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## **Between Magnanimity and Malevolence: Nigeria's Commitment to South Africa's Political Freedom in the Lens of Reciprocity**

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ujah.v21i2.4>

### **Abstract**

*The history of South Africa's long walk to political freedom is dotted with Nigeria's undaunted commitment and involvement, propelled by Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy stance. This study therefore, demonstrates Nigeria's concern for Africa's political liberation, and in particular, presents Nigeria's commitment to South Africa's struggle for political freedom during the colonial years. It adopts the secondary method of data collection, and borrows from the conceptual framework and doctrinal provisions of reciprocity to weigh South Africa's attitude towards Nigeria's commitment to her (South Africa's) political emancipation. Passing Nigeria's involvement in South Africa's liberation struggle and South Africa's treatments of Nigeria through the critical lens of historical and theoretical analysis, this study makes a finding that Nigeria's magnanimity to South Africa is at variance with South Africa's response to Nigeria. The study recommends that Nigeria's relations with her African brothers, informed by her foreign policy of Afrocentrism, should reflect reciprocity. In sum, that in her foreign relations, Nigeria should treat as she is treated.*

### **Introduction**

Nigeria's concern and contribution to Africa's political liberation is clear and obvious. Liberation of the African territories still under

colonial bondage was seen by Nigeria as abysmally abnormal political situation. Nigeria therefore, stopped at nothing to ensure total liberation and decolonization of the affected African states. This was informed by Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy principles and convictions. Afrocentric foreign policy is a foreign policy stance that situates Africa at the fulcrum of Nigeria's preoccupation, and around which rotate other spokes of its dealings and relations with other countries. This Afrocentric or Africa-centered ideology presupposes that Africa lies at the core of Nigeria's foreign policy concerns and calculations, and will receive priority in its engagement with the rest of the world (Enuka 2017). As Tafawa Balewa, said, "...Africa must claim first attention in our external affairs" (Akindele and Ate 2000: 104). Since her attainment of political independence therefore, Nigeria has given Africa and African affairs pride of place in her foreign policy goals and pursuits. In his maiden address to the 15th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the late Prime Minister of Nigeria, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, made the first pronouncement of Nigeria's foreign policy as including, "...commitment to African...decolonization and fight against racism and apartheid" (Adeniji 2005: 26). Following from this, Nigeria had observably, demonstrated her commitment to Africa's political freedom, by engaging in active liberation and decolonization roles in the continent through and within the frameworks of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the United Nations Organization, the Commonwealth of Nations, and other multilateral frameworks. Especially under the dynamic and proactive governments of General Murtala Mohammed and General Olusegun Obasanjo, which brought vigour and vitality into the realization of Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy objectives, true decolonization of Africa received a lot of attention.

In her pursuits for Africa's political freedom, Nigeria insisted on the full implementation of the Articles of the Charter on Self-determination, and demanded for complete wresting of political powers from the colonialists on the continent. In these efforts, Nigeria oftentimes, mobilized both local human and material resources, as well as diplomatic avenues to achieve her objective. Nigeria's astuteness over the question of destroying the bastions of colonization in Africa stood her out as a force to be reckoned with. She was recognized internationally as the credible voice of Africa. It was to a point that Nigeria became the rallying point for decolonization in Africa as well as the gateway to the international community. For her concern and commitment to the political liberation of the African continent, Nigeria was admitted into the prestigious position of the membership of the OAU Liberation Committee. So great was Nigeria's involvements in the struggle to liberate continent from the shackles of colonial rule that she became counted as one of the frontline states, despite her geographical distance from the theatre of those struggles. South Africa, Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, were among the many African countries where Nigeria's commitment to political emancipation of the peoples of Africa was eloquently demonstrated. Our concern in this study is however, limited to South Africa.

### **Conceptual/Analytical Framework**

The analytical framework for this study is built around the conceptual framework and the provisions of the concept of Reciprocity. Reciprocity is an indispensable tool of modern foreign relations fraught with conceptual dissension. This dissension which has marred conceptual progress towards universal acceptance of a particular definition of the principle of

reciprocity results mainly from disciplinary differences and disagreements. This does not in the least deny the acknowledgment of its existence and global acceptance as a practice in international relations. Defined by the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary of Current English, reciprocity is a "principle or practice of give and take, making mutual concessions, the granting of privileges in return for similar privileges." To me, reciprocity is *ikwughachi*, a return of something done. This is very natural with man, for as Simmel (1950) would say, "all contacts among men rest on the schema of giving and returning the equivalence." Some theories (Game theory, Behaviour Modification theory etc) hold that people reciprocate rewards and sanctions because it is in their interest and nature to do so (Larson 1988). Beyond the level of man, relations between and among states in the international system often involve trade favours or services. "In international relations and treaties, the principle of reciprocity states that favours, benefits or penalties that are granted by one state to the citizens or legal entities of another, should be returned in kind" (Eze 2010: 5). Usually reciprocity is motivated by the prospect of mutual gain. Social exchanges which are mutual and perceived by the parties as being fair are reciprocal. Across different historical contexts and cultures, reciprocity means mutual exchange (Larson 1998). The parties to an exchange may either leave open or specify what the other should do in return. In this sense, reciprocity refers to exchanges which are mutual and perceived by the parties as fair. It is difficult however, to determine whether exchanges are reciprocal without a common measure of value. But in the absence of standardized measure of value, norms and customary expectations determine what is considered fair. Generally, reciprocity requires that concessions be matched. It does not mean that their magnitude must be equal.

In his definitional approach, Gouldner (1960) claims that there is a ‘norm of reciprocity’ which is ‘cultural universal’ and from this normative interpretation, Gouldner defines reciprocity as the belief that, (1) people should help those who have helped those who have helped them, and (2) people should not injure those who have helped them. This apparent moral-laden definition however, sounds good, but definitely not complete. The incompleteness of this definitional formulation informs its incorrectness. Gouldner appears to be exclusively influenced by the liberal theoretical assumptions to the neglect of other theoretical projections of International Relations, especially realism which shuns morality in international politics. Therefore, Gouldner’s definition is not only reductionist in its approach, but also suffers lack of theoretical balance. To Gouldner’s definitional content in numbers 1 and 2 above, I should add that reciprocity also suggests that injury should be returned to those who injure. Robert Keohane’s definition appears better and more balanced than Gouldner’s. Reciprocity to Keohane refers to “The exchange of roughly equivalent values in which the actions of each party is contingent on the prior actions of the others in such a way that good is returned for good and bad for bad.” From this definition/understanding, it follows that the expulsion of a diplomatic/consular agent of a country, for example, is almost immediately followed by the reciprocal expulsion of the same number and grade of the other country’s diplomatic/consular agents too. In like manner, the level or extent of diplomatic privilege conferred on the diplomatic agents of a sending state would be equivalent to those agents of the receiving state. As a result, the diplomatic privileges conferred on two states in the same country may not be the same, and the country concerned would not be accused of discrimination as its action would conform to the principle of reciprocity (George 2010). It is in this

sense that some scholars consider the term from the angle view of tit-for-tat. In this perspective, George (2010) explains reciprocity as reciprocal action, taking appropriate retaliatory, or conferment of treatment similar to what a state has been subjected to by another. Corroborating this, Barker (2000) wrote that reciprocity is “The principle of give-and-take in interchange between states.” By this, reciprocity implies that action of a state towards others is determined by conditions and circumstances that follow from other states’ treatment of that state. Reciprocal behaviour returns ill for ill, and lies for treachery. It must not however, be denied that reciprocity has its positive side/dimension, as an indispensable tool of modern foreign relations. Positive reciprocity has to do with concession of mutual gains. It is not unfriendly, it is not sanctionary. It is a favour exchanged between states, which is illustrated in Article 47 (on non-discrimination and reciprocity) of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961) (Agwu 2010). On positive reciprocity, Agwu wrote, “Reciprocity thrives in an atmosphere of amity or friendship, devoid of any sense of legal obligation. The failure by a state to return a kind gesture on a reciprocal basis does not attract any sanction or act of unfriendliness...”

Having journeyed thus far on the intellectually stimulating path of conceptually clarifying reciprocity, we make haste to state that for the purposes of analyzing Nigeria’s commitment to South Africa’s political freedom, within the analytical parameters of reciprocity, our working definition of the concept adopts Peter Blau’s, which sees reciprocity as “Actions that are contingent on rewarding relations from others and that cease when these expected reactions are not forthcoming.”(Blau 1964:6).

### **Nigeria in South Africa's Political Freedom**

The South African decolonization process provides a good test-case for Nigeria's burning zealotry towards the political freedom of Africa, and interest in having the continent's problems solved. Nigeria was practically involved in dismantling apartheid in South Africa, and in returning the country to democracy and political freedom. The apartheid system by the White minority government in South Africa separated South Africans into racial groups, and deprived non-Whites of political, economic, and many basic human rights (Enuka 2019). For about half a century, fighting apartheid remained one of the world's great moral crusades. South African issues remained in the front burner as the obdurate problem facing Nigeria as the giant of Africa, and as a challenge to the principles of Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy resolve. Employing different avenues therefore, Nigeria demonstrated her outright condemnation of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Though Nigeria's relations with South Africa predated Nigeria's independence, visible role in the struggle against apartheid regime in South Africa did not commence until after Nigeria's political independence in 1960. Given her colonial status, and the colonial administration's accommodation of apartheid policies, and endorsement of white minority regime, Nigeria was helpless at the instance of the ugly political situation in South Africa. But following her political independence and membership of the United Nations, Nigeria occupied a central role in the struggle against racist apartheid regime in South Africa, and decolonization in general.

Initially, Nigeria adopted a conservative and conciliatory approach to the racial issue in South Africa. The Nigerian Prime Minister then, Tafawa Balewa, was blunt in his opposition to the

proposals for Nigeria to support revolutionary actions against the apartheid system, but rather preferred a conciliatory approach to the apartheid challenge. But as the political and other conditions of the black majority in South Africa degenerated, it whipped up deeper emotions in Nigeria, and woke up the Federal Government to a firm stand in her opposition against the estrangement of the black people in South Africa. The Sharpeville massacre provided a storm of anger and combative reactions in Nigeria. Chief Awolowo, then leader of the Opposition Party in the Federal House of Representatives, urged the Nigerian government to take immediate action against South Africa, and her business interests in Nigeria, in response to the sadism and barbarism displayed by the white minority apartheid government against black people (Abegunrin 2009). Nigeria's vehement opposition to the Sharpeville killing in particular, and racist policies of the white minority government in Pretoria, in general, moved the Nigerian House of Representatives to adopt a ban on South African imports (Emenike 2015). Arising from the reactions generated by the Sharpeville incidence, was a flurry of actions including the expulsion of the South African Dutch Reform Church from Nigeria. Nigeria took advantage of the 1961 Commonwealth Head of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in London, to which Nigeria was invited for the first time, to campaign against South Africa, and condemn the Sharpeville massacre. This eventually led to the suspension of South Africa from the Commonwealth of Nations.

In order to further display its aversion to colonization and racial discrimination as it applied to South Africa, Nigeria called on the United Nations Security Council to expel South Africa from the United Nations (Abegunrin 2009). Pursuant to this, Nigeria urged the Security Council to invoke the provisions of Article 6 of the United Nations Charter, which provides that continued

disobedience or infringement to the Charter by a member is an invitation to expulsion. Although the 1961 move by Nigeria to get South Africa expelled from the United Nations failed, it however, constituted a serious challenge and warning to the South Africa's apartheid regime, and emboldened Nigeria's voice more forcefully to launch vehement global campaign to stir up international moral indignation against apartheid. Besides, the efforts at the United Nations, the Nigerian government made efforts too to expel South Africa from the International Labour Organization; Olympic Games; and International Atomic Energy. Nigeria's concern for South Africa became so avowed that Nigeria was consulted on every aspect or possible measure that would help bring an end to the repressive apartheid regimes and its nefarious policies in South Africa. As a result of her commitment to the eradication of the colonially instituted apartheid system in South Africa, Nigeria won the championship of the United Nations Anti-Apartheid Committee in 1970, a position Nigeria held until the dismantling of apartheid in 1994.

Realizing the effectiveness of propaganda in war against the oppressive regime in South Africa, Nigeria continued to publicize the heinous crime of apartheid against humanity in South Africa. To this end, Nigeria hosted an International Conference on the Legal Status of the Apartheid Regime in Lagos (Abegunrin 2009). The Nigerian government mobilized the Nigerian public, and created awareness on the evils of apartheid and its continued practice on fellow Africans living in South Africa. It was for this purpose that the National Committee for Action against Apartheid (NACAP), was established in 1976. In their respective areas of competence, Nigerians: musicians; comedians; poets; playwrights; academics, etc, became freedom fighters using their professional outlets.

A fund known as the South African Relief Fund (SARF) was set up to assist the liberation struggle in South Africa. The fund was sustained by voluntary donations made by Nigerians, and "...was designed to be used to alleviate the plight of the victims of the apartheid oppression in Southern Africa and to promote their education and general welfare" (Olayiwola 2009: 18). The Obasanjo Military Government contributed 37 million US Dollars to the Fund. On a personal note, General Obasanjo made a personal donation of 3 thousand US Dollars, and members of his cabinet, in demonstration of their concern to the project of decolonizing Africa, made a donation of 1,500 US Dollars each. The civil servants in Nigeria were not left out in these donations. They resolved to part ways with 2 percent of their monthly salary. Nigeria contributed enormously to the Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, Special Fund of the OAU for the decolonization struggles in Africa. The South African Youth Revolutionary Council (SAYRSCO) was accorded recognition by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The belief was that such youthful organization, led by Khotso Seatholo, could threaten and overthrow the apartheid government. The Government of Nigeria provided them with tremendous assistance in form of military aid and scholarship awards. They had the offer to enjoy free education in Nigerian universities and institutions of higher learning. Some of the members of SAYRSCO participated in the Soweto Uprising of June 1976 (Ajala 1988, Abegunrin 2009).

In a frank display of Nigeria's decolonization drive and anti-apartheid posture, the Nigerian Head of State at the time, General Murtala Mohamed, made the following remarks during the 1976 OAU extraordinary meeting:

We call attention to the diabolical rule of apartheid. The main elements of the criminal doctrine are too well known

to this Assembly...Suffice it to say that the whole rationale behind this doctrine...is the perpetual subjugation of the African in order to create a paradise on earth for the whites. When I contemplate on the evils of apartheid, my heart bleeds and I am sure the heart of every true-blooded African bleeds. When we talk of these evils, we are assured of the 'sympathy' of the western countries, but when we call for sanctions to end this shame of western civilization, suddenly the glitter of gold in the form of high dividends becomes more convincing in consideration than the lives, liberty and wellbeing of Africans (Garba 1987: 102)

Rather than wane or dampen over the years, the Nigeria's mood over Africa's political freedom grew stronger rather. This was especially so over the South African question. The leadership of the country had this to say:

The Nigerian government and people are totally committed to the cause of freedom and respect for human dignity in southern Africa, not simply for its own sake, but because we are concerned that African freedom is a sacred duty that must be done...In the pursuit of this objective, we shall not consider any sacrifice too great nor any weapon too mean to hasten the end of all oppression and injustice in southern Africa and ensure the total liquidation of apartheid, foreign domination and economic exploitation. (Garba 1987).

In so many formidable ways, Nigeria provided the leadership in the Commonwealth of Nations which was lacking among its members in the fight to end apartheid in South Africa. Though the Commonwealth had always condemned apartheid, but those were at best only a lip service that carried little or no impact. There was for instance, a Commonwealth Statement issued in

London, in 1977, which called for the eradication of all forms of racism and racial prejudice. There was equally, the Commonwealth Lusaka Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice, done in August 1979. It reaffirmed the duty of all the peoples of the Commonwealth to work together for the total eradication of the infamous policy of apartheid which had been internationally recognized as a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind and which existence was an affront to humanity. Wonderful and welcoming as these statements and declarations sounded, but they were not matched with the required and expected actions. Many countries belonging to the Commonwealth of Nations, who assented to all these declarations had the good intention, but lacked the political will to ensure the prompt dismantlement of apartheid in South Africa. In the light of this desideratum, and in order to change the narrative, Nigeria had to bring pressure to bear on the Commonwealth countries, particularly Britain. Nigeria provided the needed but lacking leadership in the multilateral struggle against apartheid in many ways. At the African continental level, Nigeria gave diplomatic, economic and material support to the liberation struggle in South Africa. At the level of the Commonwealth of Nations, Nigeria took exception to Britain's attitude to apartheid in particular, and to the open collaboration of several other members with the apartheid regime in general. It is on record that Nigeria nationalized the British Petroleum and Barclays Bank in the late 1970s. Nigeria also used the platform of the Commonwealth Games to strengthen her struggle against apartheid. In protest against the decision of New Zealand and Australia to sustain sporting relationship with apartheid South Africa contrary to the organization's agreement reached at the Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting, in 1977 the government of Nigeria under General Olusegun Obasanjo,

prevented Nigerian sports men and women from participating in the Commonwealth Games held in Edmonton, Canada in August 1978 (Enuka 2019, Obi 2006). In addition to this, and in consistence with Nigeria's tradition of commitment to her Afrocentric foreign policy position, the Ibrahim Babangida administration campaigned against African participation in the 1986 Edinburgh Commonwealth Games on the grounds of Britain's fraternization with the apartheid regime.

Nigeria was a part of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG), sent to South Africa in 1986, which played a key role in the diplomatic moves that eventually led to the release of Nelson Mandela from prison in February 1990. Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria served as a co-chairman of the EPG. The Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group was created by the Nassau CHOGM held in October 1985, to promote political dialogue in South Africa. Besides securing the release of Nelson Mandela, who had been incarcerated for some twenty seven years as a political prisoner, the EPG was astounding in its diplomatic moves that set the ball rolling for democratic return in South Africa. The efforts culminated into fruitfulness when in 1994, South Africa had for the first time, a truly majority rule and democratically elected president.

### **South Africa's (Mis)Treatments to Nigeria**

Nigeria's magnanimity to South Africa, fuelled by her Afrocentric foreign policy principles and convictions, failed to be met with reciprocal responses from the beneficiary of Nigeria's largesse. Nothing demonstrates this more than the quantum of South Africa's malevolence and malevolent disposition towards Nigeria and Nigerians, as could be extrapolated from the former's relations and dealings with Nigeria. The case of the experiences of Nigeria

with South Africa does not only bear out the reality of failed reciprocity in Nigeria's African international relations, but most seriously *stupidifies* Nigeria's commitment to Africa's political and developmental affairs. Nigeria's enormous sacrifices made in support of the struggle against apartheid, and the consequent end to White minority rule in South Africa did not result to the expected good and friendly treatment of Nigeria by South Africa. Among many other things that demonstrated South Africa's unfriendly disposition towards Nigeria is the Nelson Mandela's show of indifference to Nigeria after his release from prison. Both President Mandela and his ANC government, through their visits, was busy romancing with the Western countries, and never treated Nigeria with any sense of priority. Throughout his administration in South Africa, President Mandela never visited Nigeria. It is indeed irksome that in spite of Nigeria's enormous concern for, and contributions towards the liberation of South Africa, "The Nigerian leader was not even invited to the celebration marking the end of apartheid in 1994 in South Africa, the cause for which Nigeria had sacrificed greatly in human and material resources" (Izah 2011: 350).

When Nigeria, for the first time, was suspended by the Commonwealth of Nations, on the grounds of human rights abuse, it was Nelson Mandela, the South African President that lit the fire. Not as if one is moralizing the blatant and condemnable insensitivity of the Nigerian government towards human rights of its own citizens, which culminated in the gruesome killing of the Ogoni Nine, but given the enormous sacrifices of Nigeria, and its successive governments for the freedom of both South Africa and Nelson Mandela himself from the stranglehold of the Dutch imperialists, it staggers the imagination to see Mandela championing the agitation for Nigeria's punishment. As though

that was not enough for South Africa represented by its President, Nelson Mandela returned to South Africa from the Commonwealth meeting, and began to generate action against Nigeria at home and abroad (Akinterinwa 2014). Among other things, President Mandela recalled South Africa's High Commissioner to Nigeria, pushed for the United States and United Kingdom to impose oil sanctions on Nigeria, and requested a Southern African Development Commission (SADC) meeting to take the Nigerian matter further. However, by way of reciprocity, Nigeria declined South Africa's invitation to send its national football team to participate in the Mandela Cup. Nigeria also withdrew its national team from the African Nations Cup Championship being hosted in South Africa.

For the many misdoings of South Africa, Zabadi and Onuoha described Nelson Mandela's presidency as one of hostility towards Nigeria. "...instead of the expected strategic partnership with Nigeria...South Africa under Nelson Mandela demonstrated a level of hostility" (Zabadi and Onuoha 2012: 396).

It is the case that Nigerians in South Africa have been given a bad image in the country. Though there are Nigerians who may have come to South Africa to eke out a living on the streets, and sometimes run foul of the law, but there are several Nigerians engaged in genuine businesses in South Africa. There have been negative press reports and xenophobic stereotypes of Nigerians as drug traffickers and criminals in South African media and popular imagination. As a result of this, there is the wrong perception of Nigeria and Nigerians often arising from stereotyping. The height of this all was when in 2004, a South African radio station, Johannesburg Radio 94.7 Highveld, claimed that Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo had cocaine in his bag on his visit to South Africa during Thabo Mbeki's inauguration in 2004 (Agbu

2012, Agbu 2010). Though the radio station later apologized, but the damage had been done.

Resulting from this unfortunate situation has been the incessant arrests of Nigerians by the South African police, who come with cooked up warrants and other guises, knowing that they will get away with it since there is the assumption that every Nigerian is inherently a criminal. Agbu noted that the South African criminals and hoodlums seeing that the inhuman treatments and illegal maltreatments of Nigerians by the police, go unchecked and unsanctioned, became emboldened to attack, loot, and kill Nigerians with the confidence that the same police will neither have the matters thoroughly investigated nor meet out punishment for their offences. Nigerians have been harassed by South African police, trailed to their hotel rooms and robbed or murdered upon arrival in South Africa. Many have been wrongly accused and set up by the South African police, for just being Nigerians. This is obviously a situation that is most heartbreaking, especially from the very persons Nigeria had laboured so greatly to assist.

Frowning at the non-reciprocal attitude of some African states to Nigeria's kind gestures to her African brothers, Senator Ike Nwachukwu insisted that, "There is the need to make prominent reciprocity in the delivery of our relations with other nations. The idea of accepting the maltreatment of our nationals by so called 'friendly' countries without reciprocating such actions against our people should be over by now" (Nwachukwu 2012: 400).

Contrary to South Africa's malevolence towards Nigerians and their business interests in South Africa, Nigerians have allowed South African businesses in Nigeria to thrive unchallenged. The Mobile Telephone Network, (MTN) is South

Africa's biggest single investment outside of South Africa. Other such businesses include the Multichoice M-net; Stanbic Merchant Bank; Shoprite; Protea Hotels; Sasol; Spoornet; Media 24; South African Airways; Intel Cooperation; Orion Technologies; First Alliance Pensions, etc (see Agbu 2012; Agbu 2010; Onuoha 2008; Adekeye 2006).

It is noteworthy that in spite of the ceaseless grievous provocations by South Africans, Nigerians have chosen to return benevolence to their malevolence, by refraining from attacking neither the South Africans residing in Nigeria nor their numerous businesses operating and thriving in Nigeria. For the damages done to the businesses owned by Nigerians in South Africa, and for failing to pay compensations for same, Nigerian government has the option of stopping the repatriation of dividends meant for South Africa's business interests in Nigeria. But what did the government of Nigeria do? Reciprocity guidelines were flouted. The reason, as always, was that "It is not on the path of African brotherhood...we have been our brother's keeper" (Haruna 2019: 22).

Added to the many manifestations of South Africa's malevolence and unfortunate mistreatments of Nigeria and its citizens, is the issue of visa issuance and deportations of Nigerians. The penchant for deportation of Nigerians from South Africa is another irksome and frustrating issue in South Africa's relations with Nigeria. South Africa deports Nigerians from the country at the flimsiest excuse. Just within one week in 2011, the number of Nigerians deported from South Africa stood at two hundred (Agbu 2012). Extrapolating from so many convincing circumstances, South Africa has proven to be the worst visa regime in Nigeria. Study by Osita Agbu on Nigeria-South Africa relations, made the discovery that, "...South African diplomatic personnel took

pleasure in not only punishing Nigerians at their visa offices, but also ripping Nigerians off of thousands of Naira in their quest to visit South Africa...” (Agbu 2012: 123). Though it was later abrogated, but the South African Mission in Abuja and Lagos demanded over a hundred thousand naira repatriation deposit from first-time Nigerian passport visa applicants. The Nigerian Consulate in South Africa and indeed numerous other sources confirm that several thousandsof Nigerians had been killed in South Africa extra-judicially.

Succinctly put, reciprocal expectations from the recipients of Nigeria’s sacrificial assistances, is forlorn. Spending enormous resources in assisting the liberation movements of the countries in Africa during decolonization, as well as, on the maintenance of peace in the continent, was however, “...a right thing to do, but if we thought it would give us...diplomatic influence, it has not” (Uhomoibhi 2012: 201). This rather disappointing and painful experience by Nigeria in her African international relations is a pointer to the hard international political reality that “...there is no gratitude in international relations” (Anyaku 2012). What is more? Our largesse has not been requited with the expected diplomatic clout. Little wonder Nigeria’s African brothers have, on constant note, left Nigeria in lurch, refusing and failing to be swayed into voting for Nigeria’s candidacy in international organizations or to support their benefactor’s policy.

### **Conclusion/Recommendation**

We have presented in this study that Nigeria through her contributions to anti-colonial struggle, informed by her foreign policy of Afrocentrism, was magnanimous to South Africa. But in spite of the sacrificial contributions to the political freedom of South Africa, Nigeria reaped from the recipient of her

magnanimity, responses that were total negation to the principles of reciprocity. In sum, Nigeria's magnanimity is at variance with South Africa's response to it. Nothing more proves the immorality of malevolent display of returning evil for good, perpetuated by South African in its relations with Nigeria.

In utter contravention to the tenets of reciprocity and the provisions of the Social Exchange theory, Nigeria and Nigerians are not treated the way Nigeria treated and treats South Africans. In South Africa, Nigerian citizens have been subjected to degrading treatments and violent attacks, sometimes leading to death. They are subjected to inhuman treatment even at the points of application for entry permits. They are denied certain entitlements even when they meet the requirements. South Africa that play host to thousands of Nigerians has not lived up the responsibility of ensuring justice and humane treatment for Nigerians, even when they are arrested for crimes. Their welfare and businesses are constantly subjected to threats from the citizens of their host South African communities. The same South African where these ugly incidences of maltreatment have occurred and continue to occur, have thriving businesses in Nigeria. South African citizens abound in Nigeria, and carry out their own businesses without molestation or even discrimination, contrary to what Nigerian citizens experience in South Africa. To all these disturbing incidences, questions have been raised: how should Nigeria respond? The answer, for us, lies in our working definition of the concept of reciprocity as stated in the earlier part of this paper, which adopts the Peter Blau's definition of reciprocity, as meaning "Actions that are contingent on rewarding relations from others and that cease when these expected reactions are not forthcoming." Blau (1964:6). Nigerian leaders and foreign policy formulators should by this be guided. As George Obiozor would

insist, Nigeria must do a stocktaking of those African and other states that she had once assisted and see in what ways such assistance had yielded returns for the country, and that any foreign policy that does not insist on reciprocity is infantile and simply moralistic; for in the game of nations there can be no permanent friends or permanent enemies; for only circumstances determine which course a nation will take to protect its own national interest as conditions and circumstances change.

Especially in the contemporary times, pursuits of foreign policy without recourse to the doctrine of reciprocity, is *mumuism*. And to borrow from Charlie Boy, “Our mumu don do” (Nigeria’s foolishness has been enough). Eexperts and analysts are common on the agreement that “interpersonal as well as interstate relations can function to mutual satisfaction if the rule of reciprocity is adhered to” (Ate 1990: 446). Of a necessity, Nigeria’s foreign policy must, if Nigeria will not continually live in regrets, recognize the accepted Nigerian political adage that ‘you scratch my back, I scratch yours’.

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