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# **Nigeria and the Global Powers: Continuity and Change in Policy and Perceptions**

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## ABSTRACT

Since the end of military rule in May 1999, Nigeria's foreign policy has been the subject of academic and policy interest. This is particularly in relation to its choice either continue or change the policies pursued by erstwhile military regimes. Also of interest has been the country's ability to balance its obligations as a regional power, expectations as a continental leader and aspirations as a global actor. Although Nigeria continues to be active in regional and continental politics, its relations with major global powers, both traditional and emerging, have been equally important, especially as key domestic and external developments have received international attention. The paper examines Nigeria's recent relations with global powers. It posits that these have been influenced more by domestic considerations than by the wider regional and continental pursuit of prestige that had hitherto formed the cornerstone of Nigeria's foreign policy. While pursuing domestic political stability, the country has also recognised the need to develop its international diplomacy. Although its relations with global powers may continue to experience hiccups, Nigeria's significant economic potential is likely to ensure that it remains of considerable importance to all global actors.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFRICOM	US Africa Command
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Corporation
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GBP	Pound sterling (British currency)
GGICC	Genetic International Corporation of China
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPRI	Military Professional Resources Incorporated

## INTRODUCTION

Since independence in 1960, governance in Nigeria has oscillated between civilian rule and the military. Following just over five years of civilian rule, from October 1960 to January 1966, the military ruled until October 1975. A further brief spell of civilian rule punctuated governance for a further five years until December 1985, when the military again resumed governance. The dawn of democracy in Nigeria in May 1999 called for an immediate redirection in the country's foreign policy. This was necessary to mark the changing tide in its new political dispensation. It was also to signal an end to the period of military rule in which the country had assumed a near-pariah status among democratic countries. Incidents such as the June 1993 annulment of elections, the hanging of Ken Saro Wiwa and other Ogoni activists in November 1995, the detention of members of opposition groups and state-sponsored assassination squads, evoked strong international reaction and sanctions. These included Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth, the imposition of a travel embargo on key officials and the cancellation of military contacts.<sup>1</sup> Considerable goodwill greeted the election of a new civilian president. However, the Obasanjo administration was acutely aware of the need to embark on a charm offensive to win the friendship of the international community and create an environment for Nigeria to reassert itself as a key nation in Africa and as a major player in global diplomacy.

The paper examines Nigeria's foreign policy from 2000 to 2011. It focuses largely on the country's relations with traditional global powers such as the US, Britain, France and Russia; and emerging global powers such as China, India and Brazil. It considers the present dispensation and possible future directions for each of these relations, especially in light of trade and commercial relations, diplomatic contacts and military links. The paper consists of five main sections of research. The first discusses the central determinants of Nigeria's foreign policy since the return of democracy in 1999. The second focuses on the country's relationship with traditional major powers. The third discusses Nigeria's relations with China, India and Brazil. The fourth reviews Nigeria's relations with key global organisations, in view of their connection with global powers. The concluding section looks at future directions for Nigeria's relations with these countries.

### PURSUIT OF A CHARM OFFENSIVE: DETERMINANTS OF A NEW FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA

The civilian government that assumed power in May 1999 recognised the necessity to redirect Nigeria's foreign policy. Its first step in achieving this was to aggressively search for friends, especially among countries responsible for influencing global affairs and shaping international economic diplomacy. Nigeria realised that its primary influence lay in the West African sub-region, where it had been the dominant actor, and in the rest of Africa where, alongside South Africa, it had become a major player. However, Nigeria also recognised that its ability to play this regional and continental role was largely dependent on its relations with the global powers.

A number of major trends are clearly discernable in Nigeria's foreign policy since 1999. Perhaps the most important of these is the desire to establish and maintain friendships with countries that have historically shaped global diplomacy, while cultivating deep

alliances with emerging powers featured in recent global economic developments. Nigeria has also sought to align its diplomacy with domestic developments, especially as these relate to the consolidation of its new democracy and the provision of basic infrastructure. These trends reflect the country's overall objective as envisioned in its Vision 2020 document.<sup>2</sup> This objective is to ensure that Nigeria will be one of the 20-largest economies in the world by 2020, thereby consolidating its leadership role in Africa and establishing itself as a significant player in the global economic and political arena.<sup>3</sup> Nigeria, however, continues to recognise its traditional commitment to Africa as a whole, and to West Africa, in particular. Consequently, the country's diplomacy from 1999 to 2011 has been a cautious balance of devotion to traditional obligations towards West Africa and African concerns, and the desire to ensure that external relations, especially with global powers, also assist in domestic concerns.

Six major determinants have underlined Nigeria's foreign policy since 1999. These include:

- removing the near-pariah status that the country attained during the last phases of military rule;
- remaining a key player in regional or continental politics, particularly in light of the increasing importance of the Gulf of Guinea;<sup>4</sup>
- ensuring that external relations assist in domestic economic developments, especially through strategic co-operation with traditional and emerging global economic actors;
- bringing about debt relief;
- obtaining assistance to consolidate democracy; and
- improving the image of the country affected by negative press on the illegal activities of its nationals abroad. This 'citizen diplomacy' strategy has also had a parallel domestic policy of ensuring that Nigerians at home pursue an agenda to make the nation proud.<sup>5</sup>

The determinants are conceived largely of domestic exigencies. This predominance of the domestic over the external thus calls for a brief discussion of the Nigerian domestic situation at the time of the return of civilian rule. At the dawn of democracy, Nigeria was still maintaining its position as a major oil producer, which accounted for over 95% of external earnings. This had, however, not translated into socio-economic and political development. The country was approximately \$30 billion in debt and basic infrastructures, including rail transportation, were almost non-existent, with epileptic power supply. This prevented the country from maximising its potential. At its inception, the new civilian administration was determined to address these challenges.

The desire to balance the domestic and external necessitated an initial foreign policy that required extensive outreach diplomacy during the early years of the Obasanjo administration. Indeed, between May 1999 and mid-August 2002, Obasanjo embarked on 113 foreign trips, spending 340 days out of the country.<sup>6</sup> In explaining his reasons for undertaking the trips, Obasanjo stated:<sup>7</sup>

I have devoted much time and energy journeying virtually all corners of the globe in my personal effort to positively reintegrate our country into the international community and attract investment. We are happy to report that the results from these trips have been encouraging enough to confirm my personal belief and the advice of marketing experts

namely that personal contact is the best way to market your product. And my product is Nigeria.

The late President Yar'Adua, who succeeded Obasanjo in 2007 and Goodluck Jonathan, who in turn succeeded Yar'Adua in 2010, did not embark on as many foreign trips as Obasanjo. The same charm offensive, however, underlined their diplomacy.

This new era of foreign policy differed from the preceding period in Nigeria's diplomacy, in which it had always prioritised sub-regional and continental interests.<sup>8</sup> The relative stability along these fronts enabled the country to strike a better balance between external policies and domestic interests. This was especially important because many Nigerians believed that the country had little to show for the generosity and sacrifices it had made in regional and continental diplomacy.<sup>9</sup> Many also felt that Nigeria should replace its past practice of confronting major powers in the pursuit of an African-centred agenda with a new practice that better suited Nigeria's national interests.<sup>10</sup>

## NIGERIA AND THE TRADITIONAL GLOBAL POWERS

In recent times, Nigeria's relations with traditional global powers have been central to its foreign policy activities. This is understandable, given Nigeria's historical relationship with these countries from the time of its independence. Colonial legacies, historical linkages and economic connections have closely tied Nigeria to all the traditional powers. The dominance of these countries was later threatened by the entrance of emerging powers. The entrenched nature of their relationship, however, still makes the traditional powers key actors in Nigeria's diplomacy.

### **The United States: Twists and turns**

Shortly before its return to democracy in 1999, Nigeria experienced difficult relations with the US. The US had imposed a travel ban and sanctions on the Abacha regime for hanging the Ogoni activists in 1995. These activists – and their leader, writer Ken Saro Wiwa – were hanged because their persistent campaign for justice and fairness for oil-producing regions conflicted with the interests of oil multinationals and the Nigerian government. The US ban on the Abacha regime won the support of civil society activists in the country, but brought the regime in clear opposition to the US government.<sup>11</sup> However, the confidence of Nigerian civil society groups in the offices of the US suffered when Moshood Abiola, the winner of the annulled June 1993 election, died during a meeting with US officials under circumstances many in Nigeria considered suspicious.<sup>12</sup> These tensions were ultimately dispelled when President Obasanjo was sworn in, marking a new phase in US–Nigerian relations. This was to continue under the Yar'Adua and Jonathan administrations.

Four main issues underline Nigeria's recent relations with the US. These include requesting assistance in military professionalism and security sector reform; the global war on terror; boosting trade and investment; and efforts to ensure debt relief and financial assistance.

**Assistance in military professionalism and security sector reform**

In light of its past involvement in politics, the Nigerian army needed to be 'professionalised', in order to institutionalise respect for civilian control in the new democracy. This became a key preoccupation of the Obasanjo administration and US assistance was sought in this venture. There is some controversy over whether Nigeria had actually requested a defence pact with the US, or whether it had only required assistance in aspects of its military reorganisation. Staff of the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphatically denied any consideration of a defence pact.<sup>13</sup> However, US Ambassador to Nigeria at the time, William Twaddell, stated that the US 'refused' to sign a defence pact with Nigeria because it might be interpreted as a form of 'neo-colonialism'.<sup>14</sup> He said that the US had indicated to Nigeria 'in clear terms' that it had no interest in signing a defence pact but that the US 'will work to protect the country's nascent democracy'.<sup>15</sup>

US involvement in the reform has, however, been controversial. Under the agreement that was reached, a US military training team, the Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI), was invited to train members of the Nigerian army. The details of the arrangement were unclear, except that this team was to come to Nigeria and assist in professionalising the Nigerian army, with the Nigerian government contributing \$3.5 million in implementing the defence plan. There were, however, serious objections from Nigerians, including the military. Firstly, there were those who saw it as a form of foreign domination. Although it was not disputed that the Nigerian armed forces needed to be professionalised, there were debates about whether the MPRI was best suited for this task. Secondly, there were those who objected to the expense, which was seen as a huge sacrifice at a time when many Nigerians were living below the poverty line and where basic infrastructures, such as water and electricity, were collapsing. Thirdly, there were those who felt that such an agreement would mean a switch to US weapons systems. This could compel Nigeria to discard equipment from previous suppliers, like North Korea and the former Soviet Union (now Russia), from its arsenal.

Just as the MPRI controversy was dissipating, another followed with the introduction of the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) by the Bush administration. This was supposed to be a unified command that was to be responsible for all African countries, with the exception of Egypt. Nigeria's attitude to the entire AFRICOM controversy deserves some discussion. After an initial condemnation of the initiative and a declaration that Nigeria would not have anything to do with it, the late President Yar'Adua visited the US where he was quoted as saying that Nigeria was willing to partner with AFRICOM. This position immediately created confusion, which necessitated clarification from the former Foreign Affairs Minister, Ojo Maduekwe. Maduekwe stated that the president had meant any support from the US should be in the form of assistance for an alternative African Standby Force that the continent planned, and not for an externally sponsored initiative like AFRICOM.<sup>16</sup> Shortly afterwards, Yar'Adua stated that he did not accept AFRICOM. When Barack Obama assumed the US presidency, Nigeria made clear its position, insisting that he should disband the entire AFRICOM initiative and support the African Standby Force. Nigeria continues to maintain its objection to AFRICOM.

Regardless of the US involvement, it is worth pointing out that there has been significant improvement in the professionalisation of the Nigerian armed forces since the return of civilian rule in the country, especially in its deeper appreciation of the importance of civilian oversight. Close military collaborations with the US have continued



since President Obama assumed office, and as recently as May 2011, the US donated two war ships to Nigeria.<sup>17</sup>

### **Global war on terror**

A major hiccup in the relations between the the US and Nigeria came in December 2009, when a young Nigerian, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, was arrested during a failed attempt to bomb Northwest Airlines Flight 253, flying into Detroit from Amsterdam. Although the US was aware of Nigeria's vulnerability to religious radicalisation, no one expected a national of that country to be involved in any activity of this magnitude. The immediate reaction of the US was to place Nigeria on its 'Terror Watch List'.<sup>18</sup> The Nigerian government expressed outrage at this response, which some commentators referred to as profilin – pigeon-holing a country on the basis of insufficient information. The US, however, insisted that its actions were objective and without prejudice to Nigeria. Removal from the watch list became a foreign policy priority for Nigeria.<sup>19</sup> After several diplomatic entreaties with the Nigerian government, the US agreed to remove Nigeria from the list in March 2010, on the following conditions:<sup>20</sup>

- Nigeria should publically condemn acts of terrorism wherever they occur in the world.
- Nigeria should take urgent steps to address security lapses at its airports.
- Nigeria should be party to an agreement to deploy air marshalls on all US-bound flights originating from Nigeria.
- Nigeria's anti-terrorism bill, pending before the Nigerian National Assembly should be passed into law.

### **Trade and investment**

Nigeria has prioritised trade in its relations with the US. Since the return of democracy in 1999, there have been increased trade links between the two countries. Optimising the relationship to improve Nigeria's economy is central to Nigeria's policy. There have also been persistent calls for US investments in Nigeria. Presently, key US investors in the Nigerian oil sector include Exxon Mobil, Chevron and Western Geo-physical. Other US multinationals in Nigeria include the British American Tobacco Company, in the tobacco enterprise, and CitiBank, in the banking sector. As expected, oil is at the centre of most of the country's trade with the US, and Nigeria continues to be one of its major oil exporters.

Nigeria has also been involved in the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). This was established by the US in May 2000 to provide duty-free and quota-free market preferences for approximately 6 400 products from sub-Saharan African countries to US markets until 2015. Nigeria's leading AGOA non-oil products to the US include cashew nuts, shea butter, shrimps, ginger, gum Arabic, cocoa products and local foods. However, it seems that Nigeria has not benefited as much as it should from AGOA. This is because the country's products are not economically competitive in the US. The difficulties involved in registering a company in Nigeria also appear to have affected its chances of benefiting from this initiative. The World Bank 2010 report stated that it costs 80% of an average Nigerian's annual salary to register a company, compared with approximately 4% of an average Mauritian's annual salary.<sup>21</sup> Also, infrastructural challenges such as power, transport and delay in ports increases production cost, which makes the goods less competitive in US markets. Nigeria ranks eighth out of the 40 AGOA beneficiary countries

in 2008 exports of agricultural products to the US.<sup>22</sup> For a country with Nigeria's resources and potential, this can be significantly improved.

**Table 1: Summary of US trade with Nigeria (\$ million), 1999–2010**

Year	Exports	Imports	Balance
1999	627.9	4,385.1	-3,757.2
2000	721.9	10,537.6	-9,815.7
2001	955.1	8,774.9	-7,819.8
2002	1,057.7	5,945.3	-4,887.6
2003	1,016.9	10,393.6	-9,376.7
2004	1,554.3	16,248.5	-14,694.2
2005	1,619.8	24,239.4	-22,619.6
2006	2,233.5	27,863.1	-25,629.7
2007	2,777.9	32,770.2	-29,992.3
2008	4,102.4	38,068.0	-33,965.6
2009	3,687.1	19,128.2	-15,441.1
2010	4,039.7	30,515.9	-26,448.3

Source: US Census Bureau, Foreign Trade, 'Trade in goods with Nigeria', <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c7530.html#2010>, accessed 10 July 2011

**Table 2: US trade in goods with Nigeria (\$ million), 2011**

Month	Exports	Imports	Balance
January	268.6	3,144.7	-2,876.1
February	331.4	2,859.3	-2,527.9
March	489.0	2,972.1	-2,483.1
April	397.1	2,944.2	-2,547.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,486.1</b>	<b>11,920.3</b>	<b>-10,434.2</b>

Note: All figures are in US\$ millions on a nominal basis, and are not seasonally adjusted unless otherwise specified. Details may not equal totals due to rounding.

Source: US Census Bureau, Foreign Trade 'Trade in goods with Nigeria', *op. cit.*

### Politics of debt relief and financial assistance

With the advent of democracy, Nigeria expected to receive dividends in the form of debt relief. At the time it owed approximately \$35 billion, largely to the group of countries known as the 'Paris Club'.<sup>23</sup> The realisation of this goal was a major foreign policy objective in its relations with the US and other major powers. Successive US presidents have shown considerable interest in addressing Nigeria's debt question. During a visit to

Nigeria in August 2000, President Clinton announced a \$100 million aid package to the country. This was aimed specifically at improving primary education and health care. In 2006, finance minister, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, secured the US Treasury Department's assistance to persuade the Paris Club to write off \$18 billion of Nigeria's foreign debt. The Bush administration was also involved in the sponsorship of many health-related issues in the country.

Interestingly, Barack Obama considered debt relief for Nigeria even before he became president. As Illinois senator, he made it clear on the floor of the senate that he would be a strong advocate for debt relief for Nigeria, if the country could hand over Charles Taylor – the Liberian warlord who was granted amnesty in Nigeria – who had by then been indicted by the International Court of Justice. He stated:<sup>24</sup>

I strongly believe that Nigeria is a worthy candidate for debt relief and a key US partner in West Africa. When Charles Taylor is turned over, there is no doubt in my mind that I will be a forceful advocate for debt relief for Nigeria.

Nigeria's success in alleviating its foreign debt remains, to date, one of the most important achievements in its engagement with the global powers since the return of civilian rule.

The expression of friendship between Nigeria and the US was affirmed in the signing of the first US–Nigeria Binational Commission, in April 2010. This aimed to establish a mechanism for sustained, bilateral, high-level dialogue to promote and increase diplomatic, economic and security co-operation between the two countries. The commission's main objectives are the following:<sup>25</sup>

- Promote and co-ordinate the diplomatic, economic, military, commercial, technical, social and cultural co-operation between the two countries.
- Address areas of mutual interest and/or concern and develop strategies for tackling these issues with assistance and co-ordination from both governments.
- Assist in the implementation and follow-up of agreements and all other legal instruments already concluded between the governments.
- Create favourable conditions to carry out co-operation programmes and projects as may be decided by mutual consent, and help to resolve any difficulties that may arise in carrying out any such programmes and/or projects.
- Evaluate the development of co-operation between the two countries as well as initiatives from each government aiming to expand co-operation to new areas.

The commission's main focus is for the US government to work with Nigeria on a number of key domestic issues. These include good governance, electoral reform and preparations, transparency and anti-corruption, energy (electricity supply) reform and investment, as well as food and agricultural development. No doubt, the US investors and businesses are also likely to benefit from furthering developments in Nigeria under the civilian government. In addition, the commission seeks to promote co-operation in efforts to resolve conflict in the Niger Delta, including issues of security and counter-terrorism. Underlying this is the US oil and energy security and the protection of US oil multinationals operating in the turbulent Niger Delta. Some of these issues are also apparent in Nigeria's relationship with the UK.

### **The United Kingdom: Consolidation of old ties**

Historically, Nigeria's relations with the UK have been cordial. A Nigerian expert on Anglo–Nigerian relations, the late Olasupo Ojedokun, once described these as the 'Anglo–Nigerian Entente'.<sup>26</sup> The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office document notes that up to 800 000 people in the UK have family ties to Nigeria,<sup>27</sup> and members of the Nigerian diaspora play important and valuable roles in the UK's economy and society.<sup>28</sup> Nigeria is also a key member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Although its commitment to this organisation has somewhat reduced, largely because there is nothing that brings Commonwealth affairs to the forefront of Nigeria's attention, there is still a shared memory among many of a 'glorious' past. For example, the first Commonwealth Head of States meeting outside London took place in Lagos, Nigeria in January 1966.<sup>29</sup>

Since 1999, Nigeria has tried to ensure that relations with the UK remain cordial while also serving Nigeria's own domestic interest. Key issues that have dominated relations include trade, support for democracy and co-operation in debt relief, financial assistance and the fight against corruption.

### **Diplomatic relations**

Following the return of civilian rule, successive Nigerian leaders and UK prime ministers have undertaken official visits to each other's countries. Nigeria also hosted a royal visit by Queen Elizabeth II, in December 2003. Former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, made an official visit to Nigeria in February 2002, and has visited the country twice since leaving office.<sup>30</sup>

A major diplomatic issue that has come to the fore in Anglo–Nigerian relations, however, has been how to address the problem of Nigerians in UK jails. As of May 2010, an estimated 20 000 Nigerians languished in various UK jails.<sup>31</sup> For quite some time there were speculations in UK newspapers that the UK government was to build a GBP<sup>32</sup> 3 million jail in Nigeria.<sup>33</sup> This was, however, denied by both the UK and Nigerian governments. Nigeria has also made it clear that it is not seeking any assistance from the UK for the construction of a prison.

Although Anglo–Nigerian relations continue to be cordial, Nigeria seems to be devoting less attention to the affairs of the Commonwealth. Indeed, it would appear that the organisation attracts minimal attention from policymakers. This is contrary to the 1990s, when the Commonwealth was at the forefront of Nigerian diplomacy, especially under the leadership of the Nigerian Secretary General, Emeka Anyaoku. During his tenure, Nigeria experienced crucial domestic issues, such as the Ogoni crisis, that the organisation had to contend with. However, such issues have not been present in the last decade to tie domestic political developments and concerns to the politics of the Commonwealth. Although former President Obasanjo was engaged in the Commonwealth's initiatives concerning Zimbabwe, his successors have shown far less interest in these and its other affairs. Another former Nigerian leader, Abubakar Abdulsalami, has also been deeply involved in a Commonwealth Election Observer mission.

### **Trade relations**

Trade relations between Nigeria and the UK have also remained cordial. Key trade items include oil and gas, financial services and agriculture. In August 2010, the Deputy Chief

Executive of UK Trade and Investment, Susan Haird, noted that trade in services from the UK to Nigeria in 2008 amounted to approximately GBP 1.27 billion, while exports from Nigeria to the UK, in 2009, stood at about GBP 600 million. These figures reflect the towering significance of the UK's trade advantage over Nigeria. It is alarming that of the GBP 600 million exports from Nigeria to the UK, only a miserable GBP 12 million was derived from non-oil exports. These are agricultural products such as cocoa, coffee, tea and spices.<sup>34</sup> Exports from the UK to Nigeria, in 2009, increased to GBP 1.3 billion; while exports from Nigeria to the UK remained at GBP 600 million, the bulk of which continued to be oil and gas. UK exports to Nigeria are about double Nigeria's exports to the UK. Goods exported from the UK to Nigeria were GBP 1.235 billion in 2009.<sup>35</sup>

The increase in trade seems to be a result of both countries' realisation of the potential to explore new areas in their relationship. The advent of democracy in Nigeria has encouraged improvement in their trade links. In February 2011 the British Minister for Africa, Henry Bellingham, challenged staff at the British High Commission in Abuja, Nigeria to double trade between Nigeria and the UK over the next four years. Figures are already showing an upward trend, with UK exports up 85% in the first two months of 2011, and Nigeria's exports to the UK up by 69% over the same period.<sup>36</sup> Many UK companies continue to operate in Nigeria while many Nigerians are engaging in different economic enterprises in the UK, including restaurants, cab offices and solicitor firms.<sup>37</sup>

#### **Politics of debt relief, financial assistance and the recovery of looted money**

The UK has been one of the key countries that has supported Nigeria's clamour for debt relief. It has also been involved in providing financial assistance to promote good governance and help Nigeria achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The UK has supported endeavours, including malaria prevention, girls' education and reform in the justice sector. Nigeria has also worked closely with the UK on efforts to recover money held in UK banks by corrupt Nigerian politicians.<sup>38</sup>

Both Nigeria and the UK acknowledge that relations have changed and that the UK's position of dominance in trade with Nigeria has decreased. However, they also agree that their future relations can be further strengthened on the basis of their positive history.

#### **France: Smoothing historical rough edges**

Nigeria's past relationship with France has always been a difficult one. It is even on record that France had once worked tirelessly towards the dismemberment of Nigeria.<sup>39</sup> At the centre of the enmity between the two countries was the competition to exercise influence over Francophone West African states. France was determined to ensure control over the affairs of these countries, even after their independence. It perceived Nigeria as its main 'rival' in this objective, especially because Nigeria was intent on achieving a form of regional integration that would exclude erstwhile colonial masters. This ultimately resulted in Nigeria championing the cause of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).<sup>40</sup>

In the last decade, however, relations between Nigeria and France have improved. This progress is the result of the slight shift in French policy towards its former West African colonies. France's former deep interest in the affairs of the colonies significantly decreased with its decision to turn its attention towards the former Soviet Union, and away from

its former African colonies. In a major strategic move that began under President Jacques Chirac and which has been pursued by President Nicholas Sarkozy, economic interests, rather than historical sentiments, are now key to French foreign diplomacy. Consequently, its former African colonies have slipped down the French priority list.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, former President Chirac's visit to Nigeria in July 1999 was the first by a foreign head of state to the country after its return to democratic rule. President Obasanjo returned the visit in February 2000. Relations between the two countries rose to the level of strategic partnership in June 2008, when late President Yar'Adua visited France.

Trade links between Nigeria and France have improved considerably and Nigeria has welcomed French multinational investors. Nigeria is the largest recipient of French exports and its second-largest trading partner in Africa. France is also Nigeria's second-largest foreign investor. French companies in Nigeria are mainly in the fields of oil and gas, automobile and construction industries.<sup>42</sup> The most prominent of these include Total, LaFarge and Peugeot.

Nigeria is the leading exporter of oil and related products to France.<sup>43</sup> In recognition of this, President Sarkozy pledged that *Agence France de Développement*<sup>44</sup> would increase the line of credit available to Nigerian and French companies conducting business in the country. France has always had more economic interests in Nigeria than in all other Francophone West African countries put together. As of April 2011, bilateral trade between Nigeria and France had reached 5.5 billion euros.<sup>45</sup>

In a somewhat ironic twist France, which had formerly tried to ensure that Nigeria did not interfere in the internal affairs of other Francophone West African countries, later encouraged it to find ways of bringing other West African countries together to address the instability in Côte d'Ivoire.<sup>46</sup> The constitutional impasse that ultimately occurred as a result of former President Gbagbo's refusal to step down after losing the election, resulted in greater collaboration between Nigeria and France. Both countries maintained a resolute position that Gbagbo should respect the wishes of Ivorians. Current Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan and French President Sarkozy seem to have established a good friendship. This was reflected in the Nigerian leader's invitation to attend the 25<sup>th</sup> Africa–France Summit in Nice, in May 2010. This attained the desired result with the swearing in of Côte d'Ivoire's President Ouattara in May 2011. Apart from Nigeria's relations with Western global powers, it is also important to assess the country's relations with Russia.

### **Russia: The return of an old friend**

Russia has always held a special place in the hearts of most Nigerians as the country that supported Nigeria during its bitter civil war between 1967 and 1970.<sup>47</sup> Although no form of extreme cordiality in relations was developed after the civil war, the Soviet Union (and later Russia) continued to feature prominently in Nigeria's diplomacy. In March 2001, President Obasanjo visited Russia and both countries signed a Declaration on the Principles of Friendly Relations and Partnership, and a Programme on Cultural and Scientific Cooperation.

The relationship continued to progress, and in 2008, the two countries signed a series of Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs). The first of these agreements was to

regulate the peaceful use of nuclear energy, while the second envisaged the participation of Gazprom, the Russian-based energy corporation, in the exploration and development of oil wells and gas reserves in Nigeria. By 2009, both countries had begun talking about further developing their relationship. Nigeria's former foreign minister, Ojo Maduekwe, and his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, met to discuss various areas of collaboration. Specifically, Russia was interested in projects related to the development of Nigeria's infrastructure, the ferrous and nonferrous metals industry, electric power generation, including nuclear energy, and the extraction of hydrocarbon and other raw minerals. For its part, Nigeria was interested in the electricity sector.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Nigeria in 2010, the first such visit from a Kremlin leader to Africa's most populous nation, boosted their relationship significantly. Both countries signed a deal to co-operate in developing nuclear energy, especially for the purpose of electricity. Another major project of interest to the Russians was the Trans-Saharan Gas pipeline, a project aimed at sending Nigerian gas to Europe, and supported by the EU as a way to diversify its energy resources. This is of considerable interest to Gazprom because of its belief that it is far behind its foreign competitors in Africa, especially when compared with companies such as Royal Dutch Shell, Chevron and Exxon Mobil. By 2010, both Nigeria and Russia had also started exploring discussions on space technology, nuclear energy and partnership in other technical fields. The countries have signed a nuclear agreement between the Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority and the Russian State Atomic Corporation to explore and develop gas and hydrocarbon-related projects in Nigeria. In the same year trade, between the two countries reached \$300 million, and Nigeria became Russia's second-largest trading partner in sub-Saharan Africa after South Africa. However, this amount is relatively insignificant compared with the relationship developing between Nigeria and the emerging powers.

It is believed that Russia's main focus in its relations with Nigeria is on nuclear energy, gas and oil exploration – although figures of these trade links are not available for this paper. Russian President Medvedev pointed out, during his visit to Nigeria, that if his country carries out its plans, 'Russian investment in Nigeria can reach billions of dollars.'<sup>48</sup> Indeed, figures provided by the Russian Ambassador to Nigeria, Alexander Polyakov, in January 2010, reflected that the balance of trade between Nigeria and Russia reached the \$1.5 billion mark in 2009.<sup>49</sup>

On the whole, Nigeria has maintained a cordial relationship with all the traditional powers since the return of democratic rule to Nigeria. Despite these close links and their historical ties, another set of countries have come to play important roles in the country's foreign diplomacy. These are the emerging powers, especially China, India and Brazil.

## NIGERIA AND THE EMERGING POWERS

In the last decade, emerging powers like China, India and Brazil have become key actors in Nigeria's foreign policy. This is not only because of the increasing economic power of these countries but also because of their willingness to engage with Nigeria regarding its vast economic and human resources.

### **China: The bold entrance of an economic emerging power**

Recently, China has become deeply involved in Nigeria. Although the relationship has many dimensions, its main focus has been trade. This has grown extensively, ranging from oil and gas to telecommunications and railways. By 2009, Nigeria was among the leading two-way trade partners of China in Africa, alongside countries such as Angola, South Africa and Sudan; and the second-highest African importer from China, after South Africa.

Shortly after the return of democracy to Nigeria, the two countries signed several economic agreements. These include agreements covering consular matters; co-operation against illicit trafficking; abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; and the diversion of precursor chemicals, which were signed in June 2002. Other agreements included an exchange of notes on the provision of goods between the two countries and an agreement on tourism co-operation.

The volume of trade between Nigeria and China increased from \$178 million in 1996, to \$1.44 billion in 2001. This rose further to \$1.169 billion in 2002, \$1.86 billion in 2003, \$2 billion in 2004 and to \$2.83 billion in 2007. China is one of Nigeria's top-ten trading partners and has established 30 companies in Nigeria. Some of these are solely owned and others are jointly owned with Nigerians. These companies are involved in the construction, oil and gas, technology, service and education sectors of the Nigerian economy.

Although China has a range of interests in Nigeria, its main trade interest is oil. This is also a natural resource endowment that has been at the forefront of controversy in Nigeria, largely because the resource has been mismanaged and the communities producing it have persistently complained about neglect. Several oil deals have been signed over the last few years, the most significant being the agreement that involved China investing \$4 billion in Nigeria's infrastructure in return for the first refusal rights on four oil blocks in 2008.<sup>50</sup> Such infrastructure includes China's building of a power generating station that would add substantial megawatts to Nigeria's power sector. This investment inevitably put China on a collision course with Nigerian militants fighting the Nigerian state over the management of oil in the country's Niger Delta. On a number of occasions, Chinese oil workers were taken hostage by militants and ultimately freed after the payment of ransoms. The period 2004 to 2009, witnessed some major Chinese investments. In January 2006, China's national offshore oil company, the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC), acquired a \$2.3 billion majority stake in Akpo, a major oil field. CNOOC also acquired a 45% stake in Oil Prospecting Licence 246, worth \$2.7 billion in offshore deepwater oil fields operated by Total, the French oil giant.<sup>51</sup> This is reported to be CNOOC's largest foreign investment to date. CNOOC paid \$424 million for financing, operating and capital expenses. It was arranged that profits would be shared with the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation on a ratio of 70:30 in favour of CNOOC. CNOOC also agreed to spend \$2 billion to build refineries and downstream infrastructure in Nigeria.<sup>52</sup>

China has also increased its volume of agricultural exports from Nigeria. A state-owned company, Genetic International Corporation of China (GICC), bought its first consignment of 100 000 tonnes of fresh cassava chips from Nigeria, in July 2005. This deal continued over a period of six months on a monthly basis. GICC has also begun to import cocoa beans and rubber directly from Nigeria. China also imports sesame seeds from Nigeria. There are currently over 500 Chinese experts and technicians working in various fields of agriculture in 20 Nigerian states.



Chinese firms have been trooping into Nigeria to conduct business. In April 2005, ZTE Corporation, a Chinese telecommunications firm, entered a deal with Nigerian Telecommunications Limited to expand Nigeria's Code Division Multiple Access network following a successful 10 000-line trial in Maiduguri, Borno State. The China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation built the Nigerian Communications Commission building in Abuja. Huawei, a giant Chinese telecommunications company, is also engaged in the country.<sup>53</sup> In addition, China is the source of most of the new motorcycles on Nigerian roads.<sup>54</sup>

Some Nigerian state governments have also established close economic links with China. The Borno State government awarded six major contracts to Chinese construction and engineering firms to address issues of flooding and drainage construction, and to curtail mosquito infestation. Chinese conglomerate, Zhuhai Minghong Group Corporation Limited, agreed to revive the 350-acre moribund Awoomama Resort in Oru East Local Council of Imo State. This development is also likely to have a positive impact on the neighbouring Abia and Anambra States in increasing trade and commercial activities.

In February 2011, history was made when the Nigerian government handed over the Olorunsogo Power Station in Ogun State to a consortium led by Sepco III Electric Power Construction Corporation of China and a local company, Pacific Energy. This was the first handing over under the administration's Power Roadmap to permanently address the country's power problem. The handing over of the station stemmed from Nigeria's inability to repay the loan provided by the Chinese government for the construction of the plant. China provided 65% of the funding required for the 335-megawatt-capacity Olorunsogo Plant and the 335-megawatt-capacity Omotosho Power Station in Okitipupa, Ondo State. The loan was provided through the contractors for the projects. These were Sepco III Electric Power Construction Corporation for the Olorunsogo plant and China National Machinery & Equipment Import & Export Corporation for the Omotosho plant.

When the Nigerian government failed to repay the loans for the two plants, the Chinese contractors were said to have left Nigeria with the manuals and other documents relating to the running of the plants; while the few documents left behind were written in Chinese. Interestingly, this response was seen as understandable by the Nigerian government. The Minister of State for Power, Nuhu Wya, noted that the Chinese had acted as such because 'a contractor who is being owed will guard jealously his fallback position'. There are also on-going discussions with the company that built the Omotosho [Power Station to take over the management].<sup>55</sup>

Also at the centre of most of Nigeria's diplomacy towards China, is the principle of exchanging oil for development. As recently as April 2011, the Nigerian Government signed a contract to rehabilitate the 2 110 kilometre Eastern rail line with Chinese company China Gezhouba Group Corporation and two other companies (a Turkish firm, Esser Contracting and Industry Limited, and a Nigerian firm, Lingo Nigeria Limited). The three Eastern rail lines are the 463 kilometre line from Port Harcourt to Makurdi; the 1 016 kilometre line from Markurdi to Kuru, with the inclusion of the spur lines to Jos and Kafanchan; and the 640 kilometre line from Kuru to Markurdi.<sup>56</sup>

In April 2011, trade between Nigeria and China reached a new high of \$7.76 billion, thus making Nigeria the fourth-largest trading partner and the second-largest export market of China in Africa. Key Chinese companies in the country include Happy Chef Restaurants (food and restaurants), Plas Alliance Company (rubber bags and shoes), Royal

Motors Company Limited (motorcycle assembly) and Sun Lung Industries (manufacturing and distribution of telecommunications and electrical equipments).

## India

Nigeria has a long and mutually beneficial relationship with India. In recent times, this has developed quite significantly, characterised by high-powered delegations between the two countries. In 2007, they signed a strategic partnership deal called the Abuja Declaration. The declaration included four agreements, namely, two MOUs on promoting interaction between foreign office backed institutes; one MOU on defence co-operation; and a protocol for foreign office consultations. The Abuja Declaration also covers other issues such as drug trafficking, extradition, promoting trade and investment and cultural exchange programmes. It was agreed, at the time of signing, that these pacts would set the stage for a more intensive relationship between the two countries. Before this, both countries had lacked an institutional framework to back investments and commerce.

Nigeria's relations with India cut across a broad spectrum. The most important of these is trade and commerce. According to the Indian High Commissioner in Nigeria, by 2010, trade between the two countries was approximately \$10.7 billion, of which \$8.7 billion was to Nigeria's advantage. Nigeria is now believed to be India's largest trading partner in Africa. The key areas identified include medical and pharmaceuticals, banking, telecommunication, retail, movies and entertainment. In the medical and pharmaceuticals area, many Nigerians consider India as the best location to undergo medical treatment. This is likely to continue for some time to come, especially in light of the high cost of treatment in Europe and the low standard of medical treatment in Nigeria. In the banking sector, India has been involved in the IBTC Bank in Nigeria. The involvement of Indians in telecommunication business in Nigeria has attracted considerable interest. India's largest cellular service company, Bharti Airtel, invested \$600 million in Nigeria's mobile market, to take over Zain in 2010. India has also been involved in vehicle importation into Nigeria, with two Indian companies, the DANA group and the Stallion Group, at the forefront of this.<sup>57</sup>

India's primary involvement in Nigeria has been in the oil and gas sector, with Indian company, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Videsh Limited, becoming an active participant.

Despite clear evidence of cordial relations between the two countries, there are also areas of subtle tension. A major issue of concern for Nigeria is the treatment sometimes meted out to Nigerians travelling to India. The Nigerian government has complained that Nigerians on legitimate trips to India are sometimes harassed at the airport under the stereotypical assumption that they could be drug peddlers, or that they may be engaged in other illegal business. Nigeria has always argued that, although citizens of both countries may be engaging in illegal activities, it is wrong to regard all Nigerians visiting India as potential suspects.

**Table 3: Nigeria's trade with India (\$ million), 2003–2010**

	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10
<b>Indian exports to Nigeria</b>	565.49	644.68	874.03	903.48	1,083.34	1,529.26	1,408.25
<b>Indian imports from Nigeria</b>	75.64 <sup>a</sup>	48.40 <sup>a</sup>	72.46 <sup>a</sup>	7,026.93	7,616.09	8,900.35	7,287.91

a Excluding oil import figures.

Source: Figures provided by the Indian High Commission, Abuja, Nigeria

### Brazil

Brazil and Nigeria share a long history in their relations. Apart from the historical roots, that can be linked to the slave trade, both countries also share a passion for football. In the last decade, Nigeria's diplomatic and commercial links with Brazil have increased considerably, with both sides looking to the future with considerable interest.

In January 2005, a 14-man delegation led by the Brazilian Minister of External Relations, Celso Amorim, visited Nigeria. The then Nigerian President Obasanjo, called for strong working relations between both countries, and promised that Nigeria would co-operate with Brazil on impending UN reforms. In April 2005, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, paid a two-day state visit to Nigeria, which was reciprocated in August 2005 by President Obasanjo.

The relationship between Nigeria and Brazil took a major leap forward in September 2005 when Presidents Obasanjo and Da Silva signed a bilateral agreement. This focused on four major areas of trade and investment, technical co-operation, cultural revival, and regular political consultations. Brazil, because of its historical links with Africa, also wanted Nigeria to provide teachers to teach African history in Brazil. During the visit, Obasanjo noted that both countries were in the process of 're-igniting the golden years of Nigeria-Brazil relations of the 1980s'.<sup>58</sup> Since then, the value of bilateral trade has reached over \$2 billion and the joint co-operation profile has covered virtually every facet of human activity.<sup>59</sup> Obasanjo used the opportunity of the visit to call for diplomatic efforts to revive the South Atlantic Zone of Peace and Cooperation<sup>60</sup> and committed the Nigerian government to convening an inaugural summit of leaders from Africa, the Caribbean and South America.

Between 2003 and 2005, Nigeria's merchandised exports to Brazil increased from nearly \$1.5 billion to \$5 billion. This made Nigeria the fifth-highest exporter of goods to Brazil, after the US, Germany, Argentina and China. Goods traded include oil and agricultural products. By contrast, however, Brazil's exports to Nigeria rose only slightly, reaching \$643,000 in 2005. Brazil's main exports to Nigeria include ethanol, sugar and coffee. Both countries have identified an area of mutually beneficial trade in the form of energy. Nigerian diplomats in Brazil have identified Brazil's ability to develop bio fossils and its use of ethanol as an alternative to fuel as issues of potential interest to Nigeria.

In recent times, there has been close collaboration between the two countries on the issue of hydropower. The joint agreement between Nigeria and Brazil on energy co-operation was signed when the late President Yar'Adua visited Brazil in August 2009, following which an Energy Commission was established between the two countries. According to Nigerian Vice President Namadi Sambo, the objective of the commission is to assist in 'revolutionising the Nigerian energy sector'. Brazil has expressed interest in completing the development of the Zungeru Hydropower Plant and financing the Mambilla Hydropower Project under a partnership that would allow the country to help develop Nigeria's power industry. In return for Brazil's participation in two hydropower projects, Nigeria will grant Brazil access to its oil and gas industry. This was particularly important to Nigeria, as the government had earlier failed in its promise to double electricity output to 6 000 megawatts by December 2009.<sup>61</sup> In January 2011, Vice President Namadi Sambo further cemented this agreement during his visit to Brazil.

Nigeria and Brazil are also working together in the area of drugs and narcotics control. Both countries have realised that citizens from their, and other countries, have been using Nigeria and Brazil as routes for drugs. The seriousness of this problem was highlighted in April 2010, by which time the Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency had placed the Nigerian–Brazil route on red alert in a bid to intercept moves by drug trafficking syndicates.

## NIGERIA, GLOBAL POWERS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Since the return of democratic rule in 1999, Nigeria has also pursued its relationship with global powers within the realms of major international organisations. It is important, however, to explain Nigeria's understanding of its international diplomacy regarding these organisations. Nigeria believes it has established its position as a regional African power, and that its dominance in this regard is unassailable. Consequently, the country wants to reorganise its domestic affairs and to use this to win international respectability. With democracy becoming entrenched in the country, Nigeria believes that one of the main obstacles hindering its recognition as an emerging power has been removed. Furthermore, Nigeria believes that it has done enough to win global recognition as a key player, especially against the backdrop of its involvement in global peacekeeping.

Within the UN, Nigeria's main interest has been to ensure global peace and to advance Africa's interests. Nigeria has contributed to global peacekeeping in key countries such as Sudan, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In discussions held with the leaders of global powers, the issue of political stability in Africa has remained a major topic of discussion. President Obasanjo raised the issue of instability in Africa, when he met former Secretary General Kofi Annan, in July 2002.<sup>62</sup> In May 2011, President Goodluck Jonathan discussed the situation in Côte d'Ivoire with present Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Also important in the consideration of Nigeria's diplomacy with the UN has been its desire to secure a permanent position on the UN Security Council. Nigeria has discussed this with some of the key powers, and in May 2011, it received France's promise of support in this regard.<sup>63</sup> Since the return of civilian rule in 1999, Nigeria has served in the Security Council only once, from 2010–11. Before this, the country has thrice been a member of the council, from 1966–67, 1978–79 and 1994–95. Nigeria has always believed that its

past commitment to peace and security in Africa, and its involvement in peacekeeping activities should qualify the country for the position. Nigeria is one of the largest troop-contributing nations in the UN. A UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations report of May 2010, noted that the country had approximately 6 000 men and women participating in peacekeeping missions.<sup>64</sup> This figure is surpassed only by Pakistan, Bangladesh and India. Nigeria has served in countries including Angola, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, India, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Mozambique, Pakistan (Kashmir), Rwanda, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Western Sahara. This involvement has brought special recognition to Nigeria, with a member of the Nigerian army, Lieutenant General Chikadibia Obiakor, being appointed as the UN military adviser for peacekeeping operations. The UN also accredited the Nigerian Army Peacekeeping Centre, making it one of the four facilities in the world where UN peacekeepers are trained before deployment to missions.

Nigeria has developed a somewhat peculiar relationship with the World Bank, especially on issues involving the country's debt. The Obasanjo administration has held discussions with key countries, to which Nigeria was indebted, and has succeeded in obtaining substantial relief. It is widely believed that Nigeria was able to attain this remarkable feat because the former finance minister, Okonjo-Iweala, was a former vice president of the World Bank, and as such was able to understand its inner workings. In all discussions on Nigeria's debt, the country received considerable sympathy from the key powers, and minister Okonjo-Iweala confirmed that the US was particularly helpful. It is possible that this understanding may be due to the dawn of democracy in Nigeria. It may also be possible to attribute this US sympathy to Nigeria's handover of Charles Taylor. This was, however, emphatically denied by Nigerian officials.<sup>65</sup>

Nigeria was able to reach an important agreement with the Paris Club in June 2005, at which time it owed the club \$31 billion. This involved Nigeria making an upfront payment of \$6 billion in existing arrears, thereby reducing its debt to \$25 billion. In return, the club would write off 67% of the remaining debt, amounting to \$17–18 billion.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY WITH TRADITIONAL AND EMERGING POWERS

Since the return of democracy in 1999, Nigeria has focused on developing strategic partnerships with traditional, and emerging global powers, to support its domestic priorities. It has strengthened old relations and developed new ones, and has tried to balance its role as a regional and continental power, with addressing domestic concerns. During the 1970s and 1980s, Nigeria's external preoccupation was centred around the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. During the 1990s, its focus was on peacekeeping missions. In the last decade, however, Nigeria has focused largely on domestic issues, while retaining a deep interest (although not a physical involvement) in regional and continental issues. It is against this backdrop, that Nigeria has refused to be drawn into a physical involvement in the Côte d'Ivoire, despite the Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan's discussions with President Obama on the subject.

Trade relations with international countries have also shown interesting reading. Although it is often difficult to obtain figures on Nigeria's trade relations, the paper's

discussion demonstrates its continued significance with both traditional and emerging powers. Since 1999, a shift is also evident in the country's foreign policy towards the global powers. Nigeria continues to nurture and appreciate its relations with the traditional powers, but also acknowledges the importance of developing its relationship with the emerging powers. This explains the growing interest in countries such as Brazil, India and China. Nigeria appreciates the tremendous role these emerging powers can play in global politics. As with most African countries, however, it also believes that they, being developing countries themselves, would have far greater understanding and sympathy for the African cause than the traditional global powers. Although Nigeria still seeks to be relevant in the global scene, it also wants to devote more attention to domestic considerations. In balancing these two objectives, the country has remained on good terms with traditional powers, that still determine events in global diplomacy; and with emerging powers, whose similar developmental experience is seen as a possible role model that may be relevant in Nigeria's search for economic development. It would appear that, for some time to come, Nigeria may have to continue with this 'balancing' approach to its foreign diplomacy.

## APPENDIX A

### Diplomatic visits by Nigerian leaders to global powers, April 1999 to January 2011

Date	Leader	Focus of discussion
<b>United States</b>		
October 1999	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral and regional issues
May 2001	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral and regional issues
December 2004	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral and regional issues including Darfur, Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire
March 2006	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral and regional issues
December 2007	President Umaru Yar'Adua	Bilateral and regional issues
December 2010	Acting President Goodluck Jonathan	Bilateral and regional issues
September 2010	President Goodluck Jonathan	Bilateral and regional issues
<b>United Kingdom</b>		
September 2000	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral discussion and debt relief
July 2003	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral issues and debt relief
July 2008	President Umaru Yar'Adua	Bilateral discussion
<b>France</b>		
February 2000	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral discussion
May 2005	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral discussion
June 2008	President Umaru Yar'Adua	Bilateral discussion
June 2010	President Goodluck Jonathan	Bilateral discussion

<b>Russia</b>		
March 2001	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral discussion
<b>Germany</b>		
December 1999	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral discussion
November 2003	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral discussion
June 2007	President Umaru Yar'Adua	Invitation to attend G8 Summit
<b>Brazil</b>		
September 2005	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral discussion
August 2009	President Umaru Yar'Adua	Bilateral discussion
January 2011	Vice President Sambo	Bilateral discussion
<b>China</b>		
April 1999	President-elect Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral discussions
August 2001	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral discussion
April 2005	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Bilateral discussion and Obasanjo visited as AU chairperson
February 2008	President Yar'Adua	Bilateral discussion
September 2010	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Private visit
<b>India</b>		
January 2000	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Chief guest at the 50 <sup>th</sup> Republic Day celebrations
November 2004	President Olusegun Obasanjo	Working visit
November 2007	Vice President Goodluck Jonathan	To attend the Federalism Conference
April 2008	Vice President Goodluck Jonathan	To attend the India Africa Forum Summit

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth in November 1995, for violating the organisation's Harare Declaration, through the hanging of the Ogoni activists. The travel embargo and cancellation of military contracts were imposed by the US after the military regime annulled the June 1996 election.
- 2 Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Information & Communications, Vision 2020, Abuja, 2010.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 The Gulf of Guinea has become strategically important because of its oil reserves. Indeed, the US announced that by 2015, 25% of its oil supplies may come from this region. As a key country in the region, Nigeria has had to consider these events in its diplomacy.
- 5 National pride has been encouraged through the use of different catch-phrases, the most prominent of these being rebranding. There are also phrases like 'Nigeria: Good People, Great Nation'. The objective is to make Nigerians proud of their country and to ensure that they do not embark on action that will bring the nation into disrepute.

- 6 Akindele RA, *Foreign Policy in Federal Politics. A Case Study Nigeria*. Lagos: World Press, 2003. Also see appendix A for a list of diplomatic visits made by Nigerian presidents to major global powers from April 1999 to January 2011.
- 7 See Oyedoyin T, 'Obasanjo woos foreign investors to Nigeria', *Nigeriaworld News*, 18 July 2002, [nigeriaworld.com/feature/publication/oyedoyin/0718-202.html](http://nigeriaworld.com/feature/publication/oyedoyin/0718-202.html).
- 8 For most of the 1980s, Nigeria's foreign policy was geared towards ensuring the attainment of majority rule in Southern Africa. During the 1990s, the country was deeply involved in resolving civil conflicts in the West African countries of Liberia and Sierra Leone.
- 9 Most Nigerians feel that the country's sacrifices have not been well appreciated. Negative side-effects of its generosity include President Mugabe's criticisms of Nigeria, the bad press received in *The Zimbabwean* newspaper (which ironically Nigeria had bought for the Zimbabwean government), as well as South Africa's perceived unfriendly attitude towards Nigeria.
- 10 Examples of this include Nigeria's nationalisation of British Petroleum to advance the struggle for Zimbabwean independence, and when it confronted the US over Angolan independence. For more on this, see Abegunrin O, *Nigerian Foreign Policy under Military Rule, 1966–1999*. Westport: Praeger, 2003.
- 11 The US Ambassador to Nigeria during the period, Walter Carrington, did much to forge closer ties with the democracy groups, to the serious objection of the Abacha administration. Carrington later confirmed that the regime made several attempts to kill him. Fortunately, US intelligence was informed of these plans and thereby able to alert him and prevent any attempts on his life. See Carrington W, 'Abacha almost killed me', *PM News*, Lagos, 23 July 2010, <http://pmnewsnigeria.com/2010/07/23/abacha-almost-killed-me-%E2%80%94carrington/>.
- 12 While still in detention, Abiola was invited to meet US delegates who were visiting Nigeria. It was during this meeting that Abiola suddenly became ill. He was taken to hospital, where he subsequently died.
- 13 Discussion with staff at the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja, Nigeria, 23 April 2011.
- 14 Ambassador Twaddell made this declaration while visiting the Nigerian Eastern Naval Command in Calabar with the commander in chief of the US Naval Force in Europe, Rear Admiral Michael Haskins. See Ben-Akpan A, 'United States rules out defence pact with Nigeria', *The Guardian*, Lagos, 24 March 2000.
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 *Daily Independent*, 'On AFRICOM: Nigeria will partner with US military command', 16 December 2007.
- 17 The two ships, Chase and Hamilton, are regarded as high endurance warships. They have, however, been in the service of the US Coast Guard in the last 43 and 44 years respectively. See 'US donates warships Nigeria', *The Punch*, Lagos, 13 May 2011.
- 18 This is a list of countries that the US sees as supporting terrorism or terrorists. Other countries on the list at the time of Nigeria's inclusion were Pakistan, Lebanon, Yemen, Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Algeria, Cuba, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan.
- 19 Onuah F, 'Nigeria says US air route threatens bilateral ties', *Reuters*, 6 January 2010.
- 20 Ameh J & K Ibrahim, 'US gives conditions for dropping Nigeria from terror list', *The Punch*, Lagos, 12 February 2010.
- 21 Williams S, 'Nigeria: AGOA products not competitive in US', *Daily Trust*, 1 July 2010.
- 22 Umoru H, 'AGOA: Why Nigerian products are not competitive in USA', *Vanguard*, Lagos, 1 July 2010.



- 23 The Paris Club comprises countries from the world's biggest economies, including France, the UK, the US, Germany and Japan.
- 24 Sieh RD, 'Obama ties debt relief to Taylor handover', 22 June 2005, <http://www.africamasterweb.com/AdSense/ObamaTiesDebtReliefTaylorHandover.html>.
- 25 For a full text of the Framework of the Commission, see Nnoma-Addison B, *The United States and Nigeria: Celebrating Fifty Years of Friendship and Progress in Pictures*. Washington DC: Africa Media-Image, 2010, pp. 125–127.
- 26 Ojedokun O, 'The Anglo–Nigerian entente and its demise 1960–1962', *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies*, ix, 3, November 1971, pp. 210–232.
- 27 UK (United Kingdom), British High Commission, Abuja, <http://ukinnigeria.fco.gov.uk/en/news/?view=Speech&id=592941482>, accessed 16 July 2011.
- 28 The Mayor of London Borough of Southwark in South East London, Tayo Situ, is a Nigerian.
- 29 This was to discuss the problems raised by the Declaration of Unilateral Independence by the late Ian Smith in former Rhodesia.
- 30 These visits were in February 2010 and June 2011.
- 31 Kayode-Adedeji D, '20,000 Nigerians in UK prisons', *Next*, [http://234next.com/csp/cms/sites/Next/News/National/5568581-147/20000\\_nigerians\\_in\\_uk\\_prisons\\_.csp](http://234next.com/csp/cms/sites/Next/News/National/5568581-147/20000_nigerians_in_uk_prisons_.csp).
- 32 Pound sterling (British currency).
- 33 Guyoncourt S, 'UK to build £3m jail for 400 ... in Nigeria', *Daily Express*, London, 9 July 2009.
- 34 Osagie C, 'Non-oil export: X-raying Nigeria's trade imbalance', *This Day*, Lagos, 3 August 2010.
- 35 *Ibid.*
- 36 Embassies in Nigeria, <http://diplomat-ng.blogspot.com/2011/09/british-high-commission-in-nigeria.html>, accessed 16 July 2011.
- 37 These include restaurants such as Tomi's Kitchen in Deptford, 805 Restaurant on Old Kent Road; cab offices all over London; and firms of solicitors such as Simon Bethel Solicitors in Lewisham.
- 38 Two prominent cases are those of Diepreye Alamieyeseigha, who was arrested and jailed in London, and James Ibori, who is currently standing trial.
- 39 Nwokedi E, 'France and Nigeria', in Olusanya GO & RO Akindele (eds), *Nigeria's External Relations: The First Twenty-Five Years*. Ibadan: University Press, 2006.
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