



## Military Intervention and Nigeria's Foreign Policy

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**Abstract:** *The enabling domestic and international environments in 1975-79 enabled the regime of Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo to pursue a dynamic, progressive, purposeful and result-oriented foreign policy. This can be seen in the emergence of Nigeria as a continental power in Africa. It is a demonstration of this power that was shown in its assertiveness in the Angolan MPLA/UNITA/FNTA crisis, Zimbabwe's independence, and the nationalisation of Shell, BP and Barclays Bank. The effectiveness of the policies of the duo is seen in the hypothesis below:*

*1. that Domestic political and economic circumstances and the strong military personality factor necessitated their effectiveness in Foreign Policy initiation and prompt execution;*

*2. that international political and economic circumstances made the successes of the foreign policy of Murtala Obasanjo's regimes possible.*

*A comparative methodology was used alongside the Rosenau Framework to analyse the choice of alternative foreign policy available to the duo in the domestic and international scenes. It was shown that Murtala and Obasanjo's foreign policies were part of the relationship of the World system and not an isolated sole effort but a continuous response to external and internal stimuli based on the idiosyncratic factor of a strong, assertive and bold personality.*

**Keywords:** *Intervention, Military, Foreign Policy.*

### INTRODUCTION

Foreign Policy is the formulation and implementation of policies that determine a nation's relationship with other countries of the world. These interactions are influenced by domestic factors such as politics, religion, economy, personality and psychology. Other influencing factors include the International environment. This study would be concerned with examining how and why the Murtala-Obasanjo's regimes were more effective in foreign policy execution than others. Also to be examined are the roles both the Domestic and International political and economic circumstances played in the success attained by them in their foreign policy implementation.

The impact of military intervention in Nigerian's foreign policy is the study of the contributions of the military through the Murtala/Obasanjo-regimes towards policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. The military personality of Murtala was a carryover of his civil war and communication ministry's exploits and adventures. The same disposition was brought to bear on the office of the Head of State and by extension at the international scene.

Akinyemi asserts that the personality factor is the most determinant factor in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. He says:



Constitutional provisions form the skeleton; they are the bare bones. It is the personality of the people running the system that puts the flesh on the skeleton, giving us the recognizable form.” This period of study - the Murtala/ Obasanjo’s regimes are remarkable as they would enable us to examine how Nigeria took on U.S.A. and U.K. in Angola, Barclays Bank, British Petroleum, Chad and other neighbouring countries. This bold challenge and assertiveness are remarkable in the sense that Nigeria is economically dependent on the West to buy its oil and most of its imports (Akinyemi, 2017).

Ogwu captured the exact picture of events thus:

In 1976, Nigeria became a significant, if not principal producer of oil, supplying approximately 48% of the total oil exports to the USA. By 1977, Nigeria’s oil exports to the USA had reached a peak of 90%, elevating it to the position of the second major supplier of petroleum after Saudi Arabia (2005, p.32).

Considering the fact that Nigeria’s foreign exchange earnings are dependent on oil exports to the tune of 90%, the U.S.A. is, therefore, the prime supplier of Nigeria’s foreign exchange, and when this is added to the advantages of a trade surplus which Nigeria enjoys in her trade with the U.S.A., this assertive policy is therefore remarkable. The role that increased revenue arising from oil and the presence of Kissinger/Nixon/Ford and other Republican actors played in aiding or inhibiting Murtala’s foreign policy as well as the role of Carter and his Democratic team-mates in producing a shift in policy that accounted for the differences in the approaches of Murtala and Obasanjo would be examined.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study would address the problems or difficulties which foreign policy actors face in harmonising conflicting interests during foreign policy formulation, and the inhibiting problems that emerge during implementation more so when there is a change either at the domestic or international scene.

There are different roles individual actors play in combining domestic expectations with international realities. These roles bring out the primacy of the actors. Some factors enable one leader to perform more than the other.

The limit of personality disposition of the leader(s) and the environmental factors such as the Domestic and Foreign realities and how this is brought to play in decision making will also be analysed. The multiplicity of problems militating against the attainment of goals crop up during the implementation stage and it takes not only vision that aids formulation but determination to be able to overcome domestic and external constraints. To be able to overcome such constraints, there must be an enabling environment in the form of resources and friendly policies that would not inhibit the policies from attaining set goals. Therefore, this study examines the impact of military intervention in Nigeria’s foreign policy. The scope of this study centred on the Murtala-Obasanjo’s regimes but references may be made to other events from all over the world as they have bearings on either consistency or change in the Murtala/Obasanjo foreign policy.

### **Hypotheses**

This study intends to show that Murtala and Obasanjo’s foreign policy was more effective through the following hypotheses:

1. That domestic political and economic circumstances necessitate their effectiveness in foreign policy.
2. That international political and economic circumstances made possible the success attained in foreign policy implementation by the Murtala and Obasanjo’s regime.



### Significance of this Study

The significance of this study is viewed from the relationship between external and domestic factors and how these have contributed to the performance of Murtala and Obasanjo in the foreign scene. This study would evaluate the role of the military regime of the duo in state creation, ports decongestion, streamlining of the civil service, indigenization policy, independent foreign policy in the recognition of the MPLA, nationalisation of Barclays Bank, British Petroleum etc.

The utility of State creation and the attendant creation of Local Governments, and how these have succeeded in minimising the agitations of the minorities, created a good/conducive environment for the formulation of foreign policy would be analysed. Also to be examined is the success of the civil service purge in the foreign scene with the retirement of “Deadwoods” and experienced diplomats through witch-hunting.

In the examination of domestic factors and its influence on Murtala/Obasanjo’s regimes, equal prominence is also given to the international events in the form of the cold war, republic actors like Nixon/Ford/Kissinger, the emergence of human rights crusaders and democratic party-Jimmy Carter’s roles on the international scene.

The bodies of existing literature place much emphasis on the leadership skills of Murtala and Obasanjo. This study, however, did not toe the same line as it counters balances with the environmental factors. There is no doubt that the regime demonstrated a flair for quick decision making which is a characteristic of the military hierarchical command hence the action concerning MPLA, Barclays Bank, British Petroleum etc.

### Methodology

This study was carried out through the use of secondary data in the form of books, journals, speeches, lecture notes and interview. The secondary data were obtained from public and private libraries. The use of comparative methodology was employed to assess the contributions of the military institution vis-a-vis the civilian political institution in foreign policy attainments, taking into consideration the domestic environment and its permissive policy alternatives. Also to be considered alongside is the influence of the international determinants of foreign policy.

This comparative methodology was not limited to military and civilian institutions but also to the military regime/dispensations, to see how changing international and domestic events modify foreign policies. The foreign policy of the duo was investigated to see how they had contributed to the national development of Nigeria, in terms of the eradication of hunger, poverty and diseases.

Furthermore, an attempt was also made to study the role that the military-style of foreign policy bureaucracy was able to play in harnessing the bumper crude oil revenue and popular domestic support to respond swiftly to international environmental alternatives.

### Theoretical Framework

The Rosenau framework, which is an analytical framework of five major sources of influence on the foreign scene was adopted. This framework posits that the following factors are determinants of the direction of the foreign policy of nations:

1. External influences in the form of events happening throughout the world.
2. Idiosyncratic influences including values, personality and perception of leaders.
3. Role sources that specify the role to be played by leaders in specific positions of power.
4. Societal sources involving national values, interest groups and political parties.
5. Government influences which include the structure of government and the nature of politics taking cognisance of the way they interrelate in the policy process.”



The influences of the above five factors in allowing the Murtala/Obasanjo's regime to formulate and implement its foreign policy as well as its inhibiting influences would be examined. The foreign policy of Murtala/Obasanjo would therefore be seen as part of the relationship to the world system and not as an isolated action but a continuous response to external and internal stimuli. Ofoegbu, (1980) adds that:

The most effective way to gain perspective on international politics and to find ways of grasping the complex determinants on the level of any state behaviour is to pitch the analysis on the level of any state. An understanding of all states is to be found on the understanding of any state in the system.

This shows that all the countries are linked together and so they formulate and implement their foreign policies in response to one another. This study would therefore examine how Nigeria's domestic factors such as the clamour for change and action influenced the post Gowon era, and how the Detente, Republican and Democratic politics influenced Murtala/Obasanjo's policies. It would also examine if there were other choices of policy. The idiosyncratic and psycho-political model of Harold Laswell would also be used to see how Murtala's personality enabled him to confront America's opposition to his policies, and why he had a cold relationship with the USA which took a new dimension as soon as Obasanjo took over. This resulted in Obasanjo's state visit and subsequently reciprocated by Jimmy Carter. The question to be asked is, "Why is this so since Obasanjo was implementing the policies of his predecessor - Murtala? The answer was provided by Harold Laswell – personality differences in perception, misperception and image model.

### **Review of Related Literature**

For the sixty-two (62) years of Nigeria's existence as a sovereign nation, the military has been in power for 25 years, and because of this centre stage dominance, a lot of research and comments have been made on the impact of their intervention in our polity; and for this study, on their impact on the foreign policy scene. Among these many contributions, Imobighe (1987) opined that: "The Nigeria military has since independence come to play an even more dominant role in society than ever before." In the same direction, Wayas (1979) in agreement asserts thus:

Why is it that only now is there much talk about Nigeria's role in Africa although, during the regime of Gowon, Nigeria began to play greater and somewhat more visible attention to the affairs of the continent, the dramatic metamorphosis and other images could be said to begin with the administration of Murtala Muhammed. In 1975 more specifically, Nigeria's role in Angola's war of the same year, her active pro-MPLA stance and especially her rebuff to President Ford, who sought to intimidate the O.A.U members into giving their support to a servile pro-western group (UNITA of Jonas Savimbi) was perhaps the most significant event in Nigeria's foreign policy since independence even more significant was her open decision to align herself with progressive forces of O.A.U, instead of following her customary bent for a consensus.

These two viewpoints, did not only talk about the involvement of the military in national development but more especially of the commendable contributions of Murtala Muhammed, who broke from the past and charted a new course in his preparedness to confront Nigeria's traditional allies when her interests were not being advanced.

The International environment was permissive of such boldness as it would not have succeeded without such support, and that they tried to test the international environment with their boldness is worthy of commendation. It must be added that this radical departure was risky. Wayas failed to inform us that Nigeria depended solely on the West as she is economically aligned to the Western economy. Any counter-reaction would have been counterproductive as it would have greatly hampered Nigeria's national interest. An oil embargo or trade embargo would have paralysed Nigeria's economy as there may not be enough foreign exchange for an oil-dependent economy.



Supporting Ogwu (1982) posits that:

Gowon's overthrow in 1975 brought in an entirely new behaviour into the political scene - adventurous, activist, and pragmatic and a realist by conviction. He was Murtala Mohammed having no experience in government or foreign affairs but was result-oriented. His personality enabled him to initiate policy based on the conviction that Africans, particularly Nigerians will not tolerate South Africa and Western powers design in South Africa (p.23).

It is now emerging why scholars like Bolaji Akinyemi, Joy Ogwu, Gabriel Olusanya and others described this period as the golden era in Nigeria's foreign policy, as it reached its highest peak within that period to date and this was capped with the hosting of the festival of Arts and Culture."

Expanding further, Bolaji Akinyemi emphasised that Nigeria's recognition of the MPLA led Nigeria to a bruising confrontation with the U.S.A. which is exceptional-Nigeria confronting an Anglo-Saxon superpower. It also marked the first time that Nigeria and the Soviet Union would be on the same side against the U.S.A. While not denying the bold steps represented by the recognition of the MPLA, it was however not as significant as posited; not as significant as the experiences of the Nigerian Civil war when Nigeria was denied assistance by her traditional allies of the U.K and U.S.A claiming what I call "Dubious Neutrality". Harold Wilson only came to Nigeria's aid at a time she least needed them; when Port Harcourt had already been liberated brought home the message on non-alignment. The assistance of the Soviet Union and the extension of the hand of friendship to the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc countries that supported MPLA made Nigeria's support a matter of time. The influence of the cold war allowed Nigeria to get away with her radical policies as she was always assured of super-power support.

Efforts were also not made by these scholars to critically examine the international environment particularly the leader in the U.S.A by examining the effects of a show down if a gunboat loving diplomatic president was on seat. The dynamism of this regime was also commented upon by Oyeleye Oyediran. He opined that:

"Nigeria-American relations were at its nadir at the beginning of 1976. Nigeria subjected President Ford to a public tongue lashing over his letter to African Heads of State. This rebuke is significant not only for the stated fact that the U.S.A. buys the bulk of Nigeria's crude oil and depends on oil for its main foreign exchange earning but also there is no ready alternative market for our oil but there exists an alternative supply of oil for America through Saudi Arabia (the swing producer), North sea, Soviet Union and other Gulf producers."

In assessing the appropriateness of the style of Murtala in the foreign arena, Lambert Ejiofor in Africa in World Politics holds the following view:

Political realism is the alternative to idealism, realism believes that the world is imperfect and is a result inherent in human nature, one must work with these forces, not against them if one hopes to improve the world. The world is inherently steeped in opposing interests, and moral principles can never be fully realised, rather they must be balanced with interest and the precarious settlements of conflicts, political realist must therefore confront conflict or negotiate with situations as they are.

Mongethan (1978) also holds the same view. He states that in a world of power politics, states must arrange their power to provide survival; the goals of the state have come to include the search for ways to acquire and keep power, increase power and demonstrate power. It is this power that Ejiofor and Mongethan were writing about that was shown in Angola's UNITA/MPLA, OAU, moral and financial support to Liberation movements in Africa. Murtala addressed both present and future problems and was therefore a moderniser.





For Mazrui opined that:

From the socio-psychological point of view, we might therefore say that modernisation consists in gradual tilting of the balance away from servility to the past and towards responsiveness to the future. E.J. Fenchel Wanger and Peternailor in the Soviet Union and Third World (1981) tabulated Soviet trade with Third World countries. In it, Nigeria's trade volume with USSR was 21.2 million roubles in 1970, but in 1975 and 1976, it increased to 108.3 million roubles, an increase of 71.1 million roubles which is 247% increase. This is significant as any trade with the Soviet Union was a loss to the Western world that buys Nigeria's oil. It also decreased Nigeria's dependence on the West. This less dependence enabled Nigeria to be susceptible to intimidation and blackmail like the then Soviet Union suffered under Reagan when America suspended sales of grains to protest against the bombing of the South Korean Airlines over the Soviet airspace.

The individual and distinct characteristics of Murtala and Obasanjo led Ogwu to assert that Gen. Obasanjo took over the leadership of Nigeria with the assassination of his predecessor, he assumed office with the commitment to carry out almost to the letter the policies already laid down by his predecessor but he pursued these policies and attained the same objectives with a different style. He was both calculating and reflective (1998).

This difference in style cannot be attributed solely to the personalities of Murtala or Obasanjo but also to the emergence of a new leader in the person of Jimmy Carter who came in with a radical departure from the Republican Militarism to Democratic humanitarianism. The American Public after a suffocating dose of Nixon/Ford/Kissinger's strong policies needed a change which Carter brought into the Presidency: it would have been prudent if Nigeria had continued with the strong arm response of the Murtala years. However, there is no doubt that individual characteristics of leaders also have a role to play. Dike (1988) adds that:

It is true that each individual is unique and ineffable; that the diversities which characterise the life of man are ordained by the creator hence there can be no two men identical in mental capacity or moral disposition, one may excel in solid judgement, another in the tenacity of memory and a third in the brilliancy of imagination.

These differences make it impossible for two leaders to act in the same manner. However, no matter the right leadership qualities possessed by any leader, it can only be effective if the local and international environments allow it. It then means that environmental determinism also holds sway in the international arena.

According to Ojo (1980), most countries of the world accept the principle of civilian control of the military but what is in operation is proletarianism. The beginning of the military in politics can be dated back to the Roman Empire when the Roman senate was guided or protected by soldiers to wade off the external invasion and ensure peace and orderliness in their meetings. With time, they became too powerful to such an extent that they determined who became the next Emperor, put a stop to or paralysed the Senate. To many scholars, the military institution is an agent of socialisation.

Ojo (2017) observed that: "African armies - Nigeria inclusive tend to be the most detribalised, the most Westernised, the most integrated and cohesive institution within their respective States".

The army, he continues is usually the most disciplined agency in the state. It often enjoys a greater sense of national identity than other institutions. In technical skills including the capacity to be cohesive and communicate, the army is the most effective agency in the states and a more vivid symbol of sovereignty than the flag, parliament or constitution. There is therefore no doubt that the Nigerian army is anything but what La Fever has posited. It may be true of the colonial or the



immediate post-colonial era. Ojo (1993) is of the same view as the La Fever he quoted. He says the military always come to power to do the following:

1. To resolve existing critical public issues
2. To take a substantive decision on the nature of the political system of the future in the light of what the current problem is, this has to be in the light of the military diagnosis of past problems, their vision of the future.

This means that despite the distaste for military rule, they are still useful. It is therefore not surprising that it can take the military to perform such tasks as the cancellation of the controversial census, conducting of new ones, creation of states, local governments, party system, types of government, formation of ECOWAS, recognition of MPLA, Nationalisation of Barclays Bank, Shell B.P etc.

To these, Ikoku (1993) adds that: “The military has played a role in national development, Ataturk, Nasser, Suharto, Murtala, In Iran, in Libya, the truth is that the military makes positive contributions to International and Domestic evolution.”

Francis Adigwe (1973) also made a useful contribution. He says:

“The foreign policy under the military regimes has been more military and radical than under the civilians partly as a need to improve relations to be truly non-aligned as Nigeria’s relationship with the communist countries has improved almost to the level of her relationship with the Western Countries”

Still appraising the Murtala/Obasanjo’s regime, Oyeleye (1979) opined that:

In the field of African affairs, Nigeria has become a force to reckon with, she has increased her aid to the Liberation fighters, has advocated and implemented decisions programmed to speed the liberation of colonial rule in Africa. These programmes gave Nigeria the leadership role it played in the continent from 1975 – 1979.

In fairness to Murtala Muhammed, Nigeria did not lose any advantage as a result of this radicalism, for Baran and Sweezy (1968) uphold that “Development in the Third World, if any of foreign aid, is just not the growth per se but further growth in the assisting countries.”

In the same vein, Carfanton and Condomines (1980), Nkrumah (1967), Whyden (1980), Terzian (1983) maintain that foreign aid is denied those governments that are stubborn and reluctant to offer the services required from them. Darlington Iwarimie Jaja and Steve Onyeiwu (1993) further stated that “Wherever possible, un-submissive governments are toppled and replaced with docile ones.” This view accounts for the suspicion of the CIA of USA of complicity in the death of Murtala Muhammed. And Sam Ikoku (1995) further states that “Obasanjo did not do anything new as he was scarred, he just programmed the election for somebody to emerge.”

This buttresses the fact that environment has more to do with the achievements of Obasanjo. In effect, the various related literature shows that Nigeria’s foreign policy was dynamic, progressive and more result-oriented during Murtala/Obasanjo’s regimes. The existing literature on Murtala Muhammed and Olusegun Obasanjo failed to explain the events around the world in which their foreign policy initiatives or actions were mere responses, as foreign input is a product of two inter-dependent variables. This study explains the domestic and external prevailing political and economic circumstances during the Murtala regime. This takes into consideration their foreign policy options in reacting to external factors.



## Historical Background of Nigerian State

Nigeria occupies an area of 923,679 square kilometres with an estimated population of over 120 million people. The country is abundantly rich in mineral resources which include tin, columbite, iron ore, lead, zinc, coal, crude oil, natural gas etc. The most important mineral is crude oil. It contributes significantly to government revenue.

The Nigerian military first came to the political scene in January 1966 following a military coup led by Major Chukwuma Nzeogwu. There was a counter-coup in July 1966. This counter-coup led to the outbreak of the civil war that depleted the treasury of the country. After the civil war, Nigeria experienced an oil boom that generated revenue. This revenue was mismanaged towards the end of Gowon's regime. There was near-paralysis in the government of Nigeria. The military governors who were also members of the Supreme Military Council (the highest decision-making body) became the Lords of the Manor. They arbitrarily arrested and detained people. They were corrupt and were virtually doing nothing for the welfare of the governed. The promised return to civil rule was not also upheld while civil servants were owed a huge backlog of salaries, and many anti-corruption crusaders were rushing to the courts swearing one affidavit after another against serving public officers. The governors, commissioners and permanent secretaries were publicly living above their means. There were cries, all over the country but Gowon could do nothing as the governors and ministers appear too powerful to be dealt with. It was at this period that super permanent secretaries emerged to compound the whole crisis.

Regrettably, sycophants took over Gowon and he was not prepared to listen to the voice of reasoning. The day he was leaving Nigeria to attend an O.A.U meeting, he was booed on his way to the airport by teachers who were owed arrears of salary. The seaports were also congested with cement which prevents the effective utilisation of the seaports. The nation was already fed up with this slow-motion and corruption infested government. The stage was therefore set for a change, which finally came when he (Gowon) was attending the O.A.U. meeting. To sustain or justify its intervention, the new government of Murtala-Obasanjo had no choice but to move fast in dealing with the corrupt officers through the Assets and Forfeiture decree; the civil service purge, the military and paramilitary organisations were not also left out. The government further went ahead to release a detailed plan to handover to a democratically elected government. All these changes were responses to domestic demands. This spate of changes was also extended to the foreign scene. It will not be far-fetched to assert that the oil boom of this period also contributed to the dynamism of this era. Supporting this view, Bolaji Akinyemi (1978) says:

This effervescent involvement in African Affairs backed up by the enormous resources generated by the oil boom resources which are now being ploughed into the industrial base, has led observers to believe that a continental power has finally emerged in Africa" What Prof. Bolaji Akinyemi was referring to was the primacy of oil generated revenue in financing Murtala's foreign policy.

The change in policy can be seen from the speech of Joseph Garba (1975) thus:

We in Nigeria do not seek for confrontation, but if we are challenged by any power on matters of interest to us and which involves the welfare of our fellow Africans anywhere in the continent, we would take the challenge.

It was also significant to note that there was enormous oil revenue at the disposal of the government if compared with the major foreign exchange earnings of the preceding regimes. The major sources of foreign exchange then were groundnut from the north, cocoa from the west and palm oil from the East and the accruing foreign exchange are controlled by these regions leaving the central government weak.





In 1960, Nigeria's crude oil production was 0.9 thousand metric tons. In 1969, it became 26.4 thousand metric tons. The percentage of oil revenue was 41.57 in 1972 and 70.67 in 1977. This means that it has been increasing at the same rate and even more as the Gulf war shows.

At the International scene, the Republicans in America were in power in the persons of Presidents Nixon and Ford who favoured strong personality and assertive foreign policy to complement them, and Henry Kissinger – a strong advocate of Interventionist policy was the Secretary of State. In Great Britain, the Conservatives were in power, and Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, favoured gunboat diplomacy.

However, the coming to power of the Democratic party, and its pointsman Jimmy Carter – a Human Rights Crusader led to a shift in America's policies and the subsequent change in policy in Nigeria marked the difference between Murtala's and Obasanjo's foreign policies. It is these changes that enabled Obasanjo to pay a state visit to the U.S.A. and Carter to Nigeria (which was not possible during Murtala-Ford era).

### **The Angolan-Zimbabwean Issue**

National Liberation Movements emerged in Angola in the 1960's and towards the early 1970's. They were fighting a fierce guerrilla war against the Portuguese colonialists in that country. The Angolans were unable to present a united front to their colonial masters - Portugal.

The three Liberation Movements were the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) led by Dr. Antonio Angostinho da Silva Neto, The National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) led by Holden Roberto and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) led by Jonas Savimbi. The strongest and most acceptable of these three Liberation Movements was the MPLA which was Marxist oriented and obtained its military and other supports mainly from the Soviet Union and its allies in the Warsaw Alliance. The FNLA was the second in terms of military influence and civilian followership and was financed by China. UNITA was the smallest and got the bulk of its assistance from the West.

At the international scene, the fascist government of Portugal was overthrown by a military coup in 1974. The emergent military leaders in Lisbon were committed to a policy of immediate decolonisation of their African colonies and granting them full independence.

However, there was an intense jockeying by the three Nationalist Movements on which of them would take over from Portugal as the legal and authoritative government when Portugal finally withdraws from the country. The O.A.U on its part; Nigeria inclusive supported a government of National Unity comprising all the three Nationalist Movements. This could not be attained due to mutual distrust, suspicion, conflicting ideologies and individual quest for power as well as foreign intervention. This resulted in the divisive situation where each held onto the part of the territory it had taken control of from Portugal in the guerilla war. At this stage, they began to fight amongst themselves for dominance.

As of 1974, there was no single united group in Angola to whom the Portuguese would have handed over Angola's independence or as they claimed. This was a sharp contrast to Mozambique where the departing Portuguese colonialists handed over power and the symbol of National independence to Samora Michel's FRELIMO.

Therefore, on the scheduled day for independence - November 1975, the Portuguese representative in Angola made a public declaration where he stated that he was handing over Angola's independence collectively to the Angolan people. At this point, the civil war was already escalating.



The MPLA was in total control of Luanda the capital. This made the OAU and the federal government of Nigeria to recognise it as the legitimate government, even though they still worked hard to reconcile and bring compromise among the freedom fighters.

At the home front, the government of General Yakubu Gowon was overthrown on the 29th of July, 1975, and Murtala Muhammed became the new Head of state. This new government continued the policy of the old dispensation in connection with the Angolan issue i.e. it refused to recognise any of the movements and still supported a government of national unity and national reconciliation of the warring factions.

The FNLA and UNITA, fearing that the MPLA would gain the upper hand in the crisis decided to form a coalition of UNITA/FNLA to fight the MPLA thereby improving and boasting of their military capacity. To the amazement and complete disgust of many “TRUE BLOODED AFRICAN”, it was exposed that the FNLA/UNITA Alliance had allied its coalition with Apartheid South Africa and were fighting side by side with South African forces against MPLA. This was the straw that broke the camel’s back as it was decisive in the resulting change in policies. Nigeria quickly repudiated her previous stand on the Angolan crisis and decided to accord full diplomatic recognition to the MPLA government in Luanda in December 1975. After recognising the MPLA Government, Nigeria extended economic aid of N13.5 million in addition to sending military supplies. Nigeria also launched what Bolaji Akinyemi called “a diplomatic blitzkrieg” among African states on behalf of the recognition of the MPLA.

Earlier on, the MPLA government afraid that its forces might be overrun by the combined forces of South Africa, FNLA and UNIA had requested assistance from friendly nations. Cuba responded and sent in both men and materials. This new Nigeria’s policy on Angola brought Nigeria into direct opposition with the United States Government under President Ford, resulting in an exchange of public insults thereby plunging their relationship to zero levels.

It also disintegrated to the level where the United States Secretary of state was twice refused permission to visit Nigeria. It is appropriate to point out the differences in approach in the Angolan crisis between Nigeria and the USA. Whereas the USA saw the Angolan crisis as an extension of Soviet- America rivalry in which Soviets-backed MPLA, Nigeria believed that East-West ideological competition was marginal to the real issue at stake and that of genuine African liberation and independence. This was how Nigeria and the United States came to be pitted against each other in a diplomatic contest over Angola.

An extra-ordinary summit of the O.A.U Heads of State and government was scheduled to take place in Addis Ababa before the middle of January 1976 to deliberate on the issue. Anticipating this African summit, President Ford sent his Secretary of State (Henry Kissinger) to the summit with a letter, advising the Heads of Government not to recognise MPLA Government, and to insist on the withdrawal of the Soviet Union and Cuban advisers from Angola. He insisted that it is this immediate withdrawal that will lead to the withdrawal of South African forces from the areas she had been occupying in Angola.

In his address to the summit, General Muhammad called this instruction from President Ford “a flagrant insult on the intelligence of African rulers”. Nigeria on her part did not just fold her arms; she intensified her campaign for support of MPLA among the African States. During the extra-ordinary summit, it was reported that General Muhammad personally canvassed for support for MPLA from his fellow Heads of States. On the other hand, American canvassers and lobbyist were also intensely active, seeking support for the American position. According to Akinyemi, the result of the voting during the summit was “a Hung Jury”. There were two motions. The first was sponsored by twenty states and it: called for the recognition of MPLA. The other also sponsored by twenty states called for a National Government. The host country Ethiopia abstained but the victory



was claimed for the O.A.U and Nigeria. Because the American position was rejected, many more African states extended diplomatic recognition to Angola under MPLA after the summit.

The new actions, postures and orientations projected into the international scene, reflected Nigeria's increased capacity to conduct a more independent and assertive foreign policy.

Later, Joseph Garba (1976) the then Nigeria's Commissioner for External Affairs let it be known to all the World that Nigerians:

neither seek nor desire confrontation with any powers - bethey super power or mini-powers, but if challenged by anyalien powers on matters of interest to us and which involvedthe welfare of our fellow Africans anywhere in the continent, we will stand our ground and shall not yield an inch.

The following laws were therefore passed during this period:

- i. The Southern African Relief Fund Act retained as Cap.409. This law allows the Government, Corporate bodies and individuals to make donations towards the dismantling of apartheid.
- ii. The Petroleum Profits Tax (Amendment) Act.
- iii. The Petroleum Profits Tax (Amendment) No. 2
- iv. The Petroleum Profits Tax (Amendment X No. 3 Act. All these were promulgated in 1979 to streamline the activities of the Petroleum sectors.
- v. The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation amendment

Act was enacted in 1979 to re-organise and make the Corporation more functional.

The same thing was done to the Nigerian Export Promotion Council Amendment Act.

- vi. In 1978, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Amendment Law was enacted.
- vii. In 1979, General Olusegun Obasanjo promulgated the Acquisition of Assets (British Petroleum Company Limited)Act. This act was retained as Cap. 3 in NigerianLaw. This law gave the legal backing to the Nationalisation of the Assets of the British Petroleum Company Limited. It States:

An Act to make provisions for the transfer of all shares held by the British Petroleum Company Limited in BP Nigeria LTD and all interests appertaining thereto in the shell B.P Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation and the payment of compensation for such shares in accordance with laid down formulae.

The provisions of the Law:

- i. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other enactment, all shares of whatever description and however held by the British petroleum company Limited in BP Nigeria Limited and all rights, privileges, equities, entitlement and interests of whatever description held by or due to the British Petroleum Company Limited in all oil concessions inNigeria (including licenses and oil mining leases) granted to the Shell-BP Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited are hereby transferred to and shall hereafter vest in the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation in accordance with the following provisions of this act and without- further assurance than this Act.
- ii. Compensation for anything acquired pursuant to section 1 of this Act shall be paid by the Corporation to the British Petroleum Company Limited and such compensation shall be computed respectively as follows, that is to say:
  - (a) In respect of shares in BP Nigeria Limited, on the basisof the share valuation to be undertaken by the capital issues commission and



(b) In respect of rights, privileges equities, entitlements and interests (including licenses and mining leases) appertaining to the British Petroleum Company Limited in the Shell- BP Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited, on the basis of the Corporation's participation in the joint venture operations of oil-producing companies in Nigeria.

iii. Any person who contravenes or fails to comply with any of the provisions of section 5 in this Law shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable upon conviction to imprisonment for one year without the option of a fine.

The question of whether any provision of chapter IV of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has been, is being or would be contravened by anything done or proposed to be done in pursuance of this Act shall not be inquired into in any court of law and accordingly, section 40, 42 and 220 (i)

(b) of the constitution shall not apply in relation to any such question.

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires "British Petroleum Company Limited means a company of that designation or description registered in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and includes any of its nominees or affiliates whatsoever."

This decree is a bold and landmark enactment. It is also a triumph of domestic and international policies of the government.

### **African Unity and Disunity; Foreign Influences**

Nigeria under Murtala Muhammad pursued an independent and assertive foreign policy. This posture brought Nigeria into direct confrontation with the USA, a superpower nation, which would have been considered taboo initially in our relationship with other countries particularly the Western nation and more especially the USA and U.K. Insults were publicly exchanged between the two governments and their relationship plunged to zero marks. The USA Secretary of state, Dr. Henry Kissinger was refused permission to visit Nigeria.

This was unprecedented in the history of Nigeria's foreign policy for whereas in the early 1960's an East German trade delegation that wanted to visit Nigeria could not obtain visas due to American and West German pressures on Nigeria, it was now the turn of America. In analysing the appropriateness- and the true impact of the recognition of the MPLA as the legitimate government in Angola, Murtala proved his in-depth understanding of the plight of the Africans that had been subjected to various forms of manipulations by outside influences. There was no point advocating more for the formation of the government of national unity when the warring factions aided and abetted by external powers were not ready to compromise.

The effectiveness and success of Murtala's Angola's policy can be seen in the withdrawal of support by the western nations from Jonas Savimbi's UNITA and its recent agreement to be accommodated in the present MPLA's Government showed that Murtala has a vision that had lived after his death. It took the West twenty years to see what Murtala saw in 1975. For Nigeria, the Angola crisis represented a milestone in her relationship with other countries and diplomatic history because firstly, Nigeria was prepared to stake out a position and lobby to create an African consensus. Secondly, Nigeria was prepared to confront the United States over an African issue. This was an unprecedented act for Nigeria's Foreign policy.

This pan Africanising was made possible by the oil boom of the period. Akinyemi was referring to the primacy of oil generated resources in the financing of Murtala's foreign policy. The positive impacts of this domestic international induced foreign policy can be seen in the political benefits of the strong and virile policies of Murtala and Obasanjo which lifted the dignity of the Blackman politically in the African continent, that a third world developing country could successfully



confront a superpower, that Nigeria can also affect the world stocks market shows that Nigeria does not have only political muscle but also economic might.

The Russians entered Africa through the ideological rivalry between the Eastern bloc country and the Western nations. It started in Nigeria with Russians support for the federal cause in the country's civil war and at the end of the war;

U.S.S.R. was in good relations with the Nigerian government. This good relationship led to the increased tempo of construction activities in its technical co-operation with Nigeria, particularly in the Ajaokuta steel mill. Nigeria was also able to insulate herself from trade blackmail like the Russians suffered when they depended solely on America's grain to meet up with a shortfall in domestic production.

One wonders what flying in a military exclusion zone and the military response has to do with grain sales more so when American farmers need the sales badly. There was an increase in the volume of Nigeria's trade with the Soviet bloc. Unity and disunity in the African countries are being influenced by the superpowers as every problem is being looked at from the ideological perspective or from the national interests' perspective.

According to H. Morgenthau (1967), in his book *Politics among nations* with the subtitle: "National Interest" the struggle for power and peace indicates his concern not only with the struggle for power but the ways in which it is limited by ethics, norms, and law.

This means that Nigeria cannot maximize its national interest because of ethics, domestic and international law which allows it to do what is permissible within the prevailing rules and dominant detendices. The international environment was also partly responsible for the reaction of Murtala Muhammed to events in Africa.

Foreign policies are formulated and implemented with a conscious and deliberate understanding of the issues within the global political system. Foreign policy concept, in a more refined scientific parlance, refers to the formulation, implementation and evaluation of external choice with one state viewed from the perspective of another.

There was a strong Republican presence in the white house. President Nixon was a republican. He was replaced by President Gerald Ford also a Republican president. This was the period when Dr. Henry Kissinger, one of the most foremost Secretary of State's that America has produced held sway. The republican administration has a strong bias for gunboat diplomacy, it was no coincidence that republican president Reagan invaded Grenada, George Bush another republican president assembled the Gulf war allies that drove Saddam Hussein from the occupied Kuwait. There was no other alternative than to respond the way Murtala did if Nigeria was to make any impact if we are to follow the realist theory. "State must engage in power politics to survive and they should do anything to achieve that goal".

The highest moral duty of a state is its preservation and the survival of Nigeria during this Republican grip on power is to respond in like manner, but with caution. It must calculate the implication of its response taking into consideration its economic capabilities coupled with its political capabilities.

Nigeria calculated that it would be safe for it to challenge the West most especially America and Great British because of the existence of the cold war between the American led N.A.T.O block and the then Soviet union-led WARSAW PACT countries.

The existence of this bi-polar and ideologically locked world made it possible for the world powers not to see any issue from the same viewpoint; they always take extreme and opposing positions. The confrontation of Nigeria with its Western traditional allies was bound to be fully supported by





the iron curtain as the Soviet-led block was called. The existence of the cold war intensified the attachment to blocks or the potential support of an opposing block. The survival of a nation provides the justifications for the balance of power arrangement which realists contend are the most effective techniques for managing power. The balance of power theory shows that Nigeria as a potential aggressor or defender was forced to weigh her options critically before confronting a state or several states within the world system and it has to be done for the sake of Nigeria's supreme national interest.

The MPLA was being supported by Russia and its allies and Nigeria's support for the MPLA government in Angola, solidly backed by Cubans was, therefore, an opportunist stand-off playing one superpower against the other. It is commendable that Nigeria identified that it could operate within such latitude. With the death of Murtala, Obasanjo who took over nationalised Shell BP. This sent shock waves into the world stock markets. Aluko (1981) described it as thus. "This was a clear cut and successful use of oil as an instrument of foreign policy by Nigeria." Nigeria's foreign policy reached its peak during this period and that is why it is described as the golden era in Nigerian foreign policy.

Ofoegbu (1980) says that with the advent of the Murtala/Obasanjo administration, a new emphasis and more forceful Nigerian Southern Africa policy was in evidence. Gen. Muhammed escalated the traditional Nigerian policy towards South Africa and decolonisation and more specifically, took a bold decisive step in recognising the MPLA faction which later became the de jure government in Angola. Nigeria's refusal to bow to American wishes on the Angola issue was instructive by this action. Nigeria visibly demonstrated a firm ability to assert its will on the United States over the issue, and Gen. Muhammed's pronouncements sent shock waves and tremors throughout the United States having been thrust into a position of leadership. Lt. Gen. Obasanjo, who succeeded Murtala, inherited, carried forward and expanded the Southern Africa policies of his predecessor.

The regime of Obasanjo was a continuation of Murtala Muhammed, so he stepped up the tempo of support for the legal MPLA Government of Angola and also made massive and constructive contributions to the African liberation movement. He used every opportunity to consistently condemn the evils of apartheid and foreign interference in Africa.

Some scholars prefer the period approach in their analysis of Nigeria's external behaviour. Delancy identified two stages. The civil rule and military rule, characterising them as conservative, passive and active respectively. Some have categorised the various periods as pro-west, and others like Anglin, label the first decade of Nigerians foreign policy as politically non-aligned and economically aligned.

During the military regime, activism in foreign policy created a more visible role for the foreign ministry. What is it in the military that enabled it to perform marvelously in 1975-1979? The answer to this question will give more clarity to the military characteristics of the actors.

The military environment is another factor that aided the success of the duo of Murtala and Obasanjo as the military environment allows for quick decision making. Whenever the commander in chief makes up his mind, his subordinates would not question it. The policy is just implemented; nobody would expect Brigadier Joseph Garba to question his commander in chief in the appropriateness of the South African policy.

The military is a regimental institution, where its products undergo strict disciplined training that enables them to obey commands without questioning the orders. There is more respect for superiors and the outcome of this, is that decisions are quickly made and also implemented faster.

Philosophers from the time of John Locke had argued that people learn through experience and that learning consists of the association of ideas. For example, if you see the colour white, you are



inclined to think of the colour black. The reason is that black and white sensations have been associated with your experiences many times before.” The barking of orders immediately follows compliance. This immediate response enables Murtala/Obasanjo to perform.

The military institution trains its product to make decisions with precision as there cannot be procrastination in the battlefield, there cannot be wide consultation in an emergency situation.

The military institution is an agent of socialisation. The Nigerian army is the most detribalised, the most Westernised, the most modernised, the most integrated and cohesive institution within their respective states. The army is usually the most disciplined agency in the state; it often enjoys a greater sense of national identity than other institutions. In the technical skill including the capacity to be cohesive and communicate, it distinguishes itself. The army is the most effective agency in the state. It is because of the military’s disciplined orientation and the hierarchical organisation pattern that enables them to possess the above listed-qualities.

That learned rather than unlearned behaviour conditions that are inborn or innate behavioural tendencies is the key. Learning and training therefore makes the difference. The environment is the most important determinant of simple and complex behaviour and it is also the determinant of responses as the environment would decide the options available to respond and the full implications of any action intended.

It is evidenced that ranking is the most important in the military’s hierarchical structure which ensures obedience to orders from above. It is possible that Obasanjo did not like the style of Muhammed as can be seen in his style of command when he took over from Murtala during the civil war. This was also shown by the deviation from Murtala’s style when he took office as Head of State. Gen Obasanjo took over the leadership of Nigeria with the assassination of his predecessor, He assumed office with the commitment to carry out almost to the letter the policies already laid down by his predecessor and he pursued them and attained the same objective with different style, he was both calculating and reflective.

It is possible that Obasanjo complied with Muhammed’s style because of his military training that inculcated the values of obedience to superior officers by subordinates, but this is a subsidiary reason. There were domestic, economic and political reasons Obasanjo had to change politically. Nigerians could not keep pace with Murtala’s changes and the resulting social dislocations; some of the changes were counter productive.

Most officers embarked on witch-hunting in the purge and many innocent people lost their jobs and the nation lost some of the best crops of its workers. The compulsory seizing of assets of both military and civilian former office holders indiscriminately all compounded the situation and Nigerians began to doubt the efficacy of such strong arm tactics.

There was an expectation at the domestic level for a watering down of this rigidity. The approach of partisan politics also brought pressures to bear on the military on the need to tone down its authoritarianism. In the international front there was great changes as the Democrats, the traditional friend of Africa was in the White House. The America public bored with the strong armed and capitalist oriented republicans voted for Jimmy Carter who campaigned on human rights platform.

There is no way that Obasanjo would have continued a policy conceived in the past that is not relevant to the present circumstances. Carter was more receptive to Nigeria’s worries and Nigeria responded in like manner, that is why both countries took immediate steps to restore normalcy in ties, which led to Obasanjo’s state visit to U.S. and President Jimmy Carter’s return visit.

There is no way that the success recorded by Mohammed and Obasanjo can be attributed to oil revenue alone considering that Shagari was unable to sustain the tempo. When he took over all the resources both human and materials were still available but Reagan was already in the white house



with the same republican zeal and America prevented Libya's Gaddafi from becoming OAU's chairman. Quorum of attendance could not be achieved. Shagari was in Lagos waiting for a quorum to be formed before travelling which never came about.

Nigeria could not respond to the international environment and that was the reason for its non-performance during the period. Nigerian military comes to power to tackle knotty and controversial issues like the cancelation of controversial census, conducting of new ones, creation of states, local governments, party system, type of government, location of vital industries and boundary adjustments among many issues.

The military always come to power to do the following;

1. To resolve existing critical public policy issues.
2. To take substantive decisions on the nature of the political system of the future in the light of what the current problem is. This has to be in the light of the military diagnoses of past problems and their vision of the future.

The military's diagnoses of past problem are usually accurate as the military is not limited or inhibited by party affiliation and pressures when it wants to get to the root of a matter. It appoints the best experts in the field. Great scholars like Bolaji Akinyemi, Okoi Arikpo, Sule Gambari were appointed by the military. The Nigeria Institute of International Affairs is more relevant under military regimes to play technical and advisory role.

Murtala and Obasanjo were able to record success because there were no personality clashes between them, which their military ethics would not allow on the effectiveness of the styles employed by the duo.

According to H. Morgan Than in his principles of realism made us to understand as follows:

Political realism is the alternative to idealism. Realism believes that the world is imperfect and as a result inherent in human Nature, one must work with these forces, not against them, if one hopes to improve the world, the world is inherently steeped in opposing interests and moral principles can never be fully realised, rather they must be balanced with interest and the precarious settlement of conflicts.

The political realist must therefore confront conflict or negotiate with situations as they are. In the world of power politics, states must arrange their power to provide survival. They search for ways to acquire and keep power, increase power and demonstrate power. It is the pair of Murtala and Obasanjo that have engaged in assertive, dynamic, purposeful, calculating and authoritarian foreign policy.

### **Conclusion**

The regimes of Murtala/Obasanjo were a tremendous success, this can be seen in the way it tackled the Angola and Zimbabwe issues through its assertive, courageous and result-oriented policies. This achievement was made possible because of the enabling domestic economic and political circumstances that existed then in the form of the strong desires of Nigerians for a change, a marked departure from the comatose political situation were military governors who were also members of the Supreme Military Council are beyond the control of the Head of State, corruption, maladministration and nepotism became the order of the day. There was huge backlog of salary arrears which led to loud grumbings by the civil servants. The industrial unrest which this scenario brought about led to fear by foreign investors.



The stage was therefore set for a new approach that Murtala Muhammed brought into government; there was need for change. If Murtala had continued in the footsteps of Gowon and popular acceptance for his government by the already disillusioned, Nigerians would have been wasted. Economically, Nigeria's economy was okay, there was enough oil revenue to finance both domestic and foreign engagements. What was lacking was the will power and Murtala/Obasanjo provided that.

In the international scene, there was also no other option for Murtala; if Nigeria was to make any headway in its foreign policy implementation. The Republican Party was in power under the leadership of President Gerald Ford, who took over from President Richard Nixon also a republican president. The Republican administrations don't have so much interest in Africa and they are used to strong presidential tenures. This made it imperative for Nigeria to act in like manner. There were factors that Nigeria took into consideration before confronting Republican ruled America and the Conservatives ruled Britain. What are our economic, political and military capabilities to confront Americans, and Britain's superpower/advanced industrialised powers?

The answer is simply that Nigeria is no match against these two world powers and does not stand any chance in the event of any showdown but Nigeria analysed the international environment and discovered that the two world superpowers

U.S.A. and then U.S.S.R cannot see eye to eye and there is the certainty, not the probability that Russia would support Nigeria which would discourage America and its allies from going all out for Nigeria.

Because of the assistance which Soviet Russia gave to Nigeria when Nigerian traditional friends abandoned her, Britain refused to deliver arms that have been paid for, while America declared its neutrality.

It was the Soviet Union's assistance that kept one Nigeria going. At the end of the war, Nigeria strengthened its technical, economic, scientific, cultural and political corporation with U.S.S.R. There was already this balance of forces in Nigeria, so no one power can claim exclusive control of all the strata of the society so as to threaten Nigeria.

To show conclusively, the influence of the domestic and international environment in the style of formulation and implementation of policies, the case of Obasanjo is already a case at hand. On the death of Murtala Muhammed, he declared to continue with the policies laid down by Murtala.

This he did to the end when he finally handed over power to a democratically elected civilian government. The cold relationship with the U.S.A was changed to a warm one, with his state visit by Carter; the change of circumstances is so tremendous. The movement from when a secretary of state cannot visit Nigeria to when the highest level state visit is so wide. The reasons for this is not far-fetched, there was a change of baton in America, the American public tired of the human rights abuses of the republican presidency spoke out loud through the ballot box. Carter came to power on human rights platform with the advent of this democratic regime, there was no option for Nigeria other than to change its policies as to retain the former policy would be counterproductive.

To demonstrate this further, Nigeria nationalised the shares of British petroleum and Barclays Bank in order to press the United Kingdom to grant independence to Zimbabwe. The initial plan of the UK was to recognize the puppet regime of Bishop Abel Muzerewa.

Nigeria had the economic resource to pay for the shares it was acquiring. The money came from Nigeria's huge foreign exchange that comes from daily oil export.



The Nigerian public was also no longer comfortable with Murtala's breathtaking changes more so with the witch-hunting that attended the purge of the public service, military and paramilitary organs.

The properties of some innocent Nigerians were erroneously seized by the government through the assets forfeiture decree. The combined effects of these factors led also to the slowing down process.

In its response to Great Britain, the strong arm policies of Murtala was continued partly due to the continued presence of Margaret Thatcher led conservative government. The Iron Lady did not treat politics be it in the international arena or domestic arena with kid gloves. Politically, the period 1975 to 79 witnessed the elevation of the prestige of the black man on the emergence of a distinct, assertive foreign policy from Nigeria. Economically, more foreign investments were attracted to Nigeria as the Eastern bloc countries were now encouraged to do business with Nigeria so Nigeria is less prone to Western pressures.

Socially, Nigeria now benefits from scholarship awards from the communist bloc countries that are eager to spread their ideological orientations overseas. Our educational institutions benefited from technical assistance and books from both sides of the great divide unlike before when it received from only the Western side. This is the reason this period is known as the era of dynamism, progressiveness, purposefulness and result oriented dispensation.

The hypothesis that the Murtala/Obasanjo regimes are more effective in foreign policy execution and that domestic political and economic circumstances necessitates their effectiveness in foreign policy execution and also that international political and economic circumstance makes the success of Murtala/Obasanjo regimes' foreign policy possible. This has been shown with the mood of the Nigeria domestic populace and the events in the international spheres which created the most conducive environment under which such policy succeeded without any inhibition.

Nigeria's capacity to initiate and implement any successful foreign policy depends solely on oil revenue for now as the economy is not diversified but a mono one. There are certain weaknesses at present which tend to undercut Nigeria's oil power. The oil is sold in the crude form i.e. as a primary product and its many derivatives are thereby lost to Nigeria production levels and hence incomes rise or fall with demands in the industrialised nations who constitute the main consumers. Crude oil has made Nigeria completely a mono-economy and any fall in the quantity of oil exported causes serious ripples in the economy. Production is undertaken mainly by foreign operators which are the multi-national oil corporations which can wreak political and economic havoc in the countries they operate.

Due to centralised and command system in the militant, they are able to be assertive and with the oil revenue at their disposal, they were able to bark and bite.

### **Recommendations**

Arising from the observations, it is recommended that processing the crude oil locally and exporting the final products would enhance the ability of the country to withstand the recurrent shocks coming from the international oil markets. It is very hazardous to leave the production of such vital national resources in the hands of foreigners. The actual Nigerinisation of the oil industry should be given the greatest priority. Vigorous and progressive foreign policy can only be based on a strong and firm economic and social foundation.

Murtala/Obasanjo were able to deliver based on their military backgrounds, the prevailing international and domestic policy and oil revenue. Nigeria should therefore diversify its resources base. Finally, scholars should always evaluate the impact of environmental factors so as to know the real contributions of Murtala Muhammed and Olusegun Obasanjo.





There is need to elect charismatic leaders with the political Will and action-based capacity to the various political positions for effective management of the available resources for the societal development and progressive foreign policy.

It is strongly recommended that the leaders with military background should be elected like Charles De Gaulle in France, Winston Churchill, George H. W. Bush who served in the Texas Air National Guard during Vietnam, Ronald Reagan who served in both the Army Reserve and U.S Army Air Forces, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was a general during the World War I and President J. F. Kennedy who served in the U.S Naval Reserve, commanding a series of PT boats in the Pacific theatre.

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