

**NIGERIA AND THE UNITED STATES: AN ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL GOALS**

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**NIGERIA AND THE UNITED STATES: AN ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL GOALS**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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As the most populous country in Africa, Nigeria has regained importance to the United States. U.S. interests necessitate a U.S. policy with required and resourcing of “Ways” and “Means” to assist Nigeria’s economy and governmental institutions to provide for the Nigerian population. This research paper examines U.S. efforts to improve relations and support Nigeria’s work to stabilize their economy and improve their governance, reviews current Nigerian policy and national objectives. Then, the paper compares U.S. policy and allocation of “Ways” and “Means” with respect to Nigerian. An analysis of how well U.S. policies complement Nigerian policy and objectives concludes the research.



## NIGERIA AND THE UNITED STATES: AN ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL GOALS

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the continent of Africa has regained in importance to the United States (U.S.) and other economically-advanced nations, primarily due to vast amounts of untapped resources. Nigeria is the largest producer of oil in Africa, and Nigeria ranks fifth as a supplier of oil to the U. S.. Nigeria earns an estimated \$40 billion per year from oil and natural gas extraction, although trouble from insurgencies and criminal activity has reduced production.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Nigeria directly affects the global economic community's capability for continued growth. Nigeria has become the target of interest for many nations, as their demand for Nigeria's resources continues to grow. The global community has realized that economic growth requires fair, equitable, and consistent access to Nigeria's resources. Hence, Nigeria's capacity to provide a stable and responsible Nigerian government has become a global issue.

The U.S., along with the rest of the western hemisphere, largely ignored Nigeria and the rest of the African nations after the fall of the Soviet Union. The U.S. has refocused its resources and diplomatic efforts to the continent of Africa as access to natural resources becomes more difficult, and the fear of Islamic-based terrorism breeding freely in northern Africa has grown. The U.S. Department of State (DOS) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), with public support from U.S. President George W. Bush, have begun to strengthen cooperative ties in both Nigeria and the rest of Africa. Recently, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) established a new military-political regional command, U.S. Africa Command



(USAFRICOM), to strengthen security ties with friendly African nations and regain influence on the continent.<sup>2</sup>

This research paper examines U.S. efforts to improve relations and support Nigeria's work to stabilize their economy and improve their governance. This paper will review current Nigerian policy and national objectives. Then, the paper will review and compare U.S. Policy and allocation of "Ways" and "Means" with respect to Nigerian. Finally, this paper will then provide and analysis of how well U.S. policies complement Nigerian policy and objectives.

### Nigerian Public Policy and Objectives

Nigeria, with an estimated 135 million people, contains the largest population of any nation on the continent of Africa. Nigeria contains over 250 ethnic groups, although the seven largest groups comprise 87 percent of the Nigerian population. Nigeria's population comprises 50 percent Muslim in the sub-Saharan north and 40 percent Christian in the coastal south. As a result of disease and the lack of adequate healthcare, life expectancy is low in Nigeria at forty-seven years of age, and the median age of the population is eighteen years of age.<sup>3</sup>

Nigeria received its independence from Great Britain in 1960, inheriting a democratic, federal form of government. Nigeria consists of 36 states, one federal territory, and 774 municipalities. In spite of the federal system, the Nigerian government has struggled to become a system that serves the Nigerian people. After a brief period of democratic rule, Nigeria experienced twenty-eight years of military dictatorships and a civil war from 1967 to 1970.<sup>4</sup> To date, Nigeria has only successfully completed one peaceful transition between democratically-elected civilian presidents.<sup>5</sup> As a legacy from

the dictatorships, power within a democratically-elected government remains largely under central governmental control instead of a balance between federal and state governmental institutions.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the political trouble, Nigeria is a major regional power in Africa. Nigeria plays active roles in a significant number of regional and international organizations such as the African Union (AU), Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the United Nations (UN), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Nigeria continues to contribute military forces and leadership to peacekeeping missions under the AU, ECOWAS, and UN banners. As a result, both the Nigerian media and the government take pride in Nigeria's ability to serve as leaders and co-equals within the international community.

Nigeria ranks as the second-most corrupt nation in the world.<sup>7</sup> During the military dictatorships, corruption and graft ran rampant and became institutionalized into the fabric of the nation. In spite of public repudiation by the government and media, corruption remains entrenched in Nigerian society. Many Nigerians view bribes and kickbacks as legitimate compensation for serving the government. Since Nigeria's return to democracy, many Nigerians continue to blame much of the corruption on the former military regimes, rather than taking responsibility to change the government.

### Nigeria's Government

Nigeria has experienced a difficult evolution from a British colony to an independent, democratic nation. When Nigeria gained its independence in 1960, ethnic/tribal ties played heavily in controlling Nigerian politics. The three largest ethnic-tribal groups, the Hausa-Fulanis in the north, the Yorubas in the southwest, and the

Igbos in the Southeast, controlled much of the government.<sup>8</sup> Shortly after gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria experienced a coup in January 1966. The cause stemmed from tribal pressure which fragmented the fledgling Nigerian Government and started the Biafran Civil War.<sup>9</sup> As Nigeria developed economically, the ethnically-diverse regions gained more political strength than ethnic and tribal groups.<sup>10</sup> Also, the military regimes overcame ethnic and tribal loyalties, substituting loyalty to ruling commanders, who lacked competence in governmental administration.

The subsequent actions of untrained military and incompetent civilian regimes ingrained in the political fabric the concept that government service was a means for “private accumulation” rather than a means of service to the people.<sup>11</sup> The military rulers also created a “ruling elite” of Nigerians who excluded the remaining population from participating in governmental processes. These rulers maintained a closed political system with no accountability of officials, regardless of performance, and excluded participation and oversight by Nigerians outside of the patronage of the elites.<sup>12</sup> Without accountability, the elites exploited their governmental positions for personal gain. Nigerians to this day continue to expect their government to be corrupt.<sup>13</sup>

The existing Nigerian government consists of a tripartite political structure: the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judicial branch. Nigeria has fifteen registered political parties, although the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) is the dominant party.<sup>14</sup> Nigeria also possesses a large number of professional associations from the legal, medical, accounting, academic professions, and numerous unions. However, none of these institutions have proven capable of overriding the entrenched “elite” bureaucracy of the government.<sup>15</sup> The executive branch continues to control the

majority of governmental power while the legislative and judicial branches struggle to balance the power of the executive branch.

In February 1999, former General Obasanjo won the national election and assumed the office of the President of Nigeria in May 1999.<sup>16</sup> Obasanjo's election marked a successful transition from military dictatorship to an elected government that continues to function nine years later. The transition between the elected presidents occurred on May 29, 2007, with the transfer of power from outgoing President Obasanjo to incoming President Umaru Yar'Adua. However, the legitimacy of the election remains in doubt since Nigerian opposition parties and the international community called the election a sham.<sup>17</sup>

Both current and former presidents belong to the PDP, and Obasanjo remains the head of the PDP. His control over the PDP and his role as a former leader of the military has generated an undercurrent of suspicion that Yar'Adua remains under control of Obasanjo. Yet, indications from recent media reports and Yar'Adua's speeches reveal that Yar'Adua may have distanced himself from both Obasanjo and the PDP.<sup>18</sup> Yar'Adua's independence from the PDP and Obasanjo would indicate a positive sign that the government may be slowly evolving into a functioning democracy. Despite Yar'Adua's initial actions to gain independence from Obasanjo, Yar'Adua faces the significant challenge of overcoming the pervasive governmental corruption.

The new Nigerian presidential team consists of Yar'Adua and his vice president, Goodluck Jonathan. In terms of corruption, both of these officials have better reputations than previous leaders; however, they are not unblemished. Yar'Adua comes from the northern province of Katsina, and his associates and family have benefited

from connections with government officials.<sup>19</sup> Jonathan comes from the southern Bayelsa State in the heart of the oil-producing Niger Delta region. His service as a former governor, although undistinguished, had the inherent taint of corruption associated with government service.<sup>20</sup> In December 2007, in a speech with the U.S. president, George W. Bush, Yar'Adua vowed to reinvigorate Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts and strengthen Nigeria's enforcement of the rule of law.<sup>21</sup> Success of Yar'Adua's anti-corruption claims has not materialized nor has meaningful change occurred in Nigeria's government.

Like Obasanjo, Yar'Adua has publically made anti-corruption, governmental accountability, and governmental performance national objectives. However, the success of both Yar'Adua's anti-corruption efforts, like Obasanjo's, remains questionable. The elites still maintain a closed-system that monopolizes the government, and hinder efficiency and performance. Nigerian leadership has failed to take on the elites and admit more capable individuals into the government. The failure of the Nigerian government to change themselves into an effective, open, responsible bureaucracy calls into question the ability and intentions of Yar'Adua and his officials. Yar'Adua has yet to prove that he is truly a leader for positive change, and not providing lip service to gain support, internally and externally.

Between the legislative and the judicial branches of government, the latter has demonstrated a greater ability to serve as a balance against the executive branch of government. The judicial branch of government consists of two major, federal-level courts, the Supreme Court and the Federal Court of Appeals, and encompasses state courts with each state maintaining its own legal system. The Chief Justices to the

Nigerian Supreme Court are appointees. The Nigerian legal system could play a greater, unifying role in support of Yar'Adua's public policy through impartial and fair interpretation of existing laws. To accomplish this goal, the courts must remain independent and rigorously enforce the anti-corruption laws against the ruling elite.

The Supreme Court justices have remained relatively independent and non-partisan despite relying on presidential appointment. The Supreme Court recently demonstrated their independence by rebuking former President Obasanjo's attempt to re-write the Nigerian constitution to enable Obasanjo to run for a third presidential term.<sup>22</sup> The Nigerian judiciary also has organizations charged to improve the performance of the existing civil and criminal judicial systems, the National Judicial Council (NJC) and the State Judicial Service Commissions (JSC). The NJC and the states' JSCs have made modest improvements on improving the performance of the legal system; however, the NJC and the states' JSCs operate disparately without unifying goals or leadership from the legal associations.<sup>23</sup>

In spite of the state and federal courts' independence from political control, the courts have failed to end corruption in Nigeria and counterbalance the existing monopoly of power held by the executive branch of government. The indictment of many of the federal and state judges for violations of integrity and corruption has also tainted the reputation of the courts in the eyes of the citizens.<sup>24</sup>

Nigerian police forces fall under greater criticism than the courts. Nigerians perceive the Nigerian Police, a constitutionally-mandated federal force, as ineffectual and rife with incompetence. Crime, organized and petty, runs unabated throughout Nigeria. In the Niger Delta, local criminal gangs prevent improvement of oil-

infrastructure. The failure of the police to counter these gangs has forced the military to maintain order, and lawlessness still rules the region.<sup>25</sup> The Nigerian Attorney General, Chief Akinlolu Olujinmi, in a report at the April 2004 National Summit on Crime and Policing in Nigeria, lamented that the police force had lost the confidence of the Nigerian people. This lack of confidence caused the citizens to withhold valuable information from the police.<sup>26</sup>

The Nigerian court system, as a counterbalancing force to the executive branch of government, has had modest success in ensuring the rule of law in Nigeria and countering corruption. In spite of the successes, the courts have a long way to go to demonstrate their ability to serve the Nigerian people impartially, independent of political patrons. The national police, on the other hand, have even more significant hurdles to prove their professionalism and competence in order to gain acceptance and faith from the Nigerian population. Both of these institutions require improvement in order to support Yar'Adua's political goals to improve the economy and grow the industrial base further.

Nigeria, although rated sixth militarily in Africa, maintains the most capable military in Western Africa.<sup>27</sup> The Ministry of Defense seeks to provide a modern, well-trained, fully-professional military, capable of fulfilling the Nigerian military's constitutional responsibilities of defending the country, maritime interests, airspace, the Nigerian constitution, and performing in international peacekeeping.<sup>28</sup> Nigeria has employed its military in three major roles; countering lawlessness in both the northern and southern provinces, combating various insurgencies and unlawful gangs such as

the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), and supporting peacekeeping operations externally as part of the UN, AU, and ECOWAS.

So far, the Nigerian Army has performed better in peacekeeping than in law enforcement and counter-insurgency.<sup>29</sup> Nigerian participation in AU peacekeeping forces and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), the military arm of ECOWAS, comes from Nigeria's long-held view to support regional peace and African unity.<sup>30</sup> The Nigerian military has consistently allocated forces to support AU and ECOMOG missions. Nigeria provided large formations and command headquarters for multi-national ECOMOG missions to Liberia in 1990 and Sierra Leon in 1997. Currently, Nigeria maintains one of the largest force commitments and the overall mission commander to the UN-AU mission in Sudan (UNAMID) for the Darfur crisis.<sup>31</sup>

In spite of its professional institutions and demonstrated competence in international operations, the military also remains tainted by claims of corruption and failure to counter MEND and other smaller insurgencies in the oil-producing regions. The insurgents and armed criminals continue to conduct raids on oil-production facilities and kidnap people.<sup>32</sup> The failure of the military to stem insurgency groups has contributed to the decrease of 25 percent of annual oil-production and the continued degradation of the oil-production infrastructure.<sup>33</sup>

Both the police and military's failure to control the criminal activity in the southern states has a direct impact on Nigeria's ability to move forward economically. The lawlessness reduces production capability in the oil-producing sector and also makes foreign investment in Nigerian industry difficult. Kidnapping of foreign workers deters



international organizations from sending skilled manpower into the country until conditions improve. As the impoverished sector of the nation grows, membership in armed gangs and insurgencies will also grow, making the security situation worse. None of the Nigerian security forces have made an effort to get impoverished Nigerians back to work and away from the gangs and insurgent groups as a component of their internal security efforts.

### Nigerian Foreign Policy

Nigerian foreign policy has primarily focused on the continent of Africa and establishing Nigeria as an economic leader on the continent. Since Nigeria has the largest population in Africa, Nigerian foreign policy's cornerstone is Africa as Nigeria perceives itself as the "giant" of Africa and a leader of the continent.<sup>34</sup> From 1960 through the 1990's, Nigeria supported colonial liberation movements in Namibia, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, and served as a peace broker throughout Africa. Nigerian leadership played an important role in negotiating peace in Togo, Mauritania, Cote d'Ivoire, and Liberia.<sup>35</sup>

Nigeria places significant emphasis on its role as a regional leader through membership in African organizations and international organizations operating in Africa.<sup>36</sup> Nigeria holds leadership positions in organizations such as ECOWAS, the AU, the UN, and its agencies. Nigeria also belongs to other international organizations such as the International Labor Organization, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and OPEC. In spite of Nigeria's significant contributions to Africa as a regional leader, internal issues of corruption and poverty detract from their regional prestige.

To counter the rampant corruption, the Nigerian government announced their partnership with the Group of Eight (G8) nations in 2004. Nigeria sought the G8's support to improve accountability in the government's budgetary and financial sectors; reform the public service of the government; establish Nigerian participation in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) with the formation of the Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI); and sustain economic growth.<sup>37</sup> The lack of oversight resulted from non-participation by Nigerian non-elites, no public review of government budgets and practices, and no accountability for under-performing officials. Without public participation, corruption remains endemic in the Nigerian government. This lack of checks and balances perpetuated many of the social and economic failures, and also accounts for the high level of poverty.

In addition to joining the G8, Nigeria has joined numerous international organizations with the hope that membership will demonstrate the government's commitment to eradicate corruption and strengthen Nigeria's economy. Performance to improve the public review of governmental practices and the Nigerian public's ability to hold government officials accountable remains spotty at best. Nigeria has yet to demonstrate the willingness to eradicate the endemic corruption within its government structure.

Despite internal governance issues, Nigeria maintains its status as one of Africa's more dominant countries. Nigeria is clearly the most powerful economic and military force in Western Africa, but Nigeria prefers to gain distinction as a regional leader rather than a military power.<sup>38</sup> Obasanjo's regime submitted to the International Court of Justice's ruling on the Bakassi peninsula dispute between Cameroon and

Nigeria, and Yar'Adua continues to lobby the Nigerian Senate to ratify the agreement.<sup>39</sup> Relinquishing claim to the Bakassi peninsula, a valuable deposit of natural resources, gives credibility to Nigeria's efforts to participate as a regional and global power. Externally, Nigeria continues to use their prestige as a power broker within the African continent, rather than an enforcer.

As a result of the economic downturn within Nigeria in the 1990's, the Obasanjo administration changed the externally-focused emphasis to an internal emphasis to improve Nigeria.<sup>40</sup> Yar'Adua continued the internal focus when he published his "Seven Point Agenda of the Federal Government" on 8 November 2007 as his strategy to make the country an economically-viable African nation.

The Seven Point Agenda focuses on Power and Energy, Food Security and Agriculture, Wealth Creation and Employment, Mass Transportation, Land Reform, Security, and Qualitative and Functional Education.<sup>41</sup> The underlying purpose of the agenda is to industrialize Nigeria by creating the key components required to grow industry in a developing nation. Nigerians believe that industrial development leads to economic development. Economic development ultimately benefits the impoverished by giving the majority of the Nigerians access to better educational and health benefits, and the ability to improve their lives through wealth accumulation.<sup>42</sup>

## Nigerian Economy

Although Nigeria's economy is the second largest in Africa, Nigeria has one of the poorest populations in Africa.<sup>43</sup> The weak economy and subsequent poverty has a significant, negative effect on Nigerian security and prestige. Oil and natural gas account for over 90 percent of exports and generate over 80 percent of annual

revenue.<sup>44</sup> The result of the dominance of the oil industry on the Nigerian economy creates a “feast or famine” flow of revenues that have a disruptive impact on the Nigerian governmental budget.<sup>45</sup>

Oil, discovered in the early 1970s, became the sole source of revenue generation shortly after its discovery in Nigeria. The lack of oversight of oil revenues and the subsequent policies created to grow the oil industry caused many of the other sectors of the Nigerian economy to stagnate. Since the oil industry does not require a large workforce (less than 6 percent of the Nigerian population), and because oil production has significant, adverse impact on the environment, much of the agrarian-based population never rose out of poverty.<sup>46</sup> To make matters worse, pollution from the oil extraction has poisoned much of the agricultural land and fisheries in the coastal region, driving many coastal laborers out of work.<sup>47</sup> As a result of governmental neglect in the agricultural sector, national agricultural and fishing production has dropped to such a level that Nigeria must import rather than export food.<sup>48</sup>

As a result of Yar’Adua’s announced Seven Point Agenda and Nigeria’s acceptance of the UN’s eight Millennium Development Goals, Nigeria now seeks to evolve itself from a single-source economy into a self-sufficient, modernized, industrial nation.<sup>49</sup> Nigerian objectives to create employment opportunities in the agricultural and solid-mineral extraction sectors, modernizing agricultural production and power production, and improving the supporting infrastructure in transportation, communication, education, regulations, health, and security require more advanced industrialization. To attain a self-sufficient, industrialized economy, Nigeria must overcome the endemic, corrupt, bureaucratic practices; educate and train a work force

required for an industrialized nation; and create wealth through a strong private business sector.

In spite of the oil economy, much of Nigeria's economic production comes from the agricultural sector. Agriculture accounts for 70 percent of the active work force but only contributes 42 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).<sup>50</sup> Nigeria's goal is to revolutionize the agricultural sector leading to a five to ten fold increase in yield and production, thus strengthening the agricultural sector's contribution to the GDP. The most significant inhibitor to agricultural growth stems from the manner of farming and the laws that support ownership of the land. Small-scale farmers account for much of the agricultural production. As a result of the small-scale operations and poor infrastructure existing to move the agricultural goods from the farms to the markets, Nigeria must import a large amount of food to meet national requirements. Small-scale farming continues primarily from the tradition of family farming and the land laws that hinder commercialized farming. Land in Nigeria traditionally falls under communal property. The farmers may possess the land or pass it down to their heirs as long as they pledge to use the land for family or societal benefit.<sup>51</sup> When the farmer no longer uses the land in that manner, the land reverts to communal property. The Nigerian government seeks to deregulate the land laws in order to enable commercial enterprises to begin large-scale farming.<sup>52</sup>

Nigeria has an undeveloped solid-mineral sector in the northeast. Nigeria has the ability to become a leading producer of niobium used in steel alloys, tantalum used for electronic components, vanadium used in steel alloys, zirconium alloying agent, and gold.<sup>53</sup> Currently, solid-mineral extraction represents only 0.2 percent of the export

trade. However, Nigeria sees the solid-mineral extraction as a viable competitor to the oil industry, which can provide approximately five million jobs to the workforce.<sup>54</sup> Solid-mineral extraction has become a second pillar of focus for the Yar'Adua's path to industrialization.

### Nigerian Infrastructure

To support the agricultural and mineral extraction sectors' growth, Nigeria must invest significant amounts of money, public and private, into the existing, yet dilapidated infrastructure. The current Nigerian government blames the previous military regimes' lack of investment for the decrepit infrastructure.<sup>55</sup> Generally, Nigerian strategy to improve the country's infrastructure has been same as they tried to improve the economy: form government organizations to monitor, privatize the sector, and deregulate.<sup>56</sup> Although this method breaks up the centralized governmental control that paralyzes much of the nation, it also risks abuse by a corrupt governmental bureaucracy and exploitation of the Nigerians workers.

The inadequate and poor reliability of electrical power across Nigeria remains the number one concern of the population.<sup>57</sup> Yar'Adua plans to implement infrastructural reforms in the power and energy sector to provide adequate power necessary for development into a more modern economy and industrialized nation by the year 2015. The power industry produced an estimated 1,500 to 2,300 megawatts (MW) in 2006. Nigeria's estimated requirement for power is between 35,000 to 58,000 MW.<sup>58</sup> Plans were to reach 10,000 MW by the end of 2008 at an estimated cost of \$7.3 billion of investments to improve existing power infrastructure and construction of a hydroelectric plant.<sup>59</sup> Based on the above, near-term goals, power generation capability will only meet

1/5 to a 1/3 of the national energy requirement. Nigeria will unlikely attain the long-range goal to generate adequate power by 2015 without massive public and private investment in the construction of new power generation and distribution facilities.

Until recently, terrestrial telecommunications was government owned and unable to support the demands of a growing population. Currently, adequate telecommunications are only viable in the large cities due to the lack of a land line and fiber optic networks and nascent cellular communications. Cellular networks, which are cheaper to construct, are filling the land line communications gap. However, cellular networks cannot match the current requirements of businesses, such as banks and service industries, for internet access and data sharing. Thus, internet use in households and businesses remains low due to poor reliability and high cost.<sup>60</sup> Nigeria has begun steps to improve their telecommunications infrastructure through deregulation and issuing more licenses for “Long Distance Operations enabling more private companies to emplace fiber optic networks.”<sup>61</sup>

The transportation infrastructure, consisting of road networks, rail networks, and port facilities, has a significant, detrimental impact on the Nigerian economy. The transportation network’s inefficiency costs more to “ship a container within Nigeria than from Europe to Lagos.”<sup>62</sup> All three transportation sectors have decayed from a lack of maintenance in previous decades. The main method to fix the transportation infrastructure is the Public-Private Partnership program. The public-private programs system seeks to reduce the Nigerian government’s investment costs by acquiring investment from other countries and private entities for specific projects. To entice this investment, the Nigerian government offers incentives, such as access to oil fields.

Nigeria has one of the more extensive road networks in Western Africa with an estimated 31 percent of Nigerian roads being paved.<sup>63</sup> However, most of the roads have deteriorated as a result of heavy use and lack of maintenance. Estimated costs to refurbish the roads are so large that even the oil revenue cannot rapidly fix the transportation network. Under Obasanjo, the Nigerian government established the Federal Emergency Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA) with the responsibility to maintain the road networks. In spite of an N17 billion (\$147 million) budget for 2007, FERMA failed to produce significant improvements. The inefficient FERMA performance has resulted in Nigeria recently adopting public-private funding to fund both road maintenance and new construction in order to extend their privatization initiatives and gain “best practices” for road maintenance.<sup>64</sup>

The lack of investment also eroded the railroad system. Nigeria possesses 3,505 km of narrow-gauge railroads, the fifth largest network in Africa, but most of the rail lines are in poor condition. This inefficient rail network contributes to congestion in the ports and cannot take the pressure off the road networks. The government has begun initiatives to increase rail capacity through public-private funding. Acquisition of \$8.3 billion funds from China and other countries will add another 1,315 km of standard-gauge rail lines.<sup>65</sup>

Although a coastal country, Nigeria does not possess an abundance of good ports. The ports which Nigeria does have lack adequate facilities and automation, resulting in long ship-dwell times.<sup>66</sup> These ports take almost a week to unload a single ship, compared to the international standard of forty-eight hours.<sup>67</sup> Until recently, the ports fell under one controlling government agency, the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA).



Consistent with other Nigerian government agencies, incompetence and inefficiency of the NPA prevented effective operation. Nigeria has recently changed to a “landlord” model of port management. To improve port efficiency, the government broke the NPA into smaller ports authorities and allowed private companies to operate them.<sup>68</sup> In addition to permitting companies to “rent” the port facilities, the public-private fund matching is a source to upgrade port infrastructure.

### Social Support to Nigeria’s Industrialization

In addition to good governance, other common threads required across all of Nigeria’s strategy are an educated and healthy population. These two areas of governmental responsibility have received much less emphasis and resourcing from the Nigerian government. The lack of emphasis stems from two possible reasons: lack of public concern and poor Ministerial capability at the national level. First, a 2007 NOI-Gallup Poll determined that only 14 percent of the population believed that the government should make education a national priority, and healthcare received 4 percent of the population’s concern.<sup>69</sup> Secondly, there has been very little public effort on the Ministries of Education and Health to lobby public support. Where Ministers have attempted to gain support, their strategic plan abrogated their responsibility to the local departments of education and health, asking them to develop localized plans with no grand framework.<sup>70</sup>

The Nigerian health care system has failed to provide adequate services to the population. Since the 1980’s Nigeria began efforts to improve primary health care, yet officials still consider the health care system “dysfunctional and grossly underfunded,” \$9.44 per person according to the World Bank, 2005.<sup>71</sup> The poor state of health services

results from a failure of the Nigerian government to mesh a comprehensive health policy with substance beyond mere public declarations. The Ministry of Health, like other Nigerian Ministries, has proven ineffective at establishing a working health management system that integrates disease surveillance, prevention, and management.<sup>72</sup>

Nigeria relies on international support to operate basic health services, and consistent with the other sectors of government, seeks to establish a public-private, funded, health care system.<sup>73</sup> To reduce the immediate gap in health care, USAID and other international organizations work with the Nigerian government to provide both basic health care and medicines. The generally poor state of health care has enabled diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and Avian Flu to afflict a large portion of the country.

The Nigerian government's final component of the Seven Point Agenda is to ensure a qualitative and functional education system that meets international standards. By USAID's estimate, over half of the total population is illiterate, and only 68 percent of the adult population is literate.<sup>74</sup> Educational institutions received their funding almost solely from the government, but the schools were consistently underfunded. Nigeria plans to spend approximately \$1.77 billion in 2008 for the education system. Although this amount represents a 12 percent increase from 2007, it is still insufficient to meet Nigeria's needs.<sup>75</sup> Consequently, schools do not have adequate resources such as books, and teachers receive lower pay compared to African averages.<sup>76</sup> Yar'Adua acknowledged that education in Nigeria poses a significant obstacle to solidify a free society capable of "growing an economy that will cater for the development and needs

of the people of Nigeria.”<sup>77</sup> However, the education sector remains a low priority and continues to suffer from insufficient funding.

The low national priority and funding indicates that neither the population nor the government consider education as a critical component of industrialization. After the release of the NOI-Gallup Poll, where only 14 percent felt education was a national issue, the Education Minister, Dr. Jerry Anthony Agada, addressed a meeting of the National Education Service Centers in Nigeria. In the meeting, Dr. Agada told the state-level Education Resource Center representatives that they had the responsibility “improve and upgrade curricula at all levels.”<sup>78</sup> Requiring the states to develop guidance without publishing a national standard indicates that the Ministry of Education does not understand the country’s educational needs for supporting the Seven Point Agenda. A program that affects such national priority should have a national-level framework enabling the states to synchronize their policies.

### U.S. Policy for Nigeria

Nigeria plays a vital role in both the U.S. regional African strategy and also in supporting the U.S. national strategy. President George W. Bush made assessment that clear in a joint speech with President Yar’Adua in December 2007.<sup>79</sup> More succinctly, Donald L. Heflin, U.S. DOS Acting Office Director, West African Affairs, stated that “a prosperous Nigeria remains vitally important to our security, democracy, trade, and energy needs and objectives.”<sup>80</sup> To reinforce the importance of Nigeria to the U.S., Bush requested over \$533 million in assistance for FY 2008.<sup>81</sup>

Specific U.S. strategic objectives for Nigeria consist of providing training for Nigerian democratic institutions, assisting Nigeria to improve the enforcement of the rule

of law, public review of governmental actions, and poverty alleviation.<sup>82</sup> The overarching U.S. effort continues to focus on improving government oversight, accountability in all facets of operation, and neutralizing corruption. The U.S. has also committed to aiding Nigerian stability through programs focused on education and available health care.<sup>83</sup> The U.S. DOS Strategic Plan for Fiscal Year 2004 – 2009, directs “engaging” Nigeria as one of four regional powers in Africa to support of the U.S. national interests.<sup>84</sup>

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), in coordination with the DOS strategy, has narrowed their focus on strengthening democracy and good governance; improving the economic livelihoods across the Nigerian economy; improving the social sector service delivery for education and health; and specifically fighting HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.<sup>85</sup> The DOD, through USAFRICOM, supports the U.S. policy by “promoting civilian control of militaries, improving military professionalism, and building capacity of [the] military to respond effectively to national and sub-regional crises.”<sup>86</sup>

### Improving Democracy and Governance

The key component of U.S. support for Nigeria focuses on democratic and responsive governance, which can ultimately enable Nigerians to rid themselves of governmental corruption. Through USAID, the U.S. government provides assistance to Nigerian government and non-governmental organizations that demonstrate the ability to “empower civil society” through government oversight and accountability.<sup>87</sup> Over the last three years, the U.S. has spent over \$16 million to improve governing institutions in Nigeria. These programs include training 650 Nigerian National Assembly legislators and governmental staff on legislative functions and procedures. To empower civil

society, USAID provided training to over sixty independent civil organizations to become more effective at holding the government accountable.<sup>88</sup> Other USAID efforts in this area consist of efforts to promote free and fair elections, although the \$10 million spent between 2005 and 2006 did not have a significant, positive effect on the 2007 Nigerian elections. The U.S. Treasury has also provided technical representatives to train the Nigerian EFCC how to identify money trails, and build case packets to counter money laundering and counterfeiting criminals.<sup>89</sup>

Although not directly a part of USAID's program to strengthen democracy and good governance, security plays a vital role in sustaining democratic practices in Nigeria. USAFRICOM will support the USAID efforts by rebuilding partnerships with the Nigerian military. USAFRICOM's long-term goals to promote civilian control of the military and military professionalism reinforce USAID's efforts of good governance. Military-to-military engagements were robust in the past as the U.S. attempted to build Nigeria as a leader of the African Crisis Response Force; however, military relations cooled in the 1990s and early 2000. Reestablishing trust in the U.S. military specifically will take time, as well as effort to overcome the general distrust Nigeria has for non-African militaries operating in Africa. Clearly, the U.S. must establish a long-term engagement strategy throughout the Nigerian government if the U.S. expects to neutralize governmental corruption, poor accountability, and lack of public oversight.

U.S. efforts to further governance must also enable the Nigerian government to maintain appropriate control over privatization efforts. The private sector can help Nigeria finance required infrastructure and social service improvements and bypass ineffective governmental agencies, but Nigeria runs the risk of losing the ability to

provide oversight to those entities. The U.S. does not have a specific program to train Nigerians with proper oversight and control techniques to monitor outside agents. USAID and the U.S. Embassy need to help the Nigerian government ensure that privatized services and institutions operate for the good of country, not solely for profit.

### Agricultural Productivity and Economic Growth

USAID's objective to increase agricultural productivity and economic growth align closely with Nigeria's Seven Point Agenda. USAID has three components to assist Nigerian farmers and business men. USAID seeks to build a commodity market chain from the seed and tractor suppliers to farmers to banks and markets. USAID also supports agricultural public-private partnerships in order to increase competitiveness in the agricultural sectors and enhance critical, financial services. The third component seeks to reform economic policy and governance by educating Nigeria's national budget office and legislative staff with the skills required to develop and manage Nigeria's national budget and debt.<sup>90</sup>

Supporting the Nigerian budget office and legislative training are two other U.S. government programs, the Africa Financial Sector Initiative (AFSI) and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). Through AFSI, the U.S. has enacted a program to increase private-sector competition, and improve privately-owned companies' access to the banking and credit bureau systems. Under AFSI, the U.S. has provided training to Nigerian bank regulators in order to increase the security and stability of the Nigerian banking system.<sup>91</sup> OPIC will strengthen African capital markets by supporting the creation of new, private, equity funds in order to mobilize up to \$800 million in additional

investment in Africa.<sup>92</sup> OPIC investments mobilize private investment into the region to address critical gaps in financing required by businesses.

The USAID objective to improve agricultural and economic growth supports Nigeria's goals to improve agricultural production, land reform, and wealth creation. The injection of U.S. funds through USAID programs AFSI and OPIC will enable about 50,000 farms to gain access to better technology and practices, while also establishing financial institutions which the farmers require for that growth. As Nigeria reforms its land ownership regulations, larger farms will become more feasible, in turn requiring more capable credit institutions and farmers' unions to sustain continued growth in the agricultural sector. USAID's goal for 2009 is the creation of over 100,000 jobs through growth in the agricultural, textile, and related enterprises.<sup>93</sup>

U.S. programs do not directly support Nigerian efforts to exploit the solid-mineral sector of the economy. Discussion on solid-mineral sector development is absent throughout all of the U.S. plans. One can surmise that development of solid-minerals, while creating an estimated 5 million jobs, does little to feed the population or diversify the economy. Therefore, U.S. governmental investments will yield more productive results by improving the agricultural and agriculture-related industrial sectors in Nigeria.

#### Basic Education and Health Care

USAID's objective to improve basic education and healthcare comprise four components: reduce unintended pregnancies and educate the populace on effective, reproductive behavior; overhaul basic education; prevent major infectious diseases; and increase child survival and overall health.<sup>94</sup> Of the thirty-six states and territories, USAID has focused on five states; Bauchi, Kano, Lagos, Nasarawa, and the Federal Capital

territory and fifty local government areas. USAID seeks to train and deploy 4,050 community health workers to help modify the family planning and reproductive health of Nigerians. USAID seeks to train 6,000 teachers, emplace higher standards for basic education, and implement radio instruction programs designed to reach over 4 million students. USAID seeks to eradicate polio and enhance the prevention and treatment of malaria by providing treatment medicine kits and insecticide treated nets to families. Finally, USAID seeks to improve child health and survival through vitamin A supplements and implementing routine immunization programs.<sup>95</sup>

Although USAID's educational and health programs do not cover all of Nigeria, they do represent a start that can be copied across the country. USAID's educational programs complement the Nigerian goal of improving education by instituting greater standards; providing teaching materials; and enhancing the delivery of the educational material. Educational assistance falls short in developing functioning and well-resourced national education and health programs. USAID's assistance at the local and state levels fixes the problems in the near term, but does not address comprehensive, national-level solutions. These local-level solutions may evolve into national programs, but ineffectual guidance at the national level will dilute the programs' effectiveness.

#### HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis

HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis represent the greatest health crisis in Nigeria, so the U.S. government paper considers them separately from basic health care. By the 2003 estimates, 3.6 million out of 135 million people in Nigeria have HIV/AIDS and 310,000 people die annually from the disease.<sup>96</sup> Countering HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis is not part of the Nigerian Seven Point Agenda, although Nigeria acknowledges that these



diseases are a significant problem. USAID seeks to prevent new HIV infections and improve the access to support and medical services for people with AIDS. The HIV/AIDS crisis has become significant enough that the U.S. added Nigeria to the list of 15 countries to receive assistance under the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).<sup>97</sup> PEPFAR seeks to provide treatment and distribution of antiretrovirals to those infected with the disease, and also to improve existing AIDS treatment facilities.<sup>98</sup> USAID has invested \$3.2 million in Nigeria's national tuberculosis treatment program. The program seeks to reduce deaths and disability associated with TB by targeting 1,700 hospitals, clinics, and other health facilities.<sup>99</sup> The positive results from USAID's efforts indicate that prevalence rate for AIDS-infected Nigerians may now be declining.<sup>100</sup>

### Conclusion

Nigeria fulfills a key position in support of U.S. interests, for both national security and to maintaining a growing U.S. economy. The Nigerian government has demonstrated some promising actions that indicate an honest desire to change from a corrupt, failing state into a stable, democratic state. Nigeria's goal to evolve from an oil-dependent economy into a modernized, diversified, industrial economy is appropriate and achievable. The most important hurdle that Nigeria must overcome remains the endemic and institutionalized corruption within the government.

Given the significant level of decay in Nigeria's infrastructure and the massive aid required to repair it, privatization offers the most economically-feasible means to gain the necessary funding to revitalize capital investment. Privatization also offers Nigeria a means to bypass the ineffective governmental agencies currently in charge. The fastest

method to improve the quality of a government agency is the rapid infusion of trained technicians and administrators operated by organizations with incentives to achieve efficient and effective operations. Private organizations can staff these agencies quickly. Nigeria, however, then runs the risk of losing control over major segments of internal affairs if Nigeria cannot curb the corruption in the government. The risk of private organizations coalescing with corrupt government officials and the subsequent fraud that can occur is also great. Nigeria's efforts to privatize will fail if it feeds the corruption. Nigerians could find themselves worse off than when the military controlled the country.

U.S. initiatives support Nigeria's industrialization plan, but not necessarily in the same manner that Nigeria envisions. Both Nigeria and the U.S. seek to build an employed, educated, healthy lower and middle class capable of growing small-scale, agricultural-based enterprises and supporting industries. Small-scale, privately-owned Nigerian enterprises would be more resistant to graft and gross profit skimming compared to large government controlled operations. U.S. strategy supports the Nigerian plan to grow agricultural-based private enterprises, but excludes solid-minerals.<sup>101</sup>

The missing components of the Nigerian strategy consist of the lack of emphasis on health care and education. Although education comprises one of the pillars of the Nigerian Seven Point Agenda, there is a noticeable lack of resources and effort applied to improving education. U.S. efforts to fill the health void have helped stabilize Nigeria's significant HIV/AIDS problem, but have only begun to improve health care systems across the country. For Nigeria to succeed in establishing an improved national health

care system, it must allocate additional legislation and resources towards the health care system.

The U.S. does not have any significant programs focused on Nigeria's inadequate power generation capability and infrastructure woes. Both require massive investment over time. Nigeria has sought other countries and major corporations to gain matching funds in the Public-Private Partnership programs. These partnership programs create opportunities for other countries such as China to gain influence with Nigeria. The power and infrastructure situation requires such massive assistance that any investment will help Nigeria. The U.S. should encourage Nigeria to tap any resource available that improves Nigeria, as long as public oversight remains strong and no one foreign country then dominates Nigeria.

U.S. initiatives that aid in Nigeria's industrialization and economic diversification complement the Seven Point Agenda. Additional U.S. emphasis on education and healthcare, in spite of a lack of attention by Nigeria, remains critical for Nigeria for long-term economic and political stability. Electrical power generation, the number one issue for Nigerians, receives little attention by the U.S., allowing other countries to provide power-generation resourcing. By ignoring Nigeria's electrical power issues, the U.S. could lose a valuable source of influence. Finally, privatization of Nigerian infrastructure, full or partial, can quickly raise the required funds and expertise, but it creates a potential risk. Losing control and oversight through privatization can ruin Nigeria, and the U.S. should direct its governmental training programs and diplomacy to ensure that the Nigerian government does not abrogate responsibility for oversight and accountability of these critical components of society.

## Endnotes

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<sup>2</sup> "AFRICOM Public Brief 02 02 2007 version 6," linked from *United States Department of Defense*; available from [http://www.defenselink.mil/home/pdf/AFRICOM\\_PublicBrief\\_02022007.pdf](http://www.defenselink.mil/home/pdf/AFRICOM_PublicBrief_02022007.pdf); Internet; accessed 9 January 2008. USAFRICOM's proposed mission statement included working with African states to "help strengthen stability and security in the AOR;" and "conduct theater security cooperation activities to assist in building security capacity and improve accountable governance."

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<sup>6</sup> Stephanie Hanson, "Nigeria's Creaky Political System," *Council on Foreign Relations*; available from [http://www.cfr.org/publication/13079/nigerias\\_creaky\\_political\\_system.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/13079/nigerias_creaky_political_system.html); Internet; accessed 31 January 2008.

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<sup>10</sup> Lewis, 3.

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Agency for International Development, *Democracy and Governance Assessment of Nigeria*, December 2006, 18, available from [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADI079.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADI079.pdf); accessed 23 February 2008.

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<sup>17</sup> Bonaventure Melah, "I am a Servant-Leader...Yar'Adua," *Elendu Reports*, 29 May 2007; available from [http://elendureports.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=423&Itemid=34](http://elendureports.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=423&Itemid=34); Internet; accessed 10 December 2008.

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<sup>19</sup> Robert I. Rotberg, "Nigeria: Elections and Continuing Challenges," *Council on Foreign Relations*, 10; available from <http://www.cfr.org/publication/12926/>; Internet; accessed 31 January 2008.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>21</sup> George Bush and Umaru Yar'Adua, "President Bush Meets with President Yar'Adua of the Federal Republic of Nigeria," speech, 13 December 2007; available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/12/20071213-1.html> ; Internet; accessed 14 December 2007.

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Joseph Chu'ma Otteh, "Nigeria: Way Forward for Kutigi," 5 February 2007, linked from *Open Society Justice Initiative*; available from [http://www.justiceinitiative.org/db/resource2?res\\_id=103630](http://www.justiceinitiative.org/db/resource2?res_id=103630); Internet; accessed 31 January 2007. Otteh states "[t]he sheer size of substantiated indictments against Judges, and an intermittent wave of still appalling conduct shows just how long a way we have to go there too, while acknowledging the modest effort the NJC and State Judicial Service Commissions are making in this regard. It is doubtful however, whether we can win a transformative struggle against corruption in the Judiciary only by using disciplinary remedies that are mostly post-dated and reactive. There is need perhaps to reinforce safeguards that will reduce the misappropriation of adjudicational authority for private profit." Otteh also states that "[i]f the Judiciary drives the reform process, it will help to insulate the reform process from vicissitudes of political change that may come about from a change in government, or change in the persons occupying particular political offices. The Judiciary should therefore, take leading responsibility for managing the justice system reform agenda."

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<sup>28</sup> "Federal Ministry of Defence," linked from *Nigeria Direct*; available from <http://www.nigeria.gov.ng/NR/exeres/0ACCCCF8-6629-4D27-8354-4C9A28CC2F88.htm>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2008.

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<sup>39</sup> Ploch, 20.

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<sup>41</sup> Andrew Oota and John Adah, "Nigeria: Yar'Adua's Budget and the Seven Point Agenda," linked from *allafrica.com*, 30 January 2008 [Newspaper on-line]; available from <http://allafrica.com/stories/200801300241.html?viewall=1>Leadership; Internet; accessed 30 January.

<sup>42</sup> Oota and Adah.

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<sup>44</sup> George B. N. Ayittey, *Corruption In Nigeria*, Testimony before U.S. Congress, House, House International Relations Committee, 18 May 2006, available from Lexis-Nexis; accessed 10 December 2007

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<sup>53</sup> U. S. Trade Representative, *African Growth and Opportunities Act Competitiveness Report*, July 2005, 28; available from [http://www.ustr.gov/assets/Document\\_Library/Reports\\_Publications/2005/asset\\_upload\\_file604\\_7857.pdf](http://www.ustr.gov/assets/Document_Library/Reports_Publications/2005/asset_upload_file604_7857.pdf); Internet; accessed 11 February 2008.

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<sup>78</sup> Adenipekun.



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