



Research Paper

Domestic Factors and Nigeria's Foreign Policy in The Fourth Republic: A Case Study of President Muhammadu Buhari's Administration (2015–2023)

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the interplay between domestic factors and Nigeria's foreign policy under President Muhammadu Buhari's administration (2015–2023) during the Fourth Republic. It argues that Nigeria's foreign policy during this period was not solely a function of international dynamics but deeply rooted in domestic realities such as economic instability, security challenges, political reforms, and socio-cultural pressures. The research highlights how economic recession driven by oil price volatility necessitated diversification strategies that influenced foreign partnerships, particularly with China and through frameworks like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Similarly, internal security threats, notably from Boko Haram and the Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP), shaped Nigeria's regional military alliances and counterterrorism collaborations. Governance reforms and anti-corruption initiatives were deployed both to improve Nigeria's global image and to strengthen relations with countries like the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates. Additionally, rising youth unemployment and increasing migration rates led to the institutionalization of diaspora engagement through the establishment of the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM). The study adopts a qualitative approach, drawing on secondary sources to analyze how these domestic imperatives shaped diplomatic actions and engagements. It concludes that Nigeria's foreign policy under Buhari was reactive to internal pressures, highlighting the crucial linkage between domestic governance and international diplomacy in shaping a developing state's foreign policy outcomes.

Keywords: foreign policy, domestic factors, fourth republic, foreign partnerships.

Received 02 Nov., 2025; Revised 09 Nov., 2025; Accepted 11 Nov., 2025 © The author(s) 2025.

Published with open access at www.questjournas.org

I. Introduction

The concept of foreign policy, many times, is considered as the outward projection of a state's internal realities, and this is seen apparently in developing nations where domestic constraints significantly shape international behaviour. In Nigeria's Fourth Republic, especially under the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari (2015–2023), the country's foreign policy direction was a clear indication of the several complexities within its borders. The administration faced a range of domestic challenges which included economic downturns, insecurity, government reformation, and socio-demographic pressures, which inevitably became instrumental in shaping its diplomatic priorities and strategic engagements in the global scheme of events.

When he assumed office in 2015, President Buhari became responsible for an economy that depended on oil exports, which actually was the source of majority of the government revenue. The global crash in oil prices accounted for a recession, compelling a shift in focus toward economic diversification through agriculture, infrastructure, and regional trade initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This economic situation was reflected in Nigeria's foreign policy orientation, which prioritized partnerships capable of supporting domestic recovery. Concurrently, the administration struggled with constant insecurity within its borders, particularly from Boko Haram, a sinister terrorist group. These threats not only endangered national stability but also necessitated greater regional cooperation through bodies like the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), thereby reshaping Nigeria's role in West African security politics.

It might interest anyone to know that the Buhari administration's strong anti-corruption rhetoric and institutional reforms played a dual role. They served both domestic political interests and also as a foreign

policy tool for rebuilding international credibility and fostering bilateral cooperation, even in areas like asset recovery. Social dynamics also influenced policy, with youth unemployment and emigration leading to heightened engagement with the Nigerian diaspora and the creation of the Nigerians in the Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM). At the same time, human rights concerns, especially in events like the #EndSARS protests strained Nigeria's diplomatic relations with Western democracies.

This study attempts to interrogate how these internal economic, security, political, and social factors influenced Nigeria's foreign policy direction under President Buhari. Hence, it seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on the interdependence of domestic politics and international relations, providing different perspectives for the formulation of foreign policy in the context of internal constraints. This research will engage a qualitative analysis of Nigeria's foreign engagements from 2015 to 2023 in order to inquire into the extent to which internal governance realities can define a nation's external behaviour.

II. Literature Review

Foreign Policy

The foreign policy of the Nigerian state during President Muhammadu Buhari's administration was significantly shaped by a set of related domestic imperatives. Researchers of this discourse have increasingly interrogated the role of internal crises, such as economic instability, insecurity, institutional capacity, and political ideology, in determining the trajectory of Nigeria's foreign dealings.

Ndaji (2023) argues that a nation's foreign policy comprises the concepts, objectives, and specific instruments that it employs to develop and maintain relationships with other nations. The interaction of domestic and international factors leads to the formulation of foreign policy. It is a vital part of government, because a nation, especially one which is developing, cannot afford to exist in isolation. In the case of Nigeria, foreign policy was sacrosanct, given its economic and social control. He argues that economic recession and the Boko Haram insurgency were pivotal in driving Nigeria's advances toward economic diplomacy and regional security cooperation.

Chilaka and Akpan (2024) noted that a country's foreign policy consists of self-interest strategies chosen by the state to safeguard its national interest and to achieve its goals within the international relations milieu. In other words, it is the aggregate of a country's national interest which results from the interaction of internal and external actors and non-state actors as articulated by the foreign policy decision makers. The approaches used are strategically employed in order to interact with other countries as well as to protect the national interest. In recent times however, due to the deepening level of globalization and transnational activities, relations and interactions have been known not only to exist between state and non-state actors in the international system but to continue to change.

Ndaji (2023) explores the institutional dimension, identifying weak bureaucratic structures and political interference as major impediments to effective foreign policy implementation. He notes that "lack of institutional capacity, inadequate monitoring, and poor stakeholder engagement" led to inconsistent diplomatic messaging and underwhelming international partnerships.

Akinrinde (2023) provides a critical assessment of Buhari's foreign policy between 2015 and 2019, highlighting how domestic insecurity, particularly insurgency, banditry, and separatist agitations, along with economic inflation to reveal Nigeria's international posture. He contends that while the administration emphasized anti-corruption and sovereignty, these efforts were often undermined by internal governance challenges. Critically, the Buhari-led government had several drawbacks as a result of the numerous domestic challenges.

In his explorative research, Oni (2020) observed that a country's foreign policy is generally influenced by both the internal and external environment. It goes to say that fundamentally, the conduct of Nigeria's external relations has never been free from the domestic circumstances. The many but varied constituents of economy, pressure group, political system, public opinion among others exert pressure on foreign policy decision making. The Nigerian internal environment has been consistent with diversities of challenges which have had consequences on the conduct of her external relations and her image to the rest of the world. This is simply saying that Nigeria's foreign policy is fundamentally shaped by domestic factors.

These studies converge on a central theme: Buhari's foreign policy was largely reactive to domestic vulnerabilities. The administration's pursuit of foreign investment, regional security cooperation, and asset recovery initiatives were driven by internal needs—economic recovery, counterterrorism, and political consolidation. This marks a departure from earlier foreign policy eras that emphasized pan-African solidarity and normative leadership.

Domestic Factors in Nigeria

Nigeria, as the most populous African country has been faces with a multitude of complex security challenges throughout its history, according to Adebawo (2020). These challenges are multidimensional, and

which include, insurgency, ethno-religious conflicts, militancy, farmer-herder clashes, and the rise of criminal activities such as kidnappings and banditry. Understanding and assessing these security challenges is crucial for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders seeking to formulate effective strategies and policies.

In the course of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration, who assumed office in 2015 and served until 2023, Nigeria witnessed significant efforts to address the country's security issues. The administration promised to prioritize security and combat the persistent threats faced by the nation (Adebanwi, 2020). Thus, assessing the security landscape during this period can give us valuable insights into the effectiveness of the government's response and its general impact on Nigeria's security situation.

One of the most prominent security challenges during Buhari's administration was the Boko Haram insurgency. Boko Haram, an extremist group primarily active in the northeastern region of Nigeria, has caused widespread instability and violence, resulting in a significant loss of lives, displacement of populations, and extensive infrastructure destruction (Ibrahim, 2018).

While the studying of the Boko Haram insurgency during this period is essential for comprehending the dynamics of insecurity faced by Nigeria, Nigeria has faced recurring ethno-religious conflicts, adding to the overall security challenges in the country. These conflicts stem also from historical tensions, competition for resources, and political factors (Ibeanu, 2018).

Falola and Heaton (2016) have analyzed the complex interplay between ethnicity, religion, and political power in fueling these conflicts. A comprehensive analysis of the causes, patterns, and consequences of these conflicts can help us to further understand the security landscape and the government's efforts to manage and mitigate them.

Theoretical Framework

This study draws upon dual-theoretical approach: **Constructivism** and **Realism**, to analyze the influence of domestic factors on Nigeria's foreign policy during the Muhammadu Buhari administration. These frameworks offer complementary insights into how identity, norms, and material interests shaped Nigeria's external engagements between the years of 2015 and 2023.

Constructivism

Constructivism is one of the most influential theoretical lenses in International Relations (IR) and foreign policy analysis since the 1990s. It provides an alternative to the dominance of realism and liberalism by foregrounding the role of ideas, norms, identity, and social interaction in constructing state behaviour.

Wendt (1992) notes that unlike materialist approaches that emphasise power distribution or institutional constraints, constructivism asserts that the international system is socially shaped through shared meanings and practices. This ontological shift permits scholars to interrogate how domestic narratives, collective identities, and normative commitments influence a state's foreign policy conduct.

Alexander Wendt's seminal work, *Anarchy is what states make of it*, is widely regarded as the foundational text of constructivist theory. Wendt (1992) argues that anarchy does not dictate a fixed pattern of self-help behaviour; rather, it states act based on the meanings they attach to anarchy and to other actors. This idea highlights the importance of intersubjective understandings and collective identities in determining whether states view one another as rivals, partners, or allies. By shifting attention from material capabilities to socially constructed realities, Wendt laid the groundwork for scholars to interrogate the discursive and normative underpinnings of foreign policy.

Subsequent contributions expanded the analytical scope of constructivism. Checkel (1998) identifies a "constructivist turn" in IR, noting that scholars must examine how norms, ideas, and social learning shape political outcomes. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) further expanded this thought by introducing the concept of the "norm life-cycle," demonstrating how norms emerge, cascade, and become internalised within states. This model illustrates how domestic and international norms interact to produce political change, making it particularly useful for analysing foreign policy decisions influenced by internal socio-political pressures.

Foreign policy analysis (FPA) literature has increasingly drawn on constructivist insights to understand the domestic origins of external behaviour. Kaarbo (2015) underscores the value of FPA in linking domestic politics to foreign policy choices, arguing that constructivist frameworks enable scholars to see how leaders' identities, rhetorical practices, and political narratives translate into international postures. For instance, state leaders often construct a narrative of national identity that legitimises certain policy directions while delegitimising others. This identity-driven discourse is central to explaining why states may pursue foreign policies that do not necessarily maximise material gains but align with their self-understandings.

Realism

Falode (2009) gives one of the foundational discussions on the theoretical basis of realism in foreign policy. According to him, realism begins with certain assumptions about the nature of social and political actors. At its core, realism suggests that the international system is characterized by conflict groups organized as

unitary political actors that rationally pursue distinct goals within an anarchic global order. In the light of this, each state is seen as a sovereign entity capable of undertaking unitary action. However, when it comes to interactions among states, anarchy dominates, meaning there is no overarching authority to regulate their conduct.

Franceschet (2024), challenges the conventional perception of realism as merely endorsing domination by the powerful over the weak. Instead, he highlights that realism also contains an implicit ethos of resistance, rooted in the historical complexity and diversity of realist thought. Realists further assume that these sovereign actors are rational, always opting for the most efficient means to achieve their objectives. In the modern international system, the state is therefore regarded as the dominant form of political order capable of pursuing a coherent and unitary foreign policy.

As Falode (2009) explains, this view shows the almost puritanical state-centric orientation of realism in the study of foreign policy in relation to internal factors. This perspective has been reinforced by key realist scholars such as Kenneth Waltz, Robert Gilpin, Stephen Brooks, and Hans Morgenthau, who emphasize the centrality of the state and power politics in explaining global interactions.

Vasileiadis (2023) argues that neoclassical realism (NCR) requires a more structured way of understanding the method by which domestic factors interact with the international system. He introduces what he identifies as the transitive approach for NCR. In this opinion, systemic pressures (like changes in global power distributions) initiate domestic responses, and those responses then shape foreign policy. The domestic factors don't just filter or modulate external pressures; they are part of a causal chain set off by systemic change.

Waltz (1979) argued that realism is one of the oldest and most influential theories of international relations, built on the assumption that the international system is anarchic, meaning there is no overarching authority above the states.

Morgenthau (1948) noted that in this environment, states are considered the main actors, and their foremost goal is survival. To ensure this, states seek for power and security, often prioritizing national interest over moral or ideological concerns. Realists argue that cooperation among states is limited and usually temporary, as each state is wary of relative gains and the potential for others to become stronger competitors.

Classical realism, associated with scholars like Hans Morgenthau, emphasizes human nature as the driving force behind the struggle for power and conflict. Structural or neorealism, advanced by Kenneth Waltz, shifts the explanation from human nature to the anarchic structure of the international system, which compels states to behave in self-interested and competitive ways.

Variants such as offensive realism (Mearsheimer, 2001) argue that states seek to utilize power and even pursue regional hegemony, while defensive realism maintains that states aim only to maintain security and avoid unnecessary risks. It could be stated that realism offers a pessimistic but pragmatic view of international relations, stressing matters such as competition, conflict, and the centrality of power politics in shaping state behavior.

III. Methodology

A qualitative case study approach was adopted for this research. Hence, data were drawn from secondary sources which include international news outlets (e.g., BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera), Nigerian government security reports, academic journals, NGO publications, and reports from organizations like Amnesty International and the UN. Thematic content analysis was employed to categorize data into key themes: media framing, diplomatic impact, economic consequences, and state response.

Key Findings

Economic Realities and Nigeria's Foreign Policy under Buhari

This study backs the fact that economic factors played a pivotal role in shaping Nigeria's foreign policy during President Muhammadu Buhari's administration (2015–2023). Nigeria's continued reliance on oil revenue influenced its international engagements, particularly within energy diplomacy and OPEC negotiations. However, the volatility of global oil prices during this period exposed structural vulnerabilities, prompting a strategic shift toward economic diversification.

Buhari's administration pursued diversification through initiatives such as the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), and the major aim was towards agriculture, manufacturing, and technology. These priorities informed Nigeria's foreign partnerships, notably with countries like China and Germany, focusing on infrastructure, renewable energy, and technical cooperation.

In spite of all these efforts, challenges such as bureaucratic inefficiencies and inconsistent policy implementation limited the full impact of economic reforms on foreign policy outcomes. While the administration demonstrated a commitment to repositioning Nigeria's economy and global image, domestic constraints hindered the realization of its foreign policy ambitions.

Significantly, this research suggests that Buhari's foreign policy was shaped by a dual prioritization: managing oil dependency while pursuing diversification. This approach marked a significant step toward long-term economic resilience and a more strategically aligned international posture.

Insecurity and Nigeria's Foreign Policy under Buhari

On another part, this study reveals that security challenges, most notably, the Boko Haram insurgency and broader regional chaos, were central to Nigeria's foreign policy under President Muhammadu Buhari. The insurgency catalysed intensified diplomatic engagement with neighbouring states such as Chad, Niger, and Cameroon, and that resulted in Nigeria's leadership role within the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to coordinate regional military and intelligence operations (Adetula, 2018).

Buhari's administration also expanded international partnerships to address the transnational dimensions of insecurity. Collaborations with global actors like the United States and the European Union provided access to military aid, intelligence sharing, and counter-terrorism training, effectively globalizing Nigeria's domestic security concerns.

However, persistent challenges, including penetrable borders, resource constraints, and internal governance issues, limited the long-term effectiveness of these security-driven foreign policy initiatives. Corruption and weak institutional capacity further complicated Nigeria's ability to sustain progress. Buhari's foreign policy was significantly shaped by the imperative to confront domestic and regional security threats. While Nigeria demonstrated a strategic commitment to regional stability and international cooperation, systemic inefficiencies constrained the full realization of its security objectives.

Political Inconsistencies and Nigeria's Diplomatic Dealings under Buhari

Akinyemi (2020) noted that political dynamics, particularly governance reforms and anti-corruption initiatives were instrumental in shaping Nigeria's diplomatic engagements during President Muhammadu Buhari's administration. Central to this strategy were policies such as the whistleblower initiative as well as partnerships with international organizations aimed at restoring Nigeria's global credibility. These efforts resonated with Western governments and multilateral institutions, and that made for cooperation in asset recovery and governance support, including the repatriation of stolen funds like the Abacha loot.

Governance reforms further aligned Nigeria with global expectations, enhancing its engagement with institutions such as the World Bank and IMF. The administration's emphasis on transparency and accountability helped secure financial assistance and technical support tied to reform benchmarks. Allegations of selective prosecution and the politicization of anti-corruption efforts raised concerns about the integrity of the government reforms. Critics argue that domestic political considerations often overshadowed genuine reform efforts, leading to doubts among some international partners.

In fact, Buhari's governance and anti-corruption agenda served as a strategic tool for diplomatic engagement, positioning Nigeria as a regional advocate for transparency. However, the coexistence of reformist rhetoric and political bias complicated the effectiveness and perception of these initiatives on the global stage.

Social and Demographic Conditions in Nigeria's Foreign Policy under Buhari

This study reveals the increasing impact of social and demographic factors, particularly youth unemployment and diaspora remittances on Nigeria's foreign policy during President Buhari's administration. Youth-driven concerns shaped economic diplomacy, with efforts to gain or invite foreign investment in sectors like technology and agriculture aimed at addressing widespread unemployment. Alliances with countries such as the United States and China demonstrated this strategic focus, though outcomes were mixed, as unemployment rates remained persistently high.

Diaspora remittances emerged as a critical economic and diplomatic asset. The administration actively engaged the Nigerian diaspora through initiatives like the Nigerian Diaspora Investment Summit, recognizing their contributions to national development and foreign reserves, with annual remittance inflows exceeding \$20 billion, according to World Bank (2020). These funds supported economic diversification and reduced reliance on oil revenues.

In spite of these efforts, there were still challenges. The lack of a cohesive diaspora engagement framework and the limited scale of youth-focused programs constrained their overall impact, as implied by Olatunji (2022). While these initiatives improved Nigeria's international image and signalled responsiveness to domestic pressures, inconsistencies in implementation hindered their transformative potential.

Social and demographic factors played a significant role in shaping Nigeria's foreign policy under Buhari, particularly through economic diplomacy and diaspora engagement. These strategies reflected a shift toward integrating domestic socio-economic realities into international decision-making, though their effectiveness was affected by structural limitations.

Human Rights and Governance in Nigeria's International Relations under Buhari

Also, it is important to note that human rights and governance issues were central to Nigeria's international relations during President Muhammadu Buhari's administration. The government's handling of domestic protests like the #EndSARS uprising and its treatment of minority groups drew criticism from Western nations and international human rights organizations. Bodies such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch condemned the use of excessive force and restrictions on civil liberties, prompting diplomatic tensions with partners like the United States and the European Union.

Despite these concerns, Buhari's governance reforms, particularly the anti-corruption initiatives, enhanced Nigeria's standing with certain international actors. The repatriation of stolen assets, including the Abacha loot from Switzerland and the UK, reflected efforts to promote transparency and accountability (Ojo, 2020). These reforms made for cooperation with institutions such as the World Bank and the African Union.

However, allegations of selective prosecution and internal corruption raised skepticism about the sincerity of these reforms, leading to doubts among some key observers.

The impact of this on Nigeria's international relations was dual-faceted, in that while governance reforms attracted diplomatic support and financial cooperation, human rights violations strained relationships with Western nations focused on civil liberties. On another note, engagements with non-Western powers like China and Russia remained largely unaffected, as these countries prioritized economic and security interests above human rights concerns.

Notice that human rights and governance issues shaped Nigeria's foreign policy under Buhari in complex ways. These factors served both as instruments of diplomatic engagement and sources of international friction, underscoring the need for a balanced approach that reconciles domestic governance with the expectations of global bodies.

IV. Discussion of Findings

This study applies a foreign policy analysis (FPA) framework, substantiated by constructivist methods, to examine how domestic variables shaped Nigeria's international affairs during President Muhammadu Buhari's administration. The findings reveal a multidimensional foreign policy landscape, where domestic, economic, security, political, social, and normative interacted to define Nigeria's diplomatic posture.

Economic Imperatives and Strategic Realignment

Economic factors, particularly oil dependency and diversification efforts, were significant to Nigeria's foreign policy correction. Buhari's administration leveraged Nigeria's status as an oil exporter to maintain influence within OPEC and global energy markets, as noted by Adetoye (2020). In spite of that reality, the volatility of oil prices necessitated a pivot toward diversification, with initiatives like the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) guiding partnerships in agriculture, manufacturing, and technology. These engagements, especially with China and Germany, reflected a strategic attempt to align foreign policy with domestic economic reform objectives.

Security Challenges and Regional Diplomacy

Adetula (2018) argued that security threats, especially the Boko Haram insurgency compelled Nigeria to prioritize regional stability in its foreign policy. The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) exemplified Nigeria's leadership in coordinating military and intelligence efforts with neighbouring states. In the same vein, global partnerships with the U.S. and EU facilitated counter-terrorism support, framing Nigeria's internal security crises as transnational threats. This securitized diplomacy underscored the administration's effort to globalize domestic insecurity and legitimize its military responses.

Political Dynamics and Governance Signalling

Governance reforms and anti-corruption initiatives were deployed as machineries of diplomatic engagement. Buhari's whistleblower policy and asset recovery efforts, including the repatriation of the Abacha loot, enhanced Nigeria's credibility with Western partners and multilateral institutions. These reforms aligned with global governance norms and facilitated financial cooperation. However, it was not without allegations of selective prosecution and politicization of anti-corruption efforts. Falade(2022) revealed the tension between normative signalling and domestic political realities, making the Nigeria's reform narrative a lot more complex.

Social and Demographic Pressures in Foreign Policy Design

Youth unemployment and diaspora remittances emerged as influential social drivers of foreign policy. Buhari's administration sought foreign investment to address youth frustrations, particularly through technology and industrial partnerships with the U.S. and China. (Adepoju, 2020). One notable fact was that diaspora engagement via initiatives like the Nigerian Diaspora Investment Summit recognized remittances as a stabilizing

economic force, contributing over \$20 billion annually (World Bank, 2020). These efforts showed a growing awareness of demographic pressures and the need to integrate domestic socio-economic realities into foreign policy.

Human Rights and Governance: A Dual-Edged Diplomatic Tool

Human rights concerns, especially regarding the issue of the #EndSARS protests and minority treatment, strained Nigeria's relations with Western democracies and human rights organizations (Akinyemi, 2021). While governance reforms invited praise, human rights violations provoked diplomatic friction, particularly with nations that tied aid and cooperation to civil liberties. Conversely, alliances with China and Russia remained unaffected, highlighting the divergence in normative expectations across Nigeria's foreign partners. This duality shows the complicated role of governance and rights in shaping Nigeria's global image.

V. Conclusion

To sum this research up, this study concludes that Nigeria's foreign policy under Buhari was shaped by a dynamic interplay of domestic pressures and international expectations. Economic vulnerabilities, security demands, political reforms, demographic shifts, and human rights concerns, each exerted distinct yet interconnected influences on diplomatic decision-making. Through the lens of foreign policy analysis and constructivist theory, it becomes evident that Nigeria's international behaviour was not merely reactive but strategically constructed to navigate internal challenges and external opportunities.

Even though the Muhammadu Buhari's administration demonstrated a commitment to repositioning Nigeria on the global stage through diversification, regional leadership, governance signalling, and diaspora engagement, systemic inefficiencies, political contradictions, and normative tensions often undermined the transformative potential of these efforts. The dual narratives of progress and constraint reflect the complexity of foreign policy in a developing democracy grappling with internal fragilities and global ambitions.

In the final analysis, Nigeria's foreign policy trajectory under Buhari, underscores the importance of aligning domestic reform with coherent international strategy. Future administrations must build on these foundations by institutionalizing reforms, enhancing transparency, and adopting a more inclusive and rights-respecting approach to diplomacy, one that harmonizes national interests with global norms.

These findings confirm the theoretical expectations set by Constructivism. Constructivist analysis shows how global perceptions of Nigeria are constructed through repeated images and narratives, not merely objective metrics. The media's portrayal of Boko Haram's violence, compounded by government's mismanagement, has shaped a powerful international identity of Nigeria as a fragile state.

VI. Recommendations

It is not insignificant to recommend that, Nigeria should continue to prioritize economic diversification through the development of sectors like agriculture, technology, and manufacturing. To ensure these sectors flourish, the government should improve infrastructure, streamline regulatory processes, and foster public-private partnerships. Additionally, proactive engagement with emerging economies, especially in trade and investment, can help reduce reliance on oil exports and enhance Nigeria's foreign policy influence.

Also, Nigeria should enhance regional collaboration by strengthening existing security frameworks, such as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). It is crucial to address coordination challenges and resource constraints through increased investments in intelligence-sharing systems, better training for regional forces, and diplomatic efforts to engage neighbouring countries in collective security operations. A more comprehensive approach to addressing root causes of insecurity is essential to long-term stability.

It also means that Nigeria should build on its anti-corruption efforts by ensuring transparency and fairness in governance reforms. Strengthening judicial independence, promoting the rule of law, and protecting the freedom of the press are vital to improving Nigeria's international image and engendering stronger diplomatic ties. The government should also create a more inclusive political environment, where democratic processes, including free and fair elections, are ensured.

In addition, the Nigerian government should implement policies aimed at creating sustainable jobs for the youth by focusing on education, entrepreneurship, and skill development programs. Strengthening partnerships with the diaspora for investments, mentorship, and remittance-driven development can also help address unemployment. Developing a comprehensive framework to engage the diaspora more effectively in national development initiatives will improve Nigeria's foreign relations and contribute to economic growth. Nigeria should prioritize improving its human rights record by strengthening legal frameworks for the protection of freedom and addressing systemic issues within its security forces.

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