

Foreign Policy and National Security Dilemma: Examining Nigerian Experience

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Abstract : The essence of any state as well as government is to ensure and advance the security of lives and property of its citizens. As a result, providing security in all spheres ranging from safeguarding the territorial integrity, security of lives and property of the citizens as well as economic emancipation have constitute the core objectives cum national interest of virtually all country's foreign policy in the world. In view of this imperative above, Nigeria has enshrined in the early part of her 1999 constitution as amended, as its duty and responsibility as a state, to ensure security of lives and property of its citizens. Yet, it does not make any significant shift as it relates to the country's fundamental security needs as exemplified by the current enormous security challenges that reduced the country's fortune to the background in all ramifications. The study chooses realist paradigm as theoretical underpinning which emphasizes that exigency of the moment should always take priority in the pursuit of foreign policy. The study is historical, descriptive and narrative in method and character. Data for the study was sourced from secondary sources and analysed via content analysis. The study found out that it is lack of political will on the side of the government to guarantee a just and egalitarian society that will be of benefit to all citizens. This could be more appreciated when looking at the gaps between the theory in Nigerian foreign policy and the practice as exemplified by the action or inaction of the government to ensure security in the state. On this account, the study recommends that until the leaderships in Nigerian foreign policy recognized the need for political will and respect for constitutionalism to ensure security of its citizens and territory, otherwise achieving great Nigeria will remain an illusion.

Keywords : foreign policy, nation, national security, Nigeria, security

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