

# NIGERIA'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS



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A THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL COMPLETION OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF  
The Certificate-of-Training in United Nations Peace Support Operations



Peace Operations Training Institute®

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A Thesis

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## ABSTRACT

Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has grown to be widely recognized in the international community as an unrelenting advocate of global peace. The principles and objectives of Nigerian Foreign Policy since independence made it mandatory for the country to be an active participant in global as well as African regional Peace Support Operations (PSOs). Furthermore, as a non-aligned country during the Cold War years, Nigeria maintained a neutral position, which made her a dependable mediator and courted participant in the forces raised to restore and maintain peace in conflict zones.

Certainly, this active participation in PSOs has cost Nigeria significant human and material losses. While most of the peacekeeping operations in which Nigeria has participated were UN mandated and led, a few came under the mandate of the then Organization of African Unity (OAU), now African Union (AU). More recently, these PSOs have been authorized and carried out under Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) mandates and often, Nigerian took a leading role at the operational level.

As an institution, the Armed Forces of Nigeria have kept pace with the evolving doctrine of PSO. This has gone a long way in projecting Nigeria's image in the international community and has improved its armed forces professional capabilities through exposure and interaction with troops from other countries. The performance of its troops has been widely acclaimed as her contingents in PSOs have repeatedly earned citations and medals for leadership, bravery, discipline, professional competence and integrity.

This thesis will review the enormous contribution that Nigeria has made towards securing world peace and security through its past participation in PSOs. It will identify past problems and current "issues" in Nigeria's participation in PSOs. The thesis will also enumerate the benefits that would accrue to the Armed Forces of Nigeria if its PSOs were well structured. This study will provide policy-making inputs on PSOs that could be used by the Armed Forces of Nigeria hierarchy charged with the responsibilities for planning and future participation in UN PSOs. Finally, the study will contribute to the broad knowledge that already exists in the PSO field and hopefully encourage further research work.

1.

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

The League of Nations was created in the aftermath of the First World War. The league's purpose was to promote international cooperation and to achieve international peace and security<sup>1</sup>. However, the League of Nations was powerless in preventing the world's descent into a second global war thus leading to the creation of the United Nations (UN) at the end of World War II, in 1945.

The UN Charter is the *grand norm* or the source of authority for the conduct of all Peace Support Operations (PSO) globally. The first article in the charter states the purpose of the UN thus: "To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace".<sup>2</sup> In fulfilling this responsibility, Chapter VI of the UN Charter provides for the pacific settlement of disputes by a variety of peaceful measures, these include: negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement (Article 33)<sup>3</sup>. Chapter VII on the other hand, is essentially coercive and designed to deal with threats to peace, breaches of peace and acts of aggression perpetrated by sovereign states. Since gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria's interest and commitment to world peace has

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1. Joint Warfare Publication 3-50, Peace Support Operations (Abuja: 2001).

2. Charter of the UN, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter1.shtml>.

3. Oni SK (ed) **The Nigerian Army ECOMOG Operations: Liberia and Sierra Leone**, (Kaduna: Spectrum Books Ltd, 2002).

put her in the forefront of troop contributing nations to support UN, regional, and sub-regional led PSOs.

The three Armed Services that constitute the main organ of the Armed Forces of Nigeria have now been established for over 50 years. Within this period Nigeria has had the privilege of participating either with a single service or with two or more armed services in a PSO. The earliest test of Armed Forces of Nigeria participation came within a few months of political independence when Nigeria contributed both military forces and police to ONUC, the peacekeeping mission in the Congo that lasted from 1960 to 1964. Since then Nigerian forces have participated in peacekeeping missions across the globe under varying international legal authority executing a variety of operational mandates.

For example, at the sub regional level, Nigeria played a prominent role in the integrative and peace building efforts within the west-African region. At the regional level, she has contributed to various peace building and peacekeeping efforts on the African continent in places such as Somalia, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Globally, Nigeria participated in conflict area such as Lebanon, the area of the former Yugoslavia and in Kuwait. To date, Nigeria has contributed armed military contingents, unarmed military observers, military staff officers, formed police units and police advisors as well as civilian experts to more than 40 UN, OAU/AU and ECOWAS missions.

For this active support of (and participation in) international peacekeeping, Nigeria has been rightly singled out for praise at the highest levels of the UN. However, it must be noted that the human, material and financial losses Nigeria has incurred in these involvements have been significant. Further noteworthy is the view held by some that Nigeria has not taken full advantage

of its active participation in the numerous peacekeeping operations around the world by not getting commensurate economic, military and political remuneration for its participation. For example, countries like Ghana, which also participate in numerous UN PSOs, generate funds through this process to defray the costs of sustaining its military, while Nigeria on the other hand has largely deprived itself of such benefits.

## 2. **CHAPTER TWO: OPERATIONAL TASKS OF ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA PARTICIPATION IN PSOs**

The Armed Forces of Nigeria are comprised of the Army, Navy and Air Force. While the Nigerian Army (NA) has been the predominant military service deployed to peacekeeping operations, significant contributions have also been made by the Nigerian Navy (NN) and the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) far beyond the standard use of vessels and aircraft respectively to convey contingents from one place to another. The specific roles and tasks carried out by the NA, NN and NAF in past peacekeeping operations will be discussed in this chapter.

### 2.1 **ROLES OF THE NIGERIAN ARMY IN PSOs**

#### **GENERAL**

As noted previously, the NA participation in peacekeeping dates back to over 50 years. General Aguiyi Ironsi led NA troops out for the first time in a PSO mission to the war ravaged Congo in the 1960s. The NA success in this endeavor endeared it to the international community as a reliable peace



partner.<sup>4</sup> Since then, the NA has continued to contribute to world peace whenever the Federal Government of Nigeria decided to participate.

While the strength and scope of the mandates varied for each peacekeeping mission, the operational tasks assigned to the NA military contingent usually involved the following: assisting in establishing a safe and secure environment; supervision of disarmament, disengagement and withdrawal of former combatants. Others have been: monitoring and supervising cease-fire agreements; supervising prisoner exchanges; and, assisting in establishing and implementing arms control regimes. Key skills needed by the forces to carry-out these tasks often required additional pre-deployment training. The tasks requiring additional training included: observation techniques, negotiation and mediation skills, surveillance and supervision, information gathering, presence patrolling, and investigation of complaints. This training is normally conducted at the Nigeria Army Peace Keeping Centre (NAPKC), Jaji- Nigeria.

### 2.1.1 **SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS**

According to Dr Eze, while the NA has participated in ECOWAS, OAU/AU and UN organized PSOs, the constraints and challenges of these operations were overall similar.<sup>5</sup>

Due to its position as the regional power and financier, Nigeria led the West African endeavor in ECOWAS PSOs. This resulted in significant financial costs to Nigeria which placed a heavy burden on the economy. The NA was further constrained in the ECOWAS PSOs because it lacked many basic amenities such as responsive remunerations and troop welfare programs. Reuben Agbo

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4. Dangana WM, PSO, Social and Professional Implication on the Nigerian Military. P.35.

5. Ibid. p.37

made this clear when he stated that, “the NA carried the cross and thorn of the ECOMOG PSOs in West Africa.”<sup>6</sup>

The NA was used to participating in UN PSOs but when the defunct OAU decided to intervene in Chad, it posed another level of challenge to the peacekeeping force. In Chad, many observed that the NA was the only force that could be relied upon in difficult situations. Iremenene, in commenting on the Chad operation, stated that: “the NA took its level of discipline and professionalism for granted and expected other African states’ armies to behave the same. It was completely disappointed.”<sup>7</sup> The lack of a common doctrine and different national objectives of the troop contributing African nations in this PSO made the operational environment very unfriendly and the mission, difficult to attain.

According to Dr. Biobaku, “the NA fared better in UN organized PSOs than the ECOMOG and Chad operations”.<sup>8</sup> Alfred Junue posited that in spite of the weakness of the UN, its mandate for PSOs is always clearer than those of ECOWAS and OAU/AU”.<sup>9</sup> Also, for UN-led peacekeeping missions, the UN Security Council is available to respond to and help resolve whatever new issues and circumstances, problems and constraints peacekeeper may face during an operational deployment.

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6. Reuben Agbo, PSOs in General, the African Perspective, A Paper Delivered at Social and Defence Forum Presentation Day (2008). p.6.

7. Inemennen P, African Armies and Professional Competence, A Paper Delivered at Social and Defence Forum Presentation Day (2008) p.6.

8. Dr Biobakun K, PSO’s in General, the Analysis of participating Armies, A Paper Delivered at Social and Defence Forum Presentation Day (2008) p.9.

9. Op Cit. p.19.

In Darfur, the ever increasing number of attacks on UN peacekeepers, especially NA troops, suggested that the force structure, equipment and weapons for PSOs need to be periodically reviewed and adjusted as found necessary. Ajagbe Oguntofaki suggested that the NA should equip itself in a manner that disposes it to be able to strike at unruly attackers while at the

same time being able to perform everyday peacekeeping tasks.<sup>10</sup> Identifying the appropriate type of equipment and level of armament required was found to be a challenge for Nigerian Army PSO planners and executioners.

## 2.2 **ROLES OF THE NIGERIAN NAVY IN PSOs**

### **GENERAL**

In addition to sea lift of troops from other ECOWAS contributing countries, the Nigerian Navy has deployed some naval assets to support ECOMOG operations. These have included; 2 Fast Attack Craft Missile, one Landing Ship Tank (LST), 2 Mine Counter Measure Vessels (MCMV), one Tug, 3 Merchant Ships and one Oil Tanker. The NN used these elements of sea power to control the waterways and coastline within the operational area of the PSO during the ECOMOG operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone. However, the principles of “minimum force” and “control of application of lethal weapons” in PSOs (to limit civilian casualties and collateral damage) restricted the application of Naval Gunfire Support (NGFS) when requested by peacekeepers.

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10. Op Cit. p.18.

Reflecting on the effectiveness of the NN in ECOMOG operations (Adekeye 1997) noted that it was not only in sea control that the maritime force of ECOMOG demonstrated its essentiality. They also played many other support roles that were crucial to the peacekeeping process.

### 2.2.1 **SPECIFIC TASKS CARRIED OUT**

#### **Sea Surveillance/Blockade:**

There was the need to carry out a continuous surveillance of the entire Liberian coast through patrols to ensure that sea blockade of supply of arms and ammunition to the rebels was effective. The National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) used canoes to launch artillery attacks on ECOMOG Naval Task Force Ships at early stages of the operation. These were later routed which paved way for relief efforts, refugee evacuation tasks and consolidation of PSO to take effect.

#### **Control of Shipping:**

The NN used its control of the sea during ECOMOG operations to control all types of shipping through channeling, searching, identification and seizure of lethal cargoes. It also allowed channeling of humanitarian relief materials to other parts of the country according to the refugee situation.

#### **Gunfire Support:**

When ECOMOG's mandate was changed from peacekeeping to peace enforcement, the NN did, at times, provide Gun Fire Support (GFS) to ground troops from the sea. The GFS was crucial in insuring that ECOMOG did not

yield ground unnecessarily to advancing rebel forces. Furthermore, the support of the NN was crucial to the ECOMOG forces' capture of Roberts Field International Airport near Liberia's capital, Monrovia, and the city of Buchanan, the second largest city in Liberia.

### **Sealift of Personnel/Logistics:**

The NN ships like Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) AMBE were used to transport of troops to and from Liberia during the ECOMOG operations. Following the near impassable nature of the Liberian roads due to activities of armed factions, sea lift of logistics, troops and supplies became the main option open to ECOMOG. Also, some casualty evacuation and movement of humanitarian relief supplies were done by sea.

### **Search and Rescue Mission:**

The NN conducted various search and rescue missions within the territorial waters of Liberia and Sierra Leone during the ECOMOG operations. According to Adekeye (1997:431), with the assistance of a Guinean ship stationed off the entrance to the Sherbro River in Sierra Leone in late 1990, more effective search and rescue operations were enabled.<sup>11</sup>

### **Policing of Ships Conveying Relief Materials:**

The social and humanitarian catastrophe caused by the Liberian civil war resulted in the death of over 100,000 people within the first few months of hostilities. This was partly due to the inability of relief agencies to bring relief

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11. Ibid. p.431.

materials for the refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). After the Nigerian led Naval Task Force was established as part of the peacekeeping force, vessels bringing in relief materials were escorted to berths at sea ports to discharge their cargoes. This role helped to save the lives of many Liberians and Sierra Leoneans.

In summary the NN played a vital role that contributed to the success of ECOMOG operations. It is possible that the Federal Government may need to acquire more naval platforms for the NN. The costs of such acquisitions could be partially off-set through UN reimbursements when these are used in UN PSOs.

## 2.3 **ROLES OF THE NIGERIAN AIR FORCE IN PSOs**

### **GENERAL**

In the late 1990s, when the NAF just like the NN, sent its combat platforms to the ECOMOG PSO in Liberia, it had not done such a deployment since 1964. During the operations in Liberia the NAF stationed its aircraft at Lungi International Airport due to the insecure nature of both James Springs Payne and Roberts Field Airports near Monrovia, Liberia's capital. In addition to a variety of air support operations, the NAF provided Close Air Support (CAS) to ECOMOG ground forces when the mandate of the peacekeepers was changed to peace enforcement.

#### 2.3.1 **Specific Tasks Carried out:**

##### **Reconnaissance**

Air reconnaissance was undertaken by visual observation and detection methods such as air photography, radar, infra-red, electronic and acoustic

devices. Air reconnaissance missions were used to obtain information about activities and resources of potential adversaries. Dornier 228 light transport aircraft were fitted with special equipment and instruments to perform these tasks. During the ECOMOG operations, Alpha Jets were also used for patrolling over rebel held areas to provide visual information of their activities and, at times, to interdict targets of opportunity on the ground.

### **Transport Duties**

The NAF played a key role in the transportation of logistics, supply of materiel and transportation of troops over short distances within operational areas. C-130 military transport planes were used for the airlift of units to mission areas during ECOMOG operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Most of the perishable rations were also transported from Nigeria to the mission area by the NAF. This role helped to maintain the fighting efficiency of units during the PSO. C-130's were also used for troop rotation on completion of their missions.

### **Casualty Evacuation**

Casualty evacuation of serious cases during the operation was accomplished using NAF Super Puma helicopters. The NAF C-130's were also used to convey the remains of dead Nigerian peacekeepers back to Nigeria.

### **Aerial Patrol**

Helicopters were also used to undertake aerial patrol. The rotary wing aircraft hover capability made them particularly appropriate for observation and sight reporting of incidents taking place on the ground.

### **Close Air Support (CAS)**

During the ECOMOG operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the NAF provided CAS to ECOMOG ground forces using Alpha Jets. Specific targets included rebel convoys, ammunition depots and troop concentration areas. This support was vital to ECOMOG's successes during the counter offensive against NPFL rebel fighters.

### **Other Observations on NAF Operations in ECOMOG:**

Overall, the platforms in the inventory of NAF were insufficient for sustaining units in these PSO's. Particularly, the NAF C-130 transport planes are insufficient to transport large numbers of Nigerian troops to PSOs. Consequently, the Federal Government resolved to using commercial airlines for conveying troops for UN PSOs. This has hampered the benefits which the government could derive from PSOs in terms of being reimbursed by the UN for initial troop deployment and semi-annual troop rotation transportation costs. It may therefore be desirable for the Federal Government to make concerted efforts to repair existing C-130s and to purchase more for the NAF. Furthermore, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) could revitalize other unserviceable planes and make them available on a "wet lease" basis to the UN for maximum benefits to be derived to the nation through UN reimbursements for the lease of those Nigerian aircraft to the peacekeeping mission.



3. **CHAPTER THREE: THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL  
IMPLICATIONS OF PSO UNDERTAKEN BY THE  
ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA**

The socio-economic as well as the political implications of Nigeria's participation in PSOs are also important. The decision by Nigeria to undertake PSO ventures should not be taken lightly. This is because the cost of mounting any PSO is monumental. It certainly will affect the economy because the resources diverted to the peacekeeping operation could be used for other developmental purposes. It will affect other needs of the society. Therefore, it is generally perceived as an unnecessary diversion especially if the huge amount involved does not bring any benefit directly to the nation mounting the operation as Nigeria did in all its operations except those led by the UN.

Equally, just as it drains the economy, the social dislocation to the nation is another factor. Nigerian soldiers who have been deployed for long periods away from their families have frequently returned home with serious physical and mental ailments causing anguish to their families in particular and the nation at large. This means that long-term PSO deployments have the potential of impacting negatively on quite a lot of families. Studies of Nigerian forces participating in the Liberian and Sierra Leonean operations attest to this fact. Politically, the ECOMOG operations have questioned Nigeria's sensitivity to the plight of the ordinary Nigerians who are in need of better standard of life. National resources were expended without the consent of the people. At the end of operations nothing came back financially or materially to the Nigerian people as a dividend. Although the nation is committed to Africa and the ECOWAS community of states, it does not mean that the national leadership

should not take the feelings of the ordinary citizens into consideration when undertaking such costly interventions.

#### 4. **CHAPTER FOUR: BENEFITS OF NIGERIA'S PARTICIPATION IN PSO**

Despite the problems and costs confronting Nigeria's peacekeeping efforts it has continuously sent troops to PSOs. Nigeria routinely ranks in the top five countries contributing troops to UN peacekeeping operations. As previously noted, the Armed Forces of Nigeria have achieved international recognition for their admirable performances in peacekeeping. It is worthy of note that peacekeeping has become a proxy for training in terms of acquiring practical experiences. It serves as a continuous on the field training experience. The challenges in the mission area provide opportunities for more practical experiences of soldering. In an era in which military hardware is being improved through testing on a daily basis, PSO deployments also serve to test the familiarity of Nigerian troops with modern weapons. Joint and combined training has also been achieved in the various PSOs. These have afforded Nigerian troops the opportunity to mix with other nation's armed forces, thus encouraging training and learning of their organization, tactics and methods of operation.

Nigeria has also been using the mechanism of peacekeeping to translate her inspirational quest for African leadership into reality. Its contributions to PSO have contributed to boosting the country's military and diplomatic status within the international system. It has been through the instrumentality of the

peacekeeping force that Nigeria has assumed the status of a major actor in international conflict management.<sup>12</sup>

Arising from peacekeeping therefore, more African countries and indeed the outside world have come to appreciate the centrality of Nigeria to African affairs. Nigeria has shown commitment to promoting international peace and security through her participation in PSO. The country has particularly demonstrated her ability when conducting sub-regional PSO missions. Consequently, Nigeria has leveraged on her peace support role as a basis to claim for a seat in an expanded UN Security Council.

With specific reference to UN operations, Nigerian participation in peacekeeping has been a potential source of revenue for the Nigerian government. This is so because contributing countries to UN PSO are entitled to various reimbursements. These range from reimbursements for equipment used in mission areas, food items, clothing, individual equipment and troops monthly allowances. Reimbursement on equipment has sometimes provided Nigeria funds for purchase of new equipment to replace old ones. Although reimbursements are often delayed because of UN cash shortages, economic gains can still accrue to the country on account of her participation in a UN PSO if done correctly. For example, reimbursement for use of major equipment and provision for “self sustainment” for the initial 2 battalions in UNAMSIL from December 27 1999 to 26 January 2000 amounted to US \$798,063.<sup>13</sup>

Nigeria is amongst the largest contributors of troops to UN PSOs, this means that the percentage of troops’ allowance that accrues to Nigeria, when

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12. Oche O. (2000), “Nigeria’s role in International Conflict Management” HI Ajaegwu, BJ St Mathew – Daniel and OE Uyo (Eds), *Nigeria: A People United A future Assured Vol 1, Abuja*, Federal Ministry of Information.

13. Lawrence A. (1996), *Peacekeeping and International Security in Changing World*, (Jos: Mono Expressions Ltd, 1996) p.192.

aggregated, provides a considerable amount of foreign exchange earnings for the country. At UNAMSIL, the UN troops allowance paid to the TCC is US \$1, 349 per troop per month. Of that, Nigeria pays a flat rate of \$600.00 to officers and soldiers while retaining for its national treasury US \$740 per soldier.<sup>14</sup> The amount retained by the government varies based on the mission. For instance, in Liberia allowance paid to individual peacekeepers was only US \$1,000.

Overall, the amount retained by the country from UN troops allowance has therefore amounted to a significant income for the country. Thus, contrary to the popular impression that Nigeria's participation in PSO is always a drain on the economy, the reality is that such participation, especially in UN operations and missions, can constitute a source of foreign exchange for the country. It is when participating in African regional and sub regional peacekeeping missions that Nigeria often "loses" money.

5. **CHAPTER FIVE: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF NIGERIA'S PARTICIPATION IN PSO**

Nigeria's Armed Forces will continue to play a major role in the achievement of the national security and foreign policy objectives. Apart from being the most populous and leading black nation in the world, Nigeria is blessed with great human and natural resources. The UN has relied much on Nigeria through the use of its military as peacekeepers in the organization's quest for global peace and security. Nigeria's participation in international PSOs has not been without challenges. For better future performance in PSO,

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14. Ibid.

these challenges should be addressed and Nigeria's role in international PSOs could even be enhanced.

### 5.1 **CHALLENGES OF NIGERIA'S PARTICIPATION IN PSOs**

The involvement of Nigeria in international peacekeeping operations, particularly in ECOMOG, brought out some lapses and challenges. Notably among them are: manpower, training and doctrine, logistics, mandate, administration, inadequate information management, language barrier and funding.

#### **Manpower:**

The problem of manpower especially in the NA has become noticeable in recent times. This is worsened by the current security challenges (terrorism) facing this country resulting in most troops being deployed on Internal Security operations within the Country. Troops have to be drawn from different units across the country to form up a complete battalion with the required strength that meets the UN standards for deployment to the mission area. In recent times, in extreme cases, some personnel have been posted to deploying units as late as the time of their departure to the mission area. These individuals were deployed without pre-induction training. Obviously personnel of such *ad hoc* units that are filled at the last minute for a PSO arrive in the mission area without adequate knowledge of each other's capabilities and deficiencies. This also creates problem of command and control. Standardization of NA units in terms of manpower would be a positive step towards equipping the NA for effective participation in PSOs. This could be achieved if all postings and marrying up of units for PSO are concluded 6 months prior to deployment.

This would also ensure cohesion among the units' personnel thus promoting *esprit de corps*.

### **Training and Doctrine:**

Another major problem identified is that of training and doctrine associated with PSOs. Different countries have different training doctrines for the training of its personnel. The NA is faced with the problem of training doctrine for PSO. This problem had manifested itself in various operations. In the case of ECOMOG, Anglophone oriented troops were operating alongside Francophone troops which further compounded this problem. The Armed Forces of Nigeria should come up with a suitable doctrine for PSO. This would impact positively on all aspects (organization, training, leader development, materiel, and selection of soldiers) of the Armed Forces of Nigeria' preparations for and conducting peace support operations.

### **Logistics:**

Logistic problems are another set of hindrances impacting on Nigeria's participation in PSOs. In the face of non availability of centralized logistical support for ECOWAS sub regional peacekeeping, participating countries suffered shortfalls in lift and other logistical capabilities. As a result most of them relied on Nigeria which was itself logistically hard pressed. There is the need to have adequate logistical support before embarking on peacekeeping operations. The nature of the logistical challenges faced by Nigerian troops deployed on PSOs has included: lack of sufficient quantity of vehicles, lack of adequate medical facilities, insufficient communication equipment and individual soldier "kitting." The successful accomplishment of the tasks of

Nigerian contingents depends to a large extent on the availability of reliable and efficient communication support. Communication is the vital tool required to exercise command and control of the forces deployed in the mission area. Problems of communication have included such relatively low cost and mundane items as inadequate supply of batteries and lack of battery chargers. This adversely affects command and control of units. This problem was also common with the Nigerian contingent deployed with UNMIL. It is necessary to increase the scale of equipment of the signal element supporting a Nigerian battalion in peacekeeping to meet the UNs requirements for battalion level communications as outlined in the standard UN Memorandum of Understanding that the UN executes with the troop contributing country.

### **Mandate:**

Mandates are resolutions authorizing and defining a peacekeeping operation. PSOs should endeavor to have a clear and unambiguous mandate including rules of engagement for the forces. The problem of vague, unclear, unrealistic and frequently changing mandates was encountered during the Nigerian maiden peacekeeping venture in the Congo in the 1960s. The same problem of an unclear mandate arose in Chad where the OAU (now AU) peacekeepers watched helplessly while rebel groups chased away the incumbent government of President Goukouni Waddeye from office. The ECOMOG operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone 1990-1999 did see a needed change in mandate that enabled appropriate force application.

### **Language Barrier:**

Language barrier is another major problem posed to NA personnel in PSO. For instance, in Chad (1979-1980 and 1982-1983) there was language barrier and the Nigerian military had to get interpreters in order to communicate with the host nation and peacekeepers from non-English speaking countries. This same problem exists today in Darfur (UNAMID) and Mali (AFISMA), though at a lower level as some NA personnel understand and speak passable French and Arabic. Nigeria therefore needs to encourage more of its personnel to learn French, Portuguese, Spanish and Arabic etc.

### **Funding:**

Nigeria suffered financially during the first intervention in Liberia in 1990. It was always in search of financial support from other ECOWAS members for the mission. Nigeria established an “endowment fund” for the operation with an initial amount of 50 million dollars being proposed. This fund received no contributions. Generally, assistance from other sources was slow in coming. Eventually ECOWAS member states that contributed troops threatened to withdraw from the force for lack of funding. This situation caused Nigeria to single-handedly provide substantial financial support for further ECOMOG operations. The sinking of substantial financial resources to restore peace in other countries while Nigeria’s social and physical infrastructures were sorely in need of repair was difficult to rationalize with the public at large. Most Nigerians feel the billions of dollars spent for PSOs could have been better used to reduce Nigeria’s foreign debt or better still, to alleviate poverty in the country where 70 per cent of the populace survives on less than 1 US Dollar



per day.<sup>15</sup> Use of substantial sums of money to pay for PSOs also helps to explain negative responses from Nigeria's creditors when mention is made of possible debt forgiveness. Any major future involvement by Nigeria in peacekeeping would certainly be predicated on a firm commitment of financial support from either the UN or other international organizations.

### **Administration:**

Nigeria's participation in PSOs also surfaced problems in the areas of administration like medical care, medical evacuation, burial pay and allowance, misappropriation by selling of troops' raw food and units' fuel. Soldiers in deployed units also complained of lack of promotion opportunities and such simple things as not being able to observe holidays. These shortcomings were largely attributed to poor unit and sub-unit leadership. The poor quality of administration in deployed units has caused significant embarrassment to the Nigerian Army and the country in general. Commanders and troops must be adequately apprised of the danger of such practices like illegally selling items in the mission area. The Nigerian government and military need to look into all areas of administrative support for deployed units.

## **5.2 PROSPECTS FOR NIGERIA'S FUTURE PARTICIPATION IN PSOs**

From an international political standpoint, Nigeria views its continuing large-scale participation in international peacekeeping as giving it a legitimate claim for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. From a national financial standpoint there can be a potential for Nigeria to generate revenues from UN financial reimbursements for Nigerian troop and equipment "leased" to UN-led

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15. Olofinmuagun EO, (1995) *Economic Benefits of United Nations Peace Support Operations to Nigeria: An Appraisal*, being a Research Project submitted to National War College, Abuja.

PKOs. Managed wisely, UN reimbursements could be profitable by returning monetary amounts above and beyond what it costs Nigeria to deploy those forces and their associated equipment. Such profits could be used to develop infrastructure, modernization of the Armed Forces and enhanced quality of life of the service personnel. PSOs are also good avenues for exposing the Armed Forces of Nigeria to modern “Military Operations Other Than War” and to modern military equipment. This would improve the efficiency of troops. Continued Armed Forces of Nigeria participation in PSOs will also further enable her to seek recognition and bid for portfolios at the UN Headquarters in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and in senior leadership positions in fielded peacekeeping missions to include senior appointments such as force commanders. Participation of Nigerian personnel in PSOs also serves as an opportunity to garner aid and technical assistance from the more developed nations. This will improve the development of her human resource capacity.

## 6. **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION**

Since gaining independence in the 1960’s, Nigeria’s interest and commitment to world peace has put her in the forefront of troop contributing countries in support of global, regional and sub-regional Peace Support Operations (PSOs). Nigeria has participated in PSOs under the authority and mandates of the UN, AU (former OAU) and ECOWAS. Its armed forces have deployed to peacekeeping operations as either a single service, principally the Nigerian Army, or jointly with the Nigerian Air Force and/or the Nigerian Navy. Obviously, it has been the Nigerian Army that has borne the brunt of Nigeria’s involvement in PSOs.

The areas of deployment for Nigeria's Armed Forces in PSOs have had a wide geographic scope, ranging from the Congo, to Liberia, to Sudan and most recently in Mali.

Nigeria's long-time and continuing involvements in PSOs have allowed its Armed Forces to keep pace with the rapidly evolving nature of peacekeeping since 1989 as well as with the corresponding doctrinal and operational changes.

Nigeria's active participation in PSOs has seen it accrue both benefits as well as losses. The socio-economic as well as the political benefits of Nigeria's participation in PSOs weigh heavily each time Nigeria considers whether or not to participate in a PSO. Included in those considerations are both the potential positive as well as negative financial and social effects on the country and its citizenry. Some analysts are of the view that Nigeria has not taken full advantage of its active participation in the numerous peacekeeping operations around the world and feel that Nigeria is not getting commensurate economic, military and political remuneration for its participation. In the political arena, Nigeria has been using its very active participation in peacekeeping as one of the ways to translate her inspirational quest for African leadership into reality. Without doubt, Nigeria's generous contributions to PSOs have contributed to boosting the country's military and diplomatic status within the international system.

Financially, Nigeria's participation in peacekeeping could be a potential source of revenue for the Nigerian government. This is so because as a troop contributing country to a UN-led PSO she is entitled to a variety of reimbursements. Therefore, from a national standpoint, there could be a

potential for Nigeria to generate revenues from UN financial reimbursements for both Nigerian military and formed police units and their associated equipment that are all leased to UN PSOs. Such reimbursements could be profitable if the receipts of UN monetary amounts are above and beyond what it costs Nigeria to deploy those forces and their associated equipment. Any “profits” generated could be used to develop infrastructure, modernize the Armed Forces and also to enhance the quality of life of service personnel.

Again, on the “plus” side, Nigeria’s participation in PSOs provides an avenue for exposing its Armed Forces to modern “Military Operations Other than War” and to modern military equipment and hardware. Learning from such “exposure” could potentially be used to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Nigeria’s military operations in current internal security challenges.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned benefits (and other potential benefits) Nigeria’s participation in PSOs has not been without challenges at the operational level. These range from manpower, training, doctrine, and logistics, to administration, language barriers and funding. (Not all of these will be addressed in this summary.) In regards to the manpower challenges, the Nigerian Army should standardize its manpower generation process for units preparing to deploy to PSOs. This could be achieved if all postings and the “marrying-up” of units for deployment is accomplished at least six months prior to a scheduled deployment. This would also serve to lay the foundation for building unit cohesion and *esprit de corps*, qualities that are necessary for high performing units.

There are lingering problems of doctrinal development and training of the Armed Forces of Nigeria for peacekeeping. It would be helpful if the Nigerian Armed Forces developed and published a suitable doctrine for Peace Support Operations. This would impact positively on all aspects of preparation for PSOs.

Finally, the Nigerian government and military should review and make the necessary adjustments to address all shortcomings that have already been identified in the administrative and logistical support to units deployed to PSOs.

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