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A Colloquium on the United Nations Reforms was organized by the Institute from the 23rd – 25th June, 2005. The event, which was meant to sensitize the Nigerian public, particularly members of the intelligentsia, was sponsored by the Committee on National Awareness on UN Reforms. The well attended event, which was chaired by Ambassador Arthur Mbanefo, a former Permanent Representative to the UN, attracted participants from the academic and diplomatic communities, the armed forces, the corporate world and media organizations.

Among the distinguished participants were Ambassadors Akporode Clark, Gabriel Olusanya, O. Falola, and Alaba Ogunsanwo. Others were Fingap Njinga, Director, UN Information Centre, Professors Alele Williams, Charles Alade, Paulina M. Adebuso, A. Uchegbu, Remi Anifowoshe, and Yomi Akinyeye, Drs. O.B.C. Nwolise, Paul Adogamhe, Franca Attoh, and Rev. Fr. G. Ehusani to mention a few. Teachers and students of King's College, Queen's College, St. Gregory's College, Holy Child College all of Lagos, were also in attendance.

UNITED NATIONS REFORMS

A Colloquium at NIIA



*Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR,
President and Commander-in-Chief,
Federal Republic of Nigeria*

The UN Reforms

The United Nations (UN) has been and still remains the most important platform for nation-states to pursue their foreign policy interests and objectives. The UN, being a vast global organization with functional involvement in virtually every important sphere of human endeavour provides enormous benefits and advantages to its members states now numbering 191. The UN has no doubt served as a very effective global stage because it commands the attention of the international community.

The world has gone through fundamental changes since the UN was formed in 1945. These changes have been even more dramatic in the last few decades. Against this background, the UN Secretary-General following the UN Millennium Declaration of 2000, set up the **High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change** to offer informed opinion on the Reform Agenda of the organization.

The Panel submitted its Report titled **"A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility"** to the UN Secretary-General in December, 2004. The Report covered a whole range of issues which pose challenges for the world body. These include Collective

Security, Poverty, Infectious Diseases, (HIV/AIDS), Environmental Degradation, Conflict between and within states; Nuclear, Radiological, Chemical and Biological Weapons, Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime, Use of Force, Peace Enforcement, Peace-Keeping, Post-Conflict Peace-Building and Protection of Civilians.

In addition, the Report has a section on how to have a more effective UN for the twenty-first century. This aspect covers reform proposals on all the organs of the UN and its charter. All members were invited to debate the submission thoroughly so that informed decisions could be made about the Reforms.

Challenges Before the UN

For decades now, there have been calls for the reorganization and reform of the UN to make it more relevant to the needs of its members, more effective in facing the many challenges confronting it and more open and democratic.

The challenges include the problem of development and poverty. The UN has adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a guide to its shared vision of development and eradication of poverty.



*Gen. Abdusalam Abubakar, Chairman,
Committee on National Awareness on
UN Reforms at a Dinner organised by
BSG at Eko Le Meridian, Lagos*



General Ike Nwachukwu, Prof. U. Joy Ogwu, Chief Emeka Anyaoku and a guest.

The MDG has set targets in critical areas including global trade and financial system within the context of liberalization. African countries welcome this and have also requested Multilateral Institutions to adapt their policies to be in conformity with the objectives of the MDGs. The management and resolution of the debt burden of many developing countries was another challenge before the UN.

Human Security in view of the many threats to peace around the world is another challenge before the UN. Related to this is the growing threat to human rights. Of particular concern to Africans are the problems of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, abject poverty, international organized crimes, women and child trafficking among others; economic, cultural and social rights and the threats of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons as well as that of small arms and light weapons.

There was also the need to promote gender equality and pay more attention to the role of women in development and their representation in the UN. The reform of the UN and its organs and agencies including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council, the Security Council constitute key issues and fundamental development concerns to all UN members.

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Secretary-General's Vision

On the basis of this, the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, prepared a statement under the title, **"In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All"**. This provided greater clarity on the way forward for the UN and it was against this background that President Olusegun Obasanjo set up the Committee on National Awareness on UN Reforms under the chairmanship of former Head of State, General Abdulsalam Abubakar. It was this Committee which sponsored the Colloquium. A total of twenty-two papers were presented on several aspects of the UN Reforms. The participants generally welcomed the UN reform programme. They expressed the hope that the reforms would lead to greater involvement and participation of African states in the work of the organization with greater benefits for the cause of African development.

The issue of development has been presented in the Reform Agenda as **"Freedom from Want"**. This is part of the new shared vision of development and a powerful way of evoking the desire and efforts aimed at eliminating want and poverty. Participants also examined the issue of development in relation to financing, production and trade, while the factor of environmental sustainability and the special needs of Africa were also looked at. Importantly, Nigeria's national strategy on this whole issue of development was critically examined. It was concluded that there is a lot of work for Nigeria to do particularly in meeting the general developmental challenge, achieving freedom from want and meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Another aspect of the challenges of the era which attracted the attention of the participants, was the issue of security now presented as **"Freedom from Fear"**. This is actually a new vision of the whole concept of Collective Security. Here, new elements and sources of insecurity were identified and analyzed. Among such were the problems of use of force to resolve disputes, the threats of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons; the menace of terrorism, international organized crime and women and child trafficking, and the spread of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

It was understood that as the character of threats to peace and security in the world is changing so also should be the responses to them. Accordingly, the key issue in confronting these threats is Collective Security: that, more than ever should have a truly collective content and framework, which bring



L-R., Mr. Fingap Njinga, Director UN Information Centre and Prof. U. Joy Ogwu, DG NIIA.

together all the members of United Nations.

A third aspect of the Freedoms which the UN Reform is being designed to address is the **"Freedom to live in Dignity"**. This is a declaration of commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms.

This is a redefinition of the traditional human rights protection pursuits of the United Nations. In promoting this Freedom to live in Dignity, action is required in the area of the Rule of Law, broad promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the promotion of democracy.

Another critical dimension of the UN Reform Agenda is the reorganization of the UN generally. This is, however, overshadowed by the attention given to the expansion of the UN Security Council by all members. Here the enthusiasm of the participants to contribute to the debate was understandable because Nigeria is in consideration for one of the two permanent seats on offer for Africa according to one of the two Security Council Reform models. This is closely related to the possible future role of Nigeria in a reformed United Nations and the national aspiration of being one of the two permanent members expected to represent Africa in an expanded United Nations Security Council.

Observations of the Participants at the Colloquium

Some of the observations made by participants at the Colloquium are as follows:

- * The decision to reform the UN is necessary in view of its many inadequacies in relation to the needs of the current era;
- * These reforms, it is hoped, will improve the democratic content of the organization;
- * Development and eradication of poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are major challenges before the world body;
- * Growing wave of intra-state conflicts in developing states jeopardize sustainable development;
- * Social, economic and political injustices act as triggers for conflicts;
- * Continued accumulation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons threatens world peace;

* Unilateralism in the UN is a veritable threat to collective security and global peace;

* There is need to expand the membership of critical organs of the UN like the Security Council to reflect the membership spread.

On the basis of the above observations, the participants made the following recommendations:

* The UN should develop a framework and mechanism which will encourage democracy, multilateralism and effective participation of all members in the activities of the organization;

* There is need for transparency in the management of the UN and its agencies;

* More attention should be given to the needs of the developing nations;

* There is an urgent need to empower relevant organs of the UN to deal with the crisis of infectious diseases, such as the HIV/AIDS, which are becoming security threats in different parts of the world particularly in Africa;

* There is need for more investment in efforts to manage intra-state conflicts particularly in Africa; and in combating international organized crimes, women and child trafficking, terrorism and other such threats to peace;

* African nations should make concerted efforts through accelerated integration and the NEPAD framework to achieve the objectives of the MDGs and eradicate poverty;

* Multilateral institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank and WTO should be made to accommodate the interests of developing countries;

* The UN Reforms should create more room for regional organizations to play more roles in the work of the organization;

* Women should be empowered and given more role in the UN;

* Nigeria's quest for a permanent seat in the Security Council is a worthy cause and should be pursued with more vigour.

The participants expressed the hope that these proposals, if implemented would make the UN a truly global organization for the family of man.



L-R., Chief Arthur Mbanefo, Amb. B. A. Clarke, Prof. U. Joy Ogwu at one of the sessions.

Exhibition

A Pictorial Exhibition was put together by the NIIA Library and Documentation Service as part of the sensitization package. The colourful exhibition chronicled the activities of the UN over the years and the participation of Nigeria in Peacekeeping operations. It generated a great deal of interest among the participants.



L-R., May Nzeribe, Mr. Pascal Dozie and Prof. U. Joy Ogwu

Dinner

As part of activities to sensitize the Nigerian public, the NIIA, in collaboration with the Business Support Group (BSG) organized a dinner on the 25th of June, 2005, which was sponsored by Corporate Nigeria. The dinner, held at the Banquet Hall of Eko le Meridien Hotel attracted corporate leaders, members of the intelligentsia, serving and retired diplomats and ambassadors, ranking members of the armed forces, and media practitioners. Among the dignitaries who attended the event were Major General A. Abubakar, former Head of State and Chairman Committee on National Awareness on UN Reforms, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Major General Ike Nwachukwu, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Pascal Dozie and several other distinguished ladies and gentlemen.

Why Nigeria Deserves a Permanent Seat in the UN Security Council

The High Level Panel set up by the UN Secretary-General submitted its report in which it recommended two models for the reform and expansion of the UNSC. Two permanent and four non-permanent seats were proposed for the African region in Model A. In Model B, the proposal was for two four-year renewable seats and four two-year non-renewable seats for Africa. There is a growing consensus that Model A is widely preferred by Africans. Accordingly, Nigeria has declared interest in one of the two permanent seats meant for Africa.

Nigeria is very qualified for this seat. In terms of population, one in every four Africans is a Nigerian. Nigeria is Africa's most prominent and consistent defender of Africa's liberation. Nigeria has shown willingness and capacity to assume responsibilities in finding solutions to regional and global problems, and in the promotion of the political, social and economic well-being

of other groups outside her borders. Nigeria has played a great role in the peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts of the UN, the OAU/AU and ECOWAS over the past four decades. She has contributed more than any other African country, both in men and material, towards ensuring regional and global peace.

The role of Nigeria in the resolution of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean crises have led to the redefinition of the UN traditional conflict resolution methodologies since the mid-1990s.

The UN Secretary-General has argued that members of the Security Council should be those nations which "contribute most to the United Nations financially, militarily and diplomatically; participate in mandated peace operations and contribute to the voluntary activities of the UN in the areas of security and development and diplomatic activities in support of United Nations objectives and mandates".

Speakers at the Sensitization Colloquium on UN Reforms agree that Nigeria has met the criteria defined by the High Level Panel for permanent membership of the UNSC. Africa deserves to have Nigeria as one of its two permanent members on a reformed Security Council. It was, however, suggested that a lot of diplomatic efforts would have to be made to achieve this objective.

The Reform of the Security Council

The Charter of the United Nations (UN) conferred primary responsibility on the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was designed to enable the UN act decisively to protect and remove threats to peace. The UN was created not just as a representative but also as a responsible body, one that has the capacity for decisive action. The UNSC was made up of five permanent members and six non-permanent members at its inception. The non-permanent members were later increased to eleven, making the total membership of the Council sixteen.

With time, the effectiveness of the UNSC has been questioned. Therefore the reform of the Council is one of the key elements of the UN Reforms.



L-R., Chinedu Ebo Esq Executive Secretary BSG, Prof. U. Joy Ogwu, DG NIIA, Prof. W.O. Alli, DRS NIIA at the pre-event briefing.

The HLP observed that - since the end of the cold war, the effectiveness of the Council has improved as has its willingness to act;

* but it has not always been equitable in its actions nor has it acted consistently or effectively in the face of genocide and other atrocities, thus gravely affecting its credibility.

* the financial and military contributions, to the UN, of some of the five permanent members are modest compared to their special status.

* that outside the use of formal veto, the ability of the five permanent members to keep critical issues of peace and security off the Security Council's agenda has further undermined confidence in the body's work.

The HLP then proposed:

- That members of the Council should, in honoring Article 23 of the Charter of the UN, increase the involvement in decision-making of those who contribute most to the UN financially, militarily and diplomatically.

- That the UN should bring into the decision-making process countries more representative of the broader membership, especially of the developing world.

- That the UN should not impair the effectiveness of the Council.

- That the UN should increase the democratic and accountable nature of the body.

The panel believes that a decision on the enlargement of the Council satisfying these criteria is now a necessity, and, thus, proposed that either of the models below should be adopted:

Model A.

Six new permanent seats, with no veto being created, and three new two-year term non-permanent seats, divided among the major regional areas as follows:

Regional Area	N.S.	P. S. (C)	P. n. P.s.	P. 2-yr s. (n-r)	Total
Africa	53	0	2	4	6
Asia & Pacific	56	1	2	3	6
Europe	47	3	1	2	6
Americas	37	1	1	4	6
Total	191	5	6	13	24

Model B.

This model provides for no new permanent seats but a new category of eight four-year renewable-term seats and one new two-year non-permanent (and non-renewable) seats, divided among the major regions as follows:

Regional Area	N.S.	P.S.	P. 4-yr (r s)	P. 2yr. s (n-r)	Total
Africa	53	0	2	4	6
Asia & Pacific	56	1	2	3	6
Europe	47	3	2	1	6
Americas	37	1	2	3	6
Total	191	5	8	11	24

NOTES: N.S. ->No. of Seats; P.S. (C) -> Permanent Seats (Continuing); P.n.P.s. -> Proposed new Permanent seats; P. 2yr s. (n-r)-> Proposed 2-yr seats>; P.S. -> Permanent Seats; P. 4-yr (r s) ->Proposed 4-yr renewable seats.

In both models, to be elected as a member of the Security Council, a state:

- must be among the top three financial contributors in their relevant regional area to the regular budget;
- or among the top three contributors from their regional area to the UN Peacekeeping Missions.

With the above recommendations of the HLP, Nigeria, South Africa and Egypt emerged as the leading contenders for the two permanent seats allotted to Africa. In order to clinch one of the two seats to Africa, the Federal Government set up a National Awareness Committee on UN Reforms chaired by H.E. General Abdulsalami Abubakar, GCFR, to sensitize Nigerians on the need to be in the UNSC as a permanent member.

NIIA PUBLICATIONS

New Horizons for Nigeria in World Affairs

Edited by: **U. Joy Ogwu**



The book documents the insightful and scholarly deliberations of the conference organised by NIIA to stimulate an understanding of the philosophical, historical, contemporary and futuristic dimensions of Nigeria's foreign policy.

ISBN 978-002-056-X 360pp. Price: **N1,500**

Founders' Day 2005

The "Founders Day" refers to the day the Institute was officially commissioned in December 13, 1961. The anniversary is usually marked with a series of activities including a Lecture known as Founder's Day Lecture.

The first lecture which marked the beginning of this tradition, which has endured for the past forty-one years, was delivered by Mr. Jaja Nwachukwu, Nigeria's first Minister of Foreign Affairs, on December 13, 1963. This year however, it is being planned to hold on December 6, 2005.

Other Founder's activities also include:

- An exhibition around a chosen theme
- An open day where people especially students can learn about the Institute

This year's lecture will be delivered, for the first time, by a woman: Mrs Obiageli Ezekwesili, Honourable Minister of Solid Minerals, who before her present appointment was the President's Senior Special Assistant and Head of Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU), popularly known as Due Process. The title of her lecture is "**Solid Minerals: A Strategic Asset for National Development**".



L-R. President Obasanjo, Prof. U. Joy Ogwu (OFR) and Prof. Alaba Ogunsanwo (1st right) inspecting books at the NIIA Publications Exhibition during the PAC Foreign Policy Retreat, Abuja.

Nigerian Journal of International Affairs, Vol.31, No1, 2005. Price: **N500.00**

The Nigerian Forum. Price: **N250.00**

For further information on NIIA publications, please visit the Free download centre page of the Institute's official website www.niiamet.org.

On-going Book Projects

- Debt Relief in Nigeria's Diplomacy
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- The Southern Heartland Thesis.

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