AN ASSESSMENT OF THE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN NIGERIA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

This article examines Nigeria-US relations in Nigeria’s Fourth Republic (1999-2012). Adopting a historical approach that highlights the continuity and change in Nigeria-US bilateral relations since independence in 1960, the article focuses on four key areas: the US involvement in Nigeria’s military and security sector reform; the global war on terror; trade and investment and debt relief/financial assistance. The paper argues that the ambiguities of Western engagement in Nigeria’s internal security sector and imposition of war on terror conditionalities on Nigeria had some far-reaching consequences on the nations’ sovereignty, national security and law-making process. The intercourse helps in explaining the exacerbation of Western dominance in the internal affairs of sovereign states in the African Continent. Although it is crucial for Nigeria to maintain a strong and mutually beneficial relationship with the US, Nigeria should urgently re-direct its foreign policy attention and resources on bilateral relationships with countries that are strategic to its national transformation and development aspirations as an emerging industrial, political and regional power.

Keywords: Nigeria, United States, Bilateral Relations, Trade, Counter-terrorism

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