued by Onimode [24] consists of different methods, strategies and values chosen by a state to safeguard its national interest in relations with states and non-state actors and as conditioned by both domestic and external events. In essence, foreign policy is used by states to advance, project and internationalize national interests for the best interest of the people and nations.

What Guides Nigeria's National Interest and Foreign Policy?: It is a historical fact that one of the forces that drove and sustained the quest for independence in Nigeria and most African nations was the belief that development would necessarily follow the independence. According to Orngu [25] many nationalists believed that immediately citizens were allowed to manage their own affairs they would quickly attain the level of development already reached by the Western world. Thus, at independence, Nigeria followed this belief which eventually led to the type of objectives and goals it hoped to achieve as its relations with other sovereign actors were established internationally. The persistent concerns and principles which have guided its foreign policy since then therefore include the following according to Ministry of External Affairs [15];

- The protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Nigerian State,
- The promotion of the economic and social well-being of Nigerians,
- Enhancing Nigeria's image and status in the world at large,
- Respect for the sovereignty and non-interference in the internal policies of other states,
- Promotion of the unity as well as the total political, economic, social and cultural liberation of Africa,
- An irrevocable commitment to the elimination of apartheid and total liberation of countries still under colonial domination, promotion of international cooperation conducive to the consolidation of world peace and security, mutual respect and friendship among all people and states,
- Enhancing the dignity and promoting the welfare of Africans and people of African descent all over the world,
- Redressing the imbalances in the international power structure which have tended to frustrate the proper development and maturation of the developing countries of the world.

In the words of Ministry of External Affairs [15] Nigeria's national interest has remained consistent and this is as a result of consistently being involved in both bilateral and multilateral relations, maintenance of its territorial integrity and defense of its sovereignty. Osakwe [26] argue that the underlying principles and objectives guiding the conduct and influencing the preoccupation of the nation's foreign policy have had an element of continuity only that the interpretation which successive regimes place on them and the extent to which other intra and extra Nigerian events that shaped the execution have been different. This point supports the view that foreign policy of any country is a product of environmental factors, both internal and external [27]. The study argues that it is the home front that bears the result of foreign policy based on the fact that if hunger, unemployment, militancy, poverty, insecurity and their like pervade the domestic environment, it will be extremely difficult to convince the people that their interests are also included in what is called national interest.

Classical and contemporary events have proven that the influence of domestic realities on foreign policies of nations is the very best way through which they have achieved some of their national interests. Take for examples when the United States' domestic environment made it formulate a foreign policy thrust of isolationism, it was when it felt it was not ripe for a world power number one status until when it felt the time had come. It's involvement in both the first and second World Wars and the results that followed suit are not new to history. After the Second World War and the victory over the Cold War, the US has assumed the position of the police of the World. Today, some of its citizens are even questioning why it should be receding from continuing to play more assertive roles in global politics since after the Cold War in 1989, considering its position as a global hegemon. So no matter how international actors and other critics may conceive America's foreign policy thrusts considering its overbearing actions everywhere in the world, the truism is that the citizens have high self esteem and relatively self reliant.

Following the view that the domestic structure is quite significant in history of national development of any nation, Amucheazi [3] argues that good governance, proactive, visionary and charismatic leadership, patriotism, fiscal discipline and above all missionary foreign policy are vital to efficient and effective development and realization of national interest. This is exemplified in the case of Singapore that was at par with

Nigerian in the 1960s but has become a world apart in the new millennium. Ahom argues:

Singapore to achieve economic greatness in about a decade from 1965 to the mid 1970s... was ... through such strategies as export oriented industrialization, the development of a viable private sector, provision of conducive environment which attracted foreign investors, tight control over expenditures, good governance, a virile and focused civil service. Above all, Singapore had a set of dedicated and visionary leaders who abhorred corruption and had the political will to drive the economic policies [14].

In the case of Nigeria, a nation with abundant human and natural resources (Unlike Singapore that is scarcely endowed), the opposite is the case. Annoying is the reality that while Nigeria got her independence in 1960 Singapore became independent in 1965. While Nigeria is naturally richly endowed, Singapore is not. The fact however is that while Singapore is today one of the Asian tigers by breaking away from dependency, deep neo-colonialism and perpetual backwardness, Nigeria's domestic environment is filled with a lot of challenges which when translated in terms of what the country stipulated at independence as the guiding principles of its foreign policies shall amount to what the UN describes as symptoms of a *shadowy* if not failed state.

Fourteen years after Nigeria's Independence (That is 1974), the period Singapore was almost achieving the major collective interest of its people, that is, economic development, Nwosumba [20] observes that in Nigeria if a comparative assessment of income levels were to the measured in terms of standard of living and inflation levels, there would be no doubt that the average Nigerian citizen is worse off than 10 years ago. He therefore concludes that judging from the increasing decay of Nigerian villages, towns and cities, there is really no evidence to believe that the quality of life of the people in these places has improved. Forty years after Dudley's observation precisely 2017, the Nigerian domestic environment is under increasing insecurity of lives and property, exponential increase of poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, diseases, hopelessness, homelessness etc. The worst is that apart from the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Nigeria being under heavy threat due to viral insurgency, militancy, secessionist violence, political corruption, religious bigotry and dearth of good governance, the nation has inevitably relapsed into economic recession. Although the list of these challenges may be inexhaustible, the concern of this paper is to answer the question, what went wrong?

What Went Wrong, W³, What is still Wrong?: A lot of things went wrong in Nigeria shortly after independence which this paper even argues that they were and are still the offshoots of colonialism. Yet, even if they were and are the offshoots of colonialism, some countries that got independence at the same period with Nigeria have succeeded in breaking away from shackles of neo-colonialism, neo imperialism and dependency syndrome. Malaysia and Singapore are outstanding examples. So, the question remains what went wrong with Nigeria or better still, what is wrong with Nigeria since what went wrong is still wrong.

Misguided Take-Off: It is a well accepted aphorism that "The past is very much involved in the present" [11]. In the case of Nigeria, significant part of its challenges since independence can be traced to over hundred years of British colonialism. It was then the seeds of whimsical sociocultural and political bifurcations, corruption, ethnic rivalry, subjugation of citizens by rulers, exploitation of commonwealth and patrimony, tactical policy of divide and rule and arbitrariness were cultivated [22]. Significantly, it was national interest of the imperial power that subsisted for the colonized people, that is, what the colonialists conceived was summed up as the collective interest of all the people. There was no afro-centric and/or citizen-centric national interest pursued as foreign policy. In fact, what could be regarded as Nigeria's foreign policy and national interest started in the 1960s. Implicitly, the current Nigerian elite imbroglio and arbitrariness devoid of popular considerations are arguably colonial legacies which Nigeria like other nations should have overcome and reformatively transformed.

The study clearly argues that post-independent Nigeria was not only perceived as nation in hurry but one that prioritized existence than essence. The primacy of existence at the time, perhaps as always, was rather the essence of nationhood. One of the persistent sociopolitical consequences of the colonialism in Nigeria in the millennium is the intensification and diversification of political antagonisms, classism and arbitrariness which characterized British divide and rule policy and *oligarchic totalitarian* rule. This is the integer that nurtured and continues to sustain political corruption in multivariate forms, elite political subversion and apolitical practices in Nigeria. As such, for corruption to be one of the most devastating phenomena to Nigeria's effort at having a clean and inviting domestic environment is because it is serving the interest of the ruling class. Corruption intrinsically, is part and parcel of the economic culture of

capitalism hinged on possessive individualism and cronyism. It is a merciless instrument used by leaders to subvert good political will, misappropriate citizens' core welfare dividends, political goods and natural resources. For instance, a situation where government encourages medical tourism abroad for politicians, elites and bourgeoisie at the expense of dwindling national resources is unpatriotic and apolitical. It indicates a divided government with varying national interests for ruler(s) and the citizens. In this case, the medical doctors and other health workers and their professional skills including the hospitals and health facilities have become not only inhospitable, unwholesome but largely unpopular.

In a similar way, whereas Nigeria's oil boom of the 1970s focused its foreign policy on enhancing its national image and status in the world, promotion of national and regional unity and community for the overall liberation of Africa politically, economically, socially and culturally; Nigerian peoples and nations were wallowing in squalor, deprivation and rudderless misgovernment at the apex. It is no longer news that within the same period of showing off its affluence in the 1970s, income levels were abysmally low and an average citizen was "worse off than he was ten years ago [19]. Regrettably, the situation is not in tandem with Nigeria's national interest-to promote the economic and social well-being of all Nigerians and residents. Maladministration, mismanagement of oil wealth, outright embezzlement of public funds and capital flight consistently characterized governance in Nigeria from inception to the new millennium. In fact, despite the less impressionable gains of political rule and dogged efforts of Nigerian entrepreneurs, the average Nigerian citizen is politically pulverized with HDI incomparable with citizens of other developed world comparable to Nigeria at independence. The key question is no longer that of what went wrong but entirely of misgovernment and misguided leadership.

Misguided Rulers: The United Nation in consideration of the divergent factors characterizing and deepening inequality, poverty and national development among other indices "Declared the decade of the 1970s to be one of economic progress and the just distribution of wealth throughout the world" [9]. This observation by the UN is correct but the fact is that in a capitalist system the issue of distribution or re-distribution of wealth is sparsely feasible because if that should happen, it surely would contradict the basic tenets and practice of the capitalist mode of production and eventually might lead to its

collapse. This is misleading because the UN is at no time against the political economy of capitalism which survives on the exploitation of the proletariat as well as the Anaheim.

Thus, after the 1970s no wealth distribution was made rather, Nigeria, like most other resource-cursed nations, was entrapped by the consequences of the resources and revenues it generated and wasted. The obvious fact is that the Nigerian leaders were misguided and deluded by their international capitalist collaborators or it is better to say that they quickly accepted and still accept the ideas, policies, programmes and plans made by their collaborators in order to enhance their intent, that is, primitive accumulation of wealth. To achieve this class interest, the comprador bourgeoisies open the doors for the Multinational Corporations (MNCs) to manipulate the economy of the Nigerian state "Which would safeguard their interests for maximum profits" [4] and in addition, concentrate "Enormous wealth in the hands of a few economic players" [5]. The negative effects of this type of relationship can be found in a situation where there is a concentration of enormous productive capacity in the hands of the MNCs, a situation that creates unequal relations between the Nigerian State and its representative bourgeoisie on one hand and the MNCs and their home countries on the other. So, it offers the MNCs the opportunities to manipulate Nigerian political economy to the advantage and interests of their countries to the detriment of the Nigerian state and its citizens. The MNCs have grown as powerful as to be involved in annual budgets of developing countries such as Nigeria. Yet, no matter how the pendulum swings, both the Nigerian leaders and their international capitalist collaborators must have their profit notwithstanding how much each goes home with. However, this type of economic diplomacy is against the coterminous between foreign policy and national interest in Nigeria. It is also against the possibility of technology transfer from the advanced world to Nigeria because the country's leaders seemly not devoted to achieving the collective interests of the people-the national interest. They only pursue the interests that promote their corrupt practices, greed, mis-governance, lack of transparency and accountability without minding their negative effects on the economy.

The study while critiquing the primacy of existence or essence defined in term of nation building and development, Ake rather pinpoints the primacy of essence arguing in line with the discourse that the problem is not that development has failed but that, development was

critically not in the agenda ab initio. Development in Nigeria has largely failed because the leaders misunderstood it to be economic progress without realizing and being convinced that appropriate progress should be integral development. The concern was territorial integrity, sanctity, existence than integral national development hinged on human capital development. That is, an outside-in than inside-out foreign policy approach; a regional-world foreign policy than national-international foreign policy. Such development as Onimode [24] assert, "Must cater for the whole human person and encompass the people of the Nation as a whole." That is, development should be people and citizen-centred [1]. According to Amucheazi [3], Nigeria spent N98 trillion on rice importation between 2007 and 2010 where as its farmers walked and still wallow in poverty and hunger despite of huge arable land and population. This is unpopular, anti-economic diplomacy, unpatriotic, anti-national interest and largely unacceptable. This successive negative approach to foreign policy pursuit has virtually throughout all Nigerian political regimes which has been unable to obliterate core and extreme poverty incidence or reduce food insecurity in Nigeria. In the past, the Federal Government embarked on a number of initiatives aimed to boost domestic food production (As the present regime is doing) and curb food insecurity and hunger but could only achieve quite insignificant results relatively on price of food commodities. Presently, food prices are too high which indicate poor economic policy framework and/or implementation.

In all, both the indigenization policy of the 1970s; Structural Adjustment Programme of the 1980s, Operation Feed the Nation of the 1970s, Emergency Stabilization Measures of the 1980s, Anti-Corruption Wars of the 1980s and 2000s, National Development Plans since independence and the gospel on the diversification of the economy have not reasonably salvaged Nigeria from its numerous socio-political and economic challenges. With these failures, Nigeria has not been able to justify that the link between its domestic socio-economic structure and foreign policy is homegrown, strong and deep-mooted.

The implications of the gap between Policy Making and Implementation in Nigeria: One of the implications of the foregoing analysis is that Nigeria has a weak economic base which could not attract mutually beneficial direct foreign investment into the country than current scattered predatory speculators. Presently, the economy is not

attracting reasonable direct investment and could rarely achieve that at constituted. The aim of being the hub for international investment destination within the region is rare.

This implies that Nigeria is yet to bridge the gap that has existed between foreign policy making and implementation in the country since independence. It further shows that Nigerian policy makers and implementers have not realized that one of the major determinants, if not the major determinant of the foreign policy of a nation is the economic factor and that the central objective is the search for power, influence, security and prosperity [9]. To claim that Nigeria's domestic environment for years and even now is safe and secure is to disregard the increasing spate of violence, insurgency, kidnapping, armed robbery, food insecurity, militancy, national or regional secession etc. Equally, it is a reality that the mass of Nigerians especially the youth are unemployed, poverty is exponentially on the rise, with increasing rate of destitution and homelessness, low self esteem and avoidable criminality [11].

The resultant effect is that the nation did not have trickledown reward for its investments abroad, Africa especially. They were no genuine investments because they lacked economic interest. They are class-oriented. The ruling elite whom Buhari termed as 'Spoilt children' were (And still are) the determinants of how Nigerian resources were (And are) shared to their own parochial advantage with the resultant effect of pervasive corruption and poverty in the land [12]. In line with this, Jeffery Sachs, formerly a Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General on Millennium Development Goals has questioned the essence of Nigeria accepting the cancellation of its \$18 billion debt during President Obasanjo's regime on negative and stringent conditions. According to Daily Independent (September 29, 2005), Sachs' argument is that although the \$18 billion debt cancellation for Nigeria can be said to be good, it is less than good than it should be; the creditors are nasty and stingy. To extract \$12 billion from Nigeria with annual budget of \$3-\$4 billion is callous since children are dying, millions are not in school and hunger and diseases are everywhere. For Sachs, it is Nigeria that needs the money more than the creditors. It is certain that the framework of Nigeria national interest as expressed in her foreign policy is dysfunctional, unpopular, unproductive and circumvented. In all ramifications, it appears to be a parochial interest policy for and in defiance of primordial predators.

CONCLUSION

In sum, this interest of the study is to establish the fact that the coterminous between foreign policy and national interest is mutually reinforcing, effective, proactive and efficient. In many developing states like Nigeria, the matrix is vexatious, unpopular and self-serving due to the overarching impact of successive political regimes and their international collaborators and/or predators. In other words, Nigeria's foreign policy from independence to date, no matter how conceived, crafted and implemented by different regimes insofar as it not citizen-centric and futuristic cannot sufficiently advance national interest. It is neither altruistic nor patriotic and requires urgent revision to avoid imminent political implosion. The result is that while the leaders are enjoying every bit of the system they are fostering, Nigeria's national interest as encapsulated in the foreign policy thrust of different regimes is considered work in progress. To this effect, foreign policy has lost its natural essence which is embedded in the belief that it can bring development, social well-being, security, national prosperity and a pride of place in the comity of nations.

The Nigerian state should also be proud of Nigeria by always acting domestically and internationally on national interest just as developed nations do. Nigerian leaders should be conscious of foreign policy mission and vision statements in all its sociopolitical, cultural, economic policy frameworks. Foreign policy is essentially about Nigeria for Nigerians. The prosperity and posterity of Nigeria for Nigerian peoples are not negotiable. As the most populous and largest economy in Africa, Nigeria should develop Nigerian-centred African foreign policy since a developed Nigerian is invariable a prosperous Africa and conversely. The need to develop a vast homegrown African trade policy is urgent and regionally wise.

Finally, the crux of this critical discourse revolves around the development of dynamic and patriotic cream of leadership. Leadership resource is critical to realization of foreign policy visions and overall national development. This is one critical resource Nigeria has consistently gotten wrong since independence and is the bane for all times of its national development whereas it is the foundational power and natural resource of developed countries like Singapore, United States, United Arab Emirate, Germany, Norway inter alia. The study therefore concludes that the case of Nigerian foreign policy

advancing its critical national interest is to the extent of the development of its leadership. It is significant to state that Nigeria as constituted cannot advance more than its leadership resources. Nigeria underdevelopment is traceable to the underdevelopment of its leadership and/or paucity of patriotic and incorruptible, citizen-centric, responsive and responsible leadership. Therefore, Foreign policy and National interest are inalienably coterminous to the extent that Leadership and National development are intrinsically coterminous.

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