

Nigeria in World Politics

Trends and Challenges

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF
MAJ GEN JOSEPH NANVEN GARBA

EDITED BY D. A. BRIGGS

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

Nigeria in World Politics Trends and Challenges

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF
MAJ GEN JOSEPH NANVEN GARBA

EDITED BY D. A. BRIGGS

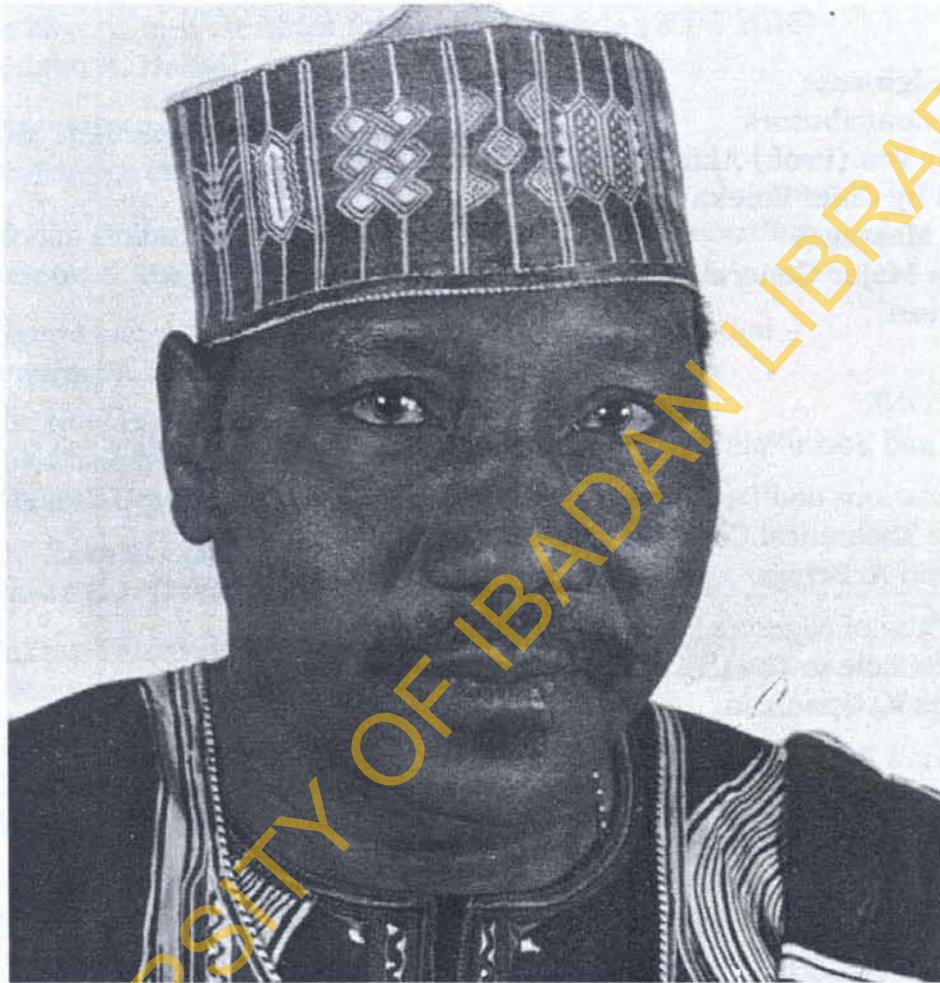
NIGERIA IN WORLD
POLITICS: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES
Essays in Honour of Major General
Joseph Nanven Garba, CFR
Copyright © 2005 by National Institute for
Policy & Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru

First published in Nigeria by NIPSS, Kuru

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

ISBN 928 2913 17 - 3

Printed by:
National Institute Press, Kuru
P.M.B 2024, Bukuru,
Plateau State, Nigeria.



MAJOR GENERAL

Joseph Nanven Garba (Rtd)

1943 - 2002

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

Contents

Acknowledgments	(vii)
Notes on Contributors	(viii)
Preface by Ven. (Prof.) Akin Akindoyeni, mni	(xviii)
Foreword by Chief Emeka Anyaoku	(xx)
Goodwill Messages	(xiii)
Tribute To Major General Joseph N. Garba D.A. Briggs	(xviii)
Introduction	(xxxiv)

SECTION ONE:

Historical and Socio-Political Environment of Nigeria's Foreign Policy

1. Foundations and Development of Nigeria's Foreign Policy:
Some Theoretical Considerations.
Deinbo A. Briggs 1
2. The Base of Nigeria's Foreign Policy
and Its Role in The Life of The Nation
James K. Opadiran 15
3. Nigeria's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century.
Sule Lamido 29
4. Nigeria's Foreign Policy in the Fourth Republic
and The Challenges of National Development
Mahmoud Yahya 45
5. Decline, Despotism and Diplomacy:
A Retrospective Appraisal of Nigeria's External Relations 1985-1993
Humphrey A. Asobie and Okechukwu Ibeanu 57

SECTION TWO:

Nigeria And The West African Sub-Region

6. Nigeria's Defence Policy In Support of Foreign Policy
with Emphasis on ECOMOG Operations in Liberia 1990 - 1998
John N. Shagaya 77

7. ECOWAS Regional Security: Challenges and Opportunities
Amechi Nweze 89
8. Sustaining the Momentum: Strategic Foreign Policy Imperatives
for Nigeria in West Africa for the Next Decade (2005-2015)
Ishiaku A. Dallaji 105

SECTION THREE:

Nigeria's Foreign Policy And The African Challenges

9. African Union: Between Nationalism and Supranationalism
Deinbo A. Briggs 117
10. Nigeria and Africa's Liberation Movements: A Reflection
Brownson Dede 129
11. The New Partnership for Africa's Development:
The Challenges for Nigeria
Musa E. Umar 141
12. The Bakassi Conundrum: What Lessons for Nigeria?
Dakas C.J. Dakas 159
13. Bakassi Peninsula Verdict: Policy Issues and Problems
Deinbo A. Briggs and Musa E. Umar 179
14. Nigeria and the Politics of African Union:
Challenges and Opportunities
Jonah I. Onuoha 189
15. Nigeria's Foreign Policy and
President Obasanjo's Shuttle Diplomacy: An Appraisal
Deinbo A. Briggs 203

SECTION FOUR:

Nigeria and the International Environment

16. Nigeria: The OPEC Challenge
Tam S. David-West 217
17. The World Bank, International Monetary Fund
and Nigeria's Reform Process
Israel Igwe 233
18. Nigeria's Foreign Policy and External Debt Burden. An Evaluation.
Momoh L. Yesufu 249

19. Nigeria and the Commonwealth Nkem Wadibia-Anyanwu	259
20. Nigeria and International Institutions in the Post Cold War Order: A Survey Aloysius M. Okolie	279
21. Nigeria: The Challenge of the United Nations Joseph N. Garba	293
22. Globalization and Nigeria's Foreign Policy: The Challenges of Adaptation to the Twenty-First Century Jonah I. Elaigwu	309
23. Nigeria's Chances of Clinching one of the Africa Slots: Re-Permanent Seat in the Reformed United Nations Security Council. Arthur C.I. Mbanefo	329
24. Nigeria and Globalization: Problems and Prospects. Uyi E. Ogbeide and John Aghahowa	341
25. The Global Crusade Against Terrorism and War: A Call for A New Vision of Collective Security Thomas A. Imobighe	359
26. Foreign Aid and Africa's Economic Development: An Assessment of the Role of Intermediary Management Institutions Augustine O. Okore & Onyukwu E. Onyukwu	373
27. Nigeria In The Throes Of Global Cyborg Politics: Information Technology To The Rescue Benedict A. Oladele	409
SECTION FIVE:	
Conclusion	
28. Balancing the Internal and External Influences on Nigeria's Foreign Policy Ogoh S. Alubo	427

Index

27

Nigeria in the Throes of Global Cyborg Politics: Information Technology to the Rescue

BENEDICT A. OLADELE, PH.D

Introduction

The balkanization of the defunct USSR and the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 as one of the last vestiges of the cold war era, have among other factors combined to impact on nations as well as bringing about some monumental changes to world politics and economics. As a consequence, the emergence of USA as a supra power nation has both directly and indirectly set in motion new political thinking at individual country and international levels. At the level of some countries, the old dogma of "control" system of governance gradually started to give way to a new wave of liberalism that encourages mass participation. Furthermore, nations also took a hard look at their strategic interests with a view to fashioning out modalities for actualizing these interests. On the international or regional bloc level, the idea of collectivism as opposed to individualism attracts the attention of world leaders. In like manner, the world economy equally witnessed a shift in paradigm from the old geographic boundary boxed-up economy to that of private sector led open market economy. All these transformations have since coalesced into the all-pervasive idea of globalization; a phenomenon that bestrides the entire gamut of human existence.

In an apparent reference to the impact of economic globalization on world economy, Turner and Hulme (1997:226) assert that the impact of the phenomenon is evident on the "supply side as commodities, capital, technology and organizational

expertise move rapidly from country to country as transnational corporations search out lower cost bases for production and distribution” and all these provide the basis for politicking between and among nations. The prevalence of these elements is further accentuated by the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT), which provides the framework for the world economy. Consequently, the framework provides a platform for trade imbalance among nations with relationships being skewed in favour of the developed countries. The imbalance was further reinforced with the adoption of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and their application to transactions by the developed economies. In this connection, the role of ICTs suddenly becomes crucial in regard to world politics and economic transactions. The technologies are not just tools for communication or connectivity between and among nations, but access and possession of them by nations have become an index or yardstick for measuring the level of a nation's relevance and participation in world affairs. It can be said therefore that in a technology driven or wired world where access to and possession of technology is a key indicator of a nation's level of participation in world politics, how can Nigeria for that matter become an active participant in the global politics and economics? What are the challenges that this global phenomenon holds for the country and how can these be addressed? This paper thus sets out to analyze the state of Nigeria's readiness to adopt and adapt ICTs for development purposes in the face of the nation's increasing and visible role in world politics. The paper is thus divided into seven sections commencing with the introduction. This is followed by section two, which explains certain key concepts in the paper and section three which presents an overview of the role of Nigeria in international politics. The fourth section relates to Nigeria's experience at improving its National Information Infrastructure (NII) with the fifth section covering the challenges for ICT development in the country. The sixth section is an analysis of the country's framework for the development of the nation's NII. The paper concludes with the seventh section.

Globalization and Cyborg Politics

In theory, politics and economics are separate and distinct from each other. In reality however, the control and management of power and resources are so intertwined that in recent times the dividing line between them seems to be blurring or thinning. In contemporary times, politics and economics have progressively merged into an all-pervasive phenomenon of globalization. As an object of academic discourse, globalization means many things to many people with every meaning reflecting the political-cum-socio-economic and intellectual inclinations of the

individual. To Toyo (2004) the phenomenon is a continuation of the class struggle between capitalism and socialism or a continuation of the grand design by the former to further subjugate the latter. This view is closely related to that of Mohammad (2002:19) who asserts that globalization:

As it is formulated and presented today is an invention of the North Atlantic countries and we can take it for granted that it is intended to enrich them further and enhance their domination of the world.

In this regard, it is perhaps obvious that globalization thrives on political-cum-economic paradigm process. One cannot therefore agree less with Anderson (1999) who asserts that globalization is “an inherently uncoordinated process driven by countless market actors” with limitless access to information technologies and capacity for diffusion and application. In a way the technologies provide the driving force behind the world entrenchment of globalization. To Anderson still, the realities of the phenomenon are demonstrated in the myriads of ICT induced possibilities like “increased volume and speed of information flows among nations whether through traditional channels such as the print media or through new technologies such as the internet.”

To its advocates, globalization is the best thing that has ever happened to the world, of which some simply described it as the end of history (Fukuyama, 1992). To its protagonists, as observed by Zeleza (2003) the concept “reinforces global economic inequalities, political disenfranchisement, and environmental degradation.” To some academics, globalization is no more than an intellectual or ideological discourse, which in the words of Zeleza (2003:1) is a “metaphor that accommodates widely divergent theoretical, empirical and ideological paradigms, positions and possibilities.” In the context of information society, it is posited that globalization is a situation in which events taking place in any part of the world have some reverberating implications for the lives of people and subsisting conditions in other regions or countries. This is even more so that information can readily be transmitted in real time with relative ease using multifaceted ICT media across international boundaries. The thrust of this conceptualization is that no individual as much as any nation can afford to be an independent archipelago of its own. The contemporary and systematic coming together of some nations as political-cum-economic regional blocs attests to the reality and challenges of globalization.

Arising from this premise, it can be said that globalization is not a country or space and time bound phenomenon. On the other hand, it underscores the

undeniable truth that individuals as well as nations are politically, economically, technologically and culturally bound together in a web-like fashion with technologies serving as the binding platform and media for information flow. The technologies also serve as yardsticks for determining nations' relevance among comity of nations including defining the nature and level of relationships among countries. Consequently, as the notion of time, distance, and spatial barriers to information flow literally disappear due to ICT application, there emerges the cyborg society, which Oladele (2004) defines as "that plastic and impersonal world that is characterized by the prevalence of information technologies and societal over-reliance on them as platforms for human interactions." The society is characterized by the prevalence of information technologies, and the capacity of nations to bring the technologies to bear on the management of their resources pursuant to the attainment of their national strategic goals. In a way, the technologies have gone a long way to redefine existing norms and conventions all of which have in turn influenced the shifting of power from traditional loci to new centres. A nation's membership of this society informal as it may seem, is determined by the quantum and quality of infrastructures for ICT application and diffusion. A combination of these variables in contemporary times goes a long way to determine nations' relevance in global politics. In other words, the relevance of nations in international arena in modern time is contingent on their capacity to acquire techniques for applying technology to manage their resources, project and canvass support for their individual interests, knowledge generation through research and development and marketing of their products and services.

A characteristics feature of the cyborg society therefore is cyborg politics, which for want of definition is described as the art of power balancing using the medium of the ever-converging power of information and communication technologies. As an art, it is characterized by the quality of knowledge and high-level manipulations of this knowledge through the interface of technologies by actors all in a bid to gain strategic advantages over their opponents or competitors. Accordingly, in a technology driven world, performance or participation in cyborg politicking coupled with economic wheeling and dealing is determined by nations' capacity to access and use technologies including the resourcefulness to utilize them to advantage. This requires that, parties or actors in the cyborg game of power must be adept at using the collective power of technologies to achieve their strategic interests. By implication, individual actors or nations in the game must evolve its strategic plans for developing their infrastructures prior to becoming active participants in the game plan. It can be observed therefore that the degree of success recorded in the implementation of such

plans perhaps explains the categorization of countries into developed, emerging, developing, and under-developed nations. It is also added that cyborg politics is one of the by-products of globalization since information and communication technologies give true effects to it.

As Turner and Hulme (1997:226) describe the situation, globalization “is not merely an economic process. It also has social and political dimensions” of which the Bretton Wood institutions are institutional mechanisms for its propagation and promotion. It can therefore be said that globalization, though involuntarily, has indisputably, integrated the nations of the world in such a way that their divergent political-economic interests have been so fused that no nation can afford or pretend to neglect the phenomenon. Both the idea and fusion have gathered so much critical mass to the point that nations cannot but reassess their resources and put the necessary infrastructures into place in a bid to enhance their capacity and relevance in the international arena. A nation that fails to take these measures may be doing so at the peril of its interests and survival.

It can also be said that globalization perhaps would have remained as an idea without the driving force of the ever-converging power of information and communication technologies. What this suggests is that the possession and utilization capacities of the technologies by nations are some of the pre-conditions for active membership of the global family. At the level of a country, the nature, quality, intensity, and sophistication of participation in world politics in contemporary times have bearing on the nature and quality of existing NII in such a country. Given the divergent disparity of these technologies among nations, globalization as a framework for international transactions or relationship readily brings to the fore the unevenness of international politics or transactions between and among countries. The situation is further accentuated by the unequal endowment of resources among nations. The unevenness notwithstanding, and in realization of the importance of ICT, nations in general and Nigeria in particular have in the last few years been striving to put in place the necessary infrastructures for ICT utilization.

Nigeria International Posturing and ICT Nexus

According to Nwokoma (2004: 50) “the 1990s were a turbulent era for Nigeria internationally.” This was the direct consequence of the manipulations of the failed attempt to return the country to democratic rule in the late 1980s and the annulment of the presidential election of June 12, 1993, all of which put a blur on the international image of the country. Efforts to remove the blur instead saw the country gradually slipping into a more enervating morass that eventually led to the

imposition of sanctions on the nation by the international community. The country was unable to get out of this pariah status until May 1999 when a duly elected President was sworn in. With democracy in place, the government started to breathe some fresh air of acceptance and confidence both at home and abroad. This development was not unconnected with some policy fine-tuning initiatives and strategic charting of a new course to sanity. The underlying thinking and conviction of the government and people of Nigeria in charting a new course is that no nation can afford to be isolated from the rest of the world without a dire consequence to its interests. This belief, in the words of Nweke (1986:50) "is an inward looking strategy" which "is aimed at limiting foreign commitments including, especially recourse to external borrowing to the barest minimum."

Since the return of the country to the democratic system of governance in 1999, the international posturing of the country can be described as an exercise in delicate "globalism" which Nweke (1986:54) describes as "global interdependence and a foreign policy of universal cooperation based on strong economic and Pan-Africa desirata." This posturing is in many ways inclusive rather than exclusive as it conforms with the nation's non-alliance belief, and commitment to African integration. The doggedness with which this posturing was pursued has not only cast off the hitherto pariah image of the country but has in many ways enhanced the confidence of the international community in the nation. This development is evidenced by the decision of the Paris Club creditors to grant 60% debt relief to the nation. It can also be said therefore that the country has within a short period of democratic dispensation achieved what it could not achieve under the military through the use of "soft power" (Builder, 1993) which Ogwuazor-Momoh (2004:109) described as the "ability to achieve desired outcomes in international affairs through attraction rather than coercion."

The conduct of international affairs or relations is a complex business that involves contacts and negotiations between and among nations, multi-lateral bodies and non-state actors. As a people and resource centred activity, it involves constant communications and dialogues among parties of which information becomes a very crucial strategic commodity. In other words, negotiation cannot exist in a vacuum but on the basis of knowledge, which is the product of internalized information.

In the traditional setting, information or knowledge can be shared in both verbal and hard formats. In recent times, the advent of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought about new possibilities for information sharing among parties at both local and international levels. The import of these possibilities is that the capacity of individuals and nations to conduct bilateral and multilateral

negotiations is heightened more than ever before just as much as nations and individuals can project their interests across the globe with a view to canvassing support for such interests. With technology the notions of time, distance and spatial boundaries are considered to be of no effect on communications among international actors. Citing the example of one of the ICT driven possibilities, Oguwazor-Momah (2004:108) describes the advantages of e-mail as having “dynamic implications for international relations: the ability to conduct multi-directional communications across borders in a timely and inexpensive manner, unfettered by geographic and institutional constraints.” Above all, in the modern conduct of international relations, information technologies as tools can be used to many advantages. These include:

- Networking parties to agreements.
- Management of bilateral and multilateral agreements and projects or programmes arising thereof.
- Projection of national or regional interests.
- Harnessing and managing of common resources and environment.
- Canvassing international support for national or regional interest.
- Establishment of discussion groups or electronic dialogues among leaders and countries.

The possibilities though by no means exhaustive, of course assume the existence of infrastructures for the exploitation of these advantages at the level of nation. The lack of the infrastructures can only serve to exclude the country from availing itself of the possibilities. In other words, the absence of infrastructures for ICT in a modern nation amounts in many ways to self-ostracization from the membership of the global information super highway. Conscious of the perilous nature of ostracization, Nigeria in the year 2002 put in place a policy framework for the development of its NII.

ICT Infrastructure

The idea behind the setting up of National Information Infrastructure (NII) by nations is a multifaceted phenomenon that spans the entire length of the continuum. From the perspective of policy promulgation, Wilson III (1997:4) describes it as an “inchoate, multidimensional phenomenon, a turbulent and controversial mix of public policy, corporate, strategies, hardware and software that shapes the way consumers and citizens use (of) information and communications.” The underlining element in this connection is the need for a clear public policy articulation that ensures the creation of an enabling environment for the adoption, diffusion and

utilization of information technologies. Unlike Wilson III, Talero (1997:289) defines NII from the narrow perspective of product and service delivery when he defines the concept as “telecommunications networks and strategic information systems necessary for sustainable economic development.” The definition however assumes the existence of a policy framework for the production of such products and services. In a way, Talero's definition is closely related to that of General Accounting Office (GAO 1995) of the US government that defines NII as an “emerging global broadband meta-network.” The emphasis in this definition is on the hardware and their connectivity and this is similar to Drake's (1995:4) perspective that defines the subject as a “heterogeneous collection of local and regional information infrastructures and long-haul networks.” From these perspectives two issues are discernable and these are NII as a policy framework with its accompanying implementation strategies for the diffusion and utilization of information and communication technologies in a nation and NII as a collection of ICT hard wares, software and human wares with clear modalities for their interface or connectivity for sustainable development.

By nature NII as a framework or public policy deals with modalities on how a nation can attain or achieve its policy objectives vis a vis ICT adoption, diffusion and utilization within a specified time frame. The policy objectives in most cases are a mixed bag of generic and sector-specific issues that are considered central to the overall sustainable visions of the country. Generic issues may range from creation of institutional structures and legal regimes for technology adoption to capacity and awareness building for the use of the technologies on a sustainable basis. On the other hand specific policy issues relate to the use of technologies for the actualization of the sectoral goals of the economy. The underpinning philosophy has to do with the recognition of information technologies centrality to effective and efficient productivity. At this level of the policy and because of the pervasiveness of the technologies, the policy must address the issue of technology diffusion in a most proactive and comprehensive manner so as to minimize wastages and duplication of efforts and resources. The technologies (computer, and other electronic hard wares, software, telecommunications products and services and broadband communication services such as radio and television broadcasts) in this regard are tools and depletable consumables that must be judiciously deployed for greater effect.

The centrality of these technologies to the growth and development of the economy informs their categorization as engines of growth. Through their multimedia (sound, data, visuals) capabilities, they serve as conduit for communications between and among diverse individuals, groups, and nations

regardless of time, distance and spatial barriers. The technologies can be deployed for distant learning, citizen's empowerment, telephony and conferencing, electronic communications and transactions, management of resources and office applications, and conduct of international relations to mention a few application possibilities.

ICT and Development Challenge

Nigeria is daily inundated with the challenge of how to bring its immense human and material resources to bear on its development needs on a sustainable basis. Efforts at achieving this goal since independence in 1960 saw the country having a number of initiatives out of which were four development plans (1962-1968, 1970-1974, 1975-1980, 1981-1985). The idea of development plans later on gave way to rolling plans with the first one covering 1990-92 period, while the subsequent one covered the period 1997-1999. Along the line, the nomenclature of the rolling plan was changed to perspective planning without much change in the objectives of the plans. The principal objective of all the plans was to develop the country using sector-based projects approach. One of the shortcomings of this approach was that the projects were independent of each other, which is symptomatic of lack of policy coordination or synergy. The resultant effects of this state of affairs were duplication of efforts and wastage of resources. Most often than not, some of the projects were more of external symbol of development with little or no bearing on the yearnings and aspirations of the populace. Sooner or later most of the projects were abandoned due to inadequate and/or inefficient management of budgetary allocation. In all these projects, the issue of infrastructures for existing communications facilities (radio, television, telecommunications), were addressed with no mention of facilities for computer and other electronics application. The nearest mention of computer-related projects was in the 1997-1999 rolling plan, and this was for the procurement of computer-facilities for the Ministry of Communication's database at the sum of N4.5 million (FRN, 1997).

From the rolling/perspective-planning era, the nation articulated its development objectives in the document titled "Vision 2010." The document is considered innovative in that it served as a turning point from project-based approach development to that of recognition of development issues and how these issues could be resolved within a stipulated timeframe and available resources. In this document, the importance of ICT to national development did not go beyond that of appreciation. It was assumed that all the sectors would incorporate the technology into their programme and project development activities. The ideas contained in the Vision 2010 document soon went the way of its predecessors only to be replaced by a

new vision titled National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), which was made public in March 2004.

According to the National Planning Commission (2004), the Federal Government agency managing the vision, the *raison d'etre* for NEEDS was explained thus:

Nigeria has the potential to become Africa's largest economy and a major player in the global economy by virtue of rich human and material resource endowment. But much of its potentials have remained untapped, and if previous trends continue, Nigeria runs the risk of not meeting the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

From this premise it can be said that NEEDS is a sort of magna charter for the overall development of the country. The vision for the first time recognizes the importance of information and communication technologies as tools and infrastructures for the development and growth of the country. The document in a sense provides the much needed focus to get the country achieve the UNMD goals.

Government vision on the development of ICT industry in the country is contained on pages 80-81 of the NEEDS document. The vision while acknowledging the centrality of technology to national development enumerated a number of factors that inhibit utilization of ICT in the country. These factors include:

- High cost of private provision of power;
- Absence of local manufacturing and maintenance of information and information telecommunications equipment including software development capacity;
- Absence of an effective and efficient postal communication;
- Inadequate human capacity and indigenous technical know-how (NEEDS Document, p. 81).

These problems notwithstanding, the vision policy thrust is summarized thus to include:

- Development and Sustainability of high level capacity building for private sector driven ICT industry;
- Improvement of capacity access to the INTERNET connectivity including computer application;
- Government facilitation of the development of “a national multimedia super corridor” as well as appropriate incentives to the private sector;
- Promotion of ICT as tool for mass education.

The actualization of the policy thrust is expected to utilize a number of strategies such as the use of fiscal and financial incentives to encourage private sector investment, enforcement of intellectual property rights, and enforcement of local content policy in the manufacture of ICT hardware, provision of micro financial supports to investors, encouragement of local software development capacity and provision of incentives for ICT industrial parks. The strategies however fail to make provision to encourage content input to the global information super highway or the global network. This is a major gap that needs to be filled by African scholars and countries. As it is now, substantial INTERNET based information about Africa is by non- Africans residing outside the continent.

Information Technology Policy

In an apparent commitment to develop the ICT industry of the country, the Federal Government of Nigeria enunciated a National Information Technology Policy (NITP) for the country in March 2002. Unlike in Singapore where a National IT Plan evolved from the country's development vision, "The Next Lap," (WONG 1997), the Nigerian NITP preceded the articulation of NEEDS vision which ought to have provided the platform for the policy. Nevertheless the Policy vision statement is to make "Nigeria an IT capable country in Africa and a key player in the information society by the year 2005" (NITDA, 2001:iii).

To arrive at this objective, NITP contains thirty-one closely related generic objectives as well as specific sector-based ones. These are aimed at widespread diffusion and application of information technologies across the economy, and more importantly to make the country both a producer and consumer of ICT products and services. The policy also contains twenty general approaches or strategies for the attainment of policy goals. The first of these strategies is stated thus:

Establishing a coordinated programme for the development of a National Information Infrastructure (NII), State Information Infrastructure (SII), and Local Information Infrastructure (LII), backbone by using emerging technologies such as satellite including VSAT, Fibre Optic Network, high-speed gateways and broadband/multimedia technologies. With this arrangement, it is expected that the country will be able to plug into the ubiquitous global information super highway.

It is however mentioned that the demarcation line between policy objectives and

strategies are not self-explicit as contained in the quoted strategy. Strategies for policy objectives border more on how and who is to bring about actualization of policy goals and there is nowhere this is more clearly stated than in the NEEDS document. This shortcoming notwithstanding, the institutional responsibility for the implementation of the policy rests with National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), which is a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Science, and Technology. From page vii of the policy document the agency is charged as follows:

To implement the IT Policy, regulate, monitor, evaluate and verify progress on an on-going basis under the supervision and coordination of Federal Ministry of Science and Technology.

To demonstrate commitment to the implementation of the policy, government has the following to say:

Government recognizes IT as a strategic imperative for national development and taking cognizance of its immense benefits government has resolved to provide considerable national resources, both financial and otherwise for the realization of the National IT vision statement (p.viii).

Government went on to give effect to this resolve by establishing the National Information Technology Development Fund (NITDEF) of which a grant allocation of seed money totalling \$150 million was earmarked in addition to allocation of 2% of annual Federal Capital Budget. Furthermore, government is to pay into the fund "3% tax on all imported finished IT products" (NITDA, 2003). The extent to which the fund becomes active is contingent on the speed with which government is determined to actualize the promised fund.

Two issues appear to stand against the full implementation of the policy. These are the lack of legal regimes or framework for both NITDA and the policy itself. In the case of NITDA, government is yet to pass the enabling law that will accord legal recognition to the body. As it is now, the body is yet to become a legal entity of its own. Similarly, the policy needs to be promulgated into law so as to facilitate allocation of resources for programmes and projects emanating from the policy. The constraints notwithstanding, the agency according to NITDA (2005) embarked on implementing the policy using three principal approaches thus: human capacity

building (training and awareness campaign for IT utilization for stakeholders); infrastructure capacity building (Public Service Network for internet service to government organs, Information Infrastructure Backbone and mobile INTERNET services) and institutional capacity building. The agency went further to say that arrangements are at advanced stage “to prepare a national strategic plan of actions and programmes that will cover the various sectors and identify particular programmes for short term, medium term and long term implementation.” The implementation of this plan is to a greater extent dependent on availability of funding and the level of involvement of stakeholders in the respective sector and ministries.

It is noteworthy to see that the private sector is expected to be the driving force behind full implementation of the policy. Putting this policy requirement side by side the power conferred on NITDA in Section 5 xix of the policy document, there appears to be a contradiction, which in many ways, is a recipe for policy somersault. In this section, NITDA is a sole service provider to the government, and the regulator of the IT industry. As a service provider, it is to provide and manage government IT requirements and services, and as a regulating body, it is to monitor development in the industry by setting standards as well as ensuring ethical professionalism. In the first instance, this clause (service provider) negates government disposition towards privatization, as it has potential to “kill” the private sector. At the present level of economic development in the country, government patronage of the private sector is a major survival lifeline. All these have potential negative implications for investors (domestic and foreign) in the IT industry. The status of the agency as a regulating authority similar to that of National Commission on Communication (NCC) will however go a long way at engendering confidence and productivity in the industry (Oladele, 2005). The provision of services in an industry as well as regulating that industry by one and the same body are two conflicting responsibilities that raise more ethical questions than are required.

Conclusion

Information and Communication Technology is a pervasive concept as well as a tool for information management and delivery. There is no gainsaying that the technology has in many ways redefined old boundaries and ways of doing things including corporate and interpersonal relationships. A quantitative analysis of the impact of this technology on the society has physically moved from the realm of conjecture to that of reality. The quantum and quality of this impact on the lives of people is yet to be fully understood as empirical studies in this area are still not many

(Keniston, 2003; Oladele, 2005). Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the technology has and is still contributing to the growth and development of countries of which access and possession of the technology in contemporary time is an index of development as much as it is a determinant of global relevance. This in a way explains the initiatives by countries in general and Nigeria in particular to enunciate framework for developing infrastructures for the technology as prelude to reaping the gains and benefits of membership of the global information super highway. Successful plugging into this highway by Nigeria can only enhance the nation's participation in contemporary cyborg politics, of which technology is a tool. The image of Nigeria therefore stands to be further enhanced if the policy is successfully implemented. This can only be if the policy is reviewed by redefining the limits and boundaries of the cumulative weight of responsibilities conferred on NITDA. Restricting the agency to a regulatory role will provide a level playing ground for true private sector participation in the industry. The attainment of this reality will thus put the country on a solid pedestal for active participation in the global cyborg politics.

References

- Anderson, J.J. (1999) *Regional Integration and Democracy*. USA, Rowman and Littlefield Publishing, Inc.,
- Builder, C. (1993) Is it a transition or a Revolution? *Futures*, March 1993 155
167.
- Drake, (1995) *The New Information Infrastructure*, pp 205-222
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1997) *National Rolling Plan, 1997-1999* Abuja, National Planning Commission, 1997 1766p.
- Fukuyama, Francis (1992) *The End of History and the Last Man*. London, Hamish, 1992.
- General Accounting Office (1995) *Information Superhighway: An Overview of Technology Challenges*. Washington, DC, 1995.
- Keniston, Kenneth (2003) IT for the Masses: Hope or Hype? *Economic and Political Weekly*, February 2003.
- Mohammed, M (2002) *Globalisation and the New Realities*. Malaysia Palenduk Publications Sdn Bhd, 2002
- National Information Technology Development Agency (2005) NITDA Begins Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of Nigeria IT Policy. <http://www.nitda.org> 08/08/05
- National Information Technology Development Agency (2001) Nigerian National Policy for Information Technology (IT) "Use IT."
- National Planning Commission (2004) NIGERIA: National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Abuja, National Planning Commission, 2004, 172p.
- Nweke, Aforka (1986) "The Domestic Structure and Processes of Nigeria's Foreign Policy" *In Nigeria External Relations: The First Twenty-Five Years* edited by G.O. Olusanya and R.A. Akindele
- Nwokoma, Ndubisi (2004) An Appraisal of Nigeria's International Trade in The 1990s. *Nigeria Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 30 No. 1 2004, 55-67
- Ogwuzor-Momah, Pamela (2004) International Relations and Network Inter-connectivity: The Role of Librarian. *Nigeria Journal of International Affairs* Vol. 30 No. 1 2004 106-119
- Oladele, Benedict A. (2004) Human Society vs. Cyborg Society: As I See Them. OASIS Newsletter Spring 2004. [Http://www.library.cusm.edu/intranet/oasis/2004-spring/cyborg.htm](http://www.library.cusm.edu/intranet/oasis/2004-spring/cyborg.htm)
- Oladele, Benedict A. (2005) Information and Communication Technology for Sustainable Development in Nigeria: Hope or Hype? Presented at the Fifth Annual Conference of FAAN on Security, Social Services and Sustainable Development in Nigeria, Calabar, 21st-24 February 2005.
- Talero, Eduardo (1997) National Information Infrastructure in Developing Economies In *National Information Infrastructure Initiatives: Vision And Policy Design* edited by Brian Kahin and Ernest J. Wilson III, Cambridge: MIP Press, 1997.
- Toyo, Eskor (2004) *Globalisation in Africa*. Calabar; University of Calabar, 2004.
- Turner, Mark and Hulme, David (1997). *Governance, Administration and Development: Making the State Work*. Macmillan Press Ltd, 1997 XV, 272 p.
- Wilson III, Ernest J. (1997) Introduction: The What, Why, Where and How Of National Information Initiatives In: *National Information Infrastructure Initiatives: Vision and Policy Design*, edited by Brian Kahin and Ernest J. Wilson III Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Wong, Poh-Kam (1997) Implementing the NII Vision: Singapore's Experience and Future Challenges In:

National Information Infrastructure Initiatives: Vision and Policy Design edited by Brian Kahin and Ernest J. Wilson III, Cambridge: MIP Press, 1997.

Zeleza, Paul Tiyambe (2003) *Rethinking Africa's Globalization* Volume 1: The Intellectual Challenges. Trenton, New Jersey; Africa World Press, Inc, 2003, Vi, 500p.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

About the Book

Nigeria In World Politics: Trends and Challenges is a compendium of essays to honour Major General Joseph Nanven Garba, CFR, who passed on while serving as the Director-General of NIPSS, Kuru. It is a token of his national and international standing that inspired the twenty-nine contributors drawn from wide spectrum of Nigerian Society. The contributors are made up of eminent scholars, diplomats, military officers, and civil servants.

The wide-ranging scope of issues covered in the twenty-eight essays of the book are in consonance with the pioneering work of Major General Joseph N. Garba, entitled "Diplomatic Soldier." The contributors have examined past and present Nigeria's actions and inactions in global affairs, from the economic, social, political and strategic perspectives, with a view to distilling valuable lessons for the future. This partially explains the unstated mission of this collection - sensitizing the interest of scholars, policy-makers and opinion moulders in Nigeria, in particular, and the rest of Africa and the world on issues of international relations.

On the whole, *Nigeria In World Politics* is a symbolic microcosm of the tons of sympathies which flowed across Nigeria as Major General Joseph N. Garba left the stage when his services were most needed.



The National Institute, Kuru
P.M.B. 2024, Bukuru, Plateau State
NIGERIA