

INDIA NIGERIA RELATION IN THE LAST DECADE: REFLECTIONS AND
POSSIBILITIES (2004-2014)**MUSTAPHA, AYODELE HARUNA***Lecturer, Department of Social Sciences, Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria.***ABSTRACT**

India established a diplomatic mission in Nigeria in 1958, even before Nigeria became independent in 1960. The follow-up diplomatic and commercial visitations between officials of both countries cemented their cooperative bond regarding political, economic, socio-cultural science and technology, energy, defence and educational issues as attachments. This paper explores and examines the diplomatic relations between India and Nigeria during the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government's (rule) from 2004 to 2014. The relations have been robust and productive to the level that it has extended to other areas of importance. In 2007, the Prime Minister of India-Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Nigeria and signed memoranda of understanding (MOU) on Defence cooperation, the Nigeria-India Joint Commission (NIJC) was reactivated and the Abuja Declaration on strategic partnership was signed. Equally, a forum was formed between the two nations called Asia-African strategic partnership (AASP) to explore mutually beneficial areas of co-operation that are pragmatic, structured and sustainable.

Introduction:

India's success in achieving independence in August 1947 has greatly influence Nigeria. It became a sovereign state and member of international organizations like United Nations and Commonwealth of Nations. It was on the ground of having suffered colonial onslaught that India championed the course of decolonization and eradication of racial discrimination. Prime Minister Nehru Jawaharia demonstrated the commitment of India in support of the decolonization process when he stressed that "we are particularly interested in the emancipation of colonial and dependent countries in the recognition of the theory and practice of equal oppourtunities of all races"

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The two nations are regional powers and share similar world views with respect to global security challenges. They both support the idea of reform of global governance institutions such as United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and World Trade Organisation (WTO). They have several factors in common such as large populations, democratic political system, diverse societies, different spoken languages and both wish to be permanent members of United Nations Security Councils. They equally share common challenges such as terrorism, insurgency and strive for inclusive socio-economic development. The paper investigates the initiatives taken by the UPA Government of India to strengthen Indian-Nigerian relations with a view to promote common interests and achieve shared prosperity. The paper adopts historical approach as its theoretical framework to midwife the study.

Keywords: *India, Nigeria, India-Nigeria relations, India's foreign policy, UPA Government, Diplomacy.*

(Kura 2009:3).

Both India and Nigeria have fought colonialism and racial discrimination in Africa and other parts of the world. Acknowledged the pre-independence influence of India on Nigeria, President Shehu Shagari expounded in a visit to India in 1983 as cited in Kura (2009) that:

We come to salute India, the largest democracy in the world we also come to learn from India, as we have been learning, beginning from the example of your (India's) great Mahatma Ghandi, the greatest hero of all colonial peoples throughout modern history. The moral force of his (Ghandi's) passive resistance philosophy ultimately led to victory. This has been the source of inspiration to all of us (as colonial appendages) and has guided us in our own struggles to achieve our own freedom from colonialism and exploitation. We also watched with interest the achievement of your republican status within the Commonwealth. We followed your example and your model (Kura, 2009:4)

India is one of the few countries in the developing world that has been relatively successful in constructing and sustaining a democratic political system. Significant changes have occurred in Indian domestic politics during the past two decades. The most permanent of these changes involved a departure from the dominant-party system under the congress party at the national level during the early-1990s. The transition to a truly multi-party system was gradual, spread

over a period of sixty years. The pursuit of national interests in the international arena has traditionally revolved around security, trade and energy issues. It has engaged with the international community to promote and support democracy abroad. In addition, it has utilized bilateral, multilateral, development aid and shared technical expertise with countries around the world including Nigeria. The federal structure of the country and the institutionalization of coalition politics have enhanced the role of state government in foreign politics.

The establishment of a diplomatic house usually marks the beginning of formal and official diplomatic and political interactions between and among sovereign states. India established its diplomatic mission on 20th November, 1958 in Lagos, two years prior to Nigeria's independence. The mission was upgraded to the level of a High commission after Nigeria became a political independent country. The visit to Nigeria by India Prime Minister Nehru in 1962 created an important in diplomatic chapter in a long-lasting friendship between both countries. Today, Nigeria has returned to democratic rule uninterruptedly after military rule truncated democratic system from 1966-79, and 1983-1999 respectively by the Nigerian Soldiers. It stands to champion the cause of African countries at the international level. Thus, the Asia-African Strategic partnership (AASP) is an ideal forum for Nigeria and India to explore mutually beneficial areas of co-operation that are pragmatic, structured and sustainable. The migration of Indians to Nigeria under the system of indentured labour during the British rule marked the beginning of an informal relationship.

India's Foreign Policy

Every sovereign country has its own foreign policy. Foreign policy refers to the sum total of principles, interest and objectives which a country promotes while interacting with other countries, the thrust of foreign policy keeps on changing according to changing international conditions. India's foreign policy is shaped by several factors including its history culture, geography and economy. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru gave a definite shape to the country's foreign policy objectives:

- Identify the basic principles of India's foreign policy;
- Explain the meaning and significance of Non-alignment;
- Analyse the relevance of Non-alignment in the post coldwar period;
- Explain the major concerns in India's foreign policy in the post coldwar period;

- Recognize India's contribution to UN efforts for peace and disarmament;
- Explain India's participation in UN peacekeeping and its claims for a permanent seat in the security council.

Basic objectives and principles of foreign policy:

Preservation of national interest, achievement of world peace, disarmament, independence for Afro-Asian nations have been important objectives of India's foreign policy. These objectives are sought to be achieved through some principles viz, Panchsheel; non-alignment, anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, anti-racism, and strengthening the UN organisational structures.

Independence of FP

India's capacity for autonomous action in Foreign Policy is of international importance to naturalists. This has taken on different policy manifestation at different times including as non-alignment, during the coldwar and more recently as strategic autonomy. India's economic growth, information technology prowess and rising power have reshaped global perception of India and India's perception of itself.

The coalition party of Prime-Minister Manmohan Singh (2004-2014): United Progressive Alliance.

UPA was a coalition of centre-left political parties in India formed after the 2004 general election. It was a coalition of parties ranging from state to national parties (Indian National Congress was the key party in UPA and BJP was the key party in NDA). Such coalition were formed because it was difficult to gain majority always to form a government in the centre where regional parties are also strong politically.

India pursues and secures her interests with more foresight than conventionally appreciated. The United Progressive Alliance's (UPA) tenure in New Delhi has been a period of rather momentous geopolitical change in Asia. As the UPA came into power in 2004, geopolitical themes that resonated today-such as the rise of China-were more than palpable. Other themes such as the United States' global decline and a broader shift to multipolarity or "G-zero" were less so. Manmohan Singh (Prime Minister) would always have the successful civil nuclear cooperation deal with the United States, which was concluded in 2006 and approved by the US House of Representatives in 2008.

The bilateral relationship between India and Nigeria is employed for the pursuit of both countries nation interest, and to achieved this, the structure to the relationship is to be carefully reviewed. Although the term never really caught on the notion of a “Manmohan Doctrine” is helpful in understanding what India’s technocratic professor-Prime Minister had in mind when he rose to the helm in 2004. He was the man who eased India into the 1990s, managing a disastrous balance of payment crisis as India’s Finance Minister. His professorial prodivities colored his perceptions of foreign policy. Singh was no realist, as an economist, his doctrine was that Indian foreign policy should privilege economic goals as the driver of India’s national interest.

Nigeria’s Foreign Policy Objectives

The relations between India and Nigeria would have been laid on the premise of mutual understanding as contained in its aims and objectives on foreign policy guides since the emergence of Nigeria as a sovereign nation as stated below:

- (1) The defence of our sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- (2) The creation of the necessary political and economic conditions in Africa and the rest of the world which will facilitate defence of the independence and territorial integrity of all African countries, while at the same time fostering national self-reliance and rapid economic development.
- (3) The promotion and defence of justice and respect for human dignity.
- (4) The promotion of equality and self reliance in Africa and the rest of the developing world.
- (5) The defence and promotion of world peace and justice.
- (6) Promotion of national interest.
- (7) Promotion of international co-operation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and elimination of discrimination in all its ramification.
- (8) Respect for international law and treaty obligations as well as the seeking of settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation arbitration and adjudication.
- (9) Promotion of a just world economic order.

India Bilateral Relations with Nigeria on Energy and Nuclear Diplomacy

A major step in the formation of the Atomic Energy Programme in India was the passing of the Atomic Energy Act in 1948 (subsequently replaced by the Atomic

Energy Act of 1962). Under the provisions of the Atomic Energy Act, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) was constituted in 1948, Uranium exploration and mining required for the nuclear power programme were some of the initial activities that were undertaken. The integrated Energy policy of India recognizes that nuclear power based on indigenous resources can provide long term energy security for the country and recommends continued support for the three-stage programme and development of the thorium fuel cycle. It also recommends exploring the possibility of setting up large nuclear capacities based on imports once the necessary agreements for international cooperation are in place.

The nuclear programme emerged tentatively in 1976 as a response to South Africa's acquisition of nuclear weapons and India's test of a nuclear device. Nigeria nuclear programme was founded in 1976, a goal-directed nuclear energy aspirations began in 2004. Since 2004, Nigeria has been guided by a Federal Government approved nuclear power roadmap and sought the support of the international Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and with the support of India to build up to 4,000 MW of nuclear capacity by 2027. International cooperation is through multilateral and bilateral mechanism with International Atomic and Energy Agency (IAEA). Under the aegis of IAEA, India has trained a number of personnel, particularly from the developing countries (Nigeria) in Nuclear Energy matters. On Oil and Gas, in 2007, India's largest power-producing company, the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) agreed to contribute towards a liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal in Nigeria. NTPC was to help Nigeria set up two gas-based power plants that could generate 700mw and 500mw respectively. Others major India's oil players include the following in Nigeria:

- (i) Indian oil corporation (IOC)
- (ii) ONGC Mihal Energy Ltd (OMEL)
- (iii) Gas Authority of India Ltd (GAIL)
- (iv) Essar and Global oil and Energy
- (v) EIL
- (vi) Fabtech
- (vii) Indcon Projects
- (viii) Patels Airtemp
- (ix) Thermax and Emmersion
- (x) ISGEC
- (xi) Larsen and Toubro
- (xii) Altech

- (xiii) Diamond Engineering
- (xiv) Others

Nigeria's oil is important to India, which it uses to sustain strong economic growth. By early 2010, it was expected that one out of every five barrels of oil imported by India would be from Nigeria. In 2006, the public-private partnership OMEL had successfully bid its interest in setting up to one of four new Greenfield refineries with a capacity of 20,000 barrels per day that were to help Nigeria, increase its domestic crude output. Even then, Mr. Anand Sharma, special Envoy to the Prime Minister of India handed over a letter from the Indian Prime Minister to the President of Nigeria seeking support for India for the Civil nuclear energy cooperation initiative to be discussed at the IAEA Board. Meeting on August 1st, 2008. He expressed India's desire to enhance mutual cooperation in various fields in view of the strategic partnership between the two countries while the Nigerian president request for energy security from India.

Maritime diplomacy

Both India and Nigeria have access to international waters. India to the India and pacific oceans and Nigeria to the Atlantic Ocean. The maritime policies of the two nations are geared towards maritime security to improve their marine strategies. Continental power projection has considerably shifted to maritime prowess which has gained central focus due to economic and strategic reasons with the interplay of non-traditional security issues like piracy and terrorism. This has been pronounced with China's rise and visible aggression in South China with respect to India, and the security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea and Niger Delta region with respect to Nigeria. There comes in collaboration and cooperation.

India-Nigeria Defence Diplomacy

A delegation of the composite India Defense industry has visited the Nigerian Defence Headquarters in Abuja to establish a defence relationship between the two nations. The visit by the 15 man delegation was a follow-up to the joint Defence co-operation committee meeting held on 2014, which gave insight into the capabilities of the Indian Defence industry and its benefits to the Nigerian military.

India has had a long-standing defence relationship with Nigerian and have been involved in training of Nigerian defence personnel and setting up of military

training institutions in Nigeria. India helped in institutions like Nigerian Defence Academic (NDA) and the Command and Staff College (CSC) in Kaduna. Both countries engaged in collaborations regarding military technologies in procurement of weapons, exchange programmes and served in UN peace keeping operations together. Equally, the cooperation extended to area of defence trade and technical ties including armaments, helicopter trainer, aircraft, fast-attack patrol boats, assistance in establishing joint ventures and the renovation of Nigerian dockyards.

Science and Technology Diplomacy

India ranks third among the most attractive investment destinations for technology transactions in the world. It has a strong focus on science and technology realizing that it is a key element of economic growth. It has undertaken space missions including missions to the moon and the famed Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). It is at the top exporter of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) services and innovation. In 2014, India Space Research Organization (ISRO) PSLV-c26 Successful launched, RNSS-IC, the third satellite in the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite (IRNSS) from Satish Dhawan Space Center, Sriharkota. Others areas include scientific research and development, Technological development, advancement of agricultural system, medical science and technology, development of infrastructure, various fields of engineering (including software, chemical mechanical civil, electrical electronic etc.).

The first National Science and Technology policy in Nigeria was produced in 1986 which was designed to create harmony in the pursuit of knowledge about the environment through research and development while the policy has been reviewed overtime. The objectives are: to create awareness in the society on the relevance of science and technology culture for the improvement of quality of life and sustainable economic development, human resources development, agriculture, water resources, health research and innovation, energy, environmental science and technology, mines and minerals development, information and communication technology, space research and investments, industrial research and development production, New and emerging technologies, defence and natural security, transport system, youths, sports and Tourism development, works, land housing and urban development, wood

resources, science laboratory technology intellectual property rights and technology transfer and diffusion.

Though to a limited scale, both countries had co-operated in exchange programmes for the benefits of Nigeria in terms of science and technology over the years. The opportunity to train in India through the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Scheme (ITEC) has been explored where Nigeria students receive fellowships for technical studies in India each year. India offered support in the areas where it had the most expertise – in capacity building by encouraging human resources development with focus on education, science and technology, increase use of ICT, Physical Infrastructure, improve food processing and automobile manufacturing industries.

Legal Diplomacy

India and Nigeria have both legal origin with respect to the British colonial occupation and legacies after independence. Their legal and judiciary system have been tied, modeled and patterned alongside their colonial matter's legal tradition and ways of life. As such, there existed common similarities between Indian and Nigerian legal structures even after their independence decades back. There have been exchange of legal experts between the two nations in law reports, regular courts proceeding, formation and operation of Nigerian Law School jurisprudence, law reforms and dispensation of justice. They have served in international court of justice and have involved in the process and operation of international law.

Diplomacy for securing permanent membership of United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

Both India and Nigeria have differently pursue moves to be members of United Nations Security Council from their countries' point of view. India makes a case to represent (Asia) Indo-Pakistan region while Nigeria tries efforts to represent African Continent. They have the potentials to be members of UNSC. As each tries to muscle its diplomatic potentials to be member, they equally seek the platform of "Developing world forum" to be members of UNSC as they belong to the Non Alignment Movement which stand on neither West nor East. They enjoy what may be called "Middle power solidarity" where they have the capacity and capability of becoming regional great powers. They have both engaged in signing treaties, conventions and international agreements with international

organizations, Non-Governmental organizations, regional organizations and multilateral cooperation with other states. India and Nigeria have called for the reform of the United Nations Security council wherein more inclusive and wider inputs from regional powers like them should be entertained. They share similar views on global security challenges terrorism, climate change, human rights cybercrime and corruption. They have at one time or the other non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council And equally under secretaries General of the UN.

Economic Diplomacy of India and Nigeria

Nigeria is one of the largest importers of Indian goods and services from India to Nigeria especially Pharmaceutical products, vehicles electrical machinery and equipments, while India is the largest importer of Nigeria's crude oil. The total trade value recorded between India and Nigeria from 2000-2013 stood at \$88.036.96 million. Out of this trade value \$71,795.00million represents Nigeria's exports to India and \$16.241.96million represents Nigeria's imports from India, which implies that the balance of trade in absolute term if not in term is in favour of Nigeria. India has widened the scope of its economic engagement with Nigeria and the rest of Africa. The Indian automobile sector has made inroads into the Nigerian markets while Nigeria offers an array of non-oil Sector oppourtunities which could potentially exploited by India.

Table 1: India's trade with Nigeria (2004-2014).

S/N	Year	Imports from India	Export to India
1.	2004	43.5	533.7
2.	2005	49.3	892.7
3.	2006	141.6	702.7
4.	2007	184	561
5.	2008	119.9	920.6
6.	2009	10.2	802
7.	2010	60.1	907.9
8.	2011	29	152
9.	2012	1.5	142
10.	2013	2.6	141

11.	2014	1.7	148
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Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria, 2015.

Again, Trade complementarity index (TCI) shows the degree to which two countries are natural trading partners in such a way that one of the country's exports match with other country's imports.

Table 2: Nigeria-India trade complementarity index, 2004-2014

S/N	Year	Nigeria's TCI with India
1.	2004	33.50
2.	2005	35.79
3.	2006	36.36
4.	2007	37.02
5.	2008	43.04
6.	2009	35.61
7.	2010	37.43
8.	2011	38.41
9.	2012	43.02
10.	2013	45.21
11.	2014	43.14

Source: Ibrahim and Shehu, 2016:195

The result from trade complementarity index shows that Nigeria can only meet part of what India requires from its available export supply. Index and Nigeria signed strategic partnership deal called the Abuja Declaration comprising four agreement: two MOUs on promoting interaction between foreign office backed institutes, one MOU on defence co-operation, and a protocol for foreign office consultations. Prior to that time, Nigeria and India had lacked institutional framework to back investments and commerce, it was agreed that those parts would set the stage for two countries. The areas covered by the Abuja Declaration were keys to promoting trade, investment and cultural exchange programmes between both countries.

Educational and cultural Diplomacy between India and Nigeria

Culturally, both nations have similarities, Indians are the largest non-African expatriate community in Nigeria. The Nigeria-India Friendship Association

(NIFA) was formed and inaugurated on November 11, 1978 in Lagos to promote mutually beneficial co-operation between Nigeria and India in the areas of culture, sports, science technology exchange of information and tourism. Others associations exists to help to bridge the cultural disparity between the two countries and promote mutual understanding while about 80,000 Indians live in Nigeria.

On education, India has been a destination for Nigerian Students for pursuing higher education since 1955. Indian council of Cultural Relations instituted scholarship programme which is fully funded by it and became the main vehicle for Nigerian students to study in India since 1960s. The Indian educational institutions system has been popular for its quality and cost-effective education. Many Nigerians are studying in various Indian universities. The system has been to strengthen ties with Nigeria. A major link is the Pan-African e-Network Project where Indian expertise is to benefit the health care and higher education sectors in Africa (Nigeria). It provided effective communication and connectivity among the 53 African nations that were signatories to the project. The projects three components were tele-education, tele medicine and a video conferencing link. As one of the pilot contries, Nigeria introduced the project in February 2009. University of Lagos was the location for telemedicine and tele-education components. While university of Ibadan served as the regional specialised hospital. Under the arrangement, 53 universities, 53 hospitals, 5 regional University centres and 5 specialist hospitals in Africa would have been connected via satellite. All the above have been on collaborations.

Breaching New Frontiers/Oppourtunities for India-Nigeria Relations.

Nigeria has witnessed impressive growth in the period between 2004 and 2014 under the UPA government of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. There is the need to significantly enhance mutually beneficial trade and investment exchanges between the commonalities and complementaries existing between the two friends. The India's booming technological economy and its increasing demand for oil combined with Nigeria's natural resources untapped will combine to be mutually beneficial. Over the years, there have been co-operation in India to collaborate in solar power production, space science technology, renewable energy modular refinery with Nigeria. Efforts to establish direct flight from India to Nigeria has been on top issue.

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