

## An Examination into the Areas of Legislature- Executive Interactions in Nigeria's Foreign Policy under the Fourth Republic Democratic Governance

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### Abstract

*As the legislature continues to represent an important democratic institution of the state and the voice of the people, its interaction with other state institutions like the executive in foreign policy relations cannot be overstretched. This is because such interaction has the capacity to promote effective foreign policy, good governance, and democratic consolidation. Based on the above, therefore, this study examined the areas of interaction between the legislature and the executive in Nigeria's foreign policy under the fourth republic democratic governance. To accomplish this, the study relied on descriptive qualitative method of research and secondary sources of information like journal articles, books, and reports, as well as the theory of power separation to arrive at a valid conclusion. From the analysis, the emerged findings showed that the legislature and the executive interact in various foreign policy areas like in policy formulation, confirmation of executive foreign appointments, ratification of treaties, external earning, and sanctioning government expenditure. Other areas include declaration of war and deployment of troops to foreign lands, and parliamentary diplomacy to promote government activities abroad. Further findings also showed that better relations between the institutions strengthen the nation's foreign policy, democracy, and good governance. While the study has contributed to the body of knowledge through its findings, it would benefit the institutions, researchers, and the public. Lastly, further studies like legislature-judiciary pattern of interaction or executive-judiciary pattern of interaction in foreign policy can be examined to further knowledge consolidation in this area.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In contemporary democracies, the role of the legislature and the executive in foreign policy affairs cannot be overemphasized. This is because they are seen as pillars of democracy (Momodi & Matudi, 2013; Osakede et al., 2017; Adetunji, 2018; Omilusi, 2018). They facilitate good governance and democratic consolidation (Igbokwe-Ibeto & Anazodo, 2015; Chima et al., 2018; Egwu, 2020; Egwu et al., 2020; Godswealth et al., 2016). This shows how relevant the institutions are in a constitutional democracy and how they can influence the foreign policy of a nation. In Nigeria, however, before the emergence of the fourth republic in 1999, the issue of Nigerian foreign policy was purely an executive business. This was because the government was controlled by the military. According to Ngara (2016a), the emergence of democracy in Nigeria in 1999 and the restoration of the legislature after decades of military rule, opened a new era for the parliament to re-establish itself in the nation’s foreign policy affairs. It succeeded in transforming both the domestic and external political engagement of Nigeria in foreign policy issues which were formally controlled by the military (Fineman, 2019). As Ngara (2016b) added, trends in global and regional integration amongst other economic and political challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have also succeeded in creating a hybrid global system that not only see the importance of the legislature but also increased the scope and functions of the legislature in the international arena. Stressing the importance of the Nigerian legislature in foreign policy affairs of the country, Arowosegbe and Akomolafe (2016) noted that though Nigerian foreign relations policies’ articulation and execution are no doubt duties that fall almost entirely within the constitutional and legal knowledge of the executive, the place of the parliament in ensuring success of such policy relations remains paramount under the nation’s fourth republic democracy.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

Foreign policy remains a vital tool for achieving national interest in the global system. It is an important platform through which states, and non-states actors interact in the international system to achieve their interest (Bello et al., 2017; Ubi & Akinkuotu, 2014; Omo-Ogbebor, 2017; Olusola, 2015). Therefore, as the legislature represents the highest symbol of a democratic government as noted by Goyei (2019), its relevance in foreign policy cannot be

undermined. It is on this note that the Nigerian legislature interact with the executive and influences its foreign policy affairs in different areas. In relation to the institutions’ interaction in Nigerian foreign policy affairs, several studies have been carried out in Nigeria and abroad. While some of these studies were centered on the institutions’ pattern of interaction such as Gardini (2010), Oni (2013), Oni (2014), Okpe and Taya (2019), others centered on parliamentary diplomacy, such as Ngara (2016a; 2016b), and Nigerian foreign policy in the fourth republic by Lawal and Aluko (2016), amongst others. Considering the legion of literatures above, there was no specific literature to unravel and describe the specific areas of interaction between the Nigeria legislature and the executive in the nation’s foreign policy affairs. Relying on this, therefore, this study aimed to explore and describe areas in which the two institutions interact under the country’s foreign policy which would promote public awareness on the importance of the institutions in foreign policy matters. This would also help to increase better relations between the institutions to promote national interest and good governance at the international level.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Considering the importance of literature review in academic research, the study reviewed important concepts and phrases like; Foreign policy; Nigerian foreign policy objectives; Nigerian foreign policy decision-making, Legislature-executive relations, and Legislature-executive relations in a foreign policy below.

## **FOREIGN POLICY**

The concept foreign policy, just like every other concept or phrase in the field of foreign relations, also suffers from a generally accepted definition. As such, scholars and pundits have different understandings of the concept. For instance, Ujara and Ibietan (2018) in their study, explained that foreign policy represents an important external activity of the contemporary state in the external environment. To them, the external environment is symbiotic, and therefore, portrays that no nation can operate alone without other states. On this ground, they concluded that nations must systematically frame their foreign policies to promote their national aspirations in the international system. In the same vein, Eze (2012) explained that it is a platform in which a nation engages with other nations. According to Amadi (2016), though several schools of thought construes it from different perspectives, each of these expressions is influenced by a peculiar ideological strand. Foreign policy, as he concluded, represents a state policy that is geared towards activities in the

external environment. Obviously, the above conceptualizations are centered within states interests.

Ade-ibijola (2013) in his study, found that foreign policy represents a state’s declared intention in the external environment. To him, as he reveals further, foreign policy informs a comprehensive, objective or plan in which the state aspires to realize in its interaction with other nations of the world. As he states further, every nation sets key objectives it seeks to attain in the international environment, and this informs the driving force why Nigeria relates with other countries of the world. He concluded that for a state to interact effectively and realize its objectives, its foreign policy demands better articulation and thought. Similarly, Bello et al (2017) revealed that foreign policy has to do with a set of activities articulated by nations to realize their interest in the global arena and are usually influenced by external and internal factors. As they concluded, environment and personality of actors’ shape states foreign policy and these actors includes non-states in the external environment. The above definition is comprehensive as it encompassed non-state actors due to the dynamic of the modern foreign environment. To Ota and Ecoma (2015), it is an articulated strategy by policymakers in its reaction to the foreign environment. These policymakers, literally, represent government institutions like the legislature and the executive in a presidential democracy like Nigeria. It is a public policy offshoot that makes certain domestic policies unachievable without interacting with the external environment (Ukwuije, 2015). The entire definitions were about realizing domestic interest at the external level for the purpose of consolidating national interest.

## **NIGERIA’S FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES**

Nigeria’s foreign policy has developed over time especially from 1960 independence to the present fourth republic, 1999 to date. As pointed out above by Eze (2012), foreign policy involves the basis in which nations can engage and interact with others in the global environment. In this regard, nations articulate their foreign policy objectives and relations in a systematic manner to aid and advance their national interests in the external environment (Ujara & Ibietan, 2018). Aligning with the above, Abdul and Ibrahim (2013) found that in today’s globalization, a nation without foreign policy and concretized objectives in relation with other nations in the international system is often seen as a ship that lacks a sailor. In this regard, therefore, Arowosegbe and Akomolafe (2016); Lawal and Aluko (2016); Bello et al (2017) revealed the followings as Nigeria’s foreign policy objectives and these includes: (i) to promote and preserve Nigeria’s national interest; (ii) promote African unity and integration; (iii) support international cooperation

to promote global peace, elimination of discrimination, and ensure respect amongst nations; (iv) to respect international rules, treaty obligations, and ensure the settlement of international disputes through mediation, conciliation, negotiation, adjudication and arbitration; and finally, (v) to promote and support a just global economic order. The above objectives, thus, explain why Nigeria is into economic and military relationship with China, US, UK, France, South Africa, Ghana, and a signatory to several international organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Treaties, amongst other international trade and economic organizations.

### **NIGERIA’S FOREIGN POLICY DECISION MAKING**

Foreign policy decision making under the Nigeria’s presidential democracy is very cumbersome as it involves contributions from different stakeholders and institutions of the government. As revealed by Lawal and Aluko (2016), it is continuous as the scope is not static. In the same vein, Arowosegbe and Akomolafe (2016) found that the responsibility of foreign policy decision making, and implementation often appear almost squally within the executive constitutional competence in several democracies. However, as they further explained, the role and contribution of the lawmakers in determining that the foreign policies of the government succeed cannot be overemphasized. For example, they concluded that in countries like Denmark, Norway, Germany, Netherland, Italy, Spain and Belgium, their heads of states often appear more powerful, but the real power in foreign policy affairs lies with the government which is accountable to the legislature. In Nigeria’s fourth republic for example, Bello et al (2017) found that Nigeria’s foreign policy decision making falls within the responsibility of the president who equals as the chief-executive amongst others such as, the legislature and the ministry of external affairs. According to Yakubu (2014), the above institutions influence foreign policy making in a democratic government, and therefore, makes it cumbersome. The above simply shows that in a presidential democracy like Nigeria, foreign policy making is not left to one institution of the government. It also shows the importance of separation of powers amongst state institutions for the essence of transparency and accountability in the system.

### **LEGISLATURE-EXECUTIVE RELATIONS**

In a presidential democracy such as Nigeria, US, Canada, Philippines amongst other similar nations, the legislature and the executive represent important institutions of democracy. According to Omotoso and Oladeji (2019), they are important pillars of presidential democracy and good

governance. Therefore, interaction between the two institutions represents a symbol of democracy and presidential system of administration. As noted by Bassey (2000); Okon et al (2013), relations between the two institutions often represent an act of institutional interaction and transaction to promote better life for the people. This relationship, as echoed by Baba (2019), is often influenced by both domestic and international environment and often manifests in a presidential democracy. As he added, this is holding to the fact that in other models of governance, the two institutions are often not separated, such as in parliamentary or military form of government. The objective behind the institutional relations as further revealed by Omotoso and Oladeji (2019), is to promote good governance, transparency, accountability and to avoid the abuse of power by any state organ as noted by Montesquieu in explaining the essence of power separation amongst state arms. It is simply a relationship between the legislature and the executive for the purpose of good governance which is often influenced by both local and external environment. In addition to the above, the Nigerian parliament is established under Part (1), Section 47 and empowered in Part (2), Section 4(1) of the 1999 Constitution, while the executive is established in Part (1) under Section 130. Therefore, their interaction in whatever regards, becomes imperative for the delivery of good governance to the citizens and better relations with other states.

## **LEGISLATURE-EXECUTIVE RELATIONS IN FOREIGN POLICY**

In a presidential democracy, legislature-executive relations or their roles in foreign policy relations cannot be overstretched. This is holding to the fact that both institutions represent a strong pillar for democracy and good governance. For instance, in formulation of foreign policy in Nigeria, Bello et al (2017) found that the executive, its foreign affairs ministry and the parliament interact in doing so. They concluded that it involves a broad consensus as the legislature must approve all executive ministerial and ambassadorial appointments, as well as treaties and budgets. More closely was the work of Egobueze (2017). His findings revealed that before the return of democracy in Nigeria in 1999, Nigeria was in a pariah state in the global system. However, as he further explained, Nigeria gained back its external reckoning through the interaction of the executive and the legislature on foreign policy matters. He concluded that the parliament, the executive, and its ministry of foreign relations facilitated the process. In the same vein, Fonck (2018) also researched cooperation between the institutions in EU foreign policy mediation talks in Macedonia between 2015 and 2017. His analysis revealed that both parliament and executive played vital role as they came up with “Przino-agreements”. He concluded that the institutions

exchanged important resources to actively conclude and execute the agreements between the opposition parties and the government. The authors revealed that better relations between government institutions could promote good governance including foreign policy relations. According to Amadi (2016), what is needed to realize a stable foreign policy, is a robust interaction between the concerned institutions.

Barry and Kleiberg (2015) studied the role of the parliament with regards to US executive sanctions abroad and its effects. They revealed that congressional pressures and commitments to executive sanctions abroad often pushes US companies with smaller economic stakes in target nations to forgo some economic opportunities that may violate US sanctions. According to McLean and Whang (2014), the major players in the sender sanctions are often the legislature and the executive. They concluded that they design their sanction policies to encompass measures less harmful to special interest groups. Congress involvements in sanctions abroad is often shaped by their representatives’ disapproval of the nation’s conducts and the view that the legislature and the executive would formulate a policy to express the citizen’s moral position. In all these foreign sanctions, Whang (2011) explained that in US, the congress in its interaction with the executive is often sensitive than the president or the executive to the opposition of individual interest bodies, given that the president relies on a wider electoral base. The above shows that the congress does not only influence executive foreign sanctions but does so in the interest of her representatives.

In a presidential democratic system such Nigeria, Gardini (2010) believe that a healthy system for checks and balances in foreign policy affairs allows for separation and distribution of roles amongst government institutions like the legislature and the executive. He concluded that foreign policy design and management often lies heavily with the executive, but the parliament enjoys the constitutional role to control and sanction executive actions. According to Arowosegbe and Akomolafe (2016), the legislature’s power to control and sanction the executive in foreign affairs lies in the hands of the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs. The committee can demand reports from the executive on specific foreign policy dealings of the government. In Philippines, for instance, the congress is more powerful in foreign affairs compare to the executive, and in Indonesia, the legislature is the most effective in putting its mark on the country’s foreign affairs as the lawmakers on many occasions vetoed executive policies abroad. In Thailand, however, the bi-cameral legislature is weak in taking an active interest in the nation’s foreign affairs (Dosch, 2006). Finally, Ngara (2016a) expanded the frontiers of the institutions’ relations in foreign affairs by looking at the role of the Nigerian legislature in the country’s external debt relief and economic diplomacy between 1999 and 2006. He found that the legislature

complemented the executive effort to secure US\$18 billion external debt relief for the nation. This complementary effort and achievement restored Nigeria’s image abroad, its democracy, bargaining power amongst other important sub-regional peace initiatives achieved (Ngara, 2016b). Unarguably, this was made possible due to the robust interaction between the institutions.

## **METHOD AND MATERIALS**

This study used descriptive qualitative research to examine and analyze areas in which the legislature and the executive relate and interact in Nigerian foreign policy affairs under the nation’s fourth republic democracy. It relied mainly on secondary data generated from academic journals and books written by authorities like Baba (2019); Oni (2013); Fashagba (2019); Omotoso and Oladeji (2019), amongst others. It equally relied on the theory of separation of powers by Montesquieu to aid analysis, discussion, create nexus and reach a reliable conclusion. It is important to mention that descriptive qualitative method is important in unveiling issues through individuals’ lenses and perceptions. And the intention is to gain a deep sound of thought on the interest of study (Magilvy, 2003: 123). Also, Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas (2013) explained that the use of descriptive qualitative analysis approach is often appropriate for researchers who wish to use relatively low-high degree of interpretation in contrast to others research approaches where a high degree of interpretive complexity is required. The significance of qualitative descriptive approach, Sandelowski (2010); Holloway and Todres (2005); and Giorgi (1992) explained that it does not only lie in the knowledge that can be generated from it, but also represents a vehicle for establishing and achieving a solid and meaningful finding. Therefore, its application in this study remains germane to reach a sound and meaningful conclusion on the institutions relations in Nigeria’s foreign policy.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study relied on the separation of power theory to assess and explore the areas of interaction between the legislature and the executive in Nigerian foreign policy affairs under the fourth republic democracy. Its application in this study was to create nexus and because of its capacity to explain relations between governmental institutions like the legislature and the executive in a presidential democracy such as Nigeria. In 1748, as noted by Eme and Ogochie (2014), Barron Montesquieu published “*Espirit de Lois*” (The Spirit of Law) in which he rearticulated an ancient political philosophy into a more suitable political theory. In his theory, they explained, Montesquieu attributed liberty in Britain to the principle of separation of powers between

the state institutions like the legislature and the executive. In other words, it means the balancing of state powers amongst the institutions of the government. According to Obidimma and Obidimma (2015), this doctrine of power separation involves a political attempt to allocating specific governmental powers and functions to government institutions. It is done to promote the rule of law, individual liberty, avoid the abuse of power by a single institution and to promote good governance through checks and balances, transparency, and public accountability.

More so, it is important to note that one fundamental concept of contemporary democracy is derived from the doctrine of separation of powers and has remained the cornerstone of modern democracy (Eme & Ogochie, 2014). To consolidate the principles of this theory, and in Nigeria democracy for example, the 1999 Constitution in Section 4 confers powers of lawmaking on the legislature, while the executive is conferred with the power of execution in Section 5 of the constitution. Primarily, the intention is to avoid the concentration of power in one organ that may abuse it, as well as to promote liberty and good governance to the citizens. This explains why in the Nigerian foreign policy decision making, it is not left to the executive institution alone as other institutions like the legislature amongst others can contribute to the process. Further buttressing the above, Arowosegbe and Akomolafe (2016); Bello et al (2017) expressed that in Nigerian democracy, the role of foreign policy decision making often appears like the responsibility of the executive alone, but the role and contribution of the legislature cannot be neglected. Therefore, the theory was found as the most suitable in aiding the exploration and description of the areas of relations between the institutions in Nigeria’s foreign policy affairs.

## **RESULT FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

From the available academic works reviewed, several findings emerged and are treated under the subheadings below.

### **Areas of Legislature-Executive Relations in Nigeria’s Foreign Policy**

In Nigeria’s foreign policy affairs, there are less doubts that the articulation and implementation of the state foreign policy affairs seems to be mainly exercised by the executive institution. However, scholarly works like Arowosegbe and Akomolafe (2016), argued that the parliament is also reserved with some degree of constitutional powers under the 1999 Constitution of the fourth republic. The 1999 Constitution subjects’ foreign policy actions and activities of the executive to parliamentary oversight. In this case, the parliament performs three cardinal constitutional functions, and these include legislation, representation, and oversight (2016). It is

empowered in Section (4) of the 1999 Constitution to make laws for good governance, peace, and order for the federation (Bello et al., 2017). This also includes the nation’s interest in external environment. It is also important to note that Section 81 and 121 of the Constitution equally give the parliament power to scrutinize and approve or reject executive budget amongst other income and expenditure of the government, including taking loans abroad. In Section 88 also, it has the power to conduct an oversight on the activities of the executive both in internal and external relations. These constitutional roles are exercised in its relations with the executive in the areas discussed below.

### **Confirmation of Executive Foreign Appointments**

Under the fourth republic Nigeria’s democracy, the first area in which the legislature and executive interact under the nation’s foreign policy is the confirmation of executive foreign appointments such as foreign minister and ambassadorial positions. This confirmatory power of the legislature is enshrined in the 1999 Nigerian Constitution. The legislature plays an important role and exhibits some level of commitment in executive foreign appointments (Arowosegbe & Akomolafe, 2016; Amadi, 2016). According to Arowosegbe and Akomolafe (2016), appointments into the office of a government minister is the responsibility of the executive, but it must be confirmed by the Senate chamber. This is captured in Section 147(2) of the 1999 Constitution. Also, no Foreign Affairs Minister, High Commissioner or an Ambassador or any other representative of Nigeria in foreign land can be appointed unless confirmed by the Nigerian Senate. It is also captured in Section 171(4) of the 1999 Constitution. This shows that the legislature is fully involved in Nigerian relations abroad and explains the role of separation of power in a presidential democracy. In a democracy, Bello et al (2017) observed, this activity involves processes of consultation, debate, and approval. It also justifies the application of the institutional power separation principle.

In United States for example, Rottinghaus and Bergan (2011) noted that the president appoints citizens into public offices, but with the advice and approval of the senate. This action is captured in “Appointment Clause” of Article 11, and Section 2 of the US Constitution. The president is the chief appointing authority, while the congress has the power of confirmation (Khan & Sabir, 2013). As they further explained, this power is divided between the institutions to achieve an effective foreign policy. This was also supported by Dull et al (2012) who observed that the president appoints, while the legislature confirms. According to Barber et al (2019), interaction between these institutions in foreign policy shows the importance of separation of powers in a democratic system. Under this kind of system, the legislature

could discipline the executive actions (Chiou & Rothenberg, 2017). This could be in the form of veto, blocking appointment amongst other oversight measures, and vice versa (Barber et al, 2019). Following the above, it appears that the executive in Nigeria just like its counterpart in US cannot make appointments into foreign lands without the approval of the legislature. It is a clear sign of separation of institutional powers and for the essence of good governance and citizens’ liberty.

### **Ratification of Government External Treaties**

As treaty remains one of the vital ingredients of foreign policy, it usually involves agreements between nations and an area of interaction between the legislature and the executive. According to Khan and Sabir (2013), treaty involves a formal legal agreement between nations. For example, in US, the Constitution in Article 11, Section 2, grants the president the authority to negotiate treaties, but must be approved by the two-third of the senate. The president is the chief negotiator, while the Congress ratifies (Egobueze, 2017). In Nigeria, for example, as noted by Arowosegbe and Akomolafe (2016), no government treaty can have the effect of the law until it is enacted into law by the National Assembly. In doing so, the National Assembly in its interaction with the executive may adjust or modify the treaty. This action is backed in the 1999 Constitution under Section 12(1,2,3), and it usually involves a broad process of consultation, debate, consensus, and approval. Also, noting the roles of the Brazilian and Argentine parliaments in their integration agreements, Gardini (2010) observed that all agreements reached by the governments were submitted to the parliaments for ratification. It is a clear sign of separation of powers and interaction between the institutions. In fact, Amadi (2016) noted that under the Nigerian constitution, the parliament has the power to request from the government all its foreign treaties. This shows the importance of the institutions in foreign treaties and must not be undermined.

### **Sanction Income and Expenditure of the Government**

In foreign policy relations, sanctioning the income and expenditure of the government remains one important areas of interaction between the legislature and the executive in a presidential democracy. According to Bello et al (2017), it requires a long process of interaction between the institutions as it involves National Assembly’s approval of government budget for effective financing and operation at the external environment. Foreign spending of the government as noted by Amadi (2016), often involves the budget of the Nigerian foreign affairs ministry which encompasses budget for Embassies, High Commissions and Nigerian Institute of Foreign Affairs (NIIA). On this, while the president remains the power of the sword, the parliament enjoys the

power of the purse (Arowosegbe & Akomolafe, 2016). Meaning, the government cannot spend any fund with regards to foreign matters without approval from the legislature. In separation of powers, this shows the degree of the powers of the legislature. In the 1999 Constitution, also, Section 81(1) observed that the president shall prepare its annual estimate of revenue and expenditure and be laid before the National Assembly. Under this constitutional arrangement, any kind of loan either externally or internally within the projected year must be highlighted in the budget. The 1999 Constitution under the exclusive list of the legislature in (Item Seven), equally grants the parliament power to oversee government’s servicing of foreign debts, loans, and acceptance of external aids amongst others.

The National Assembly also controls budget on Nigerian peace-keeping operations, foreign security spending and peace enforcement operations in foreign soils. According to Ngara (2016a), the legislature has several committees on foreign matters and this ranges from aid, loans, treaties, debt management, protocols and agreements, women in parliament, Lake Chad, trade and investment, amongst others that play vital roles. For instance, Bugaje (2015, as cited in Ngara, 2016b) noted that the Nigeria government under President Obsanjo paid US\$ 12.4 billion to the Paris Club without approval from the legislature. This incident as he further laid out, caused problem between the institutions. But as further explained by Ngara (2016b), even though the pattern of interaction within the said period, 1999 to 2007 was rancorous, reaching legislature’s corporation and support for the executive to settle Nigeria’s external debt was not that stressful. This was because the lawmakers understood the implication of the debt on the Nigerian economy, he concluded. The role of the parliament in executive foreign spending and earning remains one of its major powers in Nigeria’s foreign policy.

### **Government Deployment of Troops or Declaration of War against Foreign Invaders**

Amongst other things, another area of interaction in foreign policy relations between the executive and the legislature is in war declaration and sending troops abroad. For instance, Gardini (2010) observed that under the Brazilian democracy, the president has the constitutional power to declare war or send troops abroad. However, the congress also reserves the power either to reject or ratify the move, he concluded. Also, in the U.S, for instance, Khan and Sabir (2013) noted that the “War Power Resolution Act of 1973” gives the U.S Congress the power to declare war on any foreign nation. Under this resolution as they further explained, the president must report to the parliament on every foreign combat such as sending troops abroad. In this arrangement, the U.S troops cannot operate beyond sixty days without

authorization from the congress. This shows the level of interplay between the executive and the legislature in foreign policy relation matters. It is also a clear sign of separation of powers to avoid the abuse by a single institution.

In Nigeria, for example, Arowosegbe and Akomolafe (2016) explained that the Nigerian legislature, just like their counterparts in Brazil and the U.S, through legislation enjoys the power to establish the Nigerian military. It defines its composition, operation, control, and command, notwithstanding that the 1999 Constitution also vested the general control on the chief executive as the Chief Commander of the Armed Forces in Section 217 and 218 respectively. Section 218 for example, states that the legislature shall have power to enact laws to regulate the actions of the executive as the Commander-in-Chief of the military. Also, in Section 5(4), the president shall not declare war or even send troops into foreign land without the sanction of the Nigerian parliament comprising the Senate and the House of Representatives. Supporting the above, Ngara (2016b) showed that in July 2003, the Nigerian Senate approved former President Obasanjo’s demand to send two battalions of Nigerian troops to Liberia as part of the nation’s contribution to international peace-keeping effort amongst other countries that the troops were equally deployed. This shows that when government democratic institutions relate better through the respect and adherence to the separation of powers and rule of law, greater foreign policy and good governance can be assured.

### **Complementing Executive External Efforts through Parliamentary Diplomacy**

In a presidential democracy, parliamentary diplomacy remains one amongst the areas of interface between the executive and the legislature. This involves the legislature visiting a foreign legislature on the basis to share knowledge or for lobby on an issue of mutual interest. For example, the Nigerian legislature engaged on such diplomatic visit to the UK and US Congress (Arowosegbe & Akomolafe, 2016). Such visit could also involve the parliament visiting a government of another nation to complement and support the efforts of their own national government on foreign relations. For example, this role was played by the Nigerian parliament through its delegation to visit key members of the Paris Club. The action was carried out in support of the then Obasanjo’s government in its effort to secure debt forgiveness for Nigeria. As noted by Bello et al (2017), Obasanjo made the effort to re-open Nigeria to the global system and economic development after been battered by the past military administrations.

According to Egobueze (2017), before Obasanjo came to power in 1999, Nigeria was a pariah nation. He argued that a collaboration between the executive and the legislature brought Nigeria back to the eyes of the

global community. Aligning with the above, Ngara (2016b) explained that collaboration between the institutions under the Obasanjo’s government was not only on debt relief as the legislature also supported the administration to recover stolen funds stashed abroad as well as the restoration of Nigeria’s image. Goyei (2019) noting the role of the Nigerian parliament in foreign policy relations, observed the parliament as an important actor. He saw the legislature as a critical symbol of Nigerian democracy. To him, except the parliament approves, funding foreign commitment by the executive would not be easy. For example, during the administration of the former President Jonathan, the Nigerian National Assembly approved the government’s request to grant soft loan of US\$30 million to Principe and the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome (Goyei, 2019). From the foregoing, all the above can be attributed to the practice of separation of powers, adherence to the rule of law, national interest and the 1999 Constitution. It also showed that when government institutions like the legislature and the executive relate better, good foreign policy and governance can be assured at both home and abroad.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study examined areas of relations between the legislature and the executive under the Nigeria’s foreign policy in the fourth republic democratic governance. This was done with the intention to identify, describe and analyze such areas of interaction between the two important democratic institutions. Secondary data such as journal articles and books were used, as well as the theory of separation of power to create nexus and to arrive at a more logical conclusion. Based on the descriptive analysis, the result revealed that the two institutions interact in the following areas such as: (a) in the foreign policy formulation stage as contributions are required from both institutions (Bello et al, 2017; Lawal & Aluko, 2016; Arowosegbe & Akomolafe, 2016; Yakubu, 2014). (b) the executive cannot appoint Foreign Ministers, Ambassadors or High Commissioners without interaction and ratification from the legislature (Dull et al, 2012; Barber et al, 2019; Amadi, 2016). (c) no foreign treaties can be implemented or domesticated in Nigeria without executive interaction with the legislature and its ratification obtained (Khan & Sabir, 2013; Gardini, 2010; Egobueze, 2017). (d) all executive foreign earnings and expenditures must be sanctioned by the parliament which also creates room for relations (Bello et al, 2017; Amadi, 2016; Arowosegbe & Akomolafe, 2016). (e) the executive cannot declare war or deploy troops to foreign land without ratification from the legislature (Ngara, 2016b; Khan and Sabir, 2013; Gardini, 2010). (f) parliamentary diplomacy through which the legislature complements the efforts of the executive in foreign land

(Egobueze, 2017; Goyei, 2019; Ngara, 2016a). All the above emerged from the analysis which represents a nutshell of the institutions relations.

The result did not only reveal the institutions critical areas of interaction in the nation’s foreign policy, but equally revealed the importance of separation of power between democratic institutions, and the assurance of good governance when the institutions relate better. This means that if the institutions do not relate well, there may be abuse of power and the nation’s foreign policy objectives will suffer. The foreign policy may be endangered as the executive may declare war or engage in public expenditure at will. Based on the above, therefore, the study recommends that the institutions must consolidate their relations, adhere to the constitution, the rule of law and more representation of the citizens’ interests in their foreign affairs interaction for the benefit of the common people and the country. Lastly, while the study would benefit the institutions, the public and researchers, further studies can be built on the existing study by looking at the institutions’ relations on Nigeria’s peacekeeping abroad and its impact on national interest.

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