

Nigeria's Quest for a Permanent Seat at the United Nation Security Council: A Giant Dwarfed of Domestic Challenges

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Abstract

The United Nations was established by the Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice. The Charter was signed on 26 June 1945 by the representatives of 50 countries and there are currently 193 UN Member States. Each of the Member States of the United Nations has one seat in the General Assembly. The Organization which was established following the end of World War II with the main goal of maintaining international peace and security globally has Security Council as one of its six key pillars, with five permanents and ten non-permanent members. The General Assembly through joint resolution has seek for expansion of its permanents member seat, with a slot billed to African nations. Nigeria is one of the African nations craving for the seats. This quest has however, been narrowed by her domestic disorders particularly, in her current state of affairs. Therefore, the examination of Nigeria's quest for a permanent seat at the UN Security Council is the main objective of this study. The study engaged secondary data. Findings revealed that South Africa, Egypt, and Nigeria are the three major African nations contending for the seat, with Nigeria being considered more favoured amongst the three nations owing to her national and international impact. However, Nigeria is currently undergoing some domestic issues like insecurity, undemocratic tendencies of leaders, corruption, failing economy, poverty, unemployment, among others. Therefore, Nigeria must address her domestic problems if the ball must roll in her favour. Disentangling these challenges would require a strong political will from Nigerian government which must include among others; economic reform, protection of human rights, extinction of corruption, security reform, among others.

Keywords: *United Nations, Security Council, Nigeria, International Organasation, Africa.*

1. Introduction

United Nation since inception has been committed to maintaining international peace and security, promoting fundamental human right, upholding international law, providing humanitarian aid, and developing friendly relations among nations (Nwalie, 2022). The United Nations' most powerful body is the Security Council, which has 15 members. There are five permanent members—the People's Republic of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America—and ten non-permanent members, who are chosen by the General Assembly for two-year terms. However, because they have veto power, or the ability to overturn or revoke decisions

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made by the United Nations, permanent members are the Security Council's principal actors (Muhammad, Ngada & Bukar, 2019).

According to a 1965 revision to the council structure that became effective on August 31. Africa and the Asian continent each hold five non-permanent seats. It means that during a term, there will only be two or three non-permanent members on the continent (Nwalie, 2022). In accordance with General Assembly Resolution 52(2) and the Declaration of the Millennium, which emphasizes the necessity of a thorough reform of the United Nations, the High-Level Panel (HLP) under Kofi Annan's administration put forth an idea to address the disparity of illustration in the Security Council (Einsiedel & Fong, 2017). Two models for the UN Security Council's transformation were offered in the proposal and recommendations of the High-Level Panel. Both models propose adding more seats to the UN Security Council to resolve the dispute between the regional groups regarding the Council's makeup (Resolution on Security Council Reform, 2005).

The panel did go on to suggest that the General Assembly select Security Council members by giving preference to the top three regional groups in terms of financial contributions to the UN's regular budget, top three contributors in terms of voluntary contributions, or top three contributors in terms of troop contributions to the UN peacekeeping operations (Einsiedel & Fong, 2017). Regarding this suggestion, at the 2005 Mid-Term Summit in Abuja, Nigeria, the Heads of State and Government of Africa came to an agreement by selecting the first version of the proposal put forth by the UN High-Level Panel, which advocated increasing the size of the Security Council from 15 to 25 members by adding six permanent seats and four non-permanent members. The High-Level Panel chose the first model of its proposal and recommendation for several reasons, including the hope that it will help resolve disagreements between regional groups regarding the Security Council's composition and ensure equal treatment in the use of the veto power (Oshewolo 2019).

Nigeria also tops the list of African countries to have been on the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent seats' member with a record of five times from 1966 – 1967, 1978 – 1979, 1994 – 1995, 2010 – 2011 and 2014 – 2015 (Nwalie, 2022). With a projected 2039 million black people in Nigeria by 2025 and a total black population of over 200 million, that country is the most representative of the black race (Vitalis & Oruonye, 2019). One Nigerian is found among every four black people worldwide, which makes Nigeria the true "country of the black man," according to this statistic (Asuzu, 1997). This reality, therefore, should be considered when picking representation for Africa, the continent of the black race in the multi-racial global body (Alexander, Rahayu & Gunadi, 2023).

1.1 Justification to the Study

There is no doubt that Nigeria has a high profile with the UN, and this has placed her to the front to bid for a seat at the UNSC to represent not only Africa but the black community. V This event demonstrated the continent's interest in and stance toward choosing this version. This decision specifically honours the top three voluntary donors to the UN and their regional organization, two African countries that have made sizeable voluntary donations to the UN's annual regular budget, regional organizations in Africa, and peacekeeping forces. There have been three strong African candidates in this regard who also meet the requirements for qualification. Nigeria, South Africa, and Egypt fit the criteria set forth by the UN High-Level Panel for candidates for permanent seats on the Security Council. According to the proposal and suggestions of the UN High-Level Panel, Nigeria meets the requirements for consideration as one of the two African nations to fill the vacancies created for the permanent seats on the UN Security Council (Nwalie, 2022).

However, Nigeria's candidacy for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council is constrained by her internal crisis such as human rights violations, economic capabilities, military technology, insecurity, and corruption (Udeh & Okoroafor, 2016). As a country,

Nigeria is facing more difficulties now than ever before, the perception of credibility of Nigeria in the international community affected her ambition for a seat at the UNSC. Some of the appalling status in the international system, like the annulment of the 1993 general election, Also Gen. Sani Abacha's alleged human rights violations, like the killing of the 9 Ogoni members, and the struggle of Umaru Dikko out of London, also contributes to this constrains. Children still go to bed without a meal, and the average household makes less than \$1 per day. Therefore, it will not be facile to say that there is an issue in every home, neighbourhood, and state in the country where the most basic human requirements are not being satisfied (Muhammad, Ngada & Bukar, 2019). There is also the issue of insecurity due to the advent of the Boko Haram terrorist organization and growing crime rates for more than ten years. The rise of the terrorist organization Boko Haram in Nigeria's northeastern areas in 2009 marked the start of the country's security issues, which have now extended to other regions (Africa, 2022). Several factors contribute to the unrest in one of the most populous nations in Africa, including the conflict between farmers and cattle herders, the Shia Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN)'s presence in central Nigeria, the Niger Delta Vigilante (NDA) and the IPOB in the southeast, and Boko Haram or the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in the northeast. In 2013, Nigeria had to withdraw troops from UN missions in Mali and Sudan to beef up the security at home (Africa, 2022). Furthermore, another constrain is the country's perceived lack of regional influence. Other African countries, such as South Africa and Egypt, are seen as having more clout on the continent and are therefore considered more likely candidates for a seat on the Security Council (Africa, 2022).

The absence of agreement among African nations has also hindered Nigeria's efforts to gain a seat on the Security Council. Some countries have thrown their support behind Nigeria's bid, while others have backed alternative candidates. This lack of unity has made it difficult for Nigeria to garner the necessary votes to secure a seat on the Security Council. All these issues are what is preventing Nigeria's bid for a permanent seat at the UNSC, as the international community will not give a veto power to a country that cannot handle its internal crisis.

2. Evolution of the United Nations Organization

The stated goals of the United Nations (UN), an intergovernmental organization, are to uphold global peace and security, foster goodwill among states, promote international collaboration, and operate as a hub for coordinating national policies. It is the biggest multinational organization in the world. The UN has offices in Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna, and The Hague, which is home to the International Court of Justice. Its headquarters are in New York City, which is in the United States but enjoys certain extraterritorial powers (United Nations, 2022). The United Nations (UN) replaced the defunct League of Nations following World War II with the mission of averting future international conflicts. The UN Charter was drafted during a summit in San Francisco, California on April 25, 1945, and was ratified on June 25 of the same year. The convention brought together fifty nations. When the UN started operating on October 24, 1945, the charter went into force. The UN's charter outlines its goals, which include preserving world peace and security, defending international law, supplying humanitarian relief, defending human rights, and encouraging sustainable development. The UN now has 193 member nations, or nearly all the sovereign states in the world, as of 2023, down from 51 at its founding (United Nations, 2018).

Tensions from the Cold War between the US and the USSR, as well as their respective allies, made the UN's early decades more difficult in preserving international peace. Its mission has involved deploying military observers who are mostly unarmed and lightly armed personnel who are tasked with watching, reporting, and fostering confidence. The 1960s saw a large increase in UN membership because of extensive decolonization. The

UN spent far more on social and economic development initiatives by the 1970s than it did on peacekeeping. Following the end of the Cold War in 1991, the UN expanded and changed the way it conducted field operations, taking on a wide range of challenging assignments (United Nations, 2018).

A global organization to ensure peace was pushed for in the century before the United Nations was established, particularly by American President Woodrow Wilson and other prominent figures during World War I. At the Paris Peace Conference, the Allies, who had won the war, convened to determine the formal terms of peace (Ayankoya & Osimen, 2023). Despite approval and initial operations, the United States did not join the League of Nations. The League of Nations officially came into existence on January 10, 1920, with the adoption of the League of Nations Covenant, which had been ratified by 42 countries in 1919. The League Council oversaw the Assembly's operations in its capacity as an executive body. Initially, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Japan were the four permanent members (Nwalie, 2022). The League was ineffectual in the 1930s after experiencing a few patchy victories and setbacks in the 1920s, particularly when it was unable to stop the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1933. Japan was asked to leave Manchuria by forty nations, but the country chose to vote against it and left the League instead of leaving the country (Ayankoya & Osimen, 2023). When appeals for economic penalties on Italy failed, it also did little to stop the Second Italo-Ethiopian War. Some countries, including Italy, quit the League. The League was shut down in 1939 when war broke out (United Nations, 2022).

The Inter-Allied Conference, which resulted in the St. James's Palace Declaration on June 12, 1941, was the first step toward the creation of the UN. The Atlantic Charter, which outlined objectives for the post-war world, was written by American President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill by August 1941. During the next Inter-Allied Council meeting in London on September 24, 1941, the Soviet Union, representatives of the Free French Forces, and the eight governments of the Axis-occupied countries that were in exile all agreed to stick to the shared policy tenets that Britain and the United States had established (Osimen, Ayankoya & Udoh, 2023).

In December 1941, Roosevelt and Churchill convened at the White House for the Arcadia Conference. Roosevelt, who is credited with founding the organization, gave the name United Nations to refer to the member nations of the Allies. Churchill agreed to it. The United Nations Declaration was drafted on December 29, 1941, by Harry Hopkins, Churchill, and Roosevelt. The "Declaration by United Nations" was signed on New Year's Day 1942 by Roosevelt, Churchill, the Premier of China, T. V. Soong, and Maxim Litvinov, the former Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union. "At the earliest possible date of a general international organization" was the goal of the Four Power Declaration on comprehensive Security, one of the Moscow Declarations that came out of the October 1943 Moscow Conference. Soon after, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin convened in Tehran to debate the concept of an international organization to be established after the war (Osimen, Ayankoya & Udoh, 2023).

Twenty-one more states have ratified the UN Declaration by March 1, 1945. The UN Conference on International Organization opened in San Francisco on April 25, 1945, following months of preparation (Roll, 2013). A multitude of non-governmental organizations and the governments of fifty countries were present. The plenary sessions were presided over by the Big Four delegations. Over the course of the next two months, the United Nations Charter was finished and signed by representatives of the 50 member states on June 26, 1945. After the Charter was ratified by the majority of the other 46 countries as well as by the five permanent members of the Security Council the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Soviet Union, and China the UN came into being on October 24, 1945 (Roll, 2013).

The United Nations comprises six primary operating entities, including the General Assembly, Security Council, UN Secretariat, International Court of Justice, and Trusteeship Council. It is worth noting that the Trusteeship Council has not been in session since 1994. Numerous specialized organizations, funds, and initiatives are part of the UN System. Some of these are UNICEF, UNESCO, the World Bank Group, the World Health Organization, and the World Food Programme. Furthermore, non-governmental organizations may be allowed to engage with other agencies, such as the Economic and Social Council (United Nations, 2020).

3. Composition of the United Nations Security Council

The Council is composed of 15 Members: Five permanent members: China, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and ten non-permanent members are elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly. The five permanent members and the impacts are discussed below:

3.1 China as a Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council

With a population of more than 1.4 billion, China, officially known as the People's Republic of China (PRC), is the most populous nation in the world (Schneider & Arasu, 2023). With the adoption of U.N. General Assembly Resolution 2758 on October 25, 1971, the People's Republic of China (PRC) took the place of the Republic of China (ROC), now more generally known as Taiwan, and was elected as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. The ROC was one of the founding nations of the U.N., which succeeded the unsuccessful League of Nations in 1945. The ROC had fought alongside the Allies in World War II. It also held veto power alongside France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States as one of the five victorious nations that made up the U.N. Security Council (Feng, 2022). The conflict ended four years later when Mao's forces seized authority over mainland China and drove Chiang's army to the adjacent island of Taiwan, which had been a colony of Japan between 1895 and 1945 and still serves as the current home of the ROC government. On October 1, 1949, Mao's Chinese Communist Party proclaimed the establishment of the PRC on Tiananmen Square in Beijing. However, it would have to wait another twenty years for the U.N. to recognize it (Feng, 2022).

There were several factors that helped China secure a permanent seat at the UNSC, one of which is China's political and military power, China's armed forces are regarded as among the strongest in the world, and they have significantly advanced in recent years (Lendon, 2021). According to Lendon (2021), He posited that China's stated military budget for 2022 was the second largest in the world at US\$230 billion (1.45 trillion Yuan). China has a permanent seat at the UNSC due to its status as a major world power. Its military might be seen as a critical factor in maintaining global security, and its inclusion in the UNSC is important in ensuring that the international community is able to address threats to global security. China keeps up the upgrading of its nuclear arsenal that it started in the 1990s and 2000s, but it is greatly increasing it by deploying more nuclear weapons than ever before, both in terms of variety and quantity (Kristensen, Korda & Reynolds, 2023). China is building an air-launched ballistic missile with potential nuclear capability and has reassigned a nuclear mission to its bombers. (Kristensen et al., 2023). China's diplomatic efforts has also played a significant role in securing a permanent seat at the UNSC. China has been a key player in global diplomacy for decades, and its active engagement with other countries has helped it to build relationships and alliances that have supported its inclusion in the UNSC.

Its growing economic influence has helped it to gain a seat at the UNSC, as it has the resources to support its efforts to promote global stability and security (Kollewe & McCurry, 2011). Overall, China's combination of political, military, diplomatic, and

economic power has helped it to earn a seat at the UNSC, where it plays a significant role in shaping international policy and promoting global security. Aderemi (2015) recognized that compared to China, Nigeria is experiencing corruption, weak democratic institutions, a deteriorating economic foundation, poor leadership, instability, and poverty and these are the main obstacles to achieving a permanent seat at the UNSC.

3.2 Russia as a Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council

Russia, or the Russian Federation, is a transcontinental nation that spans Northern Asia and Eastern Europe. With an eighth of the total area on Earth that is habitable, it is the biggest nation on the planet. After the Soviet Union, which had initially co-founded the UN in 1945, was dissolved in 1991, the Russian Federation took up the Soviet Union's seat and membership in the Security Council (Johnson, 2022). Due to an array of historical, political, and geopolitical circumstances, Russia is one of the United Nations Security Council's (UNSC) five permanent members. Russia possesses one of the world's largest nuclear arsenals, making it a significant military power and a force to be reckoned with in international affairs, and this has secured them a permanent seat in the UNSC.

According to the Federation of American Scientist (2021), Russia has around 1,588 deployed missiles (those prepared for launch), which is less than the United States' 1,644 missiles. The remaining weapons are either in reserve stocks or are about to be dismantled since they have been retired. In 1986, the Soviet Union, which served as Russia's forerunner, attained a peak stockpile of around 45,000 nuclear weapons. The bilateral New START deal between Russia and the United States now limits the quantity of weapons that Russia may possess. (Kristensen, Norris & Robert, 2006). As a permanent member of the UNSC, Russia has the power to veto any resolution put forward by other members, giving it a powerful tool to protect its interests and influence global politics. Russia/USSR has exercised its veto 121 times as of May 2022 (Security Council Report, 2020). Russia has also played an active role in international peacekeeping efforts, including through its participation in UN peacekeeping missions. This has helped to build trust and goodwill with other member states, enhancing its reputation and influence in the international community (Lavrov, 1996). Overall, Russia's permanent seat at the UNSC reflects its historical legacy, geopolitical importance, military power, and active engagement in international affairs.

Nigeria and Russia are two very different countries with different historical, political, economic, and military backgrounds, and thus the reasons why Nigeria is not a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), and Russia is. Russia's permanent membership is rooted in its historical position as a major world power, its economic and military strength, and its strong diplomatic relationships. Meanwhile, Nigeria's absence from the permanent members is mainly due to its relative lack of global economic, military, and political influence.

3.3 United Kingdom as a Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council

One of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and a pioneer member is the United Kingdom. In 2015, the UK was the UN's fifth-largest financial donor, contributing 5% of the organization's overall budget and 6.7% of its funding for peacekeeping (UNSC, 2015). The United Kingdom maintains permanent missions to the UN in Geneva, Vienna, and New York City. These diplomatic missions stand in for the UK in deliberations and make sure that other UN members and UN organizations are aware of Britain's interests and viewpoints (Wogu, Misra, Udoh, Sholarin & Ahuja, 2021).

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and American President Franklin Roosevelt wrote the Atlantic Charter in August 1941, and Churchill later paid a visit to the White House for the Arcadia Conference in December 1941. Roosevelt came up with the term "United Nations" when he was there and recommended it to Churchill to refer to the Allies in World War II. Roosevelt proposed it as a replacement for the phrase "Associated

Powers," which the United States used during the First World War (Daudu, Osimen, & K Shuaibu (2023). The United States, which did not formally join the war's Allies until 1917, began the conflict under the guise of an "Associated Power." Churchill agreed, pointing out that Lord Byron had used the word to refer to the Allies at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 in his poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (Security Council Report, 2020).

Bohlen (1973), noticed that At the Dumbarton Oaks Conference in 1944, representatives from the Big Four developed and negotiated the idea of the United Nations as an international organization that would replace the failing League of Nations. Since the USSR declined to have a direct meeting with China during the summit, the U.S. and U.K. delegations first met with the USSR before traveling to China. The General Assembly and Security Council of the United Nations had their first meetings in London beginning in January 1946. Westminster Central Hall hosted the General Assembly while Church House hosted the Security Council meetings (Bohlen, 1973).

3.4 France as a Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council

One of the five countries with a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which oversees maintaining world peace and security, is France. France has been a member of the UN since its founding in 1945 (Security Council Report, 2020). Through its leadership and support of numerous resolutions and other important UN organizations over the years, France has contributed to the organization. Additionally, it is one of the states that provides the largest financial contributions to both the general budget and the spending plan for peacekeeping missions. As successive French Presidents have openly stated their support for the UN and its objectives, there are obvious similarities between France's own policies and the ideas that the UN espouses, especially with respect to human rights (Security Council Report, 2020).

As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, France has a substantial influence on how different problems that endanger international stability and security are discussed and how various documents, such as Security Council resolutions, are written. As part of its involvement at the UNSC and in preserving peace and security, France plays a significant role in the elimination of arms, working to advance many treaties and uphold non-proliferation. The veto power that France has access to due to its permanent seat on the UN Security Council has also been used and threatened to be used numerous times since the establishment of the international organization to express its dissatisfaction with several resolutions, though noticeably much less frequently than the other veto power-holding governments (Feng, 2022).

3.5 The United State of America as a Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council

The United States is a founding member of the UN Security Council and one of its five permanent members (Security Council Report, 2020). New York City, which is where the organization's headquarters are located and where the General Assembly sessions are typically held, is located on the Northeast coast of the United States. With a contribution of 27.89% of the \$6.38 billion assessed peacekeeping budget for the UN's fiscal year 2020, the United States is the organization's greatest financial contributor (China and Japan contributed 15.2% and 8.5%). The assessed regular budget and the voluntary contributions are separate from the assessed peacekeeping budget. For the fiscal year 2022, the estimated annual budget for the UN is \$3.12 billion. The United States contributed 28.6% of the budget for peacekeeping operations from July 2016 to June 2017. The creation of the UN was significantly aided by the United States (Security Council Report, 2020). In relation to Nigeria, it is significant to remember that the geopolitical environment at the time the UN was founded had an impact on the UNSC's membership. Nigeria achieved independence in 1960, many years after the UN was founded; as a result, it was denied the opportunity to become one of the organization's

initial permanent members. However, it is important to note that Nigeria has actively participated in UN peacekeeping missions and significantly aided regional and global security initiatives. To remedy the underrepresentation of African countries in the UN system, the country has pushed for reforms, including requests for permanent African representation on the UNSC (Ogunowo, Chidozie, 2020).

4. Nigeria's Historical antecedent and Contemporary Influence in World Affairs

Following its independence, Nigeria became a significant player in Africa's independence, supporting other African countries in their struggle for independence. Nigeria was one of the original founding nations of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, which subsequently evolved into the African Union (AU) in 2002. Nigeria's historical role in international relations can be examined back to the era of the slave trade when Nigeria was an important hub for the trans-Atlantic slave trade (Ebegbulem, 2019). Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the first prime minister of Nigeria, was an important figure in the Pan-African movement who pushed for the decolonization of Africa and the advancement of African unity. During the Cold War, Nigeria was an important part of the Non-Aligned Movement, fighting for the rights of underdeveloped nations and opposing imperial rule (World Bank, 2021). Nigeria's economy increased by 3.6% in 2021 after contracting by 1.8% the year before, according to the African Development Bank Group (2023), which benefited from a supply-side increase of 4.4% in non-oil production as opposed to an 8.3% loss in the oil business. Services (5.6%) and agriculture (2.1%) were the main factors behind non-oil growth.

Another notable influence of the country in international affairs is in peace keeping missions. Hamman and Omojuwa (2013), noted that Nigeria is among the top nations providing troops to support United Nations, regional, and sub-regional led peacekeeping missions because of its interest in and commitment to maintaining international peace. The first time Nigeria participated in a UN peacekeeping mission was in the Congo in 1960, only a few days after gaining independence. Nigeria not only sent troops but also served as the operation's commander. Nigeria periodically provides the leadership at different levels of the various operations in the form of Chief Military Observers and Commanders of Peacekeeping Forces. In March 1998, at the height of the Liberian operation, Nigeria dispatched roughly 12,000 officers and troops to Liberia. For the upkeep of peace and security, more than 100 million naira and \$9 billion, respectively, were spent in Chad and Liberia and Sierra Leone (Muhammad, Ngada & Bukar, 2019). In the area of global diplomacy, Nigeria has been a major player, especially at the United Nations (UN).

Nigeria recently created the Multinational Joint Task Force with the main objective of eradicating Boko Haram terrorists and delivering peace and development to the Lake Chad Area. This task force is made up primarily of troops from Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroun (Lewu, 2021). United States Department of State (2021) equally noted Nigeria has leading the charge against terrorism in Africa. The nation is at war with Boko Haram in the northeast and has been working with other African countries and the international community to tackle the security threat that ISIS poses in West Africa. Nigeria currently plays a big and varied influence in world events. The nation's influence on the world arena is demonstrated by its economic prominence, leadership position in Africa, counterterrorism initiatives, response to climate change, and COVID-19 response (Feng, 2022).

4.1 Contemporary Internal Realities and Nigeria's Ambition

Nigeria is the largest nation in Africa in terms of population and economic output, making it important from a strategic perspective. Nigeria's population, which is predicted to

exceed 400 million people by 2050 and is currently growing at a rate of 2.59% annually, will making it the third-most populated country in the world. Between the year of its independence (1960) until 1970, the Nigerian economy grew and developed in a way that was typical of other developing nations. When development first began, agriculture predominated as the main source of expansion (Falae, 1992). About 70% of the population was employed in this important sector of the economy, which also generated about 80% of all government revenue. In recent years, Nigeria's Human Development Index (HDI) rose steadily from 0.51 in 2014 to 0.539 in 2019, but the rate of growth has decreased since around 2015. Nigeria still ranks 161 out of 189 nations in the low human development category despite the improvements. If inequality is considered, the HDI is substantially lower at 0.348. The recent decrease in its economic fortunes is related to the HDI's halting improvement (UN, 2022).

Although some have claimed that Nigeria and Nigerians would not significantly gain from her quest for a permanent seat, one of the main benefits Nigeria can derive is that of image and prestige (Iharagbon, 2017). It should be noted that the third fundamental manifestation of the quest for dominance on the international scene is prestige. Morgenthau, (1986) emphasized that,

“He only really understands and can fully enjoy what he considers to be his great traits when others praise his goodness, brilliance, and strength. He can only achieve the level of security, riches, and power he feels is rightfully his through his reputation for perfection.”

From the, even though Nigeria is the largest country in Africa and has acted as a Big Brother to other African nations in need, the tributes that should have been given to her have not been. As a result, even though Nigeria is aware of her superior qualities, she has not yet reaped the rewards associated with them (Iharagbon, 2017). However, the bid has boosted Nigerian pride and improved the nation's standing as a regional force in Africa. Many Nigerians saw the bid as an opportunity to highlight the nation's dedication to maintaining international peace and security as well as an acknowledgment of the nation's expanding economic and political influence. In an interview in June 2023 with key stakeholders in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs these assertions are also confirmed

“Nigeria has "paid its dues" to the UN and has a "vigorous economy," making it a significant regional influencer and leader. These factors show that Nigeria is committed to upholding international law and order.”

Additionally, the endeavour has helped raise public awareness of Nigeria's importance in world politics. Nigeria has used military force to carry out its peacekeeping responsibilities, but diplomatic formalities have not permitted her to do so. This will change if Nigeria pursues and is granted permanent membership in the Security Council (Iharagbon, 2017). In an interview in June 2023 with key stakeholders in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs these assertions are also confirmed

“Nigeria's long participation in peacekeeping missions across Africa has given it invaluable expertise and understanding of the difficulties the region faces. This experience has enabled Nigeria to deploy its troops swiftly and effectively when required, showcasing its readiness to contribute to UN peacekeeping efforts.

Secondly, Nigeria boasts a substantial and well-trained military force, which not only has the capacity to participate in UN peacekeeping missions but also possesses the potential to enforce UN resolutions and intervene in humanitarian crises.”

Furthermore, Nigeria's commitment to democracy and leadership role in Africa, particularly West Africa also shows that Nigeria is an ideal candidate for the UNSC permanent seat, highlighted by the different positions given to Nigerian's past and present leaders within the continent such as ECOWAS appointment of former President Mohammed Buhari as COVID-19 response champion (Bassey Udo April 24, 2020). Former President Olusegun Obasanjo is appointed as high representative to the Heart of

Africa by the African Union (Premium Times September 21, 2021) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) decision to make President Bola Tinubu its new Chairman (Jonathan Nda-Isaiah, July 20, 2023). In an interview in June 2023 with key stakeholders in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs these assertions are also confirmed

“Nigeria’s “strong leader role” is an important indicate to the United Nations as regards to her ideal status for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.”

Lastly, because of its ideal position virtually in the middle of Africa, Nigeria is seen as the best-qualified suitable African candidate for a permanent membership at the Security Council. Regardless of what level of development it may be, South Africa is too far south for a successful response to many potential core African problems, and Egypt is too far north to respond to a truly African scenario appropriately. Nigeria has regarding comparable distance to the “four corners” of the African continent, although none of these other nations are thought to from a tactical point of view (Ikhariale, 2002).

4.2 Challenges to Nigeria’s Quest for a Permanent seat on the UNSC

Ethno-religious tensions have risen to an unprecedented level since the country re-established democracy in 1999 (Ikhariale, 2002). Police around the country are said to have documented 200 violent altercations just in 1999. According to reports, there were about 10,000 fatalities, a few thousand injuries, and over 750 000 displaced people between 2001 and 2004 (Hien, Huyen & Hoang, 2023). The Chcoco Movement, the Bakassi Boys, the Odua People's Congress (OPC) in the West, the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in the East, and the Egbesu Boys, and other ethnic militias have all increased their acts of violence during this time. In the South, there is the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), and in the North, there is the Arewa Peoples Mitress (APC). Serious environmental degradation, particularly in the Niger Delta, and the vast proliferation of small arms across the nation have made the situation more difficult. Poverty has an impact on the economy of the entire nation (Feng, 2022).

There is no doubt that Nigeria has factors that make her relevant and prepared to lead the African continent, factors such as her population, territorial location, economy, foreign policy stand, natural resources to mention a few. These factors as well as her international activities makes her the ideal pick for a permanent seat on the United Nation Security Council. These challenges include insecurity, undemocratic tendencies of leaders, dropping military and economic status, poverty, unemployment and human trafficking (Osimen, et al, 2023)

Nigeria operates in a global system based on the idea that a country's internal problems are somehow connected to its foreign interactions. To overcome these obstacles and earn Nigeria a permanent seat at the UN will cost a lot of money. The threat posed to her bid for a permanent seat by terrorism (the Boko Haram Insurgency) in Nigeria is the most notable of these difficulties. However, as we work to hasten our nation's entry into the global economy by promoting political and socioeconomic progress, charity must start at home. The hopes for household tranquillity, security, and wealth must be fulfilled. There seems to have been agreement pending the expansion of the UN Security Council and the restructuring of the permanent seat designated for Africa (Feng, 2022).

South Africa and Egypt have also been mentioned as potential rivals for Nigeria's seat. Egypt continues to be a significant Arab and African state, regardless of the geopolitics, regional international politics, challenges of stability and conflict, or people and culture. Egypt has a dominant position in Middle Eastern foreign relations up until 1991. It calls itself the region's leading broker of peace and, on times, chief instigator of conflict. For instance, an unforeseen Arab coalition over Iraq in 1991 was forged by Egypt. Its population is large, its armed forces are formidable about of quantity and quality, and it has 300,000 combatants (Cantori, 2002).

The credentials of South Africa are likewise exceptional. It is without a doubt the sub-regional dominant force in the South African area. But its most compelling asset may lie in the charismatic character of its former leader, Nelson Mandela. Nigeria's chances can be increased despite all odds if swift action is taken in specific areas to boost its standing and make it an enticing alternative for all the countries that are going to choose (Feng, 2022).

5. Conclusion

There is no question that Nigeria's application for a permanent seat on the UNSC is mostly genuine and perfectly in line. It is undeniable that Nigeria has supported African nations from Angola to Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), through Sierra Leone, to Liberia. She has consistently demonstrated that what she says she will do. The nation's foreign policy and reputation abroad will be significantly impacted by Nigeria's application for a permanent seat at the UNSC. The country's aspirations are understandable, but whether they are realized will depend on several things, including its record on human rights, its security condition, and the political will of the rest of the world. The interests and concerns of all UN members must ultimately be carefully considered before any decision on increasing the permanent membership of the UNSC is made.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express their gratitude to the administration of Covenant University Centre for Research, Innovation and Discovery (CUCRID) for providing the framework for this study as well as publication assistance in the form of paper processing fees. The authors acknowledge the reviewers as well for their insightful remarks.

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