NIGERIA'S ASPIRATION FOR VETO POWER STATUS AT THE UNITED NATION SECURITY COUNCIL: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT:

The 21st century is governed by a World Order, anchored on justice, respect for human rights, rule of law, democratization, open-market economy, military and technological capabilities. Compliance with these core values are the determinant factors to which a country can be reckoned with in the global diplomatic marketplace. Nigeria, who is the acknowledged giant of Africa, has made impressive achievements in the areas of participation in UN, AU and ECOWAS Peace Keeping Operations within and outside the African continent. The paper finds that these achievements enhance her prospects for a permanent seat in the UNSC. The paper also finds that Nigeria cannot succeed in her present quest for veto-power status due to domestic challenges that constitute great impediments. The paper recommends that Nigeria addresses in a comprehensive manner the identified challenges in her pursuit for global leadership

Introduction:

The United Nations (UN) as an international organization is classified under Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and consist of sovereign's member nations. Among the major roles the UN play is agenda setting, articulating political initiatives and contributing to international mediation (Akonye, Udeh and Paul, 2013). The UN came into existence in 1945 as a fallout of the failure of League of Nations to achieve its primary objectives. Five western countries spearheaded its formation and subsequently ascribed to themselves permanent membership and special status which translated into veto-power in the UN Security Council. The misapplication of this special status by these founding fathers to overrule decision made by sovereign member states at the UN General Assembly when such decisions are against their national interest has created disenchantment and inequality in the organization. According to Karen (2015:95):

"the inequality of states is clearly seen in the exercise of veto-power
by the five permanent and wealthy nations in budget
negotiations and the weighted voting system used by
the World Bank and the International Monetary fund".

This problem generated contention against the abuse of the veto power in the UN that in Nigeria and South Africa spearheading the agitation for reform. More specifically the enlargement of the UN SecurityCouncil to reflect equitable representation of the regions. During the tenure of Kofi Annan, as UN Secretary General, a high-level panel was set up to develop a proposal for the reform of the UN. It was the insistence by Nigeria and South Africa, that Africa be allocated a permanent seat with veto status in the proposed enlarged UNSC structure that scuttled the reform process (Usman, 2015:15). Since independence, Nigeria has persistently canvassed its aspiration for a permanent seat in the UNSC. Babangida (1992:5) reaffirmed this and anchored Nigeria bid for a permanent seat in the UNSC on its foreign policy achievement when he declared in his UN address that

"Nigeria's aspiration for permanent seat on the Security
Council of the United Nations is to reflect its contribution
to UN global peace and security operations and foreign policy achievement in Africa".

Thirty years before this UN address, Nigeria had notified the world of her intention for global leadership in October 1960. When the late Prime Minister Sir AbubakarTafawaBalewa made a case for Africa to be represented in UN organizations during the country's admittance as 99th member of the UN (Obiozor, 2008:27). In 2000DubemOnyia, the then Minister of State for Foreign Affairs articulated the same demand when he hosted a delegation form Kofi Annan. In 2011, President Jonathan made a case for Nigeria to represent Africa in the UNSC when he met with David Cameron, the British Prime Minister at that time (Alabi, Wole and

Chockwuma, 2011). Unrelenting her aspiration, the present Vice-president Prof. Osinbajo reaffirmed Nigeria's interest by declaring to a global audience at the launching of the Global Commission report in Abuja that….

> "Nigeria having paid her dues in terms of contributions to world peace remains the best African country in that regard" (Usman,2015).

Sustaining the tempo in 2016, president MuhammedBuhari at the 71st session of UN General Assembly declared in his address that…..

> "Nigeria stands ready to serve Africa and the world in the permanent category in UNSC to advance international peace and security" (Adetutu, 2016:6).

Some scholars and commenters have in a fallacy of haste and generalization dismissed off hand Nigeria's quest for global leadership. For Adebajo (2008:45) "it was a case of self-delusion". For Osakwe (2011:25) Nigeria's bid is a "misplaced priority". Ononihu in his analysis labeled it a "Wild goose chase" while Oddih (2017:10) was of the view that it was a case of "putting the cart before the horse." In their arguments these scholars and commentators failed to consider or factored in Nigeria's acknowledged foreign policy achievements in the areas of participation in global UN mandated peace and security keeping operations, contributions to the fight against colonialism and liberation struggles in Africa as well as manpower development assistance to needy African and Pacific-Caribbean countries as leverage to enhance the prospects of her aspiration. Moreover, Kofi Annan, former secretary General of the UN informed the world during the presentation of the proposal for the enlargement of the UNSC that….

"members that would be admitted into the proposed enlarged council are those that have contributed most to the UN through participation in the UN mandated security and peace operations as well as voluntary activities of the UN" (Alli, 2005).

In addition, American Ambassador to Nigeria, William Frazer in (2007) noted that….

> "US is open to supporting Nigeria's quest for admission into the UNSC but Nigeria must engage in electoral reforms, strengthen institutions of democracy and contribute to international peace and security."(Udeh and Okoroafor, 2016).

It is on this premise that this paper sets out to critically examine and evaluate the prospects and challenges inherent in Nigeria's persistent quest for a permanent UNSC seat by answering the following research questions:

1. In what ways can Nigeria's achievement in UN peace and security operations be used as a leverage for her UNSC permanent seat aspiration?

2. Does Nigeria possess the appropriate political governance and economic capacities required for global leadership position?
3. Has Nigeria, the military and technological capabilities to enforce peace and security in the global diplomatic market place?
4. Does Nigeria's democratic practices and electoral record in tandem with acceptable international standard?
5. Can Nigerian Human Rights record be a yardstick for enforcement of human rights in other UN member nations?

Methodology

This paper adopts the Ex-post Facto research design which involves investigating if an event that occurred (Nigerian Foreign policy milestones) has any influence in bringing about the present expectation for permanent UNSC membership. Content analysis was employed to critically analyze the variables, while secondary source method was used to obtain data from peer-reviewed journals, newspapers, academic periodicals and colloquium report relevant to the paper thrust.

The paper is presented in five sections. The introduction, research questions and methodology is captures in the first section. Section two is devoted to conceptual analysis of the United Nation Security Council, concept of veto-power, and the theoretical framework concludes the section. Section three focused on critical analysis of the prospects inherent in Nigeria's aspiration for the exalted UNSC permanent seat. Section four examined challenges militating against the bid, while section five is devoted to conclusion and recommendation arising from the research findings.

Section 2: Conceptual Analysis.

2.1 Critical Analysis of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC)is one of the six major organs of the UN. Its primary responsibility under Article 24 of the UN charter is the maintenance of international peace and security. The UNSC was established under Article 7 of the UN charter and its membership composed of 15 member states. Five of these UNSC members have permanent status with veto-power. The Big Five as they are known are the founding fathers of the UN. The other ten and non-permanent members are by Article 23 of the UN Charter elected into the Security Council by the General Assembly on the basis of their contribution to UN's international peace and security operations in the first instance and allocation of seats anchored on the principle of equity. Each non-permanent member's tenure on the Security Council is for a term of two years and non- renewable for a second tenure at the expiration of an immediate term.

Under Article 34 of the UN Charter, the Security Council is empowered to carry out investigation on any disputed matter that has the potential to trigger a breach of international peace and security (UN Charter, 2013). Furthermore, according to UN Charter (2013), the Security Council has a mandate to address two principal matters.

The first is procedural while the second is substantive matters. By Virtue of Article 27 of the UN Charter decisions made by the Security Council on matters within the context of substantive category become effective by affirmative votes of nine members which must include the concurring votes of the Big Five. In the same vein, Article 27 of the UN Charter also prescribed that any negative vote by the Big Five, on substantive matters over-rules such matters even when such decisions has been approved by theUN General Assembly. It is in this context that this paper is in agreement with Coicaud (2001) criticism that….

> "the security council is the proprietary territory of the most developed and powerful nations and caters primarily for their needs."

Reform of the UN Security Council.

According to Ohai et al (2010) the United Nations has made much progress in its pursuit of maintaining global peace and security, promoting democracy, women and human rights worldwide and ending apartheid in South Africa since its establishment in 1945. On the other hand, this paper observed that the UNSC has not been able to make similar achievements in areas of racism, discrimination, terrorism, xenophobia, territorial conflicts across the world, reducing poverty, improving standard of living and addressing the contentious issue of abuse of veto-power by the five permanent members of the UNSC.

It is against the backdrop of thenumerous agitations for reform and enlargement of the UNSC structure by other member state of the UN, Nigeria inclusive, that in 2004 a high level UN panel was set up to review and reform the UNSC.Analysis and breakdown of the proposal for the enlargement of the UNSC is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Breakdown of proposed UNSC Enlargement Structure.

REGIONS		NUMBER OF PERMANENT SEATS	
		PRESENT	PROPOSED
Africa (53 states)		0	2
Asia (56 states)		1	2
Eastern Europe	47 states	1	1
Western Europe		2	2
America (35 states)		1	2
Arab World		0	1
Total		5	10

Source: Ohia, et al (2010) culled from UN Panel Report 2005.

A close examination of the UN panel report indicates a doubling of permanent membership of UNSC from the present five to ten the proposal also outlined three routes for Africa member states to secure admittance into the proposed enlarged security council as presented in table 2.

Table 2: Proposed routes for Africa in UNSC Enlargement Reform.

ROUTES	ENLARGEMENT STRUCTURE
1	1 permanent with veto-power, 1 non-permanent but no veto-power.
2	1 permanent and 1 rotational but semi-permanent between 2 or more countries from the same region
3	2 permanent member to reflect equitable geographical representation and demographic distribution.

Source: Ohia, et al (2010) culled from UN Panel Report 2005.

2.2 Critical Analysis of the Concept of Veto-Power.

The concept of "veto" as it is being applied today in the United Nations Security Council is traceable to the political arrangement put in place by the then "Great Powers" known as "Concert of Europe" in the 19th century as a deterrent to rogue European nations[Huntington,2007). The principle was that implementation of any sanction imposed by the League of Nations on any member states would pose no enforcement difficulty, once the Great Powers are in agreement. The "veto" has over the years mutated into a mechanism built into the charter of the UN to ensure consensus of the Big Five in substantive matters. In confirmation of this Claude (2010) noted that the veto used by the permanent members of the UNSC was designed to function based on….

> "the understanding that acting as a collective,
> the Big Five's combined power would be
> overwhelming in enforcing decisions or sanctions
> imposed by the UNSC." and further more
>
> "the mere concurrence of the Big Five on
> any matter serves as adequate deterrent
> to any would be aggressor or dissident" (Claude 2010)

A critical analysis of the statement shows that the veto is a deliberately contrived circuit breaker introduced into the decision-making process of the UNSC to favor the Big Five. In agreement with this view, Ebo (2018) observed that the exercise of the veto-power by any of the Big Five was meant to protect and advance their national interest and not that of the world. For instance, because BoutrousGhali the then secretary General supported Africa led agitation for reform of the UN in 1997 his re-election was vetoed by USA because it was considered to be against their national interest. This clearly shows that the veto was intended to be used as a guarantee to ensure the rights of a powerful minority as well as mitigation of the evils of international majority.

From the above critique, this paper posits that the veto power being excised by the super powers at the UNSC provides them a

safety valve against any determined opposition or attempt from any UN non-permanent member states to enforce any sanctions imposed by the UN General Assembly against them. Article 108 of the UN Charter even went ahead to protect the interest of the Big Five by placing a caveat to the effect that any amendment of the UN Charter on any issue even minor ones cannot be effective without the concurring votes of all the permanent members. To put a cap to this argument Claude submitted that…

"the veto was designed primarily as a weighting device in acknowledgement of the inequality of states. A means of giving effect to the principle that the most powerful and important states should have special status in international organizations." (Claude, 2010)

Theoretical Framework of Analysis

In-line with the focus of this paper which is Nigeria's aspiration for veto-power at the UNSC the appropriate and most suitable theoretical framework to anchor the analysis is the theory of political realism. The theory has its underpinning from the works of Thomas Hobbes, Morgenthau and more specially in contemporary time the work of Aron.These scholars and philosophers conceived the nature of man as not only power-seeking but also prone to conflicts. Drawing from their conceptions of man, society and politics, the theory of political realism postulates that…..

"Nation states have goals and interests that are conflicting against each other. Attempt to promote or attain them at the expense of others, makes conflicts and war inevitable. Hence, nation states prepare for war by continually updating and upgrading their capabilities in terms of power" (Macridis, 1972).

Power within the context of the theory of political realism is not limited to military power but encapsulate economic, technological, political, demographic and geographic. Providing further explanation on these elements of power considered in determining veto-status Macridis (1972) classified geography and its associated natural resources as permanent material element of power, while economic, military and technological capabilities fall under less permanent elements of power. Demography, population size, ideology and quality of leadership constitute the human elements of power calculation. It is within this context, that Nweke (2015) cited in Ononihu, et al, 2017) observed that power calculation or national capabilities is the main determinant of how a country is reckoned with in the global diplomatic market place. This view is in conformity with Claude (2010) postulation that..

"in the UNSC, permanent membership or veto status is not distributed based on sympathy, fairness or

S/N	MISSION NAME	OPERATIONAL CODE	MISSION SPONSOR	MISSION OBJECTIVE	DURATION
1	UN Operation in Congo	ONUC	United Nations	Peace-Keeping	1960-1964
2	Security Force in West Guinea	UNSF	United Nations	Peace Keeping Mission	1962-1963
3	UN observers Force in Middle-East	UNDOF	United Nations	Disengagement Observer Force	1974
4	Pakistan/India Mission	UNIPOM	United Nations	Observer Mission	1965-1966
5	UN Interim Force in Lebanon	UNIFIL	United Nations	Peace-Keeping	1978-1983
6	UN Iran-Iraq Observers Group	UNIMOG	United Nations	Military Observer	1988-1983
7	Angola Verification Mission	UNAVEM I	United Nations	Peace Compliance	1985-1997
	Angola Verification Mission	UNAVEM II	United Nations	Peace Compliance	1985-1997
	Angola Verification Mission	UNAVEM III	United Nations	Peace Compliance	1985-1997
8	UN Namibia Transition Asst. Group	UNTAG	United Nations	PKO and Election Monitoring	1989-1990
9	Referendum in W/Sahara	MINURSO	United Nations	Referendum Assignment	1991
10	Iraq-Kuwait Observer	UNIKOM	United Nations	Peace Compliance	1991
11	UN Transitional Mission in Cambodia	UNTAC	United Nations	Peace Enforcement	1992-1993
12	UN Operation in Somalia UN Operation in Somalia	UNOSOM I UNOSOM II	United Nations United Nations	Peace Enforcement Peace Enforcement	1992-1995 1992-1995
13	UN Operations in Mozambique	UNOMOZ	United Nations	Peace Keeping	1992-1994
14	UN Protection Force in Youngoslavia	UNPROFOR	United Nations	Civilian Protection	1992-1995
15	UN Operation in Croatia	UNCRO	United Nations	Confidence Restoration	1993-1995
16	UN Assistance mission in Rwanda	UNAMIR	United Nations	Peace Keeping	1993-1995
17	UN mission to Bosnia and Herzegouina	UNMIBH	United Nations	Peace Keeping	1993-
18	UN mission to Libya/Chad	UNASOG	United Nations	Peace Enforcement	1994
19	UN mission to Tajikistan	UNMOT	United Nations	Observer Mission	1994-2000
20	UN mission to Macedonia	UNPREDEP	United Nations	Preventive Deployment	1995-2000
21	UN mission to Slovenia, Baranja and W/Sirmuim	UNTAES	United Nations	Transitional Administration	1996-1998
22	Mission to Bosnia Herzegivina	UNMIBH	United Nations	Peace Keeping	1995-2002
23	Mission to Prevalaka	UNMOP	United Nations	Peace Keeping	1996-2000
24	Sierra Loen mission	UNAMSIL	United Nations	Peace Keeping	1999-
25	Mission to DR Congo	MONUC	United Nations	Peace keeping	2000-
26	Mission to East Timor	UNTAET	United Nations	Transitional Admin.	2000-
27	ECOWAS Mission to Liberia	ECOMIL	ECOWAS	Peace Keeping	August-October 2003
28	UN Mission to Liberia	UNMIL	United Nations	Peace-Keeping	2003-
29	Peace Keeping Force in Tanzania	TAPKM	Nigeria under OAU	Peace Keeping	1994-
30	Chad Operation Chad Operation	OPHARMONY I OPHARMONY II	OAU OAU	Peace Keeping Intervention Force	1981-1982 1981-1982
31	Mission of Sudan	AMIS	AU	Peace Keeping	2004-
32	AU Mission to Rwanda	NMOG	OAU	Election Monitoring	1992-1993
33	Operation LIBERTY	ECOMOG	Nigeria Under ECOWAS	Peace Enforcement	1990-1997
34	Interim Mission in Kosovo	UNMIK	United Nations	Peace Keeping	1991
35	Operation SANDSTORM	ECOMOG	Nigeria Under ECOWAS	Peace Enforcement	1997-2000
36	UN Mission to Haiti	MINUSTAH	United Nations	Peace Stabilization	2004

democratization but on basis of power calculation"

It is clear from the above statement that any country aspiring for veto-power, or global leadership in the UNSC, should possess in sufficient and necessary measure these identified elements of power and the capacities to exercise it.

Section 3: Evaluation of Nigeria's Persistent Aspiration for Veto-Power Status: The Prospects.

We have mentioned in the introductory section of this paper, the major factors outlined by Kofi Annan to secure admission into the proposed enlarged UNSC on a permanent status. These factors include verifiable records of participation in UN mandated peace and security operations as well as contribution to UN voluntary activities in the area of global development. We have also highlighted necessary conditions to secure from the United States, Europe and Asia the required support to actualize Nigeria's aspiration which include, electoral reform, increasing the capacities of democratic institutions and good governance as well as good human rights record that can be used to challenge acts of human rights abuse elsewhere.

In this section, the paper shall critically examine all prospective factors in favor of Nigeria's aspiration to justify her admittance into the UNSC.

3.1 Nigeria's Participation in UN Mandated Peace Keeping Operations

Nigeria's commitment and contribution to global peace and security started before she was formally admitted into the UN as its 99th member states on 7th October 1960. In July of that year, Nigeria was invited to send a contingent to the UN Peace-Keeping Force to Congo. Since then, Nigeria has participated in similar UN mandated peace keeping operations, such as the Emergency Force in the Middle-East, Somalia, Mozambique, Rwanda, India/Pakistan, Angola, Cambodia, Iran/Iraq, Kuwait among several others (Sanda, 2005). In all, from 1960 to date Nigeria's military have participated in over forty (40) UN sponsored global and regional peace and security missions. Thirty-six (36) of these peace missions have been concluded by 2004, while six (6) are still on-going across the globe. A summary of all the UN, AU and ECOWAS sponsored peace-keeping and peace enforcement missions, Nigeria participated since 1960 is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Summary of Nigeria's Participation in Global Peace Keeping Operations (1960-2005)

Source: Sanda (2005) Nigeria's Peacekeeping Efforts, 1960-2005.

Analysis of data in table 3, shows that in the area of UN, AU and ECOWAS mandated peace and security operations Nigeria's record of achievement is impressive and unmatched on the African continent. This feat has enhanced her international image

resulting in the appointment of General Martin Luther Aqwai as commandant of the UN/AU Hybrid Force in 2006. Furthermore,

in acknowledgement of Nigeria's impressive contributions to United Nations, OAU and ECOWAS mandated peace-keeping operations, Nigeria was accorded the singular honor of being elected by the UN General Assembly to represent Africa as a non-permanent member in the UNSC for an unpreceded five times in 1966-1967, 1978-1979, 1994-1995, 2011-2012 and 2014-2015.

3.2 Nigeria's Participation in UN Mandated Voluntary Development Activities.

In 1970, the United Nations created a volunteer service scheme as a route to technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). In response to this UN initiative and in-line with Nigeria's foreign policy, the Technical Aids Corps (TAC) was established in 1987. Daura (2005 ;13) noted that TAC was established to streamline and

PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY	BATCHES								
	1st batch	2nd batch	3rd batch	4th batch	5th batch	6th batch	7th batch	8th batch	Total
	1987-1990	1990-1992	1992-1994	1993-1995	1994-1996	1997-1999	1999-2001	2002-2004	
Doctors	35	10	55	41	66	25	43	52	327
Microbiologist	---	----	3	1	----	----	----	----	4
Pharmacist	---	----	3	3	14	8	12	24	64
Radiologist	---	----	1	1	3	----	----	----	5
Med. Lab. Tech	----	----	----	1	5	5	11	15	37
Teachers	28	54	65	85	118	61	103	174	688
Nurses	20	14	37	36	24	45	59	52	287
Nurse Tutors	---	----	3	11	24	2	7	18	65
Accountants	4	2	----	4	1	2	----	5	18
Lawyers	1	7	----	8	4	35	5	8	68
Land surveyors	5	---	6	4	----	----	----	9	19
Agriculturalist	2	----	6	----	5	1	4	6	22
Architects	2	2	----	----	----	----	----	----	4
Sports	---	----	----	5	6	2	1	2	16
Engineers	8	10	15	4	7	6	6	15	71
Meteorologist	---	----	----	----	---	----	--- -	1	1

coordinate Nigerian technical assistance program to African and Caribbean countries as a practical way to revitalize South-South as well as regional and sub-regional cooperation. Available record, indicates that between 1987 when the first batch of volunteers were sent out and the eight batch in 2004, a total of 1696 professionals in various categories were sent out from Nigeria to needy recipient countries such as Fiji, Jamaica, Belize, Gambia, Sierra-Leone, Benin Republic among others to fill existing man power gaps in those countries. A summary of TAC's volunteers sent to recipient countries is presented in table 4.

Table 4: TAC Volunteers Sent to African and Caribbean Countries (1987-2004)

Grand total: 1696

Source: Daura, M.M (2005), Nigeria's Technical Aids Corps Programme

Analysis of data in table 4 indicates that volunteers in the teaching category has the highest number (688), Nurses Tutors (65) followed by doctors (327), Nurses (287) and pharmacist (64), professional volunteers from the medical category. There was a notable increase in the uptake (632) of volunteers sent out following the return to democracy in the country (1999-2004).

3.3 Nigeria's Global and Regional Leadership Roles

We shall examine these roles from three contexts.

1. **Nigeria's Leadership in The Global Context**

Within the global context, Nigeria's leadership role is more visible from her position as the giant of Africa. Whatever position, Nigeria takes at the global level especially at the United Nations, becomes the rallying point for other African-Asian countries who look up-to Nigeria for leadership.One notable way Nigeria provided leadership on the global stage was through the eminent personalities from the country that held top positions in global institutions. For instance, HajiaAmina Mohammed is the current re-appointed Deputy Secretary General of the UN. DrNgoziOkonjIweala is the current Director General of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Late Chief EmekaAnyaoku provided global leadership when he was the Secretary-General of the Common-Wealth. Dr. ObyEzekwesili was on the board of the World Bank and late Prof. AdeoyeLambo served as Deputy Director-General of the World Health Organization (Udeh and Okoroafor, 2016). To crown it all, Nigeria provided global leadership when it represented Africa as a non-permanent of the UN highest and most powerful organ, the UNSC for an unprecedented five times between 1966-2015(Ononihu and Oddih, 2017). Inspite of these galaxy of tested technocrats

providing first class leadership at the global level, Nigeria has not been able to produce visionary leadership and good governance at the domestic level.

2. **Nigeria's Leadership Role in Africa**

Right from 1960, Africa has remained the center piece of Nigeria's foreign policy (Obiozor, 1987). As a result of this policy thrust, Nigeria spearheaded the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) now African Union in 1963 which was primarily established to be used as a vanguard body to achieve the independence of those African nations under the yoke of colonialism. Nigeria's leadership within the mandate of the OAU, ensured the admittance of Liberia into the Economic and Social Council of the UN (Adeniji, 2005). Nigerian leadership in Africa through financial commitment as a member of the frontline states, ensured the total liberation of Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Lesotho. In the struggle for Angolan liberation, Nigeria singularly provided financial assistance to the Movement for Liberation of Angola (MPLA), Nigeria's leadership in Africa also led to the expulsion of South Africa from the Common Wealth Games and the eradication of the racial regime in South Africa in 1994(Fawole, 2010).

Nigeria's leadership on the global stage was again demonstrated when British Petroleum, Shell BP and Barclays Bank were nationalized by Nigerian government over UK's veto that stopped the UN from ending the apartheid regime in South Africa in 1978. Nigeria's leadership also led to the termination of South Africa's representation of Africa on the board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and replaced with Egypt (Adeniji, 2005). In acknowledgement of Nigeria's commitment to African decolonization, the UN General Assembly, elected Nigeria to chair its committee on apartheid from 1970-1994. Other Nigeria's leadership roles in Africa, worthy of mention are her contributions in the formation of the European Economic Community and African-Caribbean Pacific (EECACP) round-table negotiation, the Organization of African Petroleum Producers Association and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Nigeria input was significant in the establishment of NEPAD as African home grown alternative to World Bank, contrived Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) that had failed to address African economic and structural challenges. The paper observed that inspite of the pivotal leadership role and financial commitment expended in the formation of these

organizations, Nigeria has not been able to utilize her position in these organizations to boost her national interest. This is against the backdrop that the United States is presently a great country in world politics today because of her influence in global organizations.

3. **Nigeria's Leadership Role in West Africa**Nigeria's leadership role in West Africa emerged immediately after her independence when she opposed and challenged France for using Western Sahara as a testing site for her developed atomic bombs, which resulted in Nigeria cutting diplomatic relations with Franc (Akinterinwa, 2009). Nigeria also made significant input in the formation of ECOWAS against the backdrop of failed attempts by other West African countries. Within the context of providing leadership in the area of peace-keeping operations in West Africa, Nigeria committed both military and financial resources to restoration of stability in Liberia, Somalia, Sierra-Leone. In the fight to restore peace in Liberia and Sierra-Leone, Nigeria sponsored ECOMOG and single handedly funded its operations from 1994. In confirmation, Adeniji (2005) noted that…

"it has been estimated that ECOMOG operations in Liberia and Sierra-Leone draws its 70% troops and 80% of its funding from Nigeria."

Nigeria's leadership also came into play in several peace-making initiatives in places like Cote d' Ivoire, Togo, Sao-Tome/Principe as well as facilitated the signing of peace-accord among warring factions in Liberia and subsequent granting of asylum to Charles Taylor in Nigeria (Adesola, 2008).

3.4 Size of Nigerian Population

Based on current UN(2019) estimates, the size of Nigerian population is put at over 200million. Scholars and commentators that have argued in favor of Nigeria's UNSC aspiration have advanced this element as a good prospective factor that can enhance the country's bid for a permanent seat at the proposed enlarged structure of the UNSC. They argued that the size of China's population among others enhanced her inclusion in the UNSC, and Nigeria's current demographic is a good booster in creating demand for goods and services as well as attractive to foreign investors to invest in the economy through FDI within the context of free market economy (Aluko, 2011). Nigeria embraced free market economy with the introduction of SAP by the IMF since 1986, but the country is presentlyrated as the "capital of poverty" and one of the poorest countries in the world (Oyebode, 2010). Nonetheless, the size of Nigeria's population is seen by many as a prospect that can boost large market as well as the country's global leadership aspiration in confirmation of this statement, Streamlau (2017) noted that….

"The majority of opinion in the Western World,

USA and Asia looks up to Nigeria to provide responsible leadership on the global and regional stage because of its population and potentials and she shall be judged by the degree of failure or success of this expectation"

3.5 Nigeria's Natural Resources and Economic Potential

Nigeria's natural resources and the economic potentials that can be harnessed from it is seen by many liberal economist as a key element that can enhance Nigeria's aspiration. These economists point to the availability of a variety of mineral and oil deposits such as iron ore, Uranium, diamond and crude oil among numerous others. In the area of crude oil, Nigeria is rated 6th largest oil producer in the world, and the 3rd largest producer in OPEC (Gillpin, 2017). These mineral deposits attract international attention as they translate into huge revenue in foreign currency. The revenue from these natural resource especially crude oil has made Nigeria a country to be reckoned with in the international community. With the rebasing of the economy, Nigeria is now the biggest economy in Africa and has used her wealth to assist poor and needy African countries. The oil wealth has also enabled Nigeria to fund ECOMOG and participate successfully in over 40 UN mandated peace and security keeping operations across the globe. This feat is a boost to her UNSC aspiration.

From the foregoing analysis it can be argued that on the criteria of participation in global and regional peace keeping operations as well as in UN mandated voluntary services within the context of manpower development, size of population, economic potential, global and regional leadership. Nigeria's achievement recording these areas offers good prospects, justification as well as qualification for her inclusion in the UNSC in-line with Kofi Annan's criteria. On the other-hand, the demand of the New World Order as perquisite for global leadership and international recognition as echoed by William Frazer present challenges to Nigeria's aspiration. The paper shall now examine these challenges before presenting its conclusion and recommendation.

Section 4: Nigeria's Persistent Aspiration for Veto-Power: The Challenges

Scholars and social commentators that have argued against Nigeria's aspiration for veto-power status in the UNSC highlighted challenges in the areas of:

i. Lack of Economic capacity
ii. Absence of Military and technological capacities
iii. Poor Democratic practices
iv. Bad Human rights record.

5.1 Lack of Economic Capacities

Nigeria rely majorly on oil revenue to finance its budget and with crude oil export revenue accounting for over 90% of

Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings, it is safe to say Nigeria has a mono economy. The major challenges in the economy presently is the volatility in the price of crude oil on the international market. With any drastic fall in the price of crude oil, Nigeria's economy falls into recession which the country recently exited from (Eboh, 2016). In addition, even though Nigeria is the 6th oil producing nation in the world and a key member of OPEC, the economy is a net importer of refined petroleum products. Nigeria is also endowed with many solid mineral deposits but due to challenges she is unable to process nor harness their economic potentials for domestic development or exploit them for export. A reflection of the economic challenges is the poor human development record of the country where Nigeria according to UN, HDR (2016) recorded highest infant mortality rate in Africa, 3.3million IDPs, youth's unemployment at 42% and over 10 million children of school age, out of school. The pace of industrialization is slow due to absence of basic economic infrastructure to boost industrial production and generate employment (Okon, 2017). For instance, since 2004 electrical power generation has fluctuated between 1500Mw to 5000Mw (Adeola, 2017). Moreover,Nigeria presently is saddled with an international debt profile over USD 60billion (Osinbajo, 2015). Nigeria also failed to secure membership of the twenty largest economies, the G20 with its vision 20-2020 nor the G-4. With these highlighted economic challenges and domestic issues,it is the considered view of this paper that Nigeria would not be able to successfully shoulder the high financial commitment that comes with discharging the enormous responsibilities associated with veto members of the UNSC as stipulated in chapter 6 and 7 of the UN Charter.

5.2 Lack of Military and Technological Capacities

Nigeria over reliance on imported military hardware and technology is a clear demonstration of her limitation in the sphere of global power calculation. Capacity to manufacture high precision advanced military hardware and technology is a critical factor in global diplomacy. Nigeria dependence on importation of modern high technological weaponry is not only counter-productive but exposes the country to coercion as she is being subjected to now in her importation of Tucano fighter jets from the United States. Possession of nuclear technology is a requirement for veto-power status in the UNSC. Nigeria presently lacks nuclear power technology and capacity even though uranium is available in the country for manufacturing of such advanced weaponry.

5.3 Challenges in Nigeria's Electoral Process and Democratic Practices.

Nigeria returned to democratic practices in 1999 after the military were forced to return to the barracks and disengaged from governance. Since the

transition to democratic practices and governance, the electoral process has been mired with electoral malpractices such as imposition of candidates, violence, rigging through falsification of votes, ballot box snatching and stuffing to favor a crooked candidate against the wishes of the electorate. For instance, the general elections in 2003 and 2007 were so blatantly rigged that even the winner UmaruYar'Adua admitted openly that the process that brought him to power was "gravely flawed" and promised structural reform of the electoral process. (Enabulele and Ewere 2010:10). Even though some reforms have been carried out in the electoral process, in the view of this paper they remain token adjustments to the voting arrangement. A consolidated democratic practice should be embedded on multi-pluralism, free and fair election, transparency, accountability and respect for rule of law. Twenty-two years after Nigeria's transition to democratic practices in 1999, good democratic governance in the country is still plagued with the challenges of providing basic services such as sound economic environment in which its entrepreneurial class can prosper, access to health care and socio-economic infrastructure expected by the citizens as "dividend of democracy" (Thomson, 2014). On the global stage, Nigeria's electoral process and democratic practices are viewed and associated with poor leadership and bad governance. It is within this context the paper argued that the nature, character and quality of Nigeria's national leadership impact not only on democratic development but also the image and influences it exacts in international diplomatic market. This argument is collaborated by Achebe and Buhari. Achebe in his epic book "The Trouble with Nigeria" noted that…..

> "the trouble with democratic governance in Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership"

Buhari (1985) in his first outing as Nigeria's Military Head of State highlighted the international dimension of Nigeria's leadership challenges when he noted that….

> "no country in the world can command the respect and admiration of the international community without a dedicated and purposeful leadership".

Drawing from the above statements, the paper, submitted that good leadership and good democratic practices are serious challenges Nigeria must adequately overcome to secure international acceptance and recognition in pursuit of her aspiration for global leadership in the UNSC.

5.4 Challenges in Nigeria Human Rights Record.

Perceptions within and outside Nigeria, before and after transition from military

rule show that Nigeria as a country do not respect or uphold the fundamental human rights of its citizens. Human rights abuses are manifested mainly through political impunity, illegal detention and extra-judicial killings (Saliu, 2012). These challenges in human right abuses have remained in the view of the paper because political leadership in the present democratic dispensation like their military counter-part in collaboration with the nation's security agencies still regard Nigeria as sovereign nation and its human rights record is an internal issue that should not be subjected to external assessment. This view is deduced from Nigeria's External Affairs Minister Tom Ikimi's statement during the dictatorship of late General Sani Abacha (1995-1999) in reaction to global pressure and threats of economic sanctions for gross human right abuses. He said…..

> "Whatever the Nigerian state is doing within the physical territory of the country is internal to it." (Saliu, 2012).

Within this persuasion, flagrant human right abuses were perpetrated through illegal detention, and extra-judicial killings. For instance, it was during Ikimis tenure and Sani Abacha's military dictatorship that NADECO activists like chief AfredRewane, MrsKudiratAbiola among others as well as the Ogoni nine led by Ken-SaroWiwa were extra-judicially killed (Ekanem, 2013). These actions and other breaches of international treaties made Nigeria a pariah state among comity of nation. Even Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's democratic administration was also characterized by many gross human rights abuses. For instance, Obasanjo completed his two tenures as president without the political will to bring to justice, those responsible for the killing of his Minister of Justice Chief Bola Ige in controversial circumstances (Zabadi, 2004) cited in Ekanem (2013). Inspite of president Buhari's declared commitment to the rule of law, the extra-judicial killings of the "Apo" nine by officers of the Department of State Security (DSS) in APO Quarters, Abuja in 2013, is instructive of the prevalence of human rights abuse in the present democratic government in Nigeria. Nigeria's bad human rights record, according to Abubakar (2014) has not only discouraged foreign assistance and external investment through FDI but also constitute a challenge to Nigeria's persistent aspiration for global leadership at the UNSC.

Section 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

As a result of contention against the abuse of the veto-power by the Big Five in the UNSC, Nigeria and other nations from the southern hemisphere have been agitating for a democratization of the United Nations and a reform of the UN Security Council to make its membership more reflective of the

various geographic regions. This agitation resulted in the proposal for the enlargement of the UNSC structure. The prospects for Nigeria's UNSC permanent seat aspiration are enhanced by factors such as her achievements in UN and AU mandated peace keeping operations as well as sponsorship of ECOWAS peace enforcement and negotiations efforts, and participation in UN voluntary services through her manpower development efforts in Africa and the Asian Pacific countries. Other factors boosting Nigeria's prospects are her available natural resources and demography. Inspite of her acknowledged notable achievements in line with the criteria for qualificationfor admittance into the UNSCon the permanent category status,the paper found that there are many identified challenges to Nigeria aspiration. These are lack of economic, military and technological capacities to discharge the enormous responsibilities expected from veto-power membership of UNSC. Other identified challenges include bad human rights record among the back drop of other militating domestic issues. The paper concludes that these challenges as they are now constitutes great impediments to her UNSC aspiration and must be addressed adequately as she aspires for global leadership.

5.2 Recommendations.

1. **Realistic Route for Nigeria's Aspiration.**The paper found that Nigeria has maintained and consistently expected that her achievement in the maintenance of global and regional peace, demographic size, economic potentials and strategic position in Africa should translate into global leadership in the UNSC with veto status. This paper is of the considered view that no country is conferred with such leadership or international recognition based on her self-perception but on efforts made and recognition earned. That is why the veto-status in the UNSC is not conferred based on self-perception, ethics, sympathy or even democratization but on capabilities within the context of elements of national power. Without first acquiring this power profile it is of little benefit routing for veto power not supported with proven power profile. It is in this regard and within the context of the theory of political realism, that the paper recommends that Nigeria drops her insistence on veto-status and pursue one of the UN panel proposal that provides for two (2) non-veto permanent seats allocated for Africa. After all, Nigeria has represented Africa five times in the UNSC before, which is a demonstration and acknowledgement that Nigeria has the capacity to speak for Africa. More over since it was Nigeria and South Africa's insistence on veto status for Africa that scuttled the reform process in 2005, it is more

likely that the Big Five would be more positively disposed to a UNSC enlarged structure that allows for more permanent but non veto members. Analyzing the address of President Buhari, during the 71st session of the UN General Assembly, it can be deduced that Nigeria has seen the futility of her veto status bid and is prepared to settle for UNSC non-permanent membership when he stated that…

"Nigeria stands ready to serve Africa and the world in the permanent member category, in the reformed Security Council to advance international peace and security." (Adetutu, 2016).

2. Holistic Socio-Economic Reform.

Due to the impact of globalization, socio-economic issues are critical to the determination of a nations both domestic and global image and acceptance. The paper found that Nigeria failed to address her domestic socio-economic challenges positively in order to attract positive support to her aspiration from her international partners. Consequently, the paper recommends that:

a) Nigeria should as a priority make concerted and pragmatic efforts to carry out comprehensive domestic socio-economic reforms that would address holistically the challenges that are impediments to her aspiration identified in the paper. Addressing these challenges adequately is critical to enhancing her prospects for securing a permanent UNSC seat.

b) Nigeria should also take advantage of the various international and regional organizations in which she has influence and leading positions such as African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD) and use them as platform to push her quest for the UNSC seat.

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