

NATIONAL INTEREST AND FOREIGN POLICY: WHY NIGERIA SHOULD INVADE CAMEROON

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Abstract

Every modern state has its unique history; Nigeria's state offers an interesting one. One of the far-reaching consequences of the First World War was that Germany lost most its African colonial territories/interests to France and Britain. For instance, by 1915, the Cameroon was administratively divided into two by the French and British—the larger half going to the French while Britain had the mandate over the south-western part (from Lake Chad down to Duala) included (as a province) the colonial Nigerian territory. Earlier, before the intrusion of European colonizers, traditional communities ruled over themselves, and later were organized into varying form of monarchies. Thus the colonial boundaries in these configurations were not established according to the various indigenous groupings. Grouping nations together in some case and dividing them in others was a common feature as long as it was consisted with the security and economic interest of the colonial powers; emergent post-colonial states also thrive still on economic and political interests and they could further those interest—even if might lead to further re-delineation of national boundaries to reflect pre-colonial societal ties in culture and political organization. Accordingly, this article adopts a theoretical methodology to articulate a case for Nigeria against the (southern) Cameroon on the ground

that it was initially mingled with Nigerian culture before the eventual European partitioning. The arguments for this are that it is in Nigeria's overall national interest to do so; it is politically expedient; it is fair to other strategic interests—on the national, regional and world stage. The work discovers that it was the ICJ which judgement (2002) formally ceded Bakassi Peninsula (southern Cameroon) to Cameroon. Hence it recommends that Nigeria should (surprisingly) invade the entire Cameroonian state such that the ensuing negotiation/diplomacy would guarantee the occupation of the Peninsula; and that achieving this should form the kernel of her African sub-regional foreign policy.

Key Terms: Cameroon, foreign policy, invasion, national interest, Nigeria

Introduction

Every modern state has its unique history; Nigeria's state offers an interesting one—specifically concerning the tussle that ensued and lasted between Nigeria and the Cameroon. In fact, for nearly two decades of the last and a few years into present century, the Bakassi Peninsula (which is the border settlement of the Nigeria-Cameroun border) the dispute between the two nations ranged but which was finally decided at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 2002—ceding it to Cameroon (Omada, 2013; Ekpenyong, 1989). The ICJ decision is tantamount to the facts of history and is not in Nigeria's national interest; thus it could be jettisoned by further litigation on the issues or by Nigeria's forceful retrieval of the territory once the facts are considered as supported by the undisputable history.

One could recall that one of the far-reaching consequences of the First World War was that Germany lost most its African colonial territories/interests to France and Britain. To be clear, by 1915, the Cameroon was administratively divided into two by the French and British—the larger half going to the French while Britain had the mandate over the south-western part (from Lake Chad down to Duala) included (as a province) the colonial Nigerian territory. Earlier, before the intrusion of European colonizers, traditional communities ruled over themselves, and later were organized into varying form of monarchies. Thus the colonial boundaries in these configurations were not established according to the various indigenous groupings. Grouping nations together in some case and dividing them in others was a common feature as long as it was consisted with the security and economic interest of the colonial powers; emergent post-colonial states also thrive still on economic and political interests and they could further those interest—even if might lead to further re-delineation of national boundaries

to reflect pre-colonial societal ties in culture and political organization. In this way, the ICJ decision is disregard for (or a distortion) of history; it needs to be righted.

Accordingly, there is the need to articulate a case for Nigeria against the (southern) Cameroon on the ground that it was initially mingled with Nigerian culture before the eventual uninvited, arbitrary and self-interested European partitioning. The arguments we are going to aver for this are that it is in Nigeria's overall national interest not only to challenge or confront the ICJ decision legally or militarily; that such course of action is politically expedient; it is fair to other strategic interests—on the national, regional and world stage. In the end, one would find sufficient justification for the point that Nigeria should (surprisingly) invade the entire Cameroonian state such that the ensuing negotiation/diplomacy would guarantee the occupation of the Peninsula; and that achieving this should form the kernel of her African sub-regional foreign policy.

Statement of the Problem

Thus, many scholars (Asobie 2003; Baye 2010; Anene 2005; Nweke 1982; Ngan 2010; Fombo 2006; Rose and Sama 2006; and Eke 2009, for instance) have made various articulations on the Nigerian-Cameroon border conflict, its (mis)management, and ICJ adjudication. Despite such articulations, not much interest is placed on the implications of the ceding on the fundamental human rights (especially that to self-determination) of the people of Bakassi Peninsula being ceded. These concerns are rife and need to be put to perspective. To be specific, there is genuine worry about Nigeria's complacency abiding by the ICJ ruling over the disputed Bakassi Peninsula. Critically, does such complacency not an indication Nigeria's abdication of her national interest and mandate to protect her citizens' rights and territorial integrity is undermined? Does the ICJ's judgement and Nigeria's adherence/complacency not place the inhabitants/citizens of the Peninsula to, willy-nilly, accept their fate thereby violating their right to decide where to (historically)? Has Nigeria exhausted the routes of possibly redress of the anomaly? As it stands, what workable new routes are yet to be explored; and is the military option not attractive?

This work dwells on facts; in the end it is prescriptive. It is significant for its foundation in praxis and expedience. It certainly would be a guide to the Nigerian government and foreign policy makers, other international actors/observers, and indeed, other relevant bodies interested in the issues pertaining to the Nigerian-Cameroon border dispute, its resolution and implications.

The Scope and Method of the Study

The major concern of this study is the analysis of the historicity of Nigeria's claim to ownership of south western Cameroon as against the ICJ's ruling. Thus the study goes beyond the Bakassi Peninsula to articulate economic, political and other elements which are in Nigeria's favor for the invasion of the entire Cameroon. Accordingly, and in order to succeed in the conceptualization of all the issues, this work adopts critical analyticity methodology to historicize and analyze the major historical trends of the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial rights over the disputed areas. Thus the work looks into extant literature on the to explain, review, and evaluate the presuppositions of international relations in the context of politics and truth, and situating these in the context of national interests which must shape a nation's foreign policy. This method relied simply on current and reliable primary/secondary sources of information: printed (books, newspapers, magazines, and journals) and soft (the internet/social media). Thus the analyticity posture of the work was also qualitative and normative.

Theoretical Framework

There are several contending theories adaptable for this work. The theoretical framework of any research is seen as a collection of interrelated concepts to frame research to enable the researcher explain, predict and interpret the research findings (Akintoye, 2015). According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016: 85), it is "the underlying structure, the scaffolding or frame of your study". However, for the present purposes and because of the eclectic nature of the issues at stake, we adopt Deterrence, Political Development, and Game Theories.

*Deterrence Theory (DT)*DT is an aspect of the wider Rational Choice Theory (RCT)—which explains social phenomena as outcomes of individual choices that can be considered rational. Choices are considered rational if they are suitable to achieve specific goals, and given the constraints of the situation by considering the costs (overall or vs immediate), risks and benefits of a decision—although choices that seem rational to one may not be so to another (Lake, 2021). Hence rational choice is self-interested/utilitarian model, whether personal (and therefore, egoistic) or state (thus perhaps, altruistic) depending on (short or long term) preferences. Thus, in politics, RCT could be used to explain political behaviors and how political issues are handled—whether national or international. Specifically, DT refers to the literature and praxis where actual or threat of use of force by one party does convince another or others to act or

refrain from some course of action. The central problem of deterrence revolves around how to credibly threaten military action or nuclear punishment on the adversary despite its costs to the deterrer (Lake, 2021). One approach to theorizing about deterrence has entailed the use of rational choice and game-theoretical models of decision making. Often, a distinction is sometimes made between nuclear deterrence and "conventional deterrence." Yet, the two most prominent deterrent strategies are "denial" (denying the attacker the benefits of attack) and "punishment" (inflicting costs on the attacker) (Lake, 2021). In this work, the DT theory is thought to apply to the various efforts to advance the respective national interests, power game and deterrent (previous or recent) efforts by both Nigeria and the Cameroon; hence Nigeria's prospective invasion should be preemptive.

For convenience, this work adopts Historical/Political Development Theory. This is because the emergence of political systems, which long predates the evolution of humankind, constitutes a set of adaptive strategies with significant evolutionary consequences. Hence Bakassi Peninsula was initially integral part of Nigerian cultures; then it was dissolved into the German African colonial territory; and later was partitioned to France (following the defeat of Germany by the allies at the end of the First World War). The trajectory of that political development indicates even though ICJ cedes Bakassi to Cameroon, it could be regained to its origins.

Similarly, this research adopts classical Games Theory (GT). The theory has become imperative in this study because of its effectiveness and merit among other means for the study and understanding of behavioral patterns of state and non-state actors in conflict situation across national frontiers. GT has got to be used to model situations where decisions must be made within certain constraints. The idea is to reduce situations to a game where the potential of achieving certain outcomes must be maximized. They further relate to game theory as a body of thought dealing with the rational decision strategies in situations of conflict and competition, when each participant or player seeks to maximize gains and minimize losses. Games theory is a decision-making approach based on the assumption of actor rationality in a situation of competition and develop strategies for the optimization of the chances of success. Hence, the theory has a multiform application.

GT is applicable in the Nigeria-Cameroon border dispute over the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula had presented a clear example of game situation whereby by each player plays to win or at least not to lose within certain constraints. The fact is that both countries have respective national interest to pursue; each thus need

to (and indeed has) develop the much possible, rational and strategic single move and short/long sequences in handling the dissent. Although the decisions or judgments of the ICJ are binding on Nigeria as member of the United Nations, the country's new political actors should revisit and initiate newer strategy and tactic that constitutes alternative policy options in pursuing the Bakassi question given the economic and strategic importance of the area to Nigeria. One thing that may permanent is national interest, and a nation ought not go back on it; such was Cameroon's victory at ICJ; but its successful invasion by Nigerian assures ultimate victory for the latter. Accordingly, all three theories adopted here reasonably justify Nigeria's prospective action.

On National Interest and Foreign Policy

Both ideas of national interest and foreign policy obtain consequent upon the reality of international relations—cross-boundary state interests/interactions; that is what “exists or is carried on between nations” (Oxford, 2005, 446). Such relations as trade, law, agreements, and conferences between two or more nations (5) are cited to help clarify the concept of international relations. Holsti (1974, 20), Deutsch (1988, 2), Akpotor (1995, 120) and Offiong (1995, 143) explain international relations as the sum total, the totality of all forms of interaction between sovereign States, especially in such areas as economic, social, political, scientific, military and technological matters. Deutsch, in particular, notes that international relations is nothing but “the art and science of the survival of mankind or attempt of a state to adjust the world, while adjusting to it (Deutsch, 2). The states of the world are inescapably interdependent, in terms of economic, scientific, technology, military matters and so on. The largest, perhaps strongest, powerful nations in the world are inevitably linked in far more ways to the smallest and weaker ones. In fact:

All nations are interdependent in terms of politics and strategy. No nation, no matter how large, can in splendid isolation be master of its fate ... no nation, no matter how large can compel all others to do its bidding, nor convert them quickly to its own beliefs... no people and no country in the world could have reached its present level of technology, prosperity and health – nor could it maintain its present rate of progress without the decisive aid of ... foreign contributors ... No country could keep many of its own people alive without the help of foreigners (Deutsch, 3).

Similarly international relations is equally a many sided enterprise, not a distinct activity. In a broader sense, international relations is a process that encompasses international politics, foreign policy, international institutions, international organizations, the politics of international economic relations, global legal order, strategic studies, international business, diplomacy and so on.

Dudley (1982) claims that the notion and the purpose of international relations is national interest. Many scholars (Barry, 1967; Oyediran, 1975/78; and Akinyemi, 1978) for instance, are of the opinion that the essential purpose of States' external relation is the promotion of, and defense of (that state's) national interest. However, in contemporary time, the concept of national interest has steered much controversy. Moreover, the normative nature of the concept makes it useful both as a way of thinking about a country's overall goals and as an agent if mobilizing public support for set objectives on the international stage.

In order to appreciate the great diversity of facts and issues in international relations, the need for an organizing device becomes imperative. The concern of scholars and students of global relations is to search for and achieve the "science" of international relations. That is, a systemic analysis of inter-state relations. One of such systemic tools is the development of theory, familiarly known as theoretical frame work, whose purpose is to help create understanding by "ordering facts and concepts into some meaningful pattern... only when these facts and events are fitted against some framework of concepts can they be seen as essentially as illustrations of general ad recurring process" in international relations (Holsti, 17). Although a theory helps the researcher select data, concepts and related variable, still it has its limitations and must be applied consciously. On the other hand, the term: *International Politics* may refer to the responses of member states of the international community to the external actions of a particular state, or collection of states; the explaining factor is one state's external actions, and then reactions of other states (a kind of stimulus-response phenomenon). Consider the case of the 1990 Republic of Iraq Military invasion of the state of Kuwait, the responses of the international community in terms of the formation of the International Coalition Forces, to get the Iraqi Armed Forces out of Kuwait. In this situation, military intervention became an aspect of international politics. It means that members of the coalition force used their military resources to effect changes in the international system (Aghahowa, 2007). Understanding the root of the political behaviour of states at the international level is inevitably the question of human survival. The existence, therefore, of several sovereign states, has strengthened the growing tendency of states to interact across their national boundaries.

By and large, the concept of national interest “enjoys considerable favour as a basis for action and has won a prominent place in the dialogue of public affairs” (Rosenau, 1972, 34). Some scholars posit that national interest is often employed as an analytical tool “...to describe, explain, or evaluate the sources or the adequacy of a nation’s foreign policy... as an instrument of political action. It serves as a means of justifying, denouncing or proposing policies... (Rosenau, 34). The concern here looks at the ways in which international actors, primary but not exclusively states, formulate decisions and strategies for dealing with member states of the international community. It concentrates on the interplay between domestic and external forces, on the organization, psychology, and politics of decision-making, on the purpose behind foreign policy, on the instrument (means) available to those who formulated and implement external policy decision, as well as a careful estimation of consequences of policy implementation (London School, 1981, 8). National interest is usually articulated by policy makers. Perhaps, the most straightforward way to analyze the external behavior of state is to look at the actions and attitudes of individuals that constitute the policy-making body of a state. We are interested in the politics, organization, perception, values, and ideological motivation of the small group (decision-making elites) that dominate the decision-making processes. But the engine that regulates the direction of international relations is foreign policy, a concept which describes the actions or behavior of states (not individuals, groups, or private organizations, etc.) across their geographical boundaries.

All the same, an analysis of a state’s (government) behavior towards the rest of the world and the domestic conditions under which the external actions of a state are formulated and implemented is certainly an analysis of foreign policy. **Thus Crabb (1972, 1) describes foreign policy as “consisting of two elements: national objectives to be achieved and the means of achieving them”. The interaction between national goals and the resources for attaining them is the perennial subject of statecraft. In its ingredients, the foreign policy of all nations, great and small, is the same. But some put it rather simply that foreign policy is a way of dealing with other countries (Schick *et. al*, 1975). On their part, Lerch and Said (1979, 32) consider foreign policy of a state as referring “to the general principles by which a state governs its reactions to the international environment”; and Pious (1980, 618) says it “involves all relations with other countries: diplomatic, economic, cultural, scientific and military”. Foreign Policies are “those policies directly involving foreign governments”**

(Weissberg, 1980, 632). While Kousoulas (1982, 24) describes foreign policy as “the attempts by countries to promote their national interest through the exercise of influence and control beyond their boundaries”, Rodes *et al*, (1983, 458) consider it in broad terms, that it “is the pattern of behavior that one state adopts while pursuing its interest in relations with other state...the analysis is an attempt to find rational explanation of why nations behave as they do”.

In all, the basic of foreign policy, as the point of fact, is that it involves “all forms of interactions (trade, diplomacy, transportation, commerce, technological and scientific cooperation, voluntary organizations, etc) between the members of separate sovereign states, whether government-sponsored or not, refer to international relations” (Agahowa, 66). Hence foreign policy is generally referred to as “governmental external actions or responses designed to meet the external aspirations of different classes in a society. Foreign policy is never a private enterprise.” However, when the sum total of the different class interest, in a particular state, are put together, they form what is known as national interest. Following Kousoulas (1982, 249), “national interest looks at or implies what is best for a country under a given circumstance.” This also points to the fact that it is the government of a particular state (country) that articulates or ascertains the national interest of that state. Yet the question is: who is the government, the president or other governmental officials? However, “whether the President has the ultimate responsibility to take final decision on foreign matters, either in the USA or in other sovereign states it is important that the formulation and execution of foreign policy should be approached strategically” (Aghahowa, 73). Accordingly, Okoli and Okoli (1990) set out the basic elements of formulating the foreign policy of a state thus:

- (1) clear elaboration of objectives or goals;
- (2) consideration of the objectives of other state;
- (3) evaluation of capacity;
- (4) calculation of gains and loss;
- (5) consideration of international environment with respect to:
 - (a) the dynamics of the environment, and
 - (b) predictable patterns of behaviour.

Similarly, Kousoulas (1982) stipulates a model of foreign policy formation guidelines, consisting of seven important steps:

1. A definition of the problems on basis of all available information;
2. A definition of the objectives to be pursued;
3. An outline of the alternative courses of action;

4. An evaluation of the possible consequences of each alternative;
5. A choice of tactics to be employed;
6. The allocation of resources needed to implement the decision;
7. A review of the projected decision in the context of the country's long-term objectives, basic principles, and domestic political, economic and social realities.

In all considerations, Aghahowa (2007, 75) sums that:

the major purpose of foreign policy of a state appears to be the desire to safeguard its continuous existence as a recognized member of the comity of nations. This notion of existence of a state is particularly guaranteed when, for instance, a state is in a relative position or has the capabilities to defend, promote and to preserve its national interest, defined as what is best and prosperous for a country. Establishing cooperative relationship among nations for the common good of all is one of the practical, perhaps, traditional ways of promoting a country's national interest. Alliance formulation has featured markedly in the foreign policy of states. On the other hand, the conduct of foreign policy, which emphasizes the desire of one state to shape the actions of others states in the directions favorable to its objectives is dependent on one key factor: diplomacy.

Nigeria and the Cameroon: The Common History

Currently, the Cameroonian and Nigerian states

lie side-by-side on the west coast of Africa. Their land boundary extends from Lake Chad in the north to the Bakassi Peninsular in the south. Their coastlines are adjacent and are bound by the Gulf of Guinea. Four States border Lake Chad: Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria; the coastal region down the basin, where the southern part of the land boundary ends, is the area of the Bakassi Peninsular. The peninsular, situated in the hollow of the Gulf of Guinea, is bounded by the River Akwayafe to the west and by the Rio del Rey to the east. It is an amphibious environment and characterized by mangrove vegetation. The Gulf of Guinea, which is concave in character at the level of the Cameroonian and the Nigerian coastlines, is bound by other states such as Equatorial Guinea (Ekoko, 2004).

According to Fombo (2006, 39),

...the border between Nigeria and Cameroon can be differentiated into roughly four physical and ecological sectors. In its northern most part, the land boundary traverses Lake Chad. Beyond this, the second phase which can be characterized as the land boundary is a near continuous chain of mountains and valleys only broken by Benue valley near Yola. The area provides the source of headwaters for many rivers that drain into either the Benue or Cross River basins that flow into Nigeria or the Sanaga and its tributaries that flow into the Atlantic on the Cameroon Coast. The predominant human activity in this sector is grazing although there are patches of cultivated grounds. This sector continues with a gradual descend from the Savanna mountains region through more peaks and valleys and traverses very dense equatorial forest before approaching the coast.

From the northern to the southern stretches of those borders, fantastic mountain formations, plateau, hill-tops, river systems, with a sea of granite peaks and thick tropical forest (Anene, 1970, 40). Another sector of this boundary is the maritime zone characterized by a broken and adjacent coast—which ends in a tripoint with Equatorial Guinea. The Eloko Island (FernandoPo, belonging to equatorial Guinea), and Sao Tome and Principe belong in this gulf—which further complicated delineation and demarcation efforts (and the fact that the latter pair was not party to the dispute at the Hague) may have precluded a comprehensive judicial ruling on the entire maritime boundary between these countries. Considerable national interests in the large area arise as a result of oil deposits and the consequent maritime life (Anene, 1970, 40).

Aghemelo and Ibhasephor (2006, 2) stress that “the geography of most of the zone in the boundary, has impact or even dictated the settlement patterns along the boundary.” Besides, its direct impact on settlement patterns, equally critical is the fact that human activities along the border are also dependent on the geography, which indeed carries a higher premium for developing societies that depend more heavily and directly on the immediate environs for subsistence exploitation of hydrological resources. On one side of the border, for instance, the flow pattern of rivers that takes their rise and flow across to the other. There is the significant overhand of population and human activities across the border, especially where the same people straddle the boundary. In the maritime zone, natural resources in the form of marine life and oil deposits lie across the border, providing opportunities for intense competition and bickering over their control. And this is historical.

Traditional Africa was largely controlled by indigenous peoples themselves over the centuries; by 1914, most of those peoples were already

organized under empires, emirates, kingdoms, or other monarchical structures. All those were reorganized into protectorates/colonies by the European powers (Aghmelo and Ibhasebhor, 2006, 1; Ronrke, 1997, 5). Thus the divisions and political impositions were done with the African on the weaker front. By 1851, Britain had taken Nigeria. This political gerrymandering of Lagos by the British would further encourage her territorial aggrandizement in Africa. But more importantly, the political conquest of “Nigeria” was accentuated by the Berlin Conference on West Africa of 1884/5 (Chukwu, 2002, 30-32). Similarly, Baye (2010, 10) remarks that “...the colonial boundaries in those configurations were not established according to the existing various indigenous groupings”. Yet the colonialists were satisfied with all the restructurings as long as such was consisted with their security and economic interests.

Concerning the interested colonialists’ political interests and intrigues, it is important to note that the Lake Chad and the Bight of Biafra stretch of the border was not demarcated—though process of was begun on in the 1932-1940; and that the Anglo-German Agreement, which formed the basis of the boundary line, was based on speculation about the nature of the territory. For instance, in one of the Agreements concerning the southern section of the eastern border (dealing with the Bakassi peninsula), the Rio-Del-Rey was assumed to be a river 80 miles (129 kilometers) long and flowing into the sea. But subsequent explorations revealed that it was rather a maze of creeks, a network of rivulets, linking two larger streams, namely, the Akapayafe and the Ndian. But, then, instead of now using the Ndian River, which fairly neatly separates two ethnic groups on either side, as the boundary, the Akpayafe was used, thus splitting the Efiks into two—some in Nigeria, the rest of their kith and kin in **Cameroon (Ede, 1981, 294-298)**; the Ekoi and the Boki ethnic groups were also split by the south-eastern boundary; much of eastern Nigerians remained in western Cameroon after its separation from Nigeria in 1961. Yet, the Western provincial government of Cameroon (fearful that if the boundary did not operate as a ‘human divide’ and that the Igbo of south-eastern Nigeria might flood Cameroon and dominate the economic life of the country) insisted on strict application of state functions at the border (Anene, 1970, 285).

Asiwaju (1984) points out that “a study of European archives supports accidental rather than intentional making of African boundaries. Corroborating this, Lord Robert Salisbury (then British PM) owns up thus:

We have been engaged in drawing lines upon maps where no white man’s feet have ever trod; we have been giving away mountains and rivers and lakes to each

other, only hindered by the small impediment that we never knew exactly where the mountains and Rivers and lakes were (Asiwaju, 1984, 64).

Similarly, Fanso opined that “the notion and function of the term” boundary differed fundamentally in the European and African contexts. According to him:

In traditional Africa, the concept of a political or ethnic boundary was expressed in terms of neighbors with whom the particular state or polity shared a territory and such a boundary was conceived of in terms of a region or a narrow zone fronting the two neighbors marked off by it. In this sense, the boundary was the zone where two states were united or jointed together (Fanso, 1986:12).

Similarly, Brownlie (1979) reports that “the actual demarcation of the Cameroon-Nigeria border took place over a long period of time from 1884 to 1961; from colonial into the post-colonial Nigeria. It was the outcome of this plebiscite that divided the British Northern and Southern Cameroons into distinct territories, which chose independence by joining Nigeria and French Cameroon, respectively. Brownlie provides a list of treaties and agreements that document the changes in the Cameroon-Nigeria boundary that took place during that time.

It is important to note that Northern and Southern Cameroons were British protectorate territories administered as part of Nigeria before 1961. There was not a separate administrative agency for the Cameroons. Konings (2005, 107) states that “the British method of administration led to the appearance that Nigeria rather than Britain was the colonial master of the southern Cameroons”. They claim that the post-1945 nationalist struggle in southern Cameroon was more anti-Nigeria than anti-colonial in character. Furthermore, he mentions that this situation gave rise to the increasing peripheralization of southern Cameroons, which seem to be more of a colony within a colony. More significantly, the quasi-regional status and limited degree of self-government gained by southern Cameroons in 1954 seemingly undermined the existing boundaries between what had been the German Cameroon protectorate and Nigeria. The southern Cameroons achieved full regional status within the federation of Nigeria in 1958. Southern Cameroon’s autonomy generated two issues in post-independence. First, they entered into a federal relationship with la-Republique du Cameroon; second, La Republique treated the border between it and Nigeria as sacrosanct and resented the continuing ties between Nigerian groups and that of the southern Cameroonians.

British/German Administration and Obfuscation of the Nigeria-Cameroun Colonial International Boundary

In 1885, Britain declared a protectorate over the territory between the protectorate of Lagos and the west bank of the Rio-del-Rey which was later renamed (1893) the Niger coast protectorate. Thus, the Nigeria-Cameroon boundary was largely settled between Britain and Germany before the outbreak of the First World War. The entire boundary had been delineated and partly demarcated with pillars leaving little doubts as to its location (Fombo, 2006). In this perspective, Ngang (2005:7) recounts that “in a series of agreements in 1913, Britain and Germany sought to establish an exact demarcation of the borders between Nigeria and Cameroon, which of course did not exist as such. While the first treaty entitled: “The settlement of the frontier between Nigeria and the Cameroons, from Yola to the sea”, put Bakassi proper under the jurisdiction of the Germans, the second: “The Regulation of Navigation on the Cross River”, ceded the “navigable portion” of the offshore border of the peninsular to Britain. Article 21 of the Anglo-German Treaty of 1913 states the exact position of the border:

From the centre of the navigable channel on a line joining Bakassi points and king of the navigable channel of the Akwayate River as far as the 3 mile limit of territorial jurisdiction. For the purpose of defining this boundary, the navigable channel of the Akwayafe River shall be considered to lie wholly to the east of the navigable channel of the Cross and Calabar Rivers (UN Department of peacekeeping operations map No. 4247, May 2005).

Moreso, events of the First World War completely changed the fate of Cameroon. The war that started in Europe was quickly carried to the colonies. German forces in spite of their dogged resistance in Cameroon, were finally overrun in 1916 by a combination of British forces from base in west Africa (especially Nigeria) and French/Belgium forces from bases in French equatorial Africa and Belgium Congo, respectively, Germany lost all her colonies in Africa including Cameroon which was divided into two territories by the league of nations and administered as mandate under British and France. The Franco-British Declaration of July 1919 placed Bakassi and the rest of the “British Cameroon” under British mandate (Crowder, 1968). But at the end of the Second World War, the British and French League of Nations mandates over Northern/Southern Cameroons and Cameroon respectively, were succeeded by

trusteeship agreements under the newly created United Nations Organization. The agreements creating these trusteeship territories re-ratified the Anglo-German and Anglo-French treaties pertaining to the borders between both countries. Once more, maps from this period place Bakassi under the sovereignty of Cameroon (Ngang, 2005, 8).

The ensuing 1916 negotiations adopted the picot Line as the provisional boundary between the British sphere to the west and the French to the East—and Britain had about one-fifth of what was left of German Kamerun and France and four-fifth. Worried over the special consideration made to France, the Milner-Simon declaration of July 10, 1919 finally settled the partition of the German colony into British and French spheres. This declaration was mainly an endorsement of the 1916 Picot line. It was subsequently appended to the mandate agreement in accordance with article 22 of the League of Nation and officially became one of the most important instruments on the definition of the Nigeria-Cameroon border. The Thomson-Marchant Declaration ratified that agreement in 1930.

On the integrative policy of Britain, the northern part of the territory (that became known as the British Northern Cameroons from 1946), Dikwa Emirate was reconstituted and admitted as a division of Bornu Province. Meanwhile, the rest of Northern Cameroons was recognized into Adamawa Emirate and placed under Adamawa province, dominated by Yola. The entire province came under the Emir of Yola who was later officially known as Lamido of Adamawa. The Nigerian legal system also replaced German legislation from February 28, 1924 in the Cameroons. Asobie (2005) stresses that this gamut of British actions led to the orientation of every aspect of life in the territory to be centered on the Northern Region of Nigeria; subsequent nationalism in this part tended to be inarticulate and, at the critical moment favored independence through integration into Nigeria as a result of the comprehensive administrative integration that was effected. In the first instance, administration of southern Cameroons as an integral part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria negated the fact of an international boundary between the two territories. Coupled with the ethnic mix of the border area, and the seasonal fishing occupation of most of the occupants of the hotly disputed Bakassi and associated Islands, movement across the border was without any form of impediment. According to Asobie, “the indigenous population (the peasant farmers and workers) living on both sides of the borders (some of who belong to the same ethnic stock) wished to operate and indeed were operating as if the artificial barriers, known as boundaries, never existed (Asobie, 2005, 82).

The accord between Gowon and Ahmadu Ahidjo of Cameroun began when the aircraft carrying arms and ammunition to secessionist Biafracrashed in **Cameroun(Aluko, 1977, 164)**. Thenceforth, Cameroun has invented claim of the ownership and sovereignty of the Bakassi peninsula. Tell magazine (2006, 31) had observed:

Nigeria may have lost Bakassi to an alleged deal Yakubu Gowon, a general and former head of state, did with Cameroun during the civil war-ceding Bakassi to Cameroun for Cameroun to blockade Biafra from the sea.

Nyong Eta(a chief of Bakassi people)said in an interview that:

It was after the war that I saw some people coming around that they were Cameroonians. I was surprised because my father never told me that this land belongs to the Cameroonians... (Tell, 2006, 12).

Perhaps, in an attempt to win Nigeria-Biafran war, Gowon gave out 1000km² of large portions of low lying Mangrove Island. Thus Camerounian aggression against Nigeria about Bakassi intensified in 1994; and in response to this, the government of Gen. Sanni Abacha ordered Nigerian troops into Bakassi to repel the Cameroonian aggression and restore peace and stability to the area. It should be noted that Cameroun had been the belligerent, intrusive and capricious party;she had attempted for many years to impose its sovereignty over Bakassi in spite of stiff resistance from the Bakassi inhabitants. Nigeria's action to restore peace and stability in the peninsula with the use of her troops was in consonance with international law as expressed in the United Nations charter, chapter vii, Article 51 which states that:

...nothing in the present charter shall impair the inherent right of individual in collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a member state of the United Nations (**Egbo, 2003, 10**).

Consequently, on March 29, 1994, Cameroun instituted a legal action against Nigeria at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague, Netherlands, claiming among others, that the Bakassi peninsula was under the sovereignty of Cameroun (Guardian September 18, 2002). In its closing arguments, the Cameroun had asked the court to adjudge and declare:

1. That the land boundary between Cameroun and Nigeria was determined by the Anglo-German Agreement of March 11, 1913.

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2. That in consequence, sovereignty over the Bakassi peninsula is Cameroon's.

And Nigeria's response requested the International court of justice (ICJ) to adjudge and declare:

1. That sovereignty over the peninsula is vested in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

2. That Nigeria's sovereignty over Bakassi extends up to the boundary with the Cameroon.

From 1994 to 2002 legal icons from both sides argued their case presenting facts and figures, to buttress their various claims. In 2002, the ICJ declared Cameroon victorious. **Sanusi (2002) pointed that the judgment made no sense. His question was "How do you cede a people with different culture, different language and background to another nation whose background differs completely?"** He insisted that Bakassi people are Nigerians who cannot become Cameroonians overnight. He pointed out the need for the Nigerian government to appeal to the World Court for a review of the judgment. Earlier, Rudin (1938) did trace the activities of the Germans and British traders in the areas during her colonial days. He observes that the German administrators in the Cameroons attached great importance to the Benue and its tributaries as the best, quickest and most profitable way of gaining access to the hinterland of their colony. **Uffot (2008) says, "...the mood of residents of the peninsula was that of fear, anger and uncertainty."** The uncertainty according to him was informed by the order from a federal high court that without prejudice to the judgment of the world court in Hague, the status quo should be maintained on the Bakassi Peninsula. **Francis (2010) examines the Article 3 of the Green Tree Agreement**, which spelt out the modalities for the transfer of Bakassi to Cameroon. To him, the section states that Cameroon shall not force Nigerians living in the Bakassi Peninsula to have the zone or change their nationality. Other sections of the agreement provides that Cameroon shall, respect the culture, language, beliefs and rights of the Bakassi people to continue their agricultural and fishing activities as well as protect their properties and that there shall be no imposition of discriminatory decisions on them. Obasanjo signed away the Peninsula via the Agreement at *Green Tree Agreement* established the methods of withdrawal and transfer of authority of the Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon. The terms of the agreement stipulated that Nigeria will continue to manage a small definite part as a specific zone for a period of two years; and, as **noted by**

Michael (2006), the event eventually took place was a vivid demonstration of President Yar'Adua's purported commitment to the rule of law.

Apparently, the political, socio-economic and cultural effects of resettlement on the Bakassi people are high. Farming, which has been the mainstay of the Bakassi people, was disrupted and social support networks dismantled; the cordial ethnic, tribal and religious relations among the people were dashed; individual life dignities were lost because of lack of privacy necessitated by inadequate accommodation for affected persons—with families estranged from their traditional and ancestral domain and culture. Moreover, the people of Bakassi's worship of "Akwa Abasi Ibom", the Almighty God in their traditional way and their rich cultural heritage were lost. Thus in October 2002, Nigeria officially rejected the judgement of the ICJ over the disputed Bakassi Peninsula—even though she had pledged (earlier in September) to the contrary under some preposterous circumstances, in disregard for other options open for possible resolution pursuant to her national interests—such as rejecting ICJ ruling, legal-lobbying, propaganda, diplomatic and military actions.

The Cameroon and Nigeria's Foreign Policy: Alternative/Contending Options

To be clear, western Cameroon is historically part of Nigerian cultures; foreign arbitrary force ceded to the Cameroonian state; and it needs to be reclaimed for several other reasons (call them excuses). Towards achieving this, it might just be civilized and democratic for Nigeria to adopt one or more of several contending political options—lobbying, propaganda and litigation—as initial steps. This might involve fresh-tendentious diplomacy—defined by **Freedman (1983, 403)** as “**the arrangements or a constant process of bargaining and compromise** among nation that constitute the greater part of inter-state relations”; or fresh legal action against the Cameroon (with France, Britain and Germany as parties) since every court is open for contest/appeal in other circumstance. Fortunately, Article 61 of the ICJ statute supports this. The appeal could be instituted back at the ICJ or at the UN for consideration at the larger world setting that could be more critical or dispassionate. As part of such appeal, a case for UN-backed plebiscite on the entire western (Bakassi) Cameroon could be reignited. After all, the UN had supervised plebiscites in British Togoland territory (1956), French Togoland (1958), Northern Cameroons (1959), Southern Cameroons (1961), Western Samoa (1962), Rwanda-Burundi (1961), Papua-New Guinea in 1972 (Sagay,2002); Eritrea had conducted in (1993), and South-Sudan followed recently in 2015. Nigeria could enter into (or

even forge) diplomatic alliances with other close regional nations for the purpose; negotiate or issue threats; cut foreign trade or diplomatic ties with Cameroon, all in retaliation for the ICJ injustice and preemptive of military action. Unfortunately, however, and no matter how this option is democratic, it seems unviable since the ICJ itself is as construed and constituted by those comprador nations directly or recrudescant involved and sided with the Cameroon. Another, and perhaps potentially more effective, option is military.

The military option to settle-up Nigeria's claims and national interests in western Cameroon could have been long overdue. This option involved the effective drafting of the Nigerian armed forces to forcefully invade the entire Cameroon on a full scale so as to exercise political control over the area. This step will help stimulate, re-awake and arouse world interest about the issues/disputation at international stage about the seriousness of Nigeria's claim/resolve. Several factors favor this option.

In the first place, the ICJ has denied Nigeria justice by refusing to put pre-colonial community realities into consideration. Accordingly, there is need to recourse to the very first step in seeking justice: self-help; after all, attack could be best form of defense. Nevertheless, there are more serious and compelling reasons, apart from the claim that the regions within the disputation were part of Nigerian territorial cultures, why Nigeria should go the military option.

One is economic. The Bakassi is filled with abundant mineral resources that could be of interest to every serious contender nation. In fact the discovery of oil in Bakassi Peninsula at commercial quantity contributed to the escalation of the crisis and difficulty in its management; this point remains valid, and the interest as alive as never.

The second reason for needed invasion is political. The effects of the ICJ adjudication on the Bakassi question also impact on the overall national interest of Nigeria. In fact, the existence of many states in the international system portends a form of permanent struggle for the maintenance of political independence, territorial integrity, economic interest and national prestige (Robert, 2010). National interest is as an aim to promote a nation's image, prestige and respect both at home and abroad (Mongenthau 1989). Moreover, the fundamental objectives and directive principles of Nigerian state policy are enshrined in chapter 2 of the 1999 Constitution; it encompasses the national interest of the country. Section 14 and sub-section 2(a) of the Constitution state that sovereignty belongs to the people of Nigeria from whom government through the constitution derives all its powers and authority; Section 14 SS2(b) states that the security and welfare of the people are the primary purpose of

government. Thus, Nigeria's national interests are summed up in the following words: sovereignty, welfare, unity, faith, peace and progress. In a nutshell, Nigeria's national interest is anything that concerns and affects all Nigerians. It is the common aspirations of the various ethnic nationalities that constitute the Nigerian State. Olukoshi (1992) supports this to include "...the defense of her sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity." In achieving her national interests, Nigeria reserves several strategies ranging from diplomacy to military actions, from cultural exchange to subversion from economic cooperation to propaganda. Suffice here to say that the Nigeria's national interests since political independence in 1960 has suffered serious setbacks—with successive government officials being usually driven by self-interest instead of national interest (as has been implicated in the case of Bakassi Peninsula). Moreover, the Nigerian state has the responsibility to protect (R2P). Indeed the Nigerian Constitution places final responsibility of foreign policy on the President, the National Assembly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, other departments (including the national Security Council. Those policy makers should realize that another reason for suggested invasion of Cameroon is that the action would reassert Nigeria as regional power and get reignite her world relevance. For instance the coalition force against Iraq is unquestionably, within the realm of foreign policy, because participation is a governmental action, though non-governmental actors may have influenced this participatory behavior (Aghahowa, 2007).

...and Federally Controlled Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), Benin, do not have specifically targeted non-formal (mass-oriented) programmes for promoting the understanding of international relations.

It might just be preliminary to alert the ICJ/UN of Nigeria's discontent/grievance, more so, where the judgement of the ICJ that Bakassi peninsula is territory within the sovereignty of Cameroon while the native population are not merely Nigerians, but Nigerians who are indigenous to Bakassi and owners of the land of Bakassi; the court ceded the ancestral home of these populations to the Cameroonians government while these people at the same time are expected to maintain cultural, trade and religious affiliations with their kith and kin in Nigeria—creating an irreconcilable admixture of factors where it grants sovereignty of a territory to one country and the nationality of its native population to another, while at the same time recognizing the land to be the ancestral homes of the population. The judgment ceded part of Cross river estuary to Cameroon which means that no ship can enter into Calabar without the

permission of Cameroon. The judgment of the ICJ on the Bakassi issue has redrawn the geographical map of Nigeria and, which requires constitutional amendment to effect change occasioned by the ruling. The judgment created a burden of loss of oil and gas soaked region reputed to contain 10 percent of the world's oil and gas reserve. It has deprived the totality of the Nigerian people the oil wealth of that community. Enforcement of the judgment was a severe violation of the inalienable rights of the people of Bakassi to self-determination and a threat to their socio-cultural stability. The judgment therefore opens the door of military option, simple—just as the Russian case against Ukraine, a manifestation of power game.

The Russo-Ukrainian analogy of my suggested invasion is apt. Two initial developments (power game and national interests) are crucial preludes to Russia's invasion of Ukraine: The demise of the USSR (and Putin's desire to reestablish the Union) and the growing expansion of NATO (admitting several independent former members of the defunct USSR). First, the West and the US nurses the geostrategic interest of dominating the regions around Russia. To effectively achieve this motive, the states within the region need to be politically structured in such a way as to align with the actualization of such interest. Russia would not want to lose its strategic interests in the country to the United States and the West. Indeed, any pro-western and pro-United States political structure in Russia's border-nations would be vehemently opposed by Russia (Gottwald, 2014). Thus Ukraine is one of the centers where this hegemonic rivalry between Russia and US unfold. Even though Germany seems moderate in its response to the Russo-Ukrainian war, it has steadily advocated for pacific resolution of the war while supplying arms to Ukraine (Gottwald, 2014). So also have been the United Kingdom (UK), France and U.S—the major nations behind the strength of the UN. By and large, Russia's annexation (2014) of the Crimea region of Ukraine marked the initial steps towards a wider invasion. Historically, the territory of Crimea had been controlled by the Crimean Khanate, a monarchy. In 1783, it was annexed by the Russian Empire. Ever since, Russia has had gradual, strategic and territorial grip on the Crimean region of Ukraine. More recently, in March 2014, Russian troops invaded and occupied key Crimean locations, including airports and military bases, following his orders. The Russian Supreme Council declared Crimea an independent and self-governing nation (this was predicated upon a purported referendum in Crimea whether or not to join the Russian Federation); a Treaty formalized those intrigues, and thereafter, Ukraine withdrew her military forces from Crimea. This action attracted Russia's suspension from the G8 and international sanctions imposed on it even though

Crimea since then has been under Russian rule. However, the UN declared “illegal” the annexation; yet it failed to prevent or restore détente while the Territory becomes military base for Russian planned expansion (BBC, 2014). Expectedly, as Russia’s have, Nigeria invading Cameroon would re-open the Bakassi question. Therein lie the game theory: while Cameroon seem to have ended the game, it should just be Nigeria’s beginning.

Conclusion

This work did attempt to indicate that the disputed but expropriated Bakassi Peninsula was originally and historically Nigerian territory as part of the localities in the Bornu, Yola, Calabari, and other cultures around the Niger Delta. The work reviewed the extant literature and legal instruments on both sides of the isle culminating in the ICJ ruling ceding the territory to Cameroon. Various arguments against the ruling and Nigeria’s complacency have been averred. More importantly, the article articulated sociopolitical and economic implications of the ICT judgement on Nigeria and expresses the grounds of why it is in Nigeria’s national interest to pursue options towards realizing that interest by reshaping her foreign policy in the regard—a policy that must not preclude military option on the table. In order to succeed, it is suggested that the Nigerian nation needs unity of purpose, solidarity and political stability.

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