

AN APPRAISAL OF THE CONDUCT OF NIGERIA'S
FOREIGN POLICY FROM 1999 TO 2003

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how Nigeria's foreign policy was conducted in a democratic setting between 1999 and 2003. The study further assessed the effects of Nigeria's socio-political and economic situations on the country's image, and foreign policy, and how the influence and prestige of the country were restored on the international scene. This is with a view to understanding the institutions, structures and process of conducting Nigeria's foreign policy in relation to government's concern for Africa's political stability, peace, unity and development.

The study used primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews and discussions with key officials of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja such as: the Under Secretary of African Affairs and Head, Department of Planning, Research and Statistics, foreign policy analysts in the fields of Political Science and International Relations and History. Secondary data were sourced from documented speeches, seminar papers and conference papers, newspaper articles, magazines, government official Gazettes, memoirs, relevant textbooks and other relevant data from the internet were used in the research. Data collected were analysed using contextual method.

The result found out that between 1999 and 2003, the conduct of Nigeria's foreign policy was geared towards ensuring Africa's political stability, peace, unity and development. It also revealed that prior to 1999

Nigeria's socio-political and economic situations negatively affected the nation's image and foreign policy conduct so much that Nigeria became a pariah nation and there was untold hardship on the entire citizenry during the time. Finally the result brought to the fore how the conduct of Nigeria's foreign policy was vigorously pursued to restore the influence and prestige of the country in the comity of nations in terms of economic reforms, war against corruption and improved socio-political situations. It was also revealed that the President had an overwhelming influence over other institutions like the National Assembly, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Co-operation and Integration of Africa, and the Nigerian Armed Forces in the formulation and implementation of Nigeria's foreign policy.

It was concluded that the conduct of Nigeria's foreign policy has improved the country's global image and that Africa has become more united and politically stable.