

NIGERIAN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS REVISITED

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Abstract

In order to be attuned with Nigeria's current peacekeeping efforts, the article explores Nigeria's peacekeeping operations in the world. The article identifies the doctrine of collective security as the theoretical basis for practical substantiation of Nigeria's participation in international peacekeeping. Furthermore, peacekeeping was differentiated from peacemaking, peace enforcement, peace maintenance and peace building. The article reveals that Nigeria has been an active participant in United Nations peacekeeping missions, deploying military contingents, unarmed military observers, military staff officers, formed police units, police advisors and civilian experts to more than 40 UN missions. Nigeria is currently one of the largest UN contributing countries with military and civilian personnel deployed in various parts of the world. However, any serious assessment of Nigeria's participation in the peacekeeping operations will reveal that the country is yet to reap the benefit of her contributions due to some problems. Such as the lack of effective organization to coordinate peace keeping operations, prevent improper accounting and make effective use of reimbursements. Until these issues are properly addressed, Nigerian peacekeepers will continue to suffer.

Keywords: Peacekeeping, peacemaking, peace enforcement, peace building collective security.

1. INTRODUCTION

What is peacekeeping? Is there any fundamental difference between peacekeeping and peacemaking, peace enforcement, peace maintenance and peace building? In the same vein, has Nigeria contributed significantly to peacekeeping operations in the world? And finally which theory can enable us understand why countries participate in peacekeeping operations?

These questions are very essential due to some reasons. First, literature on peace studies is predominantly centered on peacekeeping with little or no attention to peace making, peace enforcement, peace maintenance and peace building. Meanwhile, these other concepts are useful in conflict management. More importantly, there is need to compartmentalize these concepts been used interchangeably by informed and uninformed segments of the society.

Second, Nigeria within the context of United Nations and others international cooperative institutions have consistently committed itself to the cause of peacekeeping operations in the world. Despite these enormous contributions of Nigeria to global peacekeeping, most people still find it difficult to appreciate the impact Nigeria has made in peacekeeping operations. This article will extend the frontier of knowledge on Nigeria's peacekeeping operations for better understanding and appreciation.

Thirdly and perhaps more importantly, knowledge production is anchored on theoretical basis before its practical substantiation. Numerous studies such as Habu (2007); Nna-Emeka (2009) among others have contributed significantly to peace studies in Nigeria. However, one noticeable gap in these studies is the lack of a theoretical basis for why countries engage in peacekeeping. This article will endeavor to anchor analysis on a theoretical foundation that has sustained peacekeeping operations over the years.

To achieve the above objectives, we have deliberately divided this article into six sections, with this brief introduction as section one. Section two analyses the theoretical framework for understanding peacekeeping operations. Section three explains the meaning of peacekeeping and differentiates it from peacemaking, peace enforcement, peace maintenance and peace building. Section four x-rays the contributions of Nigeria in peacekeeping operations, while we dedicate section five to conclusion.

2 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE FOR UNDERSTANDING PEACEKEEPING

The emergence of the United Nations (UN) in 1945 has brought about a more dynamic posture in international relations and has impacted positively on the pursuit of international peace and security. The fundamental idea of international security is contained in the UN Charter. Article 1 commits all members “to maintain international peace and security” and to that end, to take effective collective measures to preserve or restore the peace.

Article 24 gives to the Security Council the “primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security”, and by Article 25, members “agree to accept and carry out the decisions” of the council. Article 42 gives the Security Council the authority to “take action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security”. Article 43 requires members to undertake to make available to the “Security Council on its call... armed forces... necessary for the purpose of peace maintenance”.

One theory behind the use of international security forces through the UN and other regional international organizations is the concept of Collective Security. Collective security is a system of maintaining world peace and security by the concerned action and agreement of all nations (Barry, 1996:82). According to Asogwa (1999:87) Collective security aims at establishing a mutual responsibility and pooling the resources of several states in an effort to maintain international peace. Thus, the maintenance of the status quo becomes a community project instead of a unilateral or bilateral plan of action. In fact,

The practice of collective security requires all nations to join one universal alliance...When associated in this manner, each nation adjust its individual interests in favour of the group interests. When power is shared in an all-for-one and one-for-all alliance, the military and diplomatic resources of the entire group may be activated to police the misbehaving aggressor. The principle enjoins all nations to use and form a common front in fighting a perceived aggressor that threatens the security of any state or states (Asogwa, 1999:88).

Collective security is based on four basic tenets. First, all countries forswear the use of force except in self-defense. Second, all agree that the peace is indivisible. An attack on one is an attack on all. Third, all pledge to unite to halt aggression and restore the peace and all agree to supply whatever material or personnel resources necessary to form a collective security force associated with the UN or some other IGOS to defeat aggressors and restore the peace.

Collective security therefore seeks to confront would be aggressors with the concerted power of states determined to keep the peace. It involves the commitment to go to war if necessary and to demonstrate to aggressor that crime among nations does not pay. According to Palmer and Perkins (2004) the concept of collective security is in reality a complex and elusive one. It is machinery for joint action in order to prevent or counter any attack against an established international order. In short, it implies collective measures for dealing with threats to peace. Such measures include peacekeeping, peacemaking, peace enforcement, peace maintenance and peace building.

Certain historical occurrences made the need for collective security important. First is the appearance of practical morality which noticed that poverty, war and conflict are not foreordained. Second is the rejuvenation of the ancient philosophic idea of the brotherhood of mankind in which both men and states were enjoined to be their brothers' keeper. It therefore implies that mankind should pursue a common course to maintain and enforce international peace and security.

Hence, collective security is essentially but not exclusively the main reason countries like Nigeria engage in International peacekeeping operations. In fact, it has been argued that peacekeeping operations have cost Nigeria enormous resources. For instance, in Congo, the total financial cost of the operation to Nigeria was put at 14,785,572 pounds sterling. This figure excluded her \$US 1 million UN bond issued to defray the cost of the operation. Again, Nigeria also had to underwrite the sum of \$US80 million cost of OAU peacekeeping operations in Chad in 1982 to make up for the funds pledged by United Kingdom and United States of America which were no longer forthcoming, especially after the withdrawal of Libyan forces (Nna-Emeka, 2010:581).

With this enormous waste of resources, one can now understand that the true position for Nigeria's participation in international peacekeeping operations is simply to maintain international peace and security anchored on collective security.

3. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PEACEKEEPING AND PEACE MAKING, PEACE ENFORCEMENT, PEACE MAINTENANCE AND PEACE BUILDING.

3.1 What is Peacekeeping?

Peacekeeping as a concept was hackneyed by Canadian diplomat and later Prime Minister, Lester Bowles Pearson, in 1957. He used it to describe his proposed UN mission that will supervise the 1957 truce reached between belligerents during the Suez crisis following the outbreak of the 1956 Arab-Israeli War (Nna-Emeka, 2010:565).

There is no agreement among experts on the actual meaning of peacekeeping. Essentially, the term peacekeeping has been used to designate a wide variety actions aimed at resolving international conflicts. According to Habu, (2007), peacekeeping is a technique, pioneered and developed by the UN, which defies simple definition. The term is not found in UN charter. However, for the UN, peacekeeping is the stationing of neutral, lightly armed troops as an interposition force following a ceasefire to separate combatants and promote an environment suitable for conflict resolution. UN peacekeepers are not authorized to use force, except in self-defense because peacekeeping troops are not designed to restore or stop the fighting between warring parties. Other distinguishing features include limited military capability, neutrality and permission of host country.

The Peacekeepers Handbook (1982) defined peacekeeping as:

The prevention, containment, moderation and termination of hostilities between or within states, through the medium of a peaceful third party intervention, organized and directed internationally, using multi-national forces of soldiers, police and civilians to restore and maintain peace.

However, Ibeanu (2007:13) conceives peacekeeping to be the use of peacekeepers to keep conflicting parties apart and keep conflict at current low levels. It is an important preliminary stage in some conflict de-escalation, in which a buffer force is raised either by an impartial state or body, whether regional or global, for the purpose of keeping apart parties that have agreed to cease-fire. However, peace keeping has been criticized as a fire-fighting approach to conflict management; often a medicine after much damage has been done to warring parties when conflict could have been prevented in the first place. Such critics therefore advocate for peace maintenance.

Peace Maintenance-this is vigorous effort to conscientize and sensitize peoples and their leaders on the need for peace. The prevention of armed conflicts and in favour of resolutions based upon adjudication, arbitration, conciliation, mediation and negotiation.

Peacemaking- For all the contributions that UN peacekeeping efforts have made, they have sometimes been unable to halt fighting quickly or to keep peace permanently. Part of the reason for this failure is that the missions are given a very narrow scope of authority to act and with few troops. One response to the frustration with the inability of the UN to achieve greater success in preserving and restoring the peace has been an increasing number of calls for a more active UN military role called peacemaking.

This new role would involve heavily armed UN forces with the authority to restore and maintain the peace. Such UN units would not only intervene where fighting had already broken out, but they could also be deployed to imperiled countries before trouble starts, thereby putting an aggressor in the uncomfortable position of attacking UN forces as well as national defense forces.

Peacemaking arises in situations where conflict is high but there are viable conditions for pursuing peace. It is the application of peace maintenance to the cease-fire situation, with appropriate rewards for compliance and sanction for non-abidance with the agreements or decisions. It not only reinforces the cease-fire, it build upon it the conditions for a stable peace.

Essentially, the major difference between peacekeeping and peacemaking is that the former does not involve the use of force, while the latter involves the threat and actual use of force to resolve conflicts.

Peace Building- is a situation of low conflict with high prospects for peace. It is related to peace maintenance, however, is specifically concerned with establishing the institutional foundations and ideological bases for peace. This involves the socio-economic and political restructuring of the domestic society and justice within the system of international relations.

Peace Enforcement- a situation where conflict is high and conditions for peace remain minimal peace enforcement is needed to create the space to encourage peace. It is the actual application of direct military power to impose an end to hostilities or compel compliance with stated demands especially in situation where either parties to conflict reject terms, thereby compelling third parties act without their consent.

In fact peace enforcement by international cooperative institutions is viewed as been akin to collective security. Hence any aspect of the peace process may translate into the above depending on the conditions.

4. SOME EXAMPLES OF NIGERIA'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

4.1 NIGERIA AND PEACEKEEPING IN CONGO 1960 – 1966

Nigeria attained its independence on October 1, 1960 and joined the United Nations on October 7, 1960. It was within this period that Congo (now Zaire) was in crisis. Congo, a former Belgium colony became independent on June 30, 1960. Five days later, the Force Publique mutinied against their Belgian officers and Belgium sent her troops to the Congo on the pretext of protecting and evaluating Europeans in the African state. On 14 July, the UN Security Council called on Belgium to withdraw her troops from Congo and also authorized the UN Secretary General to provide the government of Congo with necessary military assistance until the country's security forces could meet their task fully.

The UN called on Nigeria to help by contributing troops even before her independence. By the end of November, 1,350 Nigerian soldiers were in Congo. For 4 years 1960 – 1964, Nigerian soldiers who served in some of the most difficult areas strived along with other UN forces to execute their assignment which included:

- (a) Helping the Congolese government to restore and maintain the political independence and territorial integrity of the Congo,
- (b) Helping the Congolese government maintain law and order in the country
- (c) Putting into effect a wide and long term programme of training and technical assistance.

The UN forces brought peace and security back to the Congo to the extent that parliament reconvened in August 1961. The Nigerian troops were the last to leave the Congo on June 30, 1964 after over 3½ years of dedicated efforts in the service of mankind in search of international peace and

security. As Nwolise (1986) has noted, while in the Congo, the Nigerian troops were commended for their courage and gallantry. The United Nations decorated Major Adekunle Fajuyi for setting a good example of courage and gallantry, and for displaying high degree of leadership, military skills and ability.

The troops brought Nigeria great honour and pride. As a result of their wonderful performance, Ironsi was appointed the commander of the UN force in Congo in 1964. Nigerian contingents were also sent to Tanganyika (now Tanzania) in 1964 under the auspices of the Organization for African Unity (OAU).

Nigeria's participation in peacekeeping operation at this infant stage of her independence could be attributed to its bid to make her a force to be reckoned with in the region and internationally. However, this foreign policy initiative of Nigeria generated a lot of criticism and controversies at the time even though it laid a solid foundation that all successive governments could build on.

4.2 NIGERIA AND CHAD OPERATION 1979

Chad, one of the 25 poorest states of the world has not known peace since the country gained her independence from France. Between 1975 and 1979, the crisis attained its apogee. With the Chadian situation worsening, Nigeria's feeling of insecurity and desire to see an end to the several years of crises in Chad made her organize a peace conference for Chad in March 1979 at Kano. The conference brought Nigeria, Sudan, Libya, Niger and Cameroon together with four warring Chadian factions.

Following appeals for help from French and Chadian governments and in accordance with the Kano conference decision, Nigeria sent her troops to Chad on 7th March 1979 with Force Commander as Col. Mohammed Magoro. According to Nwolise (2004) Nigerian troops in Chad were both peacekeepers and peacemakers, the dual role being in accordance with the first Kano accord in which it was resolved that the peace keeping force would

- (a) participate in the demilitarization of N'djamena and its environs up to 100 kilometers,
- (b) participate in the enforcement of ceasefire
- (c) ensure free movement of civilians throughout Chad,
- (d) provide a forum for the warring groups to negotiate and discuss in daily conference

While in Chad, the Nigerian peacekeepers did their best to carry out their agreed assignment but were put in difficult and frustrating situation starting with the emergence of nine, instead of the four earlier factions. The Nigerian troops were still in Chad when the second Kano Peace Conference began in April 1979.

4.3 NIGERIA AND LEBANON OPERATIONS, 1978 – 1983

The Palestine and Israeli question has created tension and caused bloodshed and wanton destruction of property for over three decades. The situation became more desperate and complex in early 1978 following a full scale invasion of Southern Lebanon by Israel forces in retaliation after Palestinian commandos raided Israeli territory. In reaction to the Israel invasion, the central government of Lebanon appealed to the UNO to help it re-establish its authority in southern Lebanon occupied by Israeli forces who were determined to flush out Palestinian liberation organization members operating against Israel from there.

The UN Security Council met over the request of Lebanon, called on Israel to cease its military action against Lebanon's territorial integrity immediately, and by resolution 425 established on March 19, 1978 the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to:

- (a) Confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces
- (b) Restore international peace and security, and
- (c) Help the Lebanese government re-establish its effective authority in the area occupied by Israeli forces.

The UN Secretary General called on and got contributed troops from 10 member nations – Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Fiji, France, Nepal, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, and Norway.

The first Nigerian contingent known as NIBATT (Nigerian Battalion) of about 673 officers and men left Nigeria for Lebanon in May, 1978 and began its job of peacekeeping by policing a land area of about 50 square kilometers located around the strategic zone of the Akiya Bridge linking southern Lebanon and the rest of Lebanon. Due to the strategic importance of their area of operation, the Nigerian troops had to carry out foot and mobile patrols, check against the smuggling of arms and ammunitions, man numerous check points, prevent the warring parties from entering UN troops locations, man observation posts (OP), man listening posts, maintain peace in the area of operation and reassure the local inhabitants of their safety (Adulugba, 1982).

The Nigerian contingent throughout the period of peace keeping were replaced every six months, and the last contingent was pulled out of UNIFIL and withdrawn from Lebanon due to the over running of UNIFIL positions by Israel to invade Lebanon. About 5,500 officers and men and about 9 battalions of the Nigerian Armed Forces served in UNIFIL operations from May 1978 to January 1983, during which period 2 officers and 8 men died in the service.

In fact, Nigeria, lost Captain Oweh, Lance Corporal Mohammed Tanko and Signaller Enahoro (Ogomudia 1997:118), ammunition and equipment though the mission operated under rules of engagement (ROE) in which the use of arms was highly constrained. Eventually the Nigerian government elected to cut its losses in the ever-worsening security environment and pulled its troops out in 1983 (Kusa 2007:148; Albert 2007:170-173).

The good performance of Nigerian troops in Lebanon earned them praises and brought Nigeria international respect. During the NIBATT VIII UNO medal presentation parade held at Tayr Zibna (Lebanon) in 1972, the UNIFIL commander Lt. General William Callaghan told the Nigerian troops that the UN medal being given them was symbolic "not only for their service... but as a recognition by all peace-loving nations of the world for efforts in maintaining peace in the troubled area". (SOJA, 1983), Callaghan commended the men of NIBATT VIII for playing a fitting role in helping the UNIFIL achieve its mission despite the difficulties the men faced from various armed groups in Lebanon. Nigeria's Brigadier Mrs. Sami who was the contingent commander was appointed the UNIFIL Chief of Staff.

4.4 THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (UNMIBH)

The UNMIBH, essentially a police operation, comprised the International Police Task Force (IPTF) and UN Civilian Office. The Nigeria Police was part of the IPTF to which it deployed a total of 110 personnel in Sarajevo, commanded first by Simeon Midendu and then Godwin Obi (Nwolise 2004:172). The sterling performance of the police first in Congo and then in Namibia (1989-1990) where the Nigerian Police contingent was rated the best (Nwolise 2004:135), increased the demand for Nigerian police personnel. Police peacekeepers received accolades and medals for their accomplishments in both missions. Thus, when the UN decided to dispatch an International Police Task Force to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Nigeria police was sought after to provide peace-keepers. The scope of police roles in peace-keeping has increased considerably since then, so also the participation of Nigeria Police (Julie, 2010).

Below is a list of peacekeeping operations with Nigeria's participation:

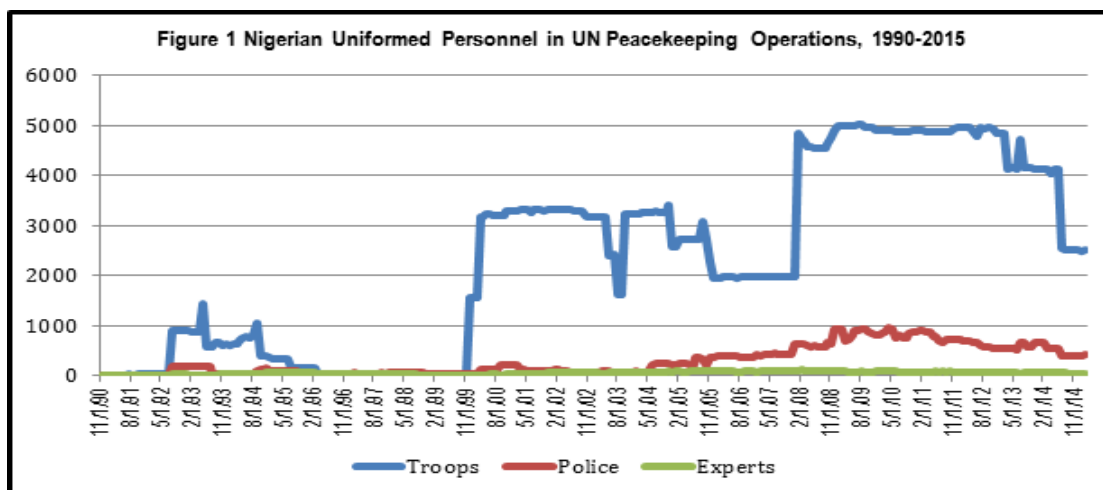
1. United Nations Operation in Congo (ONUC) 1960-1964
2. United Nations Security Force in West New Guinea (UNSF) 1962-1983
3. United Nations India-Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM) 1965-1966
4. United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) 1978-1983
5. Chad Operation (Operation Harmony I) Bilateral 1979
6. Organization of African Unity (OAU) Mission Intervention Force in Chad (Operation Harmony II) 1981-1982.
7. United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group 1988-1991
8. United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM I) 1989-1991
9. United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II) 1991-1992
10. United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) 1992-1995

11. United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia 1989-1990
12. United Nations Mission for Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) 1991 onwards
13. United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) 1991
14. United Nations Interim Mission Kosovo (UNMIK) 1991
15. United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) 1992-1993
16. United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I) 1992-1995
17. United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) 1992-1995
18. United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Yugoslavia 1992-1993
19. United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOSOM II) 1992-1995
20. United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) 1992 onwards
21. Organization of African Unity (OAU) Monitoring Group in Rwanda 1992-1993
22. United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) 1993
23. United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) 1993-1995
24. United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) 1993-1995
25. Nigeria Peacekeeping Force in Tanzania (TAPKM) 1994
26. United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) 1994-2000
27. United Nations Group in the Aouzou Strip, Libya/Chad (UNASOG) 1994
28. United Nations Prevention Deployment in Macedonia (UNPREDEP) 1995-2000
29. United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slovenia, Baranja, Western Sirmium in Croatia (UNTAES) 1996-1998
30. United Nations Observer Mission in Prevljakia (UNMOP) 1996-2000
31. United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA) July 1997
32. ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) Operation Harmony in Liberia 1990-1997
33. ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) Operation Sandstorm in Sierra Leone 1997-2000
34. United Nations Civilian Police Support Group, Dambe Region, Croatia 1998
35. United Nations Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) 2000 onwards
36. United Nations Transition Authority in East Timor (UNTAET) 2000
37. ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) August-October 2003
38. United Nations Mission in Sudan (AMIS) 2004 onwards
39. United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) 2004
40. United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) 2007 onwards
41. United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo 2010 onwards
42. United Nations Organization Interim Security Force for Abyei 2011 onwards
43. United Nations Organization in the Republic of South Sudan 2011 onwards
44. United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali 2013 onwards
45. United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic 2014 onwards.

Source: Nna-Emeka (2010) and updated by the authors

Nigeria has been an active participant in UN peacekeeping missions, deploying military contingents, unarmed military observers, military staff officers, formed police units, police advisors and civilian experts to over 25 UN missions. Nigeria is currently one of the largest UN contributing countries with military and civilian personnel deployed in ten UN peacekeeping operations and the African Union Mission in Somalia (<http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2015/04/24/peacekeeping-contributor-profile-nigeria/>).

Adesoji, provided the following table to show Nigeria's contribution to peacekeeping operations in the world.



Source:

<http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2015/04/24/peacekeeping-contributor-profile-nigeria/>

Adebajo, (2013) observed that Nigeria's peacekeepers receive training at the Peacekeeping Wing (PKW) of the Nigerian Army Infantry Corps Centre. Established in 2004, it was upgraded and made an autonomous training institution in 2009 with a new name: the Nigerian Army Peacekeeping Centre (NAPKC). The center undertakes research and delivers training that contributes to peace support operations worldwide. NAPKC was established primarily to give Nigerian troops pre-deployment training on Peace Support Operations. To date, NAPKC has delivered over 230 courses and trained over 53,000 peacekeepers.

Despite these laudable contributions, the country's contributions has not been formally incorporated and given a more focused expression by Nigeria's official voice on the foreign scene, principally by the President and key officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Again, any serious assessment of Nigeria's participation in the peacekeeping operation will reveal that the country is yet to reap the benefit of her contributions due to some problems. Such as the lack of effective organization to coordinate peace keeping operations and prevent improper accounting.

5 CONCLUSION

Since the attainment of her independence in 1960, Nigeria has remained an active contributor to both regional and UN peacekeeping operations. The country has contributed a lot in terms of finance, logistics, troops and civilian experts. Today, Nigeria remains one of the largest African troops and civilian police contributor to UN missions.

Despite its achievements, Nigeria has been under appreciated prompting this article to revisit the issue of peacekeeping operations in order to give Nigeria its right of place in conflict management. Any serious assessment of Nigeria's participation in the peacekeeping operation will reveal that the country is yet to reap the benefit of her contributions due to some problems. Such as the lack of effective organization to coordinate peace keeping operations, prevent improper accounting and make effective use of reimbursements. Until these issues are properly addressed, Nigerian peacekeepers will continue to suffer.

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