

A Case Study of Nigeria and Other Third World Countries Quest for a Permanent Seat in the Security Council of United Nations

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Abstract: International Organization such as United Nations did not originate from antiquity. Evolving developments that gave rise to the establishment of International Organization started in the 19th century. As a result of the era of war and destruction, the citizens started calling for the holding of Conferences to discuss ways in which peace could be restored and war abolished. This meeting was first conducted by no other but HUGO GROTIUS. The aim of this research was to harness and summarize the identified findings in Nigeria and third world quest for a permanent seat in the security council of the United Nations Organization between 1960-1998. The summarized findings would be brought to a conclusive reality and backed up with recommendations. The study of the Nigeria and the third world quest for a permanent seat in the security council of the United Nation have shown that Nigeria and the other third world countries are not yet force to be reckoned with in international politics except for war, hunger, disease and military dictatorship. It has also been proven beyond all reasonable doubt by the recent ‘‘area boys’’ diplomacy of the late Abacha administration, that in Nigeria, priorities are misconceived and misplaced leading to lapses in the policy formulation and implementations. Secondly, it has also been discovered that Nigerian’s quest for a permanent seat in the council system of the United Nations is for the personal political interest of the very few class that have continued to dominate the Nigerian political area in order to divert attention from the harsh economic and political realities in the country in order to prolong their stay in power.

Key words: United Nations • War • Destruction • Citizens • Power and Conferences.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria’s quest for a permanent seat at the Security Council of the United Nations is a major development in international affairs and politics in this century. The phenomenon is a marked shift from the ordinary membership formerly associated with third world countries in the past to a more participatory and prominent role by the third world in the United Nations [1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6].

Because of the global and interesting nature of the phenomenon, many authors have focused their studies basically to x-ray the emergence or otherwise of this great international issue and are consuming out with relevant findings and results.

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Brigadier Jemibewon (Retired) was more candid in his book, “United Nations and Africa”, he postulated that while acknowledging that Edwin Ogburn that those who clamour for a permanent seat for Nigeria at the United Nations Security Council are doing so for certain selfish and hedonistic ideas which characterize the value system of our society especially by our later day military leadership who most of the time fail to govern well and efficiently. He pointed out that instead of finding solutions to corrupt practices among its officers corps, the military usually embarks on non-profitable, wild and unattainable campaigns to divert the attention of the suffering masses in order to perpetuate their stay in office.

If such a view could be expressed by such an officer who knows the capabilities of the Nigeria army land and dry, it then means that like Ajaokuta Steel Industry, Nigeria is again heading to another futile journey in the words of Col. Abubakar Umar retired former military governor of Kaduna State. M.T. Ubu, foreign affairs secretary in the interim government in an address to the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs Lagos told his audience that for Nigeria to occupy a place of honour in the country of nations, it must start from this century to put in place those things that will earn her respect and honour in the next century. To him, material and human resources expended by Nigeria towards regional emancipation is not enough to endure her the status of a world power, rather it goes to show her commitment to the decolonization of the continent. He enumerated such factors that will earn Africa and third world respect in the country of nations as political stability, economic empowerment respect for fundamental human rights and technological development.

He went on to add that any country still under the web of these factors should consider herself not ready for the new world order. It is interesting to note that those comments were from a former Nigeria world image maker who also knows that those factors has continued to elude Nigeria and against this background, it will be no surprise if Nigeria fails in her bid for a permanent seat in the Security Council was a misinformed and typical diplomatic blunder that have come to be associated with our coup star generals whose only pre-occupation is the exportation and institution of military regimes in the West African Sub-region. To him, the ideal nature of the Nigerian armed forces, their involvement in government and other evils have made them think that world politics is the same as dealing with the Nigeria civil population. Nigeria's quest to him can never be granted under any military dispensation. He went on to expose the Nigerian army leadership on being myopic to national problem, lazy, tribalistic, corrupt that embarks on white elephant projects which may after all have any meaning on the socio-economic advantage of the country. In his inaugural address at a meeting of the small powers in Lagos in 1989, professor Bolaji Akinyemi then Minister of External Affairs in the Babangida regime was to develop and solve their problems jointly since they all had similar experience instead of looking up to countries who may find their problem strange. He observed that the association was within the confines of the non-aligned movement which does not support either of the power block.

If a country that was not ready for a power tussle with any of the world powers just some eight years ago should wake up to challenge the same world power today; it then means that the country overnight developed her potential but as always the case overnight developed her potential but as always the case with Nigeria, I doubt if ever such development will occur in the next sixty years.

In an interview with the Cable Network News (CNN), the former British Prime Minister Mr. John Major while reacting to Tom Ikimi's pleas for support from the Commonwealth member states for Nigeria's bid for the Security Council of the United Nations described Ikimi as a hawk in diplomatic garb and Nigeria as a country of illusion [4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10].

Considering the British relationship with other world powers especially United States of America, the implications of such statements on Ikimi and Nigeria by Major should be seen as the majority opinion of the world powers on Nigeria. And if this should be seen to be so, it then means that Nigeria's quest should only be heard but not to be granted.

Warren Christopher former American Secretary of State while on a stopover in Egypt on his way to the Middle East was quoted to by the Time Magazine as saying that South Africa has emerged to provide the required leadership to the entire black race and that America and her allies are happy to deal with her.

According to Christopher, for now, America and her allies will support South Africa if she bids for the Security Council of the United Nations. On Nigeria, he said that America consider Nigeria the way she considers Rwanda, Burundi and Zire now Republic of Congo [11, 12, 13 and 14].

If John Major can describe Nigeria as living in illusion and Christopher saying that America considers her in the same manner with other war ravaged African States, it then means that Nigeria's request for a permanent seat in the Security Council is as good only for the trash can in the United Nations.

This is more so because of the demand from Canada for the outright ban on Nigeria from the Common Wealth of Nations since sanctions alone to Canada have failed to achieve the desired result on the hard time stand on its military rulers. Canada will be proposing sanctions against Nigeria in the United Nations according to Tell Magazine.

If the Common Wealth that is an association of all English speaking countries formerly under British should bark at one of its members, it shows that something is wrong with Nigeria somewhere and this means that it will be difficult for Nigeria to muster support from the Common Wealth constituency. This was the case when Nigeria presented Obasanjo for the post of the Secretary- General of the United Nations against the candidature of Ghana's Kofi Anan and Egyptian's Boutrus Ghali respectively. When it was election time, it was difficult for Nigeria to convince the west to support Obasanjo's candidature and thus, he did not only lost to Kofi Anan but came last among the three candidates.

However, the other school of thought's believe that Nigeria has done well to merit a permanent seat at the security council, even better than the super powers. Some prominent members of the school are the elite officers corps of the Nigerian army among whom are generals – Chris Garba and Abdusalam Abubakar, the commandant of national war college and chief of defence staff respectively'

According to Garba, the recent success by Nigeria in Liberia and Sierra Leone has made Nigeria to be at faire with the world powers, therefore, it is time Nigeria is made a permanent member of the security council, so that the world will start to benefit from her potentials and experience.

Abdusalam was of the opinion that any country that ignores Nigeria's potentials is doing so at her own risk and that it is for Nigeria to accept or reject the offer of the permanent seat in the security council. He said that Nigeria deserves praises by well meaning countries of the world over her exemplary leadership in Africa and the world as a whole.

This view of Garba and Abdusalam, in line with the views of Jemibewon and Fawelimi when they said that Nigeria's quest for a permanent seat is based on the selfish interest that characterized the Nigeria society especially on the part of her military dictatorship in the west Africa Sub-region. This is more since not one civilian has ever requested for Nigeria's membership of this council. More so also if Nigeria has merited the permanent membership of the security council, the world would be in a unison beckoning on Nigeria to accept such post and not Nigeria agitating for it.

The idea to embark on this study was inspired by the consistent pronouncement by the third world countries and Nigeria for the United Nation to accommodate third world countries and especially Nigeria in the Security Council system of the United Nations. They argued that many emerging third world countries especially Nigeria have contributed more than some of the permanent members of the Security Council towards world peace and order.

It is also their opinion that the Security Council should be expanded in line with the dynamic of world politics; that the first world (advanced counties of the North Atlantic) have since their inception in 1945 continued to exercise the veto powers in the Security Council as against the majority of third world countries.

Moreover, another dimension was introduced in the race for the permanent seat of the Security Council race when Germany and Japan joined the race for the demand for permanent seat of the Security Council. In view of their demand: Do the third world countries and Nigeria have the capacity to influence world order? What will be the position of Nigeria against the advanced countries as Germany and Japan in the race for or otherwise of the membership of the Security Council of the United Nations? What effect will the domestic politics of Nigeria military rule vice-versa play in her quest for permanent seat in the Security Council.

The United Nations have played a positive role in maintaining international peace and security and in achieving economic and social development for more than 50 years. However, the international community is vastly different today from what it was when the United Nations was founded. The government of some third world countries especially Nigeria have taken the initiative in the United Nations reform to straighten its functions to further enable it to fully accomplish its tasks. For that purpose, those third world countries and Nigeria believes that reforms relating not only to the Security Council but also finance and development are the three pillars of the United Nations reforms [15, 16, 17 and 18].

As for the reform of the Security Council, what should be recognized is that since the establishment of the United Nations:

Some states with capacity and willingness to play a global role have newly emerged and many states have become independent.

To adopt to these two changes, it is essential that the Security Council be recognized and thereby enhance its legitimacy and effectiveness. Nigeria and many other states in the third world are advocating for the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent membership. If the reform resulted in an expansion of only the non-permanent membership, the council's legitimacy and effectiveness would not be enhanced and genuine reform to adopt to changing times would not have been accomplished.

Nigeria believes that each member state should in the spirit of statesmanship engage in substantive negotiations not from the genuinely broad perspective of maximizing benefit to the international community. In view of the above, one may begin to ask such questions:

- What are the reasons for the third world countries agitation for the expansion of the Security Council of the United Nations?
- Is Nigeria qualified for a permanent seat at the Security Council of the United Nations?

Aim of the Study: The purpose of this research work is to find out what brought about the emergence of the concept of the Security Council in the United Nations, the principles behind it and the composition of the Security Council.

The constitutional roles of the first and third world in the United Nations will be looked into, to know if Nigeria is qualified to enjoy the status of veto power in the Security Council of the United Nations.

Finally, the entire working of the United Nations in the contemporary world politics will also be examined.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis: The method of data collection used were primary and secondary sources such as interviews of people who matter in world of politics and who may be involved in shaping Nigeria's foreign policy, library materials, extracts from journals, magazines and newspapers.

Germans Quest for a Permanent Seat in the United Nations Organization: Germany is a core European state, whose citizens are proud of their culture and history. Before the treaty of Westphalia in 1648 that ended the European wars, Germany had become a dominant power in Europe at its beck and call were other European Nations and was dreaded so much. In the 18th century, the German's quest for economic, political and racial discrimination over the rest of the world sparked off two major wars that were to envelop the whole world.

At the end of both wars especially the second war, Germany and her notably allies, Italy and Japan were defeated by the allied forces led by America, Britain and France and as a mark of submission, the nation was divided into two viz East and West to ensure that they may not rise up again to challenge the rest of the world to be administered by the victors and according to ideological lines. Thus, East Germany became a socialist nation while the west a capitalist with the creation of the Berlin wall as a dividing line between the two German States.

However, as time went on, they arose the great need for the coming of the two brother states and in the early 1980s, the Berlin wall that have acted as artificial boundary between the two states gave way for unification. Onwards, Germany once again regional her former status of a strong, united and vast nation in world politics, with flourishing economic and technological stance, Germany once again wanted to redeem her position in world politics by making known her desire and intention to join the United Nation Security council as a permanent member. Despite the war and its effect, Germany belonged to the first world (advanced) countries dique; this is to say that she have attained economic and industrial advancement unlike Nigeria and other third world countries that are still at the take off stage. Since after the second world war, she has been a respectable member of the European Union, industrialized Nations, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and United Nations.

An epitome of economic diplomacy, Germany is noted to have granted economic, financial and technical expertise and to many nations especially Nigeria and third world to develop and fight such evil vices as hunger, refuge, desertification and industrial takeoff.

In view of her economic, industrial and technological advancement, her contributions to various organization, her location in the North Atlantic, effective diplomacy and to the upliftment of mankind harmonious relationship with other member of the security council, the chances of Germany is better than that of Japan and Nigeria unless otherwise of becoming a permanent member of the security council of the United Nations.

Japan's Quest for a Permanent Seat in the United Nations Security Council: Japan is an Asian Nation. It has the unfortunate history of fighting the Second World War on the side of axial power (Germany & Italy) and as a result of their defeat and its consequences, heavy on her part such as numerous embargos and sanctions, Japan was to have a temporary halt to her economic growth.

To cushion the effect of the war and forge ahead, Japan unlike the other latter day advanced nations (Britain, France, Spain) started to look inwards in other to develop not to look beyond her territory to exploit other people in other to develop. Therefore, Japan have to exploit her peasants and within a short period after the war, with proper management of human and material resources available, Japan laid a solid foundation for her industrial take off thereafter joined the League of Industrial advanced Nations. Her industrial goods not only compared favorably with other countries brand but it becomes household names worldwide while her income per capita also rose. In a short time, she joined the League of donor nations by giving grants to less developed countries. Even America and Britain are trying to curtail their trade deficit and the over flooding of her market with goods made in Japan which has led to the signing of various trade treaties between both States.

Japan as has been noted is back into the fold of economic super powers and if her continued dealing with other advanced states through many organization bodies and if they should be a dull moment in Germany's efforts towards her quest for a permanent seat in the security council system of the United Nation. It will not be an understatement to deduce that in the event of expansion of the security council, Japan will be ahead of Germany and Nigeria to the next permanent member.

Advanced Countries Collaborations: The advanced countries are taken to be the technological developed States of the North Atlantic; they are richer than the third world nations and they are also in the majority in the United Nations Security Council System because of their roles during the first and second world wars.

Other characteristics of advanced countries apart from technological advancement and end of hostilities in the Second world war are political stability, economic buoyancy, capitalist ideas, exploitation of the third world and geographical location towards Western Europe. The advanced countries Viz: Britain, France, America, etc, through various means and methods effectively determine events and issues far beyond the confines of her borders. Some states among them especially

the United States since the end of the cold war have come to be known as the police man of the world and instances abound to show that they have lived up to this billing through the influencing of other countries programmes and policies, their adventures especially in Panama, Haiti and Iraq. It is no longer secret that when these advanced countries sneezes, the third world catches cold.

Moreover, the existing alliances between these advanced states are so intimate that they take the same line of action in major event and crises to avoid and prevent war among themselves. Therefore, they are known to have areas of permanent interest, influence and dominion all over the world which call for proper consultations by other developed states before engaging in any tangible issue in the areas of control by other developed states. Again, the intimacy that exist between them is such that they can scuttle the ambitions and desires and aspiration of any emerging third world state.

When Mumar Gaddafi of Libya was felt to be assuming too much powers above his state as the third world leader, the United State organized her allies and through the United Nations, imposed a multi-dimensional sanction against Libya. Yet, when the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth of Nations, the Non-Alligned Movement and United Nations impose sanction against the apartheid regime in South Africa, Britain also organized her allies to oppose and make such sanction ineffective. By the roles they played in two major wars, Germany and Japan were excluded from the United Nations Security Council but on other hand, both states are known to have separately and independently achieved greatness and success in various fields and can compare favourably with other individual member of the council. However, the same thing cannot be said of Nigeria, a third world nation, whose hallmark is UNDERDEVELOPMENT, political instability, low income per capita with the worst form of diplomatic and working relationship with the world powers.

The three States (Germany, Japan and Nigeria) that have signified interest in the council system of the United Nations Security Council are to be judged on meritocratic system of selection. Nigeria will no doubt be contended with the rear and even if it is to be otherwise, the result will still be the same. The factor making possible this personal judgment, have been enumerated in various other chapters. If it were to be in the first and second republics, Nigeria would have carried decent seat but within the worst form of military dictatorship, Nigeria is chasing the shadows of her past glory.

On the last leg of his African tour in Senegal, Bill Clinton the US President while addressing a world press conference said that Nigeria a vast nation capable of moving Africa forward is moving towards utter darkness because of some people's desire to hold on to power defying all Americans solutions to move Nigeria forward. Robic Colek , the British Foreign Secretary, was of the opinion that war destruction, hunger and poverty is hovering over Nigeria.

Ghana on her part said she is not supporting what is happening in Nigeria but is carefully studying the situation because in the event of war in Nigeria, refugees from Nigeria will submerge Ghana.

Nigeria's glory is past; her image battered on the brink of war at home, her nationals intimidated and beat as evils abroad.

DISCUSSION

Nigeria and the third world's quest for a permanent seat in the Security Council of the United Nations should not be taken that Nigeria and the other third World countries can offer or have an already made solutions to the numerous socio-economic and technological problems that are facing the United Nations. The third world can be an alternative source of change with regards to the roles being undertaken by the Security Council and the world at large by the advanced countries and the permanent members of the Security Council. The nature of Nigeria and spate of military interventions in their internal politics, economic and technological woes which is antithetical to democratic, social and economic developments could be another problem. The orientation and training, plus diplomatic ineptitude, that Nigeria and the third world countries could not and cannot in any way at all institute and create the basis that make for attainment of the status of a permanent seat in the security council of the United Nations for the time being.

Moreover, if the findings in international politics that “the might is always the winner” (might is right) is anything to go by, then it means that Nigeria and the other third world countries should concern themselves with the internal development and structure that would lift economic and social upliftments of various states, Nigeria. The military as a matter of urgency should disengage politically to allow the political actors to take charge and in the events of mistake, they should be allowed to correct them and grow with such mistake, because democracy is a learning process. After all, “ Rome was not built in a day” the process has to be gradual.

CONCLUSION

The study of the Nigeria and third world quest for a permanent seat in the security council of the United Nation have shown that Nigeria and the third world is not yet a force to be reckoned with in international politics except for war, hunger, disease and military dictatorship. It has also been proved beyond all reasonable doubt by the recent “ area boys” diplomacy of the late Abacha administration, that in Nigeria, priorities are misconceived and misplaced leading to lapses in the policy formulation and implementations.

Secondly, it has also been discovered that Nigeria’s quest for a permanent seat in the council system of the United Nations is for a permanent seat in the council system of the United Nations is for the personal political interest of the very few class that have continued to the harsh economic and political realities in the country in order to prolong their stay in power.

Recommendations: From the summary of finding and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

- Nigeria and the other third world countries should embark on a vibrant policy of economic and technological developments to bridge the gap between her and developed countries of the western world.
- Nigeria and the other third world should embrace a durable and viable democratization process since military intervention in government and politics is no longer accepted.
- The “area boys and its attendant effect should be discarded for more result oriented diplomatic approach that will make for more friendly and harmonious relationship with other States in the world.
- The idea of alternating the eastern ideologies and technologies for in Nigeria should be stopped with immediate effect. Rather Nigeria should fashion an acceptable ideology that will suit her peculiar interest from both ideologies.
- Finally, Nigeria should make her impact to be felt more in the African rejoin like it was in the glorious days of Murtala/Obasanjo regime.

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