



NIGERIA AND THE QUEST FOR A PERMANENT SEAT IN THE UNITED NATION'S SECURITY COUNCIL: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria's interest and clamouring for the permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council date back to as early as Nigeria had successfully represented Africa as a non-permanent member in the United Nations for five times and as a major contributor to peace globally and with its size of population, the country deserves a permanent membership position in the United Nations Security Council. But does Nigeria truly have what it takes to rightly assert her position and achieve this ambition in terms of robust economy that determines and influences all other subsystems such as politics, education and socio-cultural life of a people. This paper therefore maintains that unless Nigeria first of all, puts her Economy in order, her quest for a permanent membership of the UNSC may remain a fleeting illusion to be pursued. The present status of the Nigerian economy, signify an unrealizable reality since the dictates of the theory of political realism showed that the UNSC permanent membership cannot be achieved based on huge contributions to UN peace keeping missions and leadership in Africa alone. The study recommends that, the Nigeria economy must be reformed and diversified. Nigeria must endeavour to pay adequate attention to other sectors of the economy with a view to freeing the economy from over reliance on oil. Agriculture must be reformed to a sustainable profitable sector while minerals and metals sector must be prompted as an important component of a diversified economy; the state of security in the polity must be urgently addressed to forestall the disintegration of the country. Government must re-organize the armed forces and other security agencies to update their operations. Clear and perceived causes of

insecurity must be plugged such as unemployment, ethnicism, poor control of borders which encourages smuggling of goods, weapons and drugs.

Key Words: Political Economy, Unemployment, Corruption, Insecurity, Economy.

A: Introduction

The United Nations was founded in 1945 with the task of promoting international cooperation and to create and maintain international peace and security. It is an intergovernmental organization under which member states come together to address common political, cultural and economic challenges as well as manage shared responsibilities, exercising collective action in order to sustainably guarantee world peace and economic development. The membership of the organization rose from 51 1945 to 188 sovereign member states in 1995. By 1991, the membership further rose to 191 and today, it stands at 193 (Katsuno, 2012; Saliu and Omotola, 2008). It must be further noted that by 1968, there were 42 sovereign African states and in a space of two years Africa constituted about one third of the entire membership of the UN which then stood at 127 members in 1970 (Ejiofor, 1981).

The UN has six major organs which include the Secretariat headed by the Secretary General, the General Assembly consisting of the Heads of Governments of member states; the International Court of Justice (ICJ); United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The UNSC is made up of 15 members comprising five permanent members with Veto Powers and 10 non-permanent members. The Security Council has enormous powers and responsibilities for the maintenance and preservation of world peace and security as provided in chapters six and seven of the United Nations (UN) Charter. These responsibilities cover preventive, coercive and punitive measures. It is however provided in Article 27 of the charter that decisions of the Security Council shall be made by the affirmative vote of nine members out of a total of fifteen, inclusive of the concurring votes of all the five permanent members. This is what arms the big five namely: USA, Russia, China, Great Britain and France with the veto-power. The five permanent members owe their seat to Article 23 of

the UN Charter which states that the Republic of China, France, The USSR, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and The United States of America shall be permanent members of the Security Council (Ejiofor, 1981).

Historically the five permanent members were major powers among the victorious allied forces and predominant actors in international relations at the end of the World War II. They were also active in the negotiations that led to the adoption of the UN Charter which established the United Nation's Organization. The other 10 non-permanent members are elected by the General Assembly according to an agreed geographical distribution for a two year term (Eitel, 2000). Nigeria's interest in the permanent membership of the UN Security Council had been espoused for quite something even before the public postulation of the G4 countries who came out to call for early reform of the 15-nation council seeking the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent membership categories.

Nigeria has not disguised her interest and ambition to be one of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) the world body's most powerful institution in the event of a reform. Usman (2015) expressed the point to the effect that, since Africa is the only continent without a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, Nigeria has the strongest profile to represent Africa and so, balance the membership composition of the council. Olusanya and Akindele (1986) had argued that in the final analysis, preparation for as well as the capacity to play an active and credible role in world affairs begins from the domestic front and depends on how well it is played. Currently, Nigeria's domestic front represented by her economic status, has many challenges. The state of security situation and the state of corruption, unemployment, among others could become an impediment to her aspiration.

B. Literature Review

Some major concepts used in the study include: political economy, unemployment, insecurity and corruption and therefore a conceptual review is necessary for a proper understanding of these themes.

Political Economy

Political economy is defined by Sumner (2008) as a comprehensive interdisciplinary framework that is based on Marxist social theory. It involves not only the interrelationship between economics and politics but also the interconnections between the various levels of social interaction from the local, through the national to the global. It can be used to explain the causes of the asymmetrical relationship between developed and developing nations in the international division of labor and exchange (Majekodunmi and Adejuwon, 2012).

Political economy as used in the study refers to how the state or nation is managed to the benefit or detriment of its citizens in relation to the economic forces at play within the polity. The concept of political economy can thus be understood as the study of how a country- the public's household- is managed or governed, taking into account both political and economic factors (Balaam, 2014). The concept also, reflects how government decision-making creates tensions between the economic and political objectives of the state and how these tensions are resolved.

Unemployment

The concept of unemployment describes a situation where able bodied citizens willing and able to work cannot find employment over a long period of time. Udechukwu and Okonkwo (2015) explained that the concept of unemployment described a situation where educated and certificated person(s) are not having access to reasonable job that will serve as means of income and sustainable life style. Onu and Akamobi (2010) commented that unemployment is the number of people without jobs. It is a state of being jobless.

There are concurrence on the definitions and usage of the concept of unemployment by scholars on the subject. Udu and Agu (2005), Ilo (2007), Hornby (2010) agree that unemployment occurs when a number of people able and willing to work are unable to find work for pay. An operational definition of unemployment will include those who are actively engaged in jobs that do not befit their status in terms of qualifications. So effectively unemployment is inability of certain persons who are qualified and able to

work but cannot find jobs as well as those who take lower cadres of jobs or part time basis which is underemployment. Harold (2009) posits that underemployment is unemployment in disguise, because people are employed on a low income that can hardly meet their needs.

Insecurity

Different definitions of the concept of insecurity have been given by social scientists. In this study, the concept of insecurity is defined as the absence of safety of lives and properties characterized by fear, anxiety, violence, destruction and death. Udoh (2015), Abdulrahman and Zuwaira (2016) all agree in the concept of insecurity which according to them is characterized by danger, violence, fear, anxiety, destruction and death. In all, insecurity is the state of being subjected to all forms of dangers of both natural and artificial disasters where lives and properties are endangered.

Corruption

The concept of corruption describes the dishonest or illegal behavior, especially of people in authority. The acts of making somebody change from moral to immoral standards of behavior. It describes the poor attitude of public officers to public funds; the belief that occupation of public offices and positions is an opportunity to primitively accumulate wealth and the desire and struggle to occupy public office for selfish ends. Infact corruption is encapsulated by Morris, (1991) as a dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power; it is the illegitimate use of power to benefit a private interest. Agbor, (2006) describes corruption as lack of transparency in public financial transaction, illegal acquisition of wealth, stealing, pilfering and looting of public treasury are major acts of corruption. Other acts of corruption include; nepotism, extortion, patronage, influence, peddling, graft and parochialism. Political corruption according to Wikipedia is a persistent phenomenon in Nigeria since the discovery of oil and gas as well as the rise of public administration.

C: Theoretical Framework of Analysis

The theoretical framework for this study is rooted in the Realism Theory as propounded by classical philosophers such as Morgenthau (1978), Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes. The proponents of realism were advocates of rationalism, prudence and realism in international relations. Their postulations were based on their understanding of the nature of man, society and politics. They saw man as being inherently wicked, self-serving, egocentric, competitive and power-seeking and prone to conflict. States behave like man mostly, out of self-interests (Ononihu and Oddih, 2017).

The Realism Theory is founded on the following assumptions: the international system is defined by anarchy, coercion or willful consent as what determines order in the international system; state power is the key element through which states can defend themselves and hope to survive; states must ensure they constantly have sufficient power to survive and advance themselves; in order to ensure survival, states seek to maximize their power relative to others' anarchy and power; anarchy and power in international politics are merely epiphenomenal; that is, they reflect the balance of power, but do not constrain or influence state behavior; It is not the rules or laws codified by states that bring about enforcement or make the state to behave in a particular way but the underlying material interest and power relations. International system is a symptom of state behavior and not a cause of state behavior; international politics vision of the world rest on four assumptions namely; survival is the principal goal of every state; states are rational actors in the quest to exist; all states possess some military capacity, and no state knows what its neighbors intend precisely; in the international system, the Great powers are decisive, (Nweke, 1985).

The theory is relevant to Nigeria's quest for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council when it is considered that the foreign policy of any nation is a function of the strength, cohesion and resilience of its economy, society and polity (power) (Nweke, 1985). Nigeria needs to bargain on the strength of a sound political economy base that would engender enough political power and international prestige to appropriate status befitting of a UNSC veto power wielding member. As already stated, UNSC permanent membership, the veto power is not distributed based on ethic, international

morality, friendship, democratization and equitable representation but on power calculation and objective realism. This is in agreement with views of Claude (1971) that the veto is a weighting device, an acknowledgement of the inequality of states and a means of giving effect to the principles that the most powerful and important states should have special status in international organizations. Thus, from the perspective of the theory of political realism, Nigeria should seek first the kingdom of sound socio-economic base for the UNSC permanent membership to be accessible to her.

As Ononihu and Oddih, (2017) posited, nation-states have goals and interests that are conflicting and attempts to actualize them at the expense of other states inevitably result in conflict and war. Hence, Nation-states prepare for war by continually updating and upgrading their capabilities in terms of power. Power here refers not only to military power but also to all the elements of national power, which encapsulate economic, technological, political, demographic, geographic and other element. Power gives the nation-state status and dominion in international politics. The state with the greatest power is most respected and or/feared.

The realism theory has direct application to this study as Nigeria needs to become realistic in her assessment with regards to the standards or criteria for attaining permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council. The theory of political realism demands that Nigeria should logically prioritize her foreign policy needs by first getting her domestic political economy to be on the right footing of economic vibrancy, political stability and good governance.

D: Unemployment and the Nigerian Economy

With Nigeria's population of about 180 million, a landmass of 923, 768 km^2 ; a bountiful endowment in arable land, solid minerals and petroleum/gas resources the country has the appropriate credentials for greatness (Sani, 2006). Although, Nigeria has remained naturally, highly endowed, it has since the 1970s remained a mono-economy dogged by poverty, corruption, infrastructural deficit, distorted political leadership, insecurity, declining income and unemployment. Nigeria's unemployment ratio jumped by nearly 30% to 16 million at the end of the year 2018 and according to the National Bureau of

Statistics another two million are expected to be unemployed by the end of 2019. Unemployment has adverse effects on both the economy and society. In the last five years unemployment growth has been steady especially that of youth unemployment which had averaged 23.10% from 2014 until 2018, reaching an all time high of 28% in the second quarter of 2018, (NBS, 2018).

The unemployment rate takes cognizance of the number of people who though qualified by age and certification but are jobless and actively looking for job. Sani, (2006) explicitly states that mismanagement of the economy, lack of public accountability, insensitivity of the leadership to the yearning and aspirations of the people, corruption and insecurity of lives and property have been the critical issues in the nation's life and public debate. Consequently low capacity utilization in the industries, inefficient and inadequate power supply; decay in the education and health sectors; lack of critical infrastructure and low level industrialization have created unemployment and poverty that today, characterized the Nigerian society.

Saliu and Omotola (2008) affirm that one of the major hurdles Nigeria has to contend with, stems from the other African contenders, namely South Africa, Egypt and Morocco. Of these countries, South Africa and Egypt pose the strongest threats. The assertions by UNDP (2002) and Aluko (2004) that economically, poverty affects the entire country hold true to date.

The low economy of Nigeria has spiral effects manifesting in abject poverty of the masses, corruption, infrastructural deficits, poor electricity supply, poor health-care, and low quality education, insecurity of life and property and growing unemployment especially among the youths.

To enhance the economy of Nigeria and to check unemployment, in the first place, calls for the diversification of the economy. The mono-production of the economic base of the country must be diversified to include the extraction, processing and exporting of finished abundant agricultural and other solid mineral resources of the country. As Ononihu and Oddih (2017) observed, there is urgent need for conscious diversification of the Nigerian economy, away from sale of crude-oil. The Nation-State ought to have

moved to the level of export of fully processed or at least semi-processed products as espoused in Nigeria Vision 20:2020 which aimed at growing and developing Nigeria and bringing her to the league of world's 20 leading economies by the year 2020. As part of strategies for transforming the Nigerian economy the vision would pursue aggressively a transformation of the economy from a mono-product to a diversified and industrialized economy in order to achieve a high standard of living for its citizens, (NV20:2020). It is not only insulting but deleterious to the nation's image and economy that up to the contemporary period, the country still import refined premium spirit or petroleum products. It is certainly ridiculous that Nigeria which was a net exporter of refined products in the 1970s paradoxically is now a net importer of the products, without a fit, functional refinery in the new millennium. (Snapps and Hamilton, 2011).

E: Insecurity in the Nigerian Polity

Although the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria specifically states that "The security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of Government", the Nigerian state has failed to live up to this expectation. Nigeria in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity (Achumba, Ighomereho and Akpor-Robaro, 2013). Today, Nigerian polity faces serious instability threatened by internal insecurity, occasioned by the activities of various militant and insurgent groups like Niger Delta Vigilance (NDV), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Niger Delta People Volunteer Force (NDPVF) and Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) among others in South South; the Odua People's Congress (OPC), Egbesu and the Badoo Boys in the West; Movement for Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Movement for Independent Biafra (MIB) and the now banned Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the South East; Boko Haram in the North and the Ravaging Fulani Herdsmen that now hold Nigeria at its jugular, leaving blood, suffering and sorrow across the length and breadth of the land. Indeed, the rampaging state of internal insecurity in Nigeria and the concomitant mass killings and bloodletting going on across the country with the National Security agencies appearing docile and perhaps partisan is such that Nigeria can be safely described as a woman going through self-induced abortion, a nation heading towards a failed state.

Achumba, Ighomereho and Akpor-Robaro (2013) affirm that the current challenge of terrorism to physical security is threatening the Nigerian society on all fronts. Like acid on the Emperor's plate, terrorism in the country discloses fine patterns of vulnerability in a complex design.

What is worst, ethnic-religious, political and economic conflicts in all fronts are making the country increasingly insecure and unstable. Ali (2013) warned that the fear of insecurity in Nigeria is on the increase and this has been compounded by the rising waves of terrorism since the country returned to democratic rule in 1999. Ewetan, and Urhie(2014) state that insecurity in Nigeria has retarded socio economic development in various ways causing social dislocation and population displacement; heightening citizenship question which encourages hostility between "indigenes" and "settlers"; dislocation and disruption of family and commercial life; general atmosphere of mistrust, fear, anxiety and frenzy; dehumanization of women, children and men especially in areas where rape, child abuse and neglect are used as instruments of war; deepening of hunger and poverty in the polity; discouragement of local and foreign investments as it makes movement unattractive to business people; halting of business operations during period of violence and outright closure of many enterprises in the areas or zones where incidence of insecurity is rife and are on daily occurrence; increase in security spending by business organizations and government and Migration of people from one area or region where there is prevalence of insecurity.

In their description of insecurity in Nigeria, Onifade, Imhonopi and Urim (2013) states as follows:

Lately, Nigeria has been enmeshed in a firebox of insecurity leading to scores of deaths of innocent civilians, foreigners, some members of the nation's security personnel, elected officials and many government workers. The insecurity challenge has assumed formidable dimensions forcing the country's political and economic managers and indeed the entire nation, to rue the loss of their loved ones, investments and absence of safety in most parts of the country. The number of violent crimes such as kidnappings, ritual killings, suicide bombings, religious killings, politically-motivated killings and violence, ethnic

clashes, armed banditry and others have increasingly become the regular signature that characterizes life in Nigeria since 2009.

In addition to the above situation are the furious and ferocious Fulani killer-herdsmen that are systematically turning socio-economic and political life in the country to a dreadful harvest of deaths. To state the least, Nigeria is gradually becoming an unsecured and unstable polity. This however, cannot be part of the qualification for the United Nations Security Council membership. If Nigeria cannot keep her own house in order, how can she possibly be fit to bring about peace and order at the global political sphere?

Ononihu and Oddih (2017) conducted a study which gave a copious evidence of Nigeria's expressed ambition to gain a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council. The study critically examined Nigeria's persisting interest as variously expressed by her political leaders and agents. The study evaluated the rationality of the Nigerian Quest against the objective realities of international politics, the design of the UNSC and called for prudent, appropriate sequencing of nation's priorities, better positioning in the pursuit of the tall ambition of becoming a permanent member of the UNSC which is the most powerful organ of the international political system. The study emphasized that the veto power in particular and the permanent membership of the UNSC are not distributed on the platter of ethics, sympathy, fairness, equity or even democratization, but capabilities in terms of national power in all its ramifications. The study emphasized that Nigeria is not a "big time world power player" as to be able to resist coercion and effectively coerce others, hence there abound urgent necessary imperatives which appropriate sequencing of priority demand that they should prudently precede the ambition to get a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council.

The study called for profound domestic reforms which would put Nigeria on the road to de-facto big power status as a necessary step towards realizing her persistent ambition. The researcher advised that for now, Nigeria should face reality and limit herself to non-veto wielding representation of the African region.

In a related study Saliu and Omotola (2008), analyzed the strength and weakness of Nigeria's aspiration for a seat on an enlarged UN Security Council. It posited that some

of the factors that strengthened the country's candidacy include its past experience, e.g. its services as a non-permanent member of the UNSC for a record five terms; its impressive peacekeeping profile at multilateral and bilateral levels, and its unparalleled Africa leadership role. The study further argued that the return of the country to the path of democratic governance after successive military regimes and the sustenance of democracy since 1999 has also boosted the legitimacy of the polity in international affairs.

In a collaborative view Katsuno (2012) conducted a research in Japan, the study x-rayed Japan's ambition to be a veto wielding member of the UNSC. The study argued that within the framework of United Nations (UN), particularly with respect to UN Security Council reform, Japan has been a major financier of the UN and it considered of major importance and a candidate for future permanent member of the Security Council.

The study posited that Japan, together with Germany, Brazil and India constitute the G4 which initiated the request for reform and expansion of the membership of the permanent seat of UNSC. The study however noted a major weakness in Japan's quest to be the strong bilateral relations between her and the United States and Japan's heavy reliance on US support in terms of National Security. The study strongly criticized Japan's policy which continues to make it an apron string to the United State of America which tends to weaken its influence in the United Nations. According to the study, this simply following the US on UN policy might spell doom and failure for Japan's quest for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

Okeke and Idike (2016) conducted a qualitative study which examined the dialectics of the political economy and trouble with Nigeria. It analyzed how the political economy has constituted a specific segment of the trouble with the Nigerian postcolonial state. It described the Nigerian narrative as a saga of corrupt practices. The Nigerian state was further characterized in the analysis as a vacuous entity for the feeding of the elite which has made it a political economy of inefficiencies and disorder. The study identified the trouble with Nigeria to be the siege laid on the economy by an unrepentant elite, which blatantly continues to articulate, implement and defend self-serving policies as public policies. The economic challenge in Nigeria the study concluded is for the elite in generic

categorization to arrive at the realization, that the elephantine Nigerian state cannot possibly be propelled in the forward direction, while ignoring the co-citizenship status of the masses of the state.

Musa (2006) carried out a study that examined the political economy of the Nigerian polity between 1999 and 2006. It noted that Nigeria has experienced direct military rule for 29 of its 45 years as an independent nation. The study described the emergence of Military General, Olusegun Obasanjo as civilian President of Nigeria in 1999 as the end of the almost total exclusion of populist politicians and political parties of deep ideological expression from the partisan political terrain by the military since 1966.

The study described the Nigerian economy as naturally great with a population of more than 133 million, a landmass of 923,768km², a bountiful endowment in arable land; solid mineral and petroleum/gas resources. But regretted the mismanagement of the potentially great economy by the managers of the Nigerian polity through; lack of public accountability, insensitivity of the leadership to the yearnings and aspirations of the citizens, corruption and insecurity of lives and property. The study suggested that the issues of internal democracy be enthroned in the political parties and the remedy of the inefficient civil service, corruption, the judiciary, transparency and accountability in the economic management and good governance with a view to providing holistic, robust, political economic practices. The study argued that it is only in the context of this holistic approach that a logical framework for ensuring a stable polity can be fashioned or put in place.

F: Corruption and Leadership in Nigeria

It could be boldly argued that Nigeria as a country has not been blessed with patriotic, visionary and intelligent leadership and one would make bold to assume that this is the reason why good governance has continued to elude her, leaving in its trail a chequered history of unpalatable domestic profile dogged by administrative laziness and corruption. As aptly stated by Ononihu and Oddih (2017), Nigeria's unappealing domestic profile could considerably be attributable to lack of good governance and leadership.

Achebe, (1998) had clearly stated that the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership... the Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hallmark of the leadership. From Belewa in 1960 to Buhari in 2018 and still ongoing, Nigeria has remained in pitiable state of visionlessness and backwardness and this has made the country not only poor but a bedlam of conflict and instability. Thus, Obiozor (2010) observed that we must accept that all the conflicts and tensions in Nigerian politics are not the fragments of some people's imagination. Many of them originate from real issues and require strong and self-confident leadership to resolve. Poor leadership had made the Nigerian polity a safe haven for corruption. Corruption has become endemic and systemic in the Nigerian body politics. Okeke and Idike (2016) affirmed that the Nigerian narrative is monumentally a saga of corrupt practices. The unearthing of egregious cases of corruption has accordingly ceased to be odious in Nigeria. Such corrupt practices are currently recorded in trillions of naira (and billions of dollars).

The current leadership of Nigeria has been making fight corruption or at least to reduce incidences of corruption through the enactment of anti-corruption laws and their enforcement but with minimal and almost insignificant success. In 2012, Nigeria was estimated to have lost over \$400 billion US dollars to corruption since independence (Okoye, 2012). Writing in the daily Post of 2 July 2016, Okoye (2012) quoted the former minister of finance Mrs. Oby Ezekwesili as saying that greed, ostentatious lifestyle, customs and people's attitudes were believed to have led to corruption. Another root cause according to Akindola (2017) is tribalism. Akindola (2017) posits that friends and kinsmen seeking favour from officials can impose strains on the ethical disposition of the official as these kinsmen see government officials as holding avenues for their personal survival and gain. The history of corruption is well rooted in Nigeria since independence and through every administration but the climax was during the regime of General Babangida. It was at this period, August 1985 – August 1993 that corruption was seen as legalized. During IBB's tenure, corruption became the policy of state (huhuonline.com, 2010). Corruption is the biggest challenge facing every successive government and every adult Nigerian.

Okwuagbalu (2010) says the cankerworm of corruption is so real that many now see it as a way of life. Nigeria has successively been rated or ranked very highly in corruption each successive year by Transparency International and other independent organizations that monitor corrupt practices globally. This “high ranking” of Nigeria is almost always impacting on Nigerians negatively especially those who travel or reside abroad. Since the year 2000 till date, the Transparency International corruption index rating has been from bad to worse. One of the campaign promises made by President Buhari in 2015 was that he will massively uproot corruption in the country. In 2019 a lot of Nigerians are asking the question whether President Buhari is actually fighting corruption. Infact this prompted the PDP Presidential candidate Atiku Abubakar during the presidential campaigns in December 2018 to retort: “Mr. President, the problem with your anti-corruption war is not the system. You are the problem!” Corruption in Nigeria is like a bad dream that wouldn’t disappear at dawn and as Professor Peter Nwangwu said “Corruption is potent cancer that has mercilessly eaten Nigeria to a state of stupor”. These are signs of bad weather for the polity. Attempting a comprehensive cataloguing of publicly recorded cases of corruption in Nigeria (even on daily basis) is problematic, as such incidences are innumerable.

Although, corruption in Nigeria has become systemic, it’s however sad and painful that the leaders and elite class are mostly implicated in these immoral acts which are occasioned by vaulting greed and the bullion mentality.

Lopez (2012), states that in simple and clear terms, the monumental enumeration indict the Nigerian elite in its generic connotations. Not only that the elite class is enmeshed in mass corruption, they covet state instrument of violence and apparatus of justice to ensure that even the feeble attempts to bring them to account remained inconclusive. As Okeke and Idike (2012) would put it, under the Nigerian setting, the elite that were suspects in such corruption cases would never be thoroughly investigated and are hardly ever convicted of any offences. Whenever some feeble convictions would be orchestrated, the accused elites are under the orthodoxy subsequently released in plea-bargains. Moreover, some of these elites have been adjudged by government to have been convicted in error, and even granted state pardon. There is no gainsaying the fact that corruption in all its

ramifications is initiated, reinforced and sustained by the visionless and incompetent leadership found at all levels in the Nigerian polity. As Oyeboade (2010:14) lamented:

If you look at the country and the prostrate economy, you look at the unspeakable mismanagement of resources the unbelievable corruption... by the time we got to that level when we have taken care of power problem, unemployment... by the time we have taken care of all these domestic challenges, Nigeria can stake a claim to making waves internationally. Right now we are just being grudgingly tolerated because we have not demonstrated to the outside world the capability to transcend our difficulties, to turn our difficulties to opportunities

G: Unemployment in Nigeria's Economy and Nigeria's quest for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council

Arguably, the economy is the bedrock of every polity and the health of every economy more or less determines the health status of a polity. However, considering the dictates of the realism theory, the Nigerian economy which for decades now has been bedevilled by rising mass unemployment, corruption and abject poverty, is in no shape to support the present strategic ambition for a UN permanent membership status. Thus, one of the major hurdles Nigeria must contend with in order to clinch the UNSC permanent membership ahead of contenders such as South Africa and Egypt, is the attainment of a viable and vibrant economy devoid of the scourge of mass unemployment. As observed by Saliu and Omotola (2008), since the 1990s, South Africa's Gross National Income per capita has remained far higher than that of any other Africa state...several economic indicators of the three main competitors showed clearly that South Africa's economy is much larger than either Egypt or Nigeria and that it performs better in terms of income per person.

UNDP (2002) report on Nigeria showed that economically, poverty affects the entire country. In 2002, Nigerian was one of the 21 poorest countries in the world. In 2003, a staggering 70% of Nigeria's population were said to be living below the poverty line. Udechukwu and Okonkwo (2015) warned that unemployment and poverty are challenging the citizens of this country and therefore required urgent attention. The chasm between the number of those entering the labor market annually and those who

succeed in securing gainful employments is a clear indication that the employment crisis in Nigeria has become a major issue of concern for both the government and the governed alike. It is embarrassing that Nigeria is about the only oil-rich country where unemployment is rising at an alarming rate.

Nigerian economy has been greatly undermined by corruption and a mercantilist mode of production where buying and selling of crude oil and gas and other natural produce/products, predominate.

The internal realities of any country count very much in its ability to function externally. In this regard, Nigeria has a lot of issues to contend with, for beyond the purely military aspect, including peacekeeping missions, contributions to the UN, AU and ECOWAS, the Nigerian economy remains a suspect. Nigeria needs to reform its economy through diversification of its mono system of producing and selling only crude oil and gas and to curb unemployment through promotion of agriculture and agro-based businesses; fishery, animal farming, as well as solid minerals. Reduction of corruption and poverty would further strengthen and advance the economy.

Nigeria needs to redouble her efforts in boosting her economy for her goal to gain a permanent seat on the Security Council to become realistic.

Calling for the reform of the economy, Ononihu and Oddih (2017) states as follows:

Given the crucial role domestic factors play in the determination of a country's external or global rating, which as a result of the ever increasing globalization and improved technological factors, have become even more critical, there is need for sweeping profound domestic reforms to shore up Nigeria's rating or estimation globally. A situation where the nation cannot harness its natural resources and continually trudge on a wobbling monoculture economy with all its pernicious effects is centrifugal to such countries fight for recognition in the global arena.

To bring the sprawling Nigerian economy up and working again, required urgent critical steps aimed at sustaining the fight against corruption, poverty alleviation, infrastructural development, good governance and diversification of the economy through the

development of Agriculture, Agro-based industries, the exploitation and processing of solid mineral like Bitumen as envisaged in the Nigerian Vision 20:2020.

H: The present state of Corruption in Nigeria and her quest for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council

Arguably, Nigeria could be called a failed state as a result of the failure of its leadership. Ononihu and Oddih (2017) are emphatic on the fact that Nigeria's unappealing domestic profile could considerably be attributed to lack of good governance and leadership....Good governance is one attribute that makes tremendous difference in the fortunes and reputation of countries, (Achebe,1998). In fact, Achebe (1998) had posited that the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely corruption of her leadership class. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hallmark of true leadership. Buhari (1985) had earlier emphasized that no country in the world can command the respect and admiration of the international community without a dedicated and purposeful leadership.

Nigeria needs effective national leadership to be able to be considered a leader at the international arena. The Nigerian political leadership or the elite in its general connotation has been 'fantastically' corrupt and no country can advance under such leadership condition as already manifested in the Nigerian condition. Bad leadership is corruption and absence of good governance.

Corruption poses a serious challenge in the socio-economic being of Nigeria and this could affect her chances of being voted into the permanent membership seat of the Security Council in due course of events. This agrees with the position of Achebe (2011) that corruption in Nigeria has grown because it is highly encouraged. In "The Trouble With Nigeria Achebe suggests that, "Nigerians are corrupt because the system they live under today makes corruption easy and profitable. They will cease to be corrupt when corruption is made difficult and unattractive". Twenty-eight years after that slim book was published, one can state categorically that the problem of corruption and indiscipline is probably worse today than it's ever been, because of the massive way in which the

Nigerian leadership is using the nation's wealth to corrupt, and to destroy the country, so no improvement or change may ever happen. Corruption does not represent the least required to put Nigeria on the road to de-facto big power status, a necessary step to the attainment of its lofty aspirations. A veto power of the United Nations Security Council means supreme political leadership borne out of good governance and which is expected to give and inspire good leadership.

I: Conclusion and Recommendations

The economy of the Nigerian state is currently in bad shape and a redoubled effort is need towards its revival in order to encourage a positive image and rating for the country towards the actualization of her quest for a UNSC permanent membership status. Currently, the state of economic mismanagement, internal political instability and lack of good leadership characterized by unemployment, insecurity and corruption constitute bad credentials for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council. Egypt and South Africa for instance are far ahead of Nigeria in the soundness of and internalization of their economies. This paper therefore maintains that unless Nigeria first of all, puts her Economy in order, her quest for a permanent membership of the UNSC may remain a fleeting illusion to be pursued. The present status of the Nigerian economy, signify an unrealizable reality since the dictates of the theory of political realism showed that the UNSC permanent membership cannot be achieved based on huge contributions to UN peace keeping missions and leadership in Africa alone.

Given the seriousness and competitiveness involved in the issue of international politics especially as it pertains to the all important permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council, Nigeria must go back to the drawing board with serious introspection.

- i. The Nigeria economy must be reformed and diversified. Nigeria must endeavour to pay adequate attention to other sectors of the economy with a view to freeing the economy from over reliance on oil. Agriculture must be reformed to a sustainable profitable sector while minerals and metals sector must be prompted as an important component of a diversified economy.

- ii. The state of security in the polity must be urgently addressed to forestall the disintegration of the country. Government must re-organize the armed forces and other security agencies to update their operations. Clear and perceived causes of insecurity must be plugged such as unemployment, ethnicism, poor control of borders which encourages smuggling of goods, weapons and drugs.
- iii. Corrupt leadership must be checked and good governance enthroned in the polity. The government must give respect to the doctrine of the separation of powers, strictly observe the rule of law and ensure that agencies of government saddled with the responsibilities of tackling corruption must be empowered to do their work. Concerted efforts must be made by government to stem the negative drawback of corruption by equipping and giving free hand to agencies charged with the investigating and prosecuting of corruption cases.

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