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NIGERIAN FOREIGN SERVICE, FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL INTEREST IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract
This study examined Nigeria's foreign service since independence. The study adopted historical and descriptive research method and obtained data from secondary sources. In doing this, the paper focused the state of Nigeria's foreign service under the various regimes and administrations in the period of study and how they impacted on both foreign service workers and foreign policy. The paper employed theory of functional necessity. From the analysis, the study revealed that foreign service staff are unfairly treated. The study also revealed that the weak approach to foreign service was basically due to ad hoc approach adopted by the various Nigerian leaders. The neglect of Nigerian Foreign Service stem from the fact that Nigerian Foreign Policy elite arrogated the domain of foreign policy making and implementation exclusively to themselves. Based on these findings, the study recommends among others that Nigeria foreign Service and its workers should be encouraged through adequate fundings, deployment of best materials and indeed be made to have input on diplomatic issues.
Keywords: Nigeria, Foreign Service, Foreign Policy, National Interest.

Introduction

Historically, modern state system emerged in 1648. From this period, states engaged in high profile diplomatic pursuit of national interest. It is however instructive to note that the strategic deployment of diplomacy to realize certain interest were in place before the 1648 Westphalia declaration. Ancient Greece, Roman, Italian city states and Europe were already in the business of diplomacy. Hassan (2012 :333) made more clarification on this when he observed that prior to 1648, there existed informal diplomacy negotiators/diplomats. They were sent to a particular state or region to perform assigned specific function. The earlier or ancient diplomats were deployed to negotiate a single interest with their counterparts in the receiving states.

However, with sovereignty and perhaps the changing nature of the global system, the use of diplomatic missions become conventional practice all over the world with an expanded scope involving every conceivable subject. Conceptually, a diplomatic mission is the foreign out post of a nation's foreign service, the bureaucratic establishment vested with the responsibility of managing external relations and foreign policy (Solomom & Adeniji, 2021:40).

Nigeria attained self-government in 1957, with nucleus of foreign service created as a unit in the Prime Minister's office (Oyelakin, 2014:21). To a large extent, it was created with specific task on Common Wealth and foreign relations. Those recruited to serve in the unit were eventually converted as the first crop of Nigeria's foreign service officers. At independence, 1st October, 1960, Nigeria government created Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

Commonwealth Relations to handle external affairs of the government. From this period (1960), Nigeria's foreign missions have evolved along the lines of its perceived interests, continuity and change in the international system.

Therefore, the paper sets out to examine in specific terms, the nature of Nigerian Foreign Service between 1960 and 2022. In doing this, the paper examines the state of Nigeria's foreign service under the various administrations and how they impacted on both foreign service and foreign policy. Foreign service officers' major task is to implement their countries foreign policies, basically the drivers of national interest of all nations. The study adopted historical and descriptive research methods, and thus relied on secondary source of data.

1. **Conceptual Clarifications**

   Major concepts in this work would be clarified to ease understanding of the issue under discussion. These among others include

Foreign Service

This is used to describe the administrative organ based at home in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and abroad in the diplomatic missions, for the purpose of implementing the foreign policy of a country (Oyelakin, 2014:364). It is the group of people from one state or an inter-governmental organization present in another state to pursue and project their principles in order to achieve certain objectives.

The achievement of a nation's national interest in the international system is in part contingent upon the perspective posture/engagement of foreign service officers. And basically speaking, this borders on either favourable and unfavourable conditions that foreign service officers find themselves. On the link between foreign service officers and foreign policy implementation, Oyekakin (2014), made useful illustration in the following words:

> The foreign service may threat its officers favourably or unfavourably and the attitudes of the officers towards the government and execution of its foreign policy depend on the wellbeing of the officers or how the foreign service is administered.

The fact here is that foreign service plays critical role in the realization of national objectives abroad. They manage nation's external relations and foreign policy. Therefore, a nation that treat its foreign service officers unfavourably may not have her interest served, because the officers may put up grudging and reluctant attitude towards the government, and thus may not enthusiastically execute government conceived foreign policy. Obviously, as Oyelakin (2014) said, foreign officers in foreign service are messengers on an errand, who carried out their assigned duties enthusiastically and accept the dangers or peril on the way with fortitude, if he knows the reward is very encouraging. The reverse would be the case, if the reward is not appreciable.

In many countries, the foreign service is designed as the ministry of foreign or external affairs. Though it varies from one country to another, it is the formal agency responsible in all countries for the making of foreign policy. This required function makes it the most important organ of government or institution to be involved in foreign policy formulation and implementation. Nation rely upon foreign service as the mechanics, missions, for implementing and achieving foreign policy objectives of the state.

Foreign Policy

The concept "foreign policy" means many things to different people. This explains why Ate (201 5:45) said, foreign policy is an instrument for development to the developing countries, and as instrument for global power for the developed countries. Various dimensions of analysis

have been put forward to give meaning to the concept of foreign policy, thus, different scholars have defined the concept. Some scholars conceive the concept as a myth, others consider it an extension of a state's domestic policy targeted specifically at others in the international system. To Frankel (1963), foreign policy involves to some appreciable extent relations between one state and others. As explained, foreign policy decisions are considered interestingly in the name of the public interest. This is why state's domestic policy determines its foreign policy. Indeed, foreign policy as Joshua (2020) remarked, is inherently manifested in acts, whether deliberately committed by a state in order to enhance its national image, promote economic interest, national security, prosperity and peace. Solomon &Adeniji (2021) also made useful contribution to the meaning of the concept, as the reflection of the prevailing state of affairs in the two major areas of (i) the attitude of the key foreign policy makers (ii) the external environment and the domestic context within which decisions are made.

National Interest

National interest is the basic motivating factor that determines the foreign behaviour of nation states. It is the key to any explanation of goal seeking behaviours that nation state pursues in their international relationship (Chris, 2021:34). It does not only evaluate the worth of foreign policies of a state, but this is the reason why states do what they do when engaged in international affairs. Every nation has a set of objectives which gives life and meaning to the behaviour of such state in international relations. Interestingly, national interest is an expression of the sum total of a nation's interests including its value and belief.

Historical Context of Nigeria's foreign Service

The foundation of Nigeria foreign service dated back to 1957 when few members were engaged to prepare for the take-off of Nigeria's diplomatic practice (Adeniji, 1990; Oyelakem, 2014). This development followed the country's attainment of self-government in 1957. A foreign service unit was created in the office of the prime minister. Historically, twelve Nigerians were recruited by Britain, and those recruited came from the legal and teaching professions, and on regional consideration. The British government recruited the second and third batch in 1958 and 1959, respectively (Hassan, 2012). The colonial government exposed these Nigerians to the British diplomatic missions across the world after one year training in a British University (Akinyemi, 1989). Before 1957, the United Kingdom was responsible for the conduct of foreign policies in all her colonies. However, with the creation of the Department of External Affairs and Common Wealth Relations, Nigeria was thus entrusted with the full powers to shape and conduct her foreign policy (Hassan, 2012).

Meanwhile, this continues until 1960, when Nigeria was granted independence. Not much changes were experienced, as the status of independence did not lead to the appointment of a substantive minister for External Affairs and Common Wealth Relations. This was because, from 1957 to 1960, the Prime Minister combined the port-folio of Minister of Foreign Service with that of his office. In 1961, a substantive minister for external relations was appointed.

With a few diplomatic missions in 1960, Nigeria expanded to all corners of the world, including effective representations at the level of international organizations. According to Chris (2021), Nigeria established eleven (11) overseas missions, six months after October 1st 1960. These establishments consisted of eight (8) diplomatic missions, two (2) consular posts and one (1) permanent delegation to the United Nations. In 1963, five Warsaw establishments were added, making them sixteen (16); twelve diplomatic missions, three (3) consular posts and one (1) permanent delegation to the United Nations. Between 1965 and 1966, Nigeria had

thirty-nine (39) oversees establishments. Of the thirty-nine, thirty were diplomatic missions, five consular posts, two area office, one permanent delegation to UN and one Office of Commissioner General for Economic Affairs in Washington (Chris, 2021). The number of staff between 1965 and 1966 were put at 473 home staff and 316 serving oversees (Chris, 2021). The nation, by 1970s, had forty-six oversees establishments, thirty-nine diplomatic missions, four consular posts, two area offices and one delegation to UN. By 1982, Nigeria had up to ninety diplomatic missions and ninety-seven (97) as at 1999. However, as at 2015, Nigeria had more than two hundred and nine (209) missions and over two thousand (2000) officers abroad. This is attributed not only to her greater roles and responsibility in world's affairs, but also to her desire to promote trade, foreign direct investment and cultural diplomacy. **Accordingly**, Nigeria has been able to establish and maintain diplomatic missions abroad in all the six continents of the world.

Theoretical framework

This paper adopted theory of functional nec essity. This theory emanated from the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic Relations in 1961(Nte, 2016,). This theory holds the view that for a diplomat deserves privileges and by extension good conditions of service for effective and efficient performance of diplomatic functions, hence, the need for diplomatic workers to be treated in a manner that not only protect them but also create atmosphere that encourage effective performance of their duties**.** The adoption of this theory became important as it gives credence to better conditions of diplomatic service**.** If the foreign service workers are not treated in a good way, including making them involve in taking decisions regarding foreign relations, things would go wrong. This theory emphasizes the need for both sending and receiving states to do the needful for result oriented functions. It is widely use in the study to discuss regime attitude to foreign service.

Nigerian Foreign Service under different Administrations.

Nigeria at independence in 1960, recognized the need to show more interest on the need for foreign service. This underscored the establishment of diplomatic missions. The Nigerian foreign service has undergone several

Balewa's Administration

The first phase of Nigeria foreign service in her diplomatic history was 1960-1970. This phase, Asobie (2010:1) tagged the "Age of Innocence." This was in its infancy stage. At this time, Nigerian leaders' views were determined and influenced by idealogy, and with strong faith in multilateral approach to the achievement of national objectives. This informed her membership of Commonwealth of Nations, United Nations, Non-allied Movements and Group of 77, among others. As pointed out earlier, the Prime Minister, Balewa, combined the foreign affairs with his premiership. The Prime Minister's office at this time or phase, administered the Department of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations.

However, in 1961, the substantive Minister for External Relations was appointed from the coalition party, National Council of Nigerian citizens (NCNC). Dr. Jaja Wachuku ceased to be Foreign Minister in 1965, as Alhaji Nuhu Bamali, was appointed during the period. Permanent Secretaries of the ministry were appointed Ambassadors, for instance, L.O.U Amomou and F.C Nwokedi, were permanent secretaries appointed in this regard. One obvious fact in this period was political crisis; which made the government of Ironsi, to rely on foreign service to initiate foreign policy and as well, to articulate government's attitudes and pronouncements before they were realized.

Adeniji (1990), noted that the cumbersome procedure for communication between the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lagos and country's foreign missions, in which missions were required to pass all their information to the Minister through the Deputy Permanent Secretary, was a marked feature of the period. Oyelakin (2014:368) observed that, the era witnessed heavy reliance on the civil servants and permanent secretaries. The reliance on civil servants made the Ministry of External Affairs enjoy some degree of autonomy. This posture was informed by two major factors first, art of governance was new to the military leaders and two, they had no political experience.

Foreign Service under Gowon's Administration

Nigerian foreign service under this administration, encountered an expanded responsibility. During the civil war, foreign service deeply engaged in the mobilization of external support for Nigerians survival as political entity and for the maintenance of Nigeria's territorial integrity. This. made Nigerian foreign service to gain tremendous experience.

> They (foreign service officers) became conscious of the complex reality of the structure and functioning of the international system… They gradually awaken to the intricate network of diplomatic ties, military ideological alliances and socio-economic polarizations that characterized the international system of the period (Asobie, 2010:3).

The understanding and knowledge became obvious following Soviet Union support for the federal government and the United States opposing the federal side covertly (Osuntokum, 2005:36). For their own strategic reasons, South Africa, Rhodesia, Portugal, France, Israel were on the side of the Biafra. Also, Ivory Coast, Zambia, Tanzania and Haiti, recognized the independence of Biafra. Benin and Equatorial Guinea were manipulated by France ostensibly for humanitarian reasons, but apparently in logistic and offensive support for Biafra. Quite understandably, before the Nigeria and Biafra war, the United Kingdom, United States and the West in general, had been considered "Nigeria's most committed allies and trusted friends"

Given the role of the West, the country moved swiftly from over dependence on the West to a balanced relationship with the Soviet Union and the eastern bloc. In an internal memorandum of 1968, Nigeria's foreign ministry identified the Soviet Union as the most dependable ally of Nigeria (Asobie, 2010:4). It is significant that the end of the war saw former Soviet Union involvement in the economy of Nigeria, particularly in the building of Ajaokuta Steel Complex.

Foreign service officers in the period went through a lot of difficulties. Officers who used to be colleagues and friends suddenly became bitter enemies as they took sides between Nigeria and Biafra. Officers' lives were in danger as their welfare were not priorities, some lost their lives; the Kampala incident is a case in point.

The civil war made a lot of demands on the foreign service, as it was expected to counter the apparent offensive propaganda of the Biafra state that already projected the civil war as a kind of genocide against the Igbo in the country (Aluko, 1981).

> A combination of measures taken to counter the Biafran propaganda such as entrusting the coordination of federal government reaction to the propaganda to the units outside the federal service greatly undermined the service.

Hassan (2012:174) observed that Igbo Nigerian ambassadors withdrew from the federal to the Biafra state. This, according to him, created a huge manpower problem for the Nigerian foreign service and foreign policy. Within the period, Ambassador Baba Gana, then Permanent

Secretary (1968 - 1972), conducted promotion exercise in 1969, and approved by the Public Service Commission, with over 100 officers promoted. Ambassador Joe Iyalla replaced Baba Gana, and introduced a new structure. He also injected discipline and finesse into foreign service.

The Foreign Service under Murtala/Obasanjo's Administration.

Foreign service within this period saw mass posting of officers to Headquarters under the pretext of austerity measures. This was not particular to foreign service as the home service witnessed and received its own share of the treatment. Under this regime, precedence of removing civil servants unceremoniously was initiated through retirement and dismissals. General Garba was the commissioner for External Affairs. He was replaced by General H.E.D Adetope, who served between 1978-79. The Permanent Secretaries were Ambassadors M.A. Sanusi (1975 – 1978) and J.N Ukegbu who served until the civilians took over in 1979 – 1981(Gambari, 2008).

Shehu Shagari's Administration.

The administration of Shehu Shagari reorganized the ministry of foreign affairs and effectively improved on the welfare of the foreign service officers. He revised personal emoluments and enhance condition of service of foreign officers. In 1980, he also opened eleven additional new diplomatic missions. Another feature of foreign service under this administration was the overwhelming involvement of non-career head of missions or ambassadors. The Non-carrier Ambassadors were mostly party faithfuls, no wonder his administration considered increased allowances for foreign officers. The injection of over thirty non-career Ambassadors, no doubt affected career prospects of senior diplomatic officers. The petro-dollar of the time made the administration engaged more hands. Over 500 people or persons were recruited into the service between 1980 and 1983. Oyelakun (2014:383), attributed the overwhelming recruitment to political consideration. The recruitment created over expenditure on personnel with attendant problems on posting and promotion.

Buhari’s Administration

Foreign Service under Buhari saw a repeat of mass retirement of foreign and home service officers. In addition, over 900 diplomatic missions were closed and its officers we assigned to headquarters to reduce officers abroad. As Oyelakin (2014:392) explained, the mass purge was due to nonchalant attitude of the ministry in taking effective disciplinary measures against officers found wanting. Before the purging, most officers felt untouchable because of their relationship with the civilian Government. Cases of plain fraud, indiscipline, insubordination were evidently noticed in Foreign Service.

The Buhari’s regime did not promote the welfare of foreign officers. He withdrew favourable conditions of service granted officers by the Shagari administration.

Babangida’s Administration

The overthrow of the Buhari-led administration and the accession to power by General Ibrahim Babangida on 27 August 1985, ultimately implied the birth of a new foreign policy thrust for Nigeria. This was partly informed by the need to repair Nigeria’s damaged diplomatic relations with the West, and partly induced by the prevailing economic situation in the country at the time. In response to this problem, the regime of Babangida initiated a paradigm shift in Nigeria’s foreign policy thrust from traditional political focus policy to that of economic diplomacy (Nwachukwu, 2012).

Under this new foreign policy thrust, all energies of foreign service officers were mobilized and directed towards:

> The diversification of Nigeria's economic base, expansion of its international markets, attraction of new foreign loans and foreign investment and the rescheduling/forgiveness of the nation's external debt (Nwachukwu, 2012:181).

Incidentally, the period under review witnessed fundamental changes in the civil service structure that responded to the call for professionalism in the civil service, foreign service inclusive. In the new structure, foreign service, like other federal Ministries, were made relatively autonomous, with the freedom to appoint, discipline and promote its own staff. All External Affairs officers became officially accepted as professional diplomats. For many years, the country's foreign service did very little to attract business to Nigeria. But under the Babangida administration, foreign service was made to lead the crusade to attract investors to the country. They were now actively involved in bilateral trade delegations to economic centers of the world.

Shonekan's administration

It is interesting to note that Nigerian Foreign Service under Shonekan's administration was not given much attention. Foreign Service Officers were not treated well. Reason was that Government had no time for staff welfare as all funds available were expended on Nigeria's political situations to counter Abiola's propaganda, against Nigeria in Europe and America.

Abacha's Administration

Foreign service suffered professional stagnation during the period. The foreign service under the Abacha's administration was not clear. However, it was clear that staff of Foreign Service suffered professional stagnation and extreme degradation of morale and efficiency.

> For seven years up to March 1998, no posting of Career ambassadors took place. For other officers, the story was more or less the same. Those abroad enjoyed their prolonged stay, while those at headquarters disliked the situation, they found themselves.

The unhappy situation came to a boiling point when on Friday 5th June 1998, workers in Ministry of External Affairs protested locking up all entrances into the building at a time when foreign minister Tom Ikimi, his colleague Alhaji Buhari Bala and their visitor of health were inside the building.

Abacha regime confrontational diplomacy resulted in stiffer sanctions from the European Union, Commonwealth of Nations, and the United States of America (). The frayed diplomatic nerves against the regime resulted in the cancellation and subsequent withdrawal of Nigeria's hosting rights of the 1995 edition of the Under-20 World Cup Tournament.

The situation was such that the regime not only sought for new friends in the South East Asia, but adopted para diplomacy; traditional rulers and leaders of thought were sent on diplomatic shuttle to launder Nigeria's image and woo new friends from Asia, Europe and Africa. Accordingly,

> In January 1996 Umaru Sanda Ndayako, Etsu Nupe, led a delegation to Malaysia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Qatar and Kuwait. Ado Bayero, Emir of Kano visited Morocco and Senegal while another team comprising Chukwuemeka

Odumegwu Ojukwu and Abiola and the United States (Ajasu and Oladipo, 1998:14).

Not much was achieved **as the country** was isolated following several cases of human rights violation On 9 June, 1998, General Abdulsalami Abubakar was elected by the Provisional Ruling Council to take over as head of state. And on assumption of office, he tremendously took steps to smoothen Nigeria's foreign relations. First, he had closed-door meeting with diplomats on the 17 June 1998 in the Aso Rock. This was followed by a shuttle diplomacy to western countries and the United States.

General Abubakar approved the appointment of 52 principal envoys of Nigeria to foreign countries on 17th March, and 12th April, 1999. They were all career officers. This was the first time career officers were so appointed. The appointment not only uplifted morale in the service, but also a step towards streamlining rules and regulations in the service. The nightmare, sagging morale and object depression following long years of stagnation of promotion became history.

Olusegun Obasanjo's Administration

The civilian government of president Olusegun Obasanjo, 29th May 1999, carried on with the foreign policy of redemption through shuttle diplomacy and the implementation of neo-liberal economic reforms. On assumption of office, he ordered the return of all those appointed by the last military administration. Oyelakin (2014:445), notes this action as the first in diplomatic history that ambassadors were recalled a week or two after presenting their letters of credence, while others were even yet to present theirs. He, however, submitted to National Assembly for screening and confirmation, 106 names consisting of 44 career officers and 62 non-career officers. Some of those asked to return could not make the list, above all, some career officers were rejected on ground of federal character. At a seminar held on 15 September 1999, the truth of repairing the already damaged image of the country was handed to the foreign service officers. The tasks of responding adequately where necessary to assist Nigeria was also entrusted to the new foreign service officers. The president understood the enormous task on foreign relation, and thus created several related offices. For instance, office of Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Minister in Charge of Cooperation and Integration in Africa and that of Special Adviser on International Relations and that of Conflict Management. This observation, notwithstanding, the dying years of this administration 2006 to 2007, witnessed heightening profiles of the reform program. The government in this period, downsized the foreign service and over 30,000 officers, both junior and senior were removed. This affected foreign service adversely and the foreign service suffered tremendously.

Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's Administration

The 2008 to 2015, paved the way for president Umaru Musa Yar'Adua and Goodluck Ebele Jonathan administrations. The Yar'Adua administration anchored its foreign policy agenda on citizens diplomacy. The major features of this trend of diplomacy were citizen-centered foreign policy trust, indicating that the welfare of Nigeria was the cornerstone of the Nigerian diplomacy. Again, this trust, is a Track Two diplomacy, where average citizens would be fully involved or consulted in the articulation and execution of foreign policy. This was in fact the opposite of the traditional approach to Foreign Relations in which the interest on the welfare of the Nigerian citizens both at home and abroad **we are** satisfied on the altar of continental leadership and prodigality. (Oyelakin, 2014)

Obviously, rather than relying whole and entire on track diplomacy, i.e work of actual diplomats at embassies, the administration Yar'Adua preferred to apply the strategy of

scientific exchanges, cultural exchanges **an** international sporting event to complement official diplomacy. The Jonathan's administration continued with the Yar'Adua's citizens diplomacy, and economic transformation.

Goodluck Jonathan's Administration

Monday 21st March 2011, Goodluck Jonathan's administration performed the official opening of the new headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Abuja. Like many other previous administration, Foreign Service never received any proper attention. This was clearly disclosed by the President Goodluck Jonathan, while commissioning the official residence of the Nigeria's ambassador to Sao Tome and Precipice in 2011. In his words:

> Upgrading the state of some Nigerian missions to full
> ambassadorial level is not the priority of his administration,
> he argued, in favour of upgrading the offices of Nigerian Missions
> to improve their working environment (Solomon & Adeniji, 2021).

The latter part of president Jonathan's disposition aptly captures the neglect foreign service had suffered from previous administration in the country. Nigeria had between 1960 – 2015, witnessed a torrential turnover of leadership succession.

Buhari's Administration

Buhari's government signed more Agreements with China and assured of a one China Policy by recognizing China, Taiwan and Mainland China as single State of China and relocated the Taiwanese Embassy from Nigeria's Federal Capital, Abuja to Lagos and downgraded its activities.

A close examination of this leadership parade revealed that, being influenced by their previous administrations, the attention given to foreign service was not coherent, systematic and articulate. The weak approach to foreign service was basically due to what Asobie (1980:60) refers to as "the pragmatic deal-with-issues as they arise approach. This is use and dumped style, which primarily made Nigeria Foreign Service to largely be treated on an ad hoc basis. The neglect of Nigerian Foreign Service stem from the fact that Nigerian Foreign Policy elite arrogated the domain of foreign policy making and implementation exclusively to themselves.

Mackintosh (1965:217) and Zartmon (1970:130) had earlier underscored this when they separately asserted that Nigeria's foreign policy has always been made by "one man and his advisers". Saliu (2021) was very clear on this when he stated thus:

> It is different for anyone to say that the Ministry of External Affairs during the Balewa played a creative role in foreign policy formulation. Apart from the fact that the cabinet was largely excluded from the foreign policy making process and was only informal matters than consulted on major issues, the Prime Minister retained the sole control of foreign affairs from independence till 1961.

Since then, there have been increasing personalization of Nigeria's diplomacy. Foreign service seemed to have been frequently by-passed. What this means is that, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Missions are not where the real action on foreign policy even as both jointly constitute an integrated foreign service.

Foreign Policy making and implementation is not one way traffic nor a one-man affair, but a two-way exchange which permits foreign missions to contribute towards the achievement of policy formulation and the strengthening of their own capacity for policy implementation.

> There is a consultation between the Head of Mission and Very Senior Officers whose input is relevant for particular policy issues and matters. Decision

> making and recommendation on such policy issues go through the process of ad hoc political discussion and consultation between the Ambassador and his appropriate top-level staff before dispatches, based on the consensus and recommendations that emerge, are formulated to the Ministry of External Affairs Headquarters.(Adeniji, 1990)

The fact here is that, the conduct of Nigeria's Bilateral and Multi-lateral diplomacy, the Ministry of foreign Affairs relies on a great deal, as it should, on advice from and action by the Country's Missions abroad. This explains why it becomes necessary for such missions to be given adequate priority to enable them cope with their diplomatic tasks, particularly implementations under the watchful eyes of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Historically, the neglect of foreign policy inputs from foreign service or missions exposed the danger of personalization of the country's diplomacy. For instance, foreign mission's foreign policy advice on Zimbabwe, support for Mugabe ignored by the Obasanjo military era created problem president Mugabe and Nigeria during the bruise aside foreign mission's advice and supported the losers of the Siera Leonean election. Where the impacts of foreign mission Australia yielded good result in unjustifiable call by a presidential … Obasanjo, requesting Nigeria's ambassador in Melbourne to initiate the recall of Australian ambassador to Nigeria. Nigeria's foreign mission in Australia advice against such action, noting the damage such decision would cause the country in the international community. The government of the day headed the advice and the nation was safe from global embarrassment (Pinda, 2012).

Akinboye (2008), also give a clap to the foreign mission for their commitment to strands of Nigeria foreign policy success on apartheid and colonization in Africa. Without the foreign missions serving as a kind of power house for the struggle it would have been difficult for Nigeria to have made huge success in her engagement in this regard. The Washington and Hague missions in Nigeria are quite active in attracting trade and investment into the country.

Conclusion

The changes in the International System with profound economic and financial crisis require well informed policy advice of the foreign service or missions. The context in which leaders personalized Nigeria's diplomacy cannot form a sound basis for international cooperation. Facing, as well as coping with, the challenges in the country, require political and administrative resourcefulness in the use of the existing foreign missions for the performance of functions such as bridging the resources and technical gaps that exist in the development efforts of the country, attention on foreign aid and development, debt relief, among others. Negotiation and discussions leading to agreements and development issues are primarily conducted by Heads of Foreign Missions for Minister of Foreign Affairs to consummate the agreement through pomp and pageantry. Given these complex and variety of roles that foreign service is called upon to perform, only good incentives and treatment could engineer optimal performance. Today The Nigeria's diplomatic missions have been fully short of expectations because leaders conducted Nigeria's diplomacy with a near absence of the foreign service input. The practice of one-man affairs and the neglect of strategic plan guiding the operations, growth and development of foreign mission had led to absence of short term, medium term and long-term policies measures to addressing the needs of the country in global interactions. The reality of the contemporary world is that autarky impracticable as sovereign states cannot totally avoid interacting with one another. This tendency has changed diplomatic practices beyond its original limits, embracing issues that were thought to be unreasonable and irrelevant. Today as rightly observed by Gambari (2007) and reechoed here, foreign service is extremely important as they not only protect countries power and influence but also facilitate the

realization of correct information and in the process, cultivate the friendship of crucial actors in the world. Therefore, Nigeria foreign Service and its workers should be encouraged through adequate fundings, deployment of best materials and indeed be made to have input on diplomatic issues.

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