

8

The African Diaspora and Nigeria's Foreign Policy

Atah Pine
and
Bernard Edeifo Ileogben

Abstract

Afrocentrism is a major pillar of Nigeria's foreign policy. Embedded in the portmanteau of this policy are multiplicities of issues that concerns the peoples of Africa in the homeland and diaspora. Nigerians constitute a large percentage of the Africans in the diaspora. But here we are interested in the African diaspora as a whole; not specifically the Nigerian Diaspora. The fundamental objective of this paper is to examine the place of the African diaspora in Nigeria's foreign policy pursuit. Methodologically, the paper is grafted on the wheels of secondary data and qualitatively evaluated. We argue that the foreign policy vision of Nigeria has historically and ideologically derived its motorising energy from the promotion of the dignity and respect, culture and civilisation of Africa and Africans; and of peoples of African descent all over the world. The idea of Africa being the centrepiece of Nigeria's foreign policy draws its wellspring from this philosophical doctrine. Nigeria has over the years pursued this policy with unrelenting vigour and courage. However, there seems to be an occlusion of this vision. We argue that since the dismantling of the last vestiges of colonialism and Apartheid on the continent the pursuit of a Pan-African diaspora agenda embrangled within the interstice of Nigeria's Africa First policy is on the reclining path. We draw our evidence to support this claim from the intense accent on Nigeria

diaspora affairs and the proportionally inverse tangency and contingency of the African diaspora; this narrow focus belies the potentials and status of Nigeria as the most populous and one of the leading African countries in contemporary international relations. And as yet, beyond the African diaspora being a treasure trove of diplomatic, economic and cultural capital to Nigeria, the mainstreaming and vigorous pursuit of African diaspora holds the key to Nigeria's quest for African continental leadership and global superpowership. The establishment of the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) is a step in the right direction, however, the net of Nigeria's diaspora policy should be flung afar to critically and ideologically aerate African diaspora issues.

Keywords: Nigerian foreign policy, African diaspora, Nigerian diaspora, diaspora and foreign policy

Introduction

It has been historically substantiated,¹⁹³ that the diaspora of any ethnicity is a critical element in its development drive. This is because their social skills and experiences, capital, connections, economic and technological knowledge among many other attributes are central to development. The diplomatic muscularity of Israel in contemporary international relations, the information and communications technology sophistication of India, and the rise of China to superpowership can scarcely be divorced from the contributions of their respective diasporas. The remittances of the African diaspora to the economic and social wellbeing of African countries is too well known to be rehearse here.¹⁹⁴ The diaspora – of whatever hue and

193 See Uya, O.E. African Diaspora Question and Human Capital Development. *Foreign Policy in Nigeria's Democratic Transition* (Abuja: Presidential Advisory Council on International Relations, 2005) and Onwudiwe, E. *The Question of Diaspora in Nigeria's International Relations* (Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, 2006).

194 See Engalama, A. "The Impact of Remittances on Economic Development". *Bullion*, (Vol.31, No.4, 2007) and Ghosh, B. *Remittances and Development: Myths, Rhetorics and Realities*. (Geneva: IOM, 2008).

colouration—is therefore a strategically powerful force in contemporary international system. Now and foreseeably, it will continue to exert unmeasurable and tremendous impact on the character and shape of the behaviour of nation-states in the community in nations.

The African diaspora is inextricably intertwined in the complex narrative of the global diaspora. The contributions of the African diaspora to the development of the African continent have been cobbled by the peculiar character of their demographic and geographic history. This is because the peopling of Africans in the diaspora arose in significant part owing to slavery and the vicissitude of historical forces. In saying this, we are not unmindful of the large body of works that counter-narrativizes the thesis of the slave origins of Africans in contemporary geographic spaces outside Africa; but to the contrary ancientizes the presence of Africa in these spaces.¹⁹⁵ However, our immediate intention here is not to be drawn into the pyrotechnic polemics of this debate as it is to examine the African diaspora in Nigeria's foreign policy pursuit. The knowledge of the existentiality of this controversy is for us, important in three major ways: there is the African diaspora whose existence is of ancient provenance; there is an African diaspora of the recorded historical period; and there is the Africa diaspora of contemporary migration. Our focus here is the historically recorded diaspora and its contemporary strand.

The historical forces that populated the African diaspora and the later colonization, imperialization and subjugation of Africa and its peoples have complexly combined to cast a dark shadow on the psyche and development of Africa. Africa and Africans, it could be argued with a strong measure of evidential proofs,¹⁹⁶ to be the most historically and psychologically marginalized *homo sapiens* in recorded times. Thus, the struggle

195 See Diop, C.A. *The Precolonial Africa*. (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1988) and Sertima, I.V. *They Came Before Columbus: The African Presence in Ancient America*. (New York: Random House, 2003).

196 Uya, O. E. *African Diaspora and the Black Experience in New World Slavery*. (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Third Press Publishers, 1997)

for political independence in Africa transcended the mere struggle for political independence qua independence; it was a struggle for the cultural, historical, social, spiritual and psychological liberation of Africa. The independence struggle was a totally self-absorbing experience. The nationalists and nationalist struggles mainstreamed the sufferings of the Nigerian peoples and the wider Africans under the jackboot of western colonial and imperial domination into their ideological armoury.

On becoming independent in 1960, the ideology of Pan-Africanism, liberation from the pangs of exploitation and domination, poverty and underdevelopment, psychological and cultural freedom seamlessly coalesced into the philosophical pool of Nigerian foreign policy. It is a measure of the importance of this psycho-historical dimension of the Nigeria's struggle for liberation that the cornerstone of her foreign policy is rooted on Africa as the centerpiece of Nigeria's foreign policy. The doctrine of Africa as the centerpiece of Nigeria foreign policy cascades through all the facets of the African condition. Its centrality in African/Nigerian affairs rather than wane continues to swell in scope and proportion because of the ever-rising challenges and dynamics of contemporary global society. This challenge calls for renewed vigour and strategy; especially in terms of foreign policy articulation and pursuit. For Nigeria, the cruciality and importance of this imperative can scarcely be overdrawn.

However, it appears the terminal dismantlement of colonialism and Apartheid on the African socio-political space has thrown Nigeria into the sleep mode as regards the African diaspora. With the coming of the political kingdom, to paraphrase Kwame Nkrumah, all other things have been added to Africa. Nothing could be farther from the truth. There is a growing tendency of Nigeria to concentrate on the Nigerian diaspora to the neglect of the African diaspora. This self-imposed isolationism and confinement to issues of importance to the Nigerian diaspora belies Nigeria's foreign policy vision as it pertains to Pan-Africanism and; it also circumscribes her

continental and global leadership aspirations; and imperils the fortunes of the African diaspora.

The tendency to focus on the Nigerian diaspora culminated in the recent establishment of the Nigeria Diaspora Commission, a parastatal in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, charged with the institutional and bureaucratic responsibility on Nigerian diaspora matters. As plausible a measure as the establishment of this Commission is, we are of the view that the African diaspora and not Nigerian diaspora is more beneficial in the long run to Nigeria's national interests. We are not in the least discountenancing the fact that charity begins at home, it is and should be the case with Nigeria without any iota of exception; however, we are of the view that the pursuit of issues of importance to the African diaspora stands Nigeria in a better stead.

The large-scale tendency to exploit and marginalize peoples of black descent emblemized by slavery in Madagascar and North Africa, racism and suppression of blacks in America, the exploitation and expropriation of peoples of African descent in South America, the dehumanization and cultural traumatization of Africans in Asia and the Middle East are serious issues that deserve serious attention. Nigeria of all the African countries, given her enormous resources, clout, and political pre-eminence is better placed to be in the vanguard of the fight for restitution of African honour and dignity, to do otherwise would tantamount to shirking her responsibility; the case of a shepherd abandoning the flock to the carnivorous mercy of ravening wolves.

The African Diaspora: Notes on Contending Paradigms

The etymological provenance of the word diaspora is Greek. In its Greek original it is called *diasperin*; this simply means 'scattering dispersion.' *Dia*, meaning 'between, through, across;' and *speiro*, meaning 'I sow, I scatter.' Its first recorded use was in the Bible; it was used to refer to the dispersion of the Jews. The usage of the word diaspora has since transcended its historio-etymological and semantical origins to cover other

large-scale demographic exoduses. It means the dispersal of a people across their known geohistorical frontiers to other geographic spaces. The basis of such dispersal could be due to a multiplicity of factors, such as forced migration, trade, agriculture, culture, and geographical factors among others. The underlying common denominator is that such a dispersed population is demographically quantitative, inhered with crisscrossing social and cultural interdependencies, rediasporisation and spatialization.

There are a lot of issues involved in the epistemology of the diaspora; and such issues cut across conceptual, philosophical, cultural, social, political, economic and spiritual.¹⁹⁷ One major issue is the characterization of the diaspora. There are notable characteristics of a Diaspora. According to Safran cited in Imbua¹⁹⁸ 'these include criteria that the group maintains a myth or collective memory of their homeland; they regard their ancestral homeland as their true home, to which they will eventually return; being committed to the restoration or maintenance of that homeland; and they relate 'personally or vicariously' to the homeland to a point where it shapes their identity.' On his part, Cohen¹⁹⁹ list the characteristics of the diaspora to among others include; occupational expansion; collective memory and mythification of the homeland and its achievements; idealization of the ancestral homeland; the urge to return home; strong ethnic or group consciousness, troubled relationship with the host; empathy and solidarity with other ethnic groups in the host country; and distinctive life style and embrace of the ideology of multiculturalism that the host county emplaces.

197 See Butler, K. "Brazilian Abolition in Afro-Atlantic Context". *African Studies Review* (Vol.43, No.1, 2000) and Zaleza, P.T. "Rewriting the African Diaspora: Beyond the Black Atlantic" *African Affairs*, (104/414, 2005).

198 Imbua, D. L. *Slavery, Slave Trade and The African Diaspora* (Makurdi: Aboki Publishers, 2018), Pg. 29.

199 Cohen, R. *Global Diaspora: An Introduction* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997).

The African diaspora therefore refers to the African presence scattered across the world. There is massive presence of Africans across the globe as a result of many historical factors. The major historical reasons that account for this diaspora are factors of geography, religion, trade and slavery.²⁰⁰ Archaeologically and anthropologically speaking, the presence of Africa across the length and breadth of the globe is traceable to prehistoric times; and a flourishing body of scholarship has explicated on this thesis. Historically, however, the contact of African with the outside world began in the 9th century through the instrumentality of the trans-Sahara trade, the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the Indian Ocean trade, and so on. Our focus in this paper is historical.

The African diaspora is segmented into two broad typological categories: the old, historic or primary diaspora on the one hand; and the new, contemporary or secondary diaspora, on the other hand.²⁰¹ The old, historic or primary African diaspora is the diaspora that was occasioned by historical forces such a slave trade; whereas the new, secondary or contemporary African diaspora is the diaspora that have migrated willing to settle outside the continental homeland. Imbua²⁰² elaborates on the differences of these typologies of African diaspora in these words: 'Historic diaspora refer to the old diasporas formed before the construction of colonial states, which have profoundly

200 See Prasad, K.K. and Angenot, J. ed. *The African Diaspora in Asia: Explorations on a Less Known Fact* (Bangalore: Jana Jagrati Prakashana, 2008), Harris, J. E. (ed.) *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1993) and Uya, O. E. *African Diaspora and the Black Experience in New World Slavery*. (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Third Press Publishers, 1997).

201 See Onwudiwe, E. *The Question of Diaspora in Nigeria's International Relations* (Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, 2006), Asante, M.K. "African and African Diaspora Culture in the New World". Babawale, T., Alao, A., Onwumah, T., Odukoya, A. (eds.) *Multiculturalism and the Prospects of Africa and African Diaspora Development* (Lagos: Centre for Black African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC), 2012) and Imbua, D. L. *Slavery, Slave Trade and The African Diaspora* (Makurdi: Aboki Publishers, 2018).

202 Imbua, D. L. (2018) *Slavery, Slave Trade and The African Diaspora*, Pg. 30.

altered the territorial identifications of Africans on the continent since the late nineteenth century. The historic African diasporas can be divided into four categories in terms of their places of dispersal: the intra-African, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, and Atlantic diaspora. In the contemporary diasporas, three main waves have been identified: the diasporas of colonization, decolonization, and the era of structural adjustments which emerged out of the disruptions and dispositions of colonial conquest, the struggles for independence and structural adjustment programmes. Contemporary diasporas are more globalized than the historic diasporas in the multiplicity of their destinations and networks.'

Apart from these typological characterizations of the diaspora, there are many other frameworks of characterizing the diaspora. Uya²⁰³, for instance, writes of the 'diaspora of enslavement' (*pace* Mazrui); the diaspora of colonization; the diaspora of the crisis of democratization; and the diaspora of globalization. And yet to others the African diaspora is categorized based on professional and occupational activity such as trading diaspora, slave diaspora, conquest diaspora, refugee diaspora, pastoral diaspora. The African diaspora is taxonomically complex, spatial and socially dynamic.²⁰⁴ Its capacity to impact on African development is massive. As Uya noted, "...the African diaspora is a reservoir of major human capital, technical expertise, and investment potentials that if properly organized and motivated can play a significant role in African development".²⁰⁵

Generally speaking, studies have demonstrated that the diaspora of whatever ethnicity is critical to its homeland

203 Uya, O.E. "African Diaspora Question and Human Capital Development" *Foreign Policy in Nigeria's Democratic Transition* (Abuja: Presidential Advisory Council on International Relations, 2005) Pg.160-162.

204 See Harris, J. E. (ed.) *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1993) and Segal, R., *The Black Diaspora: Five Centuries of the Black Experience Outside Africa* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996).

205 Uya, O.E. (2005) African Diaspora Question and Human Capital Development. *Foreign Policy in Nigeria's Democratic Transition*, Pg.163.

development.²⁰⁶ The contributions of the German, Indian, Chinese, Jewish, Irish, Japanese and Korean diasporas to the development of their respective homeland is too well known to detain us here. More importantly, is the fact that there is a dialectical connect between cultural similarity and geographical dispersion and development; forged especially through the instrumentality of ethnic networks.²⁰⁷ The commonality of factors that unite and forge the bonds of diaspora-homeland relationships and in the end crystalizes into development according to Onwudiwe²⁰⁸ are: a strong ethnic identity and a sense of mutual dependence that makes it possible for the group to adjust to changes in the global economy and politics; a global network anchored in mutual trust that allows them to operate collectively beyond the confines of national borders; an open mind to new ideas and a passion for technical and other knowledge from all sources for rapid cultural and scientific development.

The African diaspora is a mine field of opportunities waiting to be tapped for the political, diplomatic, economic and technological development of Nigeria. Our focus in this paper, it bears reemphasizing is the entirety of the African diaspora; not just the Nigerian diaspora, or African-America diaspora. Because of the U.S. hegemonic bestriding of the levers of contemporary international relations like a colossus, there is a growing tendency to equate the African diaspora to the African-American diaspora; ostensibly, because of its American background, because of its geographical massiveness, economic buoyancy, cultural dynamism, political clout, and technological

206 See Babawale, T. *Africa and African Diaspora Relations: Challenges, Opportunities and Prospects* (Lagos: Malthouse Press 2008), Onwudiwe, E. *The Question of Diaspora in Nigeria's International Relations* (Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs 2006) and Akinterinwa, A. A. "The Diaspora and Nigeria's African Policy". *Nigeria Journal of International Studies (NJIS)* Vol.38, No.1 & 2, (2013).

207 Kotkin, R. *Tribes: How Race, Religion and Identity Determine Success in the New Global Economy* (New York: Random House, 1992).

208 Onwudiwe, E. *The Question of Diaspora in Nigeria's International Relations* (Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, 2006), Pg.13.

knowledgeability. Nigeria's foreign policy as it pertains to the African diaspora must transcend this provincialism; her diaspora policy must be conceptually cosmopolitan and geographically dynamic. It must be interested in the welfare and wellbeing of the African diasporas in Asia, Middle East, South America and the Caribbean; the existential anguishes of the Siddi of India, the psychological trauma of Afro-Germans, the pangs of the cultural tyranny experienced by Afro-Iranians, African slavery in Madagascar and Mauritania and the murderous persecutions of Afro-Mexicans and Afro-Argentinians among many other contemporary crises confronting the African diaspora wherever they may be found.

Nigeria: The Imperative of an African Diaspora Development Diplomacy Policy

Nigeria of all the African countries is better placed to pursue a Pan-African diaspora foreign policy. Some of the factors that have singled Nigeria out for this historic responsibility are: a.) largest population in Africa; b.) enormous natural resources, c.) enterprising and talented population, d.) historical and cultural linkages between Nigeria and the diaspora, e.) her foreign policy agenda of promoting cultural and social relationships and solidarity with peoples of African descent all over the world. Bolaji Akinyemi²⁰⁹, erstwhile Nigeria foreign affairs minister, writing under a metaphorically telling title, 'Nigeria: The Blackman's Burden' posited that, 'the physical size of Nigeria, the state of her economy and the size of her population vis of vis (sic) other countries in Africa have bred an expectation of a leadership and activist role for Nigeria in the global system, a state with a manifest destiny to become a Black Power.'

To actualize this lofty agenda of shouldering the Blackman's burden he enunciated the ideology of *Pax Nigeriana*; not in the wont of the historical conceptualization of *Pax Romana* or *Pax*

209 Akinyemi, B., *Nigeria: The Blackman's Burden* (Lagos: Centre for Black African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC), 2007), Pg.4.

Britannia as the imposition of peace on others by Rome or Britain in their respective empires; but the pursuit of Pan-Africanism ideas and ideals in post-independent Africa. From the time of her independence in 1960, Nigeria pursued with courage and determination the fight against colonialism, racism, imperialism, and Apartheid. However, since the final dismantling of the vestiges of these vices on the African political terrain especially its physical forms such as colonialism, and Apartheid, Nigeria has relapsed into the sleep mode. She is no longer a 'frontline state' – a euphemism for Nigeria's activism in the fight against apartheid in a manner suggestive of geographical propinquity to the theater of war – Afrocentrically dynamic in her foreign policy pursuits. She is more given to cultural tokenism and spontaneous solidarity sloganeering. And yet, it is not yet *uhuru*; the situation calls for profound philosophical reflection and measured political and policy strategies.

The very first measure that Nigeria is to embark upon in order to maximally engage the African diaspora as a cultural capital to leverage her foreign policy objectives is to put in place an African diaspora policy. At the moment Nigeria has none. The African diaspora question is ensconced within the broad framework of the Africa as centerpiece of Nigeria's foreign policy. Such a policy should bear in mind the fears, anguish, troubles, aspirations and concerns of the African diaspora globally and outline measures of dealing with same. By virtue of Nigeria's enormous resources – human and material – and political clout she unquestionably fits into this role. What remains is the will and courage. Good enough the African Union (AU) at its meeting in Addis Ababa-Ethiopia in February 2003 recognized the African diaspora as the sixth region of the AU. The AU recognition and incorporation of the African diaspora as central to its institutional agenda and global supranational governance and development has accelerated the urgency of mainstreaming African diaspora issues into the foreign policy pursuits of member-states.

Secondly, Nigeria should shift from the focus on culture and racial solidarity when dealing with Africans on the homeland

and in the diaspora to high wire political and strategic matters. This would necessarily entail Nigeria's expansion of its diplomatic net to cover countries with huge African population especially in the Caribbean and actively intervening in issues that pertains to their welfare. Nigeria should expand her diplomatic missions in the Caribbean and Island countries and participate actively in their economic, political and technological development. Nigeria has no diplomatic mission in Haiti and yet Haiti is one of the countries outside the African homeland with the highest black populations and as Uya²¹⁰ stated 'symbolizes the African aspirations for freedom and independence and the dilemma and frustrations of making freedom serve the needs of the vast majority of the people.' Nigeria must be interested in issues of security, good governance and democracy, imperialism and neocolonialism, poverty and underdevelopment in countries with huge population of the African diaspora. What ails the African diaspora wherever it may exist ails Nigeria, this should be the rallying cry in the African diaspora.

Thirdly, Nigeria should deemphasize her focus on the Nigerian diaspora. Recently, Nigeria establish the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) charged with issues related to the welfare and wellbeing of the Nigerian diaspora. Specifically, the functions of the Commission are: manage the funds, with respect to the day-to-day running of the Commission; mobilize and execute programmes that will compliment and advice the Federal Government on major areas of accelerated development; formulate policies as the commission may, from time to time determine; co-ordinate and harmonize all continental Nigeria Diaspora Organizations; advice the Government at all levels on matters related to this Act; carry out training for the staff of the Commission; set-up a world-wide council (consisting of continental, regional and local

210 Uya, O.E. "African Diaspora Question and Human Capital Development". *Foreign Policy in Nigeria's Democratic Transition*, Pg. 177.

leaderships); reach out to Nigerian communities abroad through their various groups, organizations and professionals bodies; articulate its mandate and that of the Government properly and widely; strengthen the existing administrative set-up of the NIDO; work in concert with the NIDO, the professional sub-committees, sub-committees on the professional groups and the various socio-cultural groups; and design criteria for membership participation.

As can be gleaned from the above functions of NIDCOM, the commission has nothing remotely connected with the wider African diaspora. This focus on Nigerian diaspora smacks of ideological provincialism and operating below endowed capacity. This narrowness of vision contradicts Nigeria's age long aspiration for continental leadership and attainment of superpower status. Rather than Nigerians in the Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM), it should have been Nigeria Diaspora Commission (NDC); under the latter the focus should be on the whole of the African diaspora. Nigeria has what it takes to pursue a Pan-African diaspora foreign policy. The most veritable way for Nigeria to rise to international respectability, fame and glory, to attain the status of superpowerdom, and assume her rightful position in African affairs and the globe is to be seen to be actively involved in the pursuit of issues of Pan-African importance and not only Nigerian affairs.

Fourthly, the imperative of development diplomacy. According to Howard F. Jeter, a former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria and himself an African-American, the African diaspora is in its third phase of evolution. The first being the forced shipment of Africans to the new world; the second, the fight for racial equality and dignity. The third phase, he posits, lays 'emphasis on organized and institutional cooperation between Africa and the diaspora.' It is this emphasis on organized and institutional cooperation that we have termed here the development diplomacy imperative in Nigeria-African diaspora policy. In its broad conceptual configuration, it makes the case for the simultaneous pursuit of the ideas and ideals of African diaspora welfare and wellbeing; and tapping from the treasure

trove of skills, capital, technological know-how and political clout of the African diaspora.

The imperative of Nigeria-Africa diaspora development diplomacy has been stressed by many scholars.²¹¹ The challenges of development confronting African countries, and in this case Nigeria, must be a major ideological plank of her African diaspora policy. This point is so well captured by Jeter²¹² 'This nexus must be built on the realization that the social and political status of Africa and its diaspora remain closely intertwined. Many of the economic and social challenges facing one, also face the other. Vestigial discrimination continues to plague both. Thus, one cannot maximize its place in the world, without the support and cooperation of the other. In short, the third phase of the diaspora should be heralded as: the push for economic and political progress through institutional cooperation—the commonality among us—and working together, consistently, conscientiously, and carefully to achieve it. I may not see this happen, but I deeply believe that my children will do.'

There can be no iota of doubt that Nigeria stands to immensely gain from the pursuit of a Pan-African diaspora policy than a Nigerian diaspora-centered policy. However, it is important to state that the cost of the pursuit of this foreign policy objective is immense. To actualize this vision, Nigeria must attain a viable and stable economic development and growth rate, her infrastructure facilities must be upgraded to international standards, her politics must be founded on the finest traditions of democratic principles, her industrial and

211 See Uya, O.E. African Diaspora Question and Human Capital Development. *Foreign Policy in Nigeria's Democratic Transition* (Abuja: Presidential Advisory Council on International Relations, 2005), Imbua, D., Akpan, O., I. Amadi, Y. Ochefu, (2012) *History, Culture, Diasporas and Nation Building: The Collected Works of Okon Edet Uya*. Bethesda: Arbi Press, (2012) and Aderibigbe, M. "Africa Diaspora and the Question of Development in Africa: Lessons from Plato's Allegory of the Cave". Oloruntoba, S.O. ed. *Africa and its Diaspora: History, Identities and Economy*. (Austin, Texas: Pan-African University Press, 2017).

212 Jeter, H. F. *Reaching out to the African Diaspora: The Need for a Vision* (Lagos: Centre for Black African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC), 2003), Pg. 9.

technological development should accord with contemporary best practices, and above all else, she must free herself of social pathologies such as armed robbery, banditry, kidnapping, inter- and intra-communal conflicts, corruption, poor governance institutions and subservient dependence of foreign aid. Nigeria must put her act together and possess the fundamentals of an emerging economic and industrial power. In the event, Jeter's pessimism of not seen the inauguration of a beneficial Africa-African diaspora relations in his life time would be negated.

Attaining the requisite enabling environment is a long walk to freedom; but it is doable. Nigeria has the resources and ability to pursue this policy. What she needs to do is to match words with action; a visionary and committed leadership that would mobilize the creative energies and enthusiasm of the vast majority of the peoples to actively participate in the development process and support her foreign policy objectives. The benefits that would accrue to Nigeria following the pursuit of an African diaspora policy are twofold: i.) economic, technological, industrial and material development broadly; ii.) the restoration of black dignity, respectability, and the rehabilitation of the African psyche from the psychological tyranny of Occidentalism.

Conclusion

The African diaspora is a mine field of resources. The paper argues that the focus of Nigeria's diaspora policy should be Pan-African rather than Nigerian; a Pan-African diaspora policy is the most appropriate path for Nigeria to tread if she truly wants to attain her aspiration to continental leadership and superpowership. The dismantling of the vestiges of colonialism and Apartheid on the face of African continent in no way entails that the social, cultural, psychological and political crises that ails Africa and peoples of African descent globally has been exterminated. This calls for Nigeria to take up the gauntlet of the challenge given the immensity of her resources—human and material. The recent establishment of the Nigerians in the Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) is a right

step in the right direction, however, the commission should be refocused to deal with African diaspora issues broadly.

In order for Nigeria to maximally pursue this foreign policy agenda, she needs to put in place an African diaspora policy that is founded on the philosophical premise of development diplomacy. In the event, Nigeria would achieve her foreign policy objective of promotion of African dignity and respect; and also attract immense development opportunities. However, for Nigeria to achieve her African diaspora development policy agenda she must address her internal development pathologies that have over the years obstructed the realization of her national and continental leadership aspirations.