

The Nigerian Citizen: A “Reason” Not a “Burden” of Diplomacy

Henry B. Ogunjewe PhD

Department of History & Strategic Studies, University of Lagos

Email: hogunjewo@unilag.edu.ng, drogunjewohenry@gmail.com

Tel: 0802 331 2247, 0907 848 5658

Abstract

Citizens of Nigeria have often been treated as “burdens” rather than “reasons” of diplomacy practically in all formations, outlets, consular and mission outposts in most of the 105 missions of Nigeria abroad. This is a major factor in the corresponding way the Nigerian is perceived and treated by almost all of the foreign missions in Nigeria in which the Nigerian deserve services and opportunities. The lack of confidence by Nigerians in Diaspora in their country to rescue them in times of need is *caused* by the response and behaviour of Nigerian foreign officials and outposts. Unfortunately, a section of the media, academics, practitioners, and policymakers assume that this is citizen diplomacy. Far from it, Citizen Diplomacy includes direct contacts in joint activities of various sorts, or involves situations mediated or facilitated by unofficial (non-government) third parties like NGOs, private peacemakers, scholars, sportsmen and women or any other unofficial "bridge builder". Many journal articles, book chapters, media interviews, government policies have equated the care of citizens outside the country to mean citizen diplomacy! What a diplomatic blunder and academic laziness. The care of citizens in the Diaspora is the fifth of the traditional roles of diplomats which clearly states: The protection of National and Citizens interests after Representation, Negotiation, Reporting and Interpretation. This paper is premised on the need to correct the way and manner the Nigerian citizen is treated as a “burden” of diplomacy, correct the wrong narratives of equating citizen diplomacy with the care for citizens in the Diaspora while correcting the interpretation of the concept of citizen diplomacy which is also “tier two” diplomacy. The paper is essentially a field research with reliance on primary and secondary sources of data in published journals and online articles, newspaper interviews, and books. It is guided by Structural Functionalism Theory and its scope is limited to issues and content analysis bothering on the protection of Diaspora Nigerians’ interests, correct understanding of the concept of citizen diplomacy.

Keywords: Citizen, Citizen Diplomacy, Burden, Reason, Diplomacy, Diaspora

Introduction

Diplomacy as a concept and practice is as old as man. The origin of organized diplomacy can be traced to the relations among the city-states of Ancient Greece. Modern diplomacy arose in Italy in the middle ages. Italian city-states established permanent embassies in London, Paris and Rome leading to the birth of permanent diplomatic machinery. It is established that there is no nation state in the contemporary world that is self-sufficient necessitating interactions with other states.

These symbiotic interactions are powered by diplomacy (Ogunjewe, 2019). Consequently, there is the in-flow and out-flow of citizens from one state to another necessitating the need for each sending state to protect the interests of their citizens in the receiving state.

The Romans contributed in a way to the advancement of the art of diplomacy by negotiation (Rana, 2011). This extended the practice of diplomacy to include observation and reporting along with representation. Traditional diplomacy was crafted with the emergence of the five traditional roles of representation, reporting, negotiation, interpretation, and the dual carriage diplomatic machinery of protection of national and citizens' interests.

This article is not a theoretical analysis but an attempt at conceptual clarification, sensitization of government and citizens to the full import of the diplomatic concept of protection of national and citizens' interests as well as a critical examination at the relationship between the state (Nigeria) and their *citizens* abroad. The practice of not treating her citizens as “reasons” of diplomacy abroad is coincidentally but unfortunately impacting on the corresponding treatment of Nigerians by most of the foreign mission outposts in Nigeria; it is established, that the state has specific responsibilities towards their citizens. This paper submits that as its central argument that in a world where both statehood and citizenship are dynamic, owing to various forms of mobility, increasing number of people moving beyond borders and multiplying risks, the states' responsibility of care is becoming increasingly a more pressing political, legal and moral concern, while equally submitting that ‘citizen diplomacy’ is not and should not be confused with the care for citizens as out forward by some authors in journal articles and book chapters.

At the same time, the states' (Nigerian state in particular) capacity is under pressure with increasing number of her citizens in the Diaspora. This paper, therefore, provides a set of original contribution to international relations scholarship with novel insight into the study of citizenship, identity, ethics, intervention, control, migration, Diasporas and diplomacy.

The contribution is primarily interested in the articulation, practice and execution of the responsibility of care, stretching from state to citizen, often through mission outposts, consular etc thus providing a better understanding of how critical, processes of belonging and differentiation are driven by parallel logics within and across cases, and more precise analysis of the relationship between states and individuals in contemporary international relations.

Conceptual Clarifications

There is a critical need to undertake conceptual clarification in this paper as most Nigerians: educated, learned, professionals, practitioners, journalists and even historians confuse terms, concepts and issues in diplomacy especially with citizen, citizen diplomacy, diplomacy, diplomatic mission and national interest.

Citizen diplomacy (people's diplomacy) otherwise called “Tier II” diplomacy is the political concept of average citizens engaging as representatives of a state or cause either inadvertently or by design. Citizen diplomacy may take place when official channels are not reliable or desirable; for instance, if two states do not formally recognize each other's governments, citizen diplomacy may be an ideal tool of statecraft. Citizen diplomacy does not have to be direct negotiations between two states, but can take the form of: scientific exchanges, cultural exchanges, and international athletic events. Citizen diplomacy can complement official diplomacy or subvert it. Some states ban track-two efforts like this when they run counter to official foreign policy.

Protection of Interests: The fifth core function after representation, negotiation, reporting and interpretation for the Diplomat is the duty to protect the interests of his state and work with treaties, other international agreements and principles of international law. He also has the more specific duty of attempting to assist and protect businessmen and all other nationals of his country who are living or travelling in the country in which he is stationed or assigned or who have interests there. He seeks to prevent or correct practices which might discriminate against his country or its citizens.

It is lamentable that the Nigerian Diplomatic Mission has forgotten this vital aspect of diplomatic practice. The crucial need to protect the interests of Nigerians in the Diaspora; whether legal, official or illegal immigrants are a major part of diplomacy. Unfortunately, rather than concentrate efforts on this vital aspect of diplomacy, Diplomats have come to see Nigerian Citizens as “Burdens” instead of “Reasons” for Diplomacy.

While acknowledging in concise manner the limitations and challenges inhibiting the delivery of service, suggestions for the strategies and factors to enhance the Foreign Service Delivery to deserving, requesting and enquiring citizens or foreigners will be advanced.

The treatment of Nigerians by the Diplomatic Missions in Nigeria is not a clear departure from the way Nigerians are being treated by their own Diplomatic Mission in their host countries abroad. The fact that the Nigerian Government at home has not come hard in defence of her citizens in the hands of these Foreign Nationals, Embassies, High Commissions and Multinational Corporations as well as some Foreign Owned Business concerns is not a motivation for the Nigerian Envoys to rise in defence of Nigerians outside her shores. Nigerians are being molested, harassed, intimidated and embarrassed all over the world under the watchful eyes and passivity of the Nigerian Diplomatic Mission and Government. The average Nigerian cannot trust his government at home or his Diplomatic Mission outside the country to come to his aid or rescue in times of need.

Although unsuccessful at the National Assembly, the 2011 Bill proposed to create a “Commission for Nigerians in Diaspora” was a tacit acceptance of the sad fact that Nigerians have not been

accorded the best of services by the Diplomatic Missions when compared to such Foreign Services rendered Americans, British, Dutch, Germans and even Indians etc in foreign countries neither are their interests given due attention. Fortunately, the issue gained greater momentum and got the National Assembly approval in 2016 as Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) was established to coordinate and provide an organized system of collaborations of Nigerians in the Diaspora; NIDCOM is under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Reciprocity is the practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit, especially privileges granted by one country or organization to another.

Historical Evolution of Diplomatic Practice

Diplomacy as a concept and practice is as old as man. However, the origin of organized diplomacy may be traced to the relations among the city-states of ancient Greece. By the fifth century BC, Harold Nicolson stated, "special missions between the Greek city-states had become so frequent that something approaching our own system of regular diplomatic intercourse had been achieved" (Nicolson, 1946, p.46). Thucydides reported on diplomatic procedure among the Greeks, as, for instance, in his account of a conference at Sparta in 432 BC in which the Spartans and their allies considered what action to take against Athens (Nicolson, 1946, p.19).

The Romans contributed in a way to the advancement of the art of diplomacy by negotiation. Their representatives became skilled diplomats and trained observers. This extended the practice of diplomacy to include observation and reporting along with representation (Rana, 2011).

Modern diplomacy as an organized profession arose in Italy in the late middle ages. The rivalries of the Italian city-states and the methods, which their rulers used to promote their interests, are described in masterful fashion in Machiavelli's "The Prince". Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, established the first known permanent mission at Genoa in 1455 (Rana, 2011). In the next century, Italian city-states established permanent embassies in London, Paris and at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor; a British Ambassador was assigned to residence in Paris; and Francis I of France "devised something like permanent diplomatic machinery" (Akadiri, 2003, p.240).

After the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 formalized the state system¹, permanent missions became the rule rather than the exception (Akadiri, 2003). Diplomacy became an established profession and a generally accepted method of international intercourse. As diplomacy became more formal, its rules became more standardized. The 1815 Vienna Congress contributed in this respect, placing diplomacy on a formal basis, with standardized rules of procedure and protocols. The rules were embodied in the Reglement of March 19, 1815 and in regulations of the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818 (Akadiri, 2003).

The new diplomacy of the nineteenth century, then, demanded new methods, new skills, broader knowledge as well as new personnel. These methods were defined in many international agreements and became an intricate and generally observed code. According to Akadiri, (2003), diplomats were people who observed the rules of the game and understood each other.

Harold Nicolson, whose delightful little book *Diplomacy* has become a classic on the subject has called attention to three developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which have greatly affected the theory and practice of diplomacy. These are:

- i. The "growing sense of the community of nations,"
- ii. The "increasing appreciation of the importance of public opinion" and
- iii. The "rapid increase in communications" (Nicolson 1969, p.44)

The first two clearly enlarged the diplomat's functions and enhanced his importance. The foregoing process stimulated the evolution of the five traditional roles of diplomacy, namely; Representation, Negotiation, Reporting, Interpretation and Protection. These five pillars of diplomacy now extend into trade, investments, security, sports and cultural exchanges. The Nigerian mission to the UK, which represents the Nigerian Foreign Service in that country, is expected to perform all these functions to advance Nigeria's national interests. The research seeks to assess its performance in the actualization of its mandate over the study period.

In an address before the America-Japan Society in Tokyo, on Nov. 22, 1938, Joseph C. Grew, United States Ambassador to Japan, commenting on the work of the Diplomatic Mission and the diplomat in Foreign Service, thus explained the supreme purpose of a diplomat:

He must be, primarily, an interpreter and this function of interpreting acts both ways. First, he tries to understand the country in which he serves, its conditions, its mentality, its actions and its underlying motives and to explain these things clearly to his own government. Then, contrariwise, he seeks means of making known to the government and the people of the country to which he is accredited or assigned the purposes and hopes and desires of his native land. He is an agent of mutual adjustment between the ideas and forces upon which his nation acts (Chandra, 2011, p.114).

The Foreign Service provides a nation with a platform to enhance her image in the estimation of other nations in the international arena. It must be such that citizens will be proud of their nation. Lord Palmerstone once argued that just like the Romans of old could say: "Civis Romannus Sum" meaning "I am a Roman" and expect to be protected by the military might of Rome, a Briton in any part of the world, should be able to say "Civis Britannicus Sum" meaning "I am British" and expect the long arm of the British government to protect him (Andres, 1985).

In the same vein, a Nigerian in any part of the world for whatever reason must be able to depend on his Diplomatic Mission to protect him and his interests. This has come to assume a very critical aspect of Diplomacy in recent times. Diplomacy has not only become a major instrument of regulation of relationships between nations, it has also assumed a vehicle and machinery for the protection of the citizens and their interests in a foreign country.

Diplomatic practices in Nigeria, according to Sina (2014), dates back to when the geographical enclave called Nigeria was more recognised as various indigenous ethnic nations, kingdoms, tribes

and groups. The type of diplomatic practices was more in terms of commercial diplomacy, diplomacy by marriages, shuttle diplomacy and coercive diplomacy: these forms of diplomacy were driven by the interests of Native chiefs as well as tribal and religious interests (Sina, 2014). This diplomatic state reflects the diplomatic practices in the European powers before the advent of modern diplomacy in the fifteenth century.

The Nigerian Diplomatic Mission vested with Foreign Relations and Foreign Service responsibilities began a gradual evolution with the opening of the London office in 1950, other Mission outposts were opened in Jeddah, Fernando Po, Washington subsequently leading to the official establishment of the Nigerian Mission in 1957 prior to her independence and that implies that it was originally fashioned after the British Diplomatic Mission/Foreign Service pattern. This was more of a manifestation of British system of handing over power to her former colonies through a systematic but gradual process (Rana, 2011). It was established in anticipation of independence and the need to render invaluable service to the country in fulfilment of national objectives and protection of the interests of Nigerians abroad (Chandra, 2007).

The Main office of this pioneering Diplomatic Mission and Service was naturally located in London with a Liaison Office in New York. While a Foreign Service officer is generally referred to as a Diplomat, the whole body of Diplomats accredited to a state constitute the Diplomatic Corps of that country. At first they were attached to the British Embassies and Consular Posts to function as Third Secretaries, Vice Consuls, etc which served as Training opportunities and avenues for the Officers who would later take-over from the British "Trainers" and bosses to assume full diplomatic responsibilities from independence.

Foreign policy objectives have been categorised into core, middle and long range objectives. Core values are the foreign policy aims that are related to the survival of the state and its citizens. The protection of the sovereign and territorial integrity of the nation and the lives and property of Nigerians at home and abroad remain the cardinal values that constitute her national interest. Middle range objectives within the framework of Nigeria's foreign policy include such broad matters as economic development and social welfare, promotion of international cooperation, respect for fundamental rights and mutual respect among nations. On the other hand, long-range objectives are the dreams and aspirations of the state in the international system. While other objectives are subject to constant flux, core objectives are constant because they represent the national interest of the country. National interest is therefore, the core, concrete and constant objectives of a nation which translate into actions and define the relationship between independent states.

The Nigerian Diplomatic Mission represents Nigerian people and government in all the countries where Nigeria has diplomatic relations. It is an arm of the Department or Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its main functions are to carry out the policies of the Nigerian Government for the territory, welfare, image and security of Nigerian people.

In the pre-colonial Nigeria, the failure of diplomatic practices or lack of adequate diplomatic engagements led to several wars including the 100 years Yoruba civil wars which ended in 1893 with the Kiriji war as well as other such wars that considerably weakened the people of the region and made them most vulnerable to slave trade and external exploitation (Federation of Nigeria, 1956).

The Nigerian Foreign Service began a gradual evolution with the opening of the first office in London in 1950 to perform the following functions:

- a. The care and maintenance of Nigerian students in the UK and Republic of Ireland
- b. The maintenance and expansion of external trade of Nigeria in London
- c. The provision of facilities for visitors to the UK from Nigeria and vice versa
- d. The dissemination of information about Nigeria and the promotion of publicity (THISDAY, 2012; January 29)

It must be noted that the priority assignment was the **"Care and Maintenance of Nigerian Students in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland"** this underlines the importance of the citizen in any nation's practice of diplomacy and Foreign Service. This responsibility was so heavy and of major concern to the original fabricators of the Nigerian Foreign Service that the pioneering office from inception also had a Director of Students' Affairs: he was charged with the overall interest of the Nigerian Students studying in the UK and Republic of Ireland, notwithstanding that the nation was still under the British colonial rule, the value and integrity of the Nigerian was not pushed to the back burner; it was indeed a priority.

Traditional Roles of Diplomats

The major responsibilities of the diplomats which constitute the major activities of the Foreign Service and Diplomatic Mission may be broken down into these basic functions: (1) Representation (2) Negotiation (3) Reporting and (4) the Protection of the interests of the nation and of its citizens in foreign lands. Some Scholars have included Interpretation as the fifth function. These functions are closely interrelated: Space constraints will only allow concise explanations.

Representation: A diplomat is a formal or official representative of his country in a foreign state. He is the normal agent of communication between his own Diplomatic Mission or foreign office and that of the state to which he is accredited. In the eyes of many citizens of the host country, he is the country he represents and that country is assessed or judged according to the personal impression he creates.

Negotiation: a practical synonym for diplomacy itself, negotiation is the pursuit of agreements/treaties by compromise and direct personal contacts. Diplomats are by definition negotiators. As such, they have duties that, as described by Mr. Child, include "...the drafting of a wide variety of bilateral and multilateral arrangements embodied in treaties, conventions, protocols and other documents of political, economic and social nature.

Reporting: Reports from diplomats in the field are the raw material of foreign policy. These reports cover nearly every conceivable subject, from technical studies to appraisals of the

psychology of nations. Diplomats must, above all, be good reporters; if they have the ability to estimate trends accurately, if they keep an eye on information and if they present facts in concise and intelligible format may be worth a king's ransom.

Interpretation: Interpretation forms the background to the other functions. The Foreign Office must be able to interpret the actions and policies of the host country in a way to facilitate cooperation and collaboration devoid of rancour with the home government. The ability of the Foreign office or the Diplomat as the head of the Foreign Office to interpret correctly the actions, culture, policies and activities of the host country will determine the corresponding action and policies of the home government.

Protection of Interests: Although a diplomat is expected to get along authorities of the state to which he is - that is, he must be persona grata to the government of a state - he is at all times to seek to further the interests of his own country. His duty is to protect the interests of his country and work with treaties, other international agreements and principles of international law. He also has the more specific duty of attempting to assist and protect businessmen and all other nationals of his country who are living or travelling in the country which he is stationed/assigned or who have interests there. He seeks to prevent or correct practices which might discriminate against his country or its citizens

The Nigerian Diplomatic Mission and Treatment of Nigerian Diaspora: A critique

It is however lamentable that the Nigerian Diplomatic Mission has forgotten this vital aspect of diplomatic practice. The crucial need to protect the interests of Nigerians in the Diaspora; whether legal, official or illegal immigrants is a major part of diplomacy. Unfortunately, rather than concentrate efforts on this vital aspect of diplomacy, Diplomats have come to see Nigerian Citizens as "Burdens" instead of "Reasons" for Diplomacy.

While acknowledging in concise manner the limitations and challenges inhibiting the delivery of service, suggestions for the strategies and factors to enhance the Foreign Service Delivery to deserving, requesting and enquiring citizens or foreigners will be advanced.

The treatment of Nigerians by the Diplomatic Missions in Nigeria is not a clear departure from the way Nigerians are being treated by their own Diplomatic Missions in their host countries abroad. The fact that the Nigerian Government at home has not come hard in defence of her citizens in the hands of these Foreign Nationals, Embassies, High Commissions and Multinational Corporations as well as some Foreign Owned Business concerns is not a motivation for the Nigerian Envoys to rise in defence of Nigerians outside her shores. Nigerians are being molested, harassed, intimidated and embarrassed all over the world under the watchful eyes and passivity of the Nigerian Diplomatic Mission and Government. The average Nigerian cannot trust his government at home or his Diplomatic Mission outside the country to come to his aid or rescue in times of need.

Over the decades, numerous reports have emanated from Nigerians and non-Nigerians complaining about the treatments they receive from consular officials of the Nigerian Mission in

the UK and other cities. The following, which clearly expresses the frustration of some Nigerians with the consular service in Mission, was carried, in a local Nigerian newspaper:

I have tried to get a visa for my daughter and the message you get on the machine is: All Visa enquiries will be by phone. you wouldn't believe the number of times I have called both the operator and extensions..... Some phone extensions even tell you that the inbox is full and can't receive any more messages. Apparently those guys don't pick up calls, don't read up their messages. How then do they provide the needed service and assistance to Nigerian citizens here? (Ogunjewo, 2014).

What accounts for this? Is this a peculiarly Nigerian phenomenon? Is it a reflection of the domestic environment? Is it inherent in the training of Nigerian Diplomats? Does it constitute a deficiency in the overall management of the nation's Foreign Service? Is it the operational milieu of the Nigerian Mission to the UK? Is the phenomenon an intractable challenge? What attempts were made in the past to address the issues and what are the results of such efforts?

Hitherto, research has focus primarily on foreign policy formulation and implementation. This lacuna is partly reflective of, responsible for and indeed explains why Nigerians lament the treatment they receive in their Foreign Missions. The field of Foreign Service delivery and the operations of diplomatic missions await serious and intensive historical analysis.

The study is vital because it shows the importance of the Foreign Service as the primary agency for the promotion of the welfare of Nigerians in the Diaspora. In this regard, the work provides an impetus for the Government to come to terms with the reality of the unpleasant conditions of Nigerians in the Diaspora. It is hoped that it will generate discussions on strategies to ameliorate the hardship of Nigerians in the Diaspora.

On December 9, 2011, Seventy Nigerians were deported from the UK on several grounds especially ex-convicts and those unsuccessful at the Asylum Panel. Several accusations have been levelled against the Nigerian Diplomatic Mission for connivance with British authorities to frustrate the applications of the Asylum Seeking Nigerians. Thus, rather than protect the interests and aspirations of these set of Nigerians, the Mission vested with the responsibility of protecting them was actually accused of doing the opposite- working against their interests and aspirations.

Again, on March 2, 2012, 125 Nigerians were deported from the South Africa on the ground and flimsy excuse that they were in possession of fake Yellow Card meant to certify them free of Yellow Fever. This nearly led to a major row between the two nations with threats of retaliation from the Nigerian Government. Amb. Gbenga Ashiru rose to the occasion. Investigations reveal that a Senator was even detained for 48hrs in South Africa before he was ingloriously deported. Previous treatments of such magnitude have been confronted with mute complicity by Diplomats

Further still, over 1500 Nigeria nationals have been deported from US within the last seven years while no fewer than 20,000 Nigerians are currently languishing in various prisons and detention centres across Europe for various forms of immigration offences. We have another troubling,

humiliating record of over 400 Nigerians in various detention centres in China. Their offences are familiar; ranging from incomplete or irregular immigration documents, overstaying in the country and involvement in drug-related offences. Others are: credit card fraud, rape, *street begging*, murder and prostitution. How has Nigerian Diplomatic Missions reacted, responded, intervened or assisted in such matters as a matter of policy and responsibility? Negligible!

Television documentary on Nigerians who are languishing in some prisons across Europe expressing their preference to remain in foreign prisons rather than be repatriated to Nigeria as free Citizens abound. For some of them, personal economic pressures have compelled them to travel across the dangerous desert of Sahara on foot with neither food nor water whilst some brave ones had to make do with urine in place of water in their bid to escape from Nigeria. Libya, Spain, Italy, Ireland, France, UK are some of the destinations where they believe the grass is greener. Their sufferings notwithstanding, the thought of returning to their motherland Nigeria conjures in them fear, hopelessness, pain, frustration, shame, scarcity, uncertainty and poverty

Only on August 11, 2015, a Nigerian Couple Samuel and Christiana after their three-year sojourn in Libya and confronted by undue persecution embarked on an very dangerous trip from Libya through the dangerous route to emigrate to Italy with the ultimate desire of seeking asylum in the UK, why was Nigeria not an option for them in the face of Libyan persecution? What is the major intervention of Nigerian Mission in Libya?

Most disturbing is the documentary on the Nigerians experience in the hands of the UK Boarder Agencies undergoing tremendous humiliations and assaults without the intervention of any of the Nigerian Diplomats in the UK or officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Nigerians are demeaned consistently by these foreigners because of the perception that their government and diplomatic officials will neither rise to their defence nor intervene on their behalf.

Apart from the diplomatic protection denied Nigerians, the consular services are the worst of deliveries when compared with other nations' consular services. They are subjected to harrowing experiences in search of services, no provisions are made for their children care while waiting endlessly to take their turns in the mission outposts, appointments are not kept, undue delays are the order of operations and some of the offices are manned by non-Nigerians who have no stake in the image on the nation. It is even alleged that some take bribes to provide the services they were paid to provide. Facilities are broken down, courtesies are lacking and the telephones are hardly working.

How many nations parade their prostitutes the way Nigeria Government treat their fellow citizens? How many of these prostitutes engage in these trades willingly? The defect in the socio-political configuration and wicked/insensitive governance has pushed some of these people into those inglorious enterprises. No concerted efforts are in place to ameliorate the problems.

The adoption of what the federal government called "Citizen Diplomacy" in 2007 to guide Nigeria's foreign policy was a reaction to the prevalent incidents of alleged abuse and persecution of Nigerians in different parts of the world. It was designed to primarily give priority to the interests

of Nigerians abroad, as opposed to what was previously obtained; when the country's foreign policy was literally like a candle burning itself to benefit others.

Although the concept itself which depict "Tier II Diplomacy" was confused with "Reciprocity" the intention is superior to the defect. That conceptual lapse will be left for another forum. It was indeed an acknowledgement of the lapse in Nigeria's diplomacy noted correctly without the will to proceed further to address the challenges of these Nigerians in the Diaspora

Ever since then there is hardly if at all any tangible effect to be attributed to that policy. As a matter of fact, the "Nigerian Factor" seems to have thrown it into oblivion, as there is hardly any official reference to it even in the most relevant circumstances e.g. the recent mass posting of the newly appointed Nigerian ambassadors and high commissioners to different countries around the world. It seems to have been buried with the late President Yar'Adua.

Nonetheless, even if the alleged persecution of Nigerians in different parts of the world does not subside, one can at least expect some improvement in the way Nigerian diplomats abroad handle the issues of their fellow countrymen living there. The usual complaint of inadequate funding is no longer tenable. Other Third world nations' mission outposts are not better funded yet they find the necessary strategies to address their citizens' needs without subjecting them to humiliating excruciating treatments in the hands of these foreign authorities.

Interestingly, relationship between Nigerians abroad and their fellow countrymen working in the country's missions abroad is not as it should be, to put it diplomatically. This is due to the mutual suspicion that defines the way either party looks at the other.

For instance, on one hand, an average Nigerian diplomat abroad particular in developed and rich countries forms his primary impression on his fellow countrymen living there based on some stereotypical preconceptions about the notoriety of some Nigerians in the Diaspora, who are involved in various illegitimate pursuits.

This is even though, in as much as many Nigerians abroad are being rightly or wrongly associated with many illegitimate acts, it is obvious that there are equally many Nigerians of proven integrity out there, who pursue their legitimate endeavours and contribute their quota to Nigeria's economic development and indeed promote its reputation. For instance, the recent finding that, Nigerians in US are the most educated migrant group in the US is clear evidence.

Aside from the above, Nigeria has again been ranked among the top countries who produce asylum applicants in Europe and America. The details of the 2009 and 2010 Reports of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) validates the severity of the infamous table, after Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Russia, China and Serbia in that order. The case of Russia, where parts of the country have been involved in the struggle for independence is understandable. Grouping Nigeria alongside conflict-ridden or war torn nations like Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan is indeed sad and require urgent government attention. It demonstrates the desperation of Nigerians to seek help from abroad as many of them appear to have lost confidence in the ability of government to provide their basic needs and protect their interests. It is not as if their interests are better protected

abroad, but the factors of migration have contributed to the desire of these young Nigerians to take their destinies in their own hands.

The Nigerian Government stated on Dec. 24, 2011 it is using the appropriate diplomatic channel to avert a crisis which may result between Nigeria and Zambia over the unfair deportation of some Nigerians - these are legal, prosperous Nigerians allegedly deported on the orders of new President Michael Sata on allegations that they supported the opposition party during elections. The Organization of African Unity established in 1963 was expected to provide an umbrella for Africans of all stock to assume the role of their brothers' keepers while the Foreign Policy Interests of Nigeria for most part of her 50 years of Independence has kept Africa as the centre and focus of her Foreign Policy.

Conclusion

Nigeria with its enormous black populace has considered itself as having a manifest role and unique responsibility towards other blacks in reclaiming black dignity. Without any scintilla of doubt, many Diplomatic Missions are hostile but this hostility is traceable not only to the inadequate funding of the missions but also to the attitude of Nigerians seeking help. No mission can ignore any visiting Nigerian under the pretext of financial insolvency. Inadequate funding can no longer be a tenable excuse. All Nigerians must be welcome, listened to and assisted within the limited resources available to the mission. It must be noted that not all Nigerians in the Diaspora required financial assistance; some require direction, guidance, counselling and sometimes mere encouragement which can be offered free of charge but for the strange and unfortunate view of Nigerians as undesirable elements and pests, they are products of Nigeria's various government failures since independence in 1960.

It is very possible and plausible to blame the colonial powers for Nigeria's woes but what is the major impact of the imperialists in the shabby treatment of Nigerians by Nigerians in Nigeria's Missions abroad? Consequently, because the imperialists and foreign nations have taken more than passing notice in the way Nigerians are treated by their own brothers and sisters, it has become an impetus for them to help relegate their fellows as less than human: The Nigerian Passport raises alert naturally in most of the airports abroad.

Most importantly, the Ambassadors will be adjudged by the extent of their efforts and to which they have assisted and protected Nigerians visiting their missions for one form of assistance or the other. True enough, Nigerians are aware of the inadequate funding of the missions, as well as of other problems created by Nigerians who travel abroad ill-prepared. However, those who do not prepare well for their overseas trips, though culpable, should not be totally sacrificed on the altar of non-redemption. The gap between formulation of foreign policy and Foreign Service delivery is the reason for the lack of monitoring of the Missions in the protection of the interests of the citizens. This is a fundamental part of the five original traditional roles of foreign missions: Representation, Negotiation, Interpretation, Reporting and Protection of National and Citizens' interests

Indeed, the Foreign Policies of nations, nay Nigeria are formulated with inputs from the Mission outposts abroad, the Institutes of International Affairs, the Academia, the private sector and in most democratic countries, the public opinion among others.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

- i. The incoming Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria has a huge task ahead in terms of repositioning Nigeria's Foreign Service, redirection of focus, diplomatic and strategic reengineering for relevance and articulation of foreign policies and effective administration of the missions in order to appropriately position Nigeria positively in the international community or comity of nations.
- ii. It is high time the Nigerian citizens were educated, informed, enlightened on rudimentary diplomatic practices, responsibilities and their obligations, responsibilities when they travel abroad for holidays, medical tourism, education, business and other purposes like sports etc.
- iii. Additionally, the Minister of Foreign Affairs should create a special website and a complaint section for the generality of the Nigerians to lodge their complaints whenever they have not been satisfactorily attended to by any of Nigerian Diplomatic Missions.
- iv. Now that History as a course of study has been reinstated in secondary schools across the nation, the subject should be reviewed to meet contemporary needs and accommodate the citizens' consciousness of their rights as citizens not only within the state but in their various diplomatic missions abroad.

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