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*Form Approved*  
OMB No. 0704-0188

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|  |                                    |                                     |  |   |  |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b><br>4 May 2009   |                                    | <b>2. REPORT TYPE</b><br>FINAL      |  | <b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b>             |  |
| <b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b><br>A Good Investment: United States and Nigeria Security Cooperation  |                                    |                                     |  | <b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b>                      |  |
|  |                                    |                                     |  | <b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b>                         |  |
|  |                                    |                                     |  | <b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b>               |  |
| <b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b><br><br>William S. Rogers, Major, USAF<br><br>Paper Advisor (if Any): N/A   |                                    |                                     |  | <b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b>                       |  |
|  |                                    |                                     |  | <b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b>                          |  |
|  |                                    |                                     |  | <b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b>                     |  |
| <b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b><br><br>Joint Military Operations Department<br>Naval War College<br>686 Cushing Road<br>Newport, RI 02841-1207   |                                    |                                     |  | <b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b> |  |
| <b>9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b>   |                                    |                                     |  | <b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b>         |  |
|  |                                    |                                     |  | <b>11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)</b>   |  |
| <b>12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b><br>Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.  |                                    |                                     |  |   |  |
| <b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> A paper submitted to the Naval War College faculty in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Joint Military Operations Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.   |                                    |                                     |  |   |  |
| <b>14. ABSTRACT</b><br><br>The United States and Nigeria share common objectives based on security and resources. Theater security cooperation efforts between the nations ensures a stable and secure Nigeria, assists access to resources for the U.S., and facilitates U.S. presence in western Africa despite the influence of other nations such as China and the European Union. In return, Nigeria gains assistance preventing and eliminating threats aimed to undermine good governance, security, and stability. Current security cooperation efforts by AFRICOM, DoS, and USAID are making progress, but more needs to be done. Programs such as Maritime Domain Awareness, military education and training, and FMF/FMS have strengthened Nigerian defense. However, making Nigeria an "anchor state" for West Africa and improving security cooperation for air domain awareness, "brown water" navy operations, and fisheries management and enforcement will enable AFRICOM to have an immediate impact on not only Nigeria's security, but the security of U.S. interests as well. |                                    |                                     |  |   |  |
| <b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b><br>AFRICOM, Nigeria, Security Cooperation   |                                    |                                     |  |   |  |
| <b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b><br>UNCLASSIFIED   |                                    |                                     | <b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b><br><br>N/A | <b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b><br><br>26            | <b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b><br>Chairman, JMO Dept     |
| <b>a. REPORT</b><br>UNCLASSIFIED   | <b>b. ABSTRACT</b><br>UNCLASSIFIED | <b>c. THIS PAGE</b><br>UNCLASSIFIED |  |   | <b>19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)</b><br>401-841-3556 |

**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.**

**A Good Investment: U.S. and Nigeria Security Cooperation**

by

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**Major, USAF**

**A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.**

**Signature: \_\_//signed//\_\_\_\_\_**

**4 May 2009**

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## **Abstract**

The United States and Nigeria share common objectives based on security and resources. Theater security cooperation efforts between the nations ensures a stable and secure Nigeria, assists access to resources for the U.S., and facilitates U.S. presence in western Africa despite the influence of other nations such as China and the European Union. In return, Nigeria gains assistance preventing and eliminating threats aimed to undermine good governance, security, and stability. Current security cooperation efforts by AFRICOM, DoS, and USAID are making progress, but more needs to be done. Programs such as Maritime Domain Awareness, military education and training, and FMF/FMS have strengthened Nigerian defense. However, making Nigeria an “anchor state” for West Africa and improving security cooperation for air domain awareness, “brown water” navy operations, and fisheries management and enforcement will enable AFRICOM to have an immediate impact on not only Nigeria’s security, but the security of U.S. interests as well.

## Introduction

Terrorist attacks against the United States embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on 7 August 1998, forced America to realize potential threats to U.S. interests in Africa. As the second largest continent, Africa's size and diversity with 53 countries, over 800 ethnic groups, and more than 1000 languages greatly complicates the protection of these strategic interests.<sup>1</sup> In terms of operational art, the size and diversity of the countries within the continent of Africa have major considerations for the operational factors of time, space, and force. For this reason, this paper will focus on the West African sub-region (figure 1), specifically Nigeria, and its role in the region.

In recognition of the strategic importance of Africa, the U.S. established Africa Command (AFRICOM) in October 2008 to better administer U.S. policies and ensure protection of U.S. interests within the region. The official mission is stated as "United States Africa Command, in concert with other U.S. Government agencies and international partners,



Figure 1: West Africa

conducts sustained security engagement through military to military programs, military sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy.”<sup>2</sup> Key in this mission statement are the “other U.S. Government agencies.” One of the regional commands, AFRICOM, is the lead for implementing military power for the U.S. in Africa, while other agencies such as Department of State (DoS), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) et

al lead the diplomatic, economic, and informational objectives. “Development, diplomacy, and defense programs are integrally linked, and U.S. Africa Command is implementing the National Defense Strategy’s vision of a new jointness by supporting and improving collaboration with other agencies and departments across our Government, as well as improving coordination with international, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organizations. [AFRICOM} achieves the greatest effect for our nation when we coordinate and harmonize our collective efforts in support of our common objectives.”<sup>3</sup>

The U.S. and Nigeria share some common objectives based on security and resources. Theater security cooperation efforts between the nations helps ensure a stable and secure Nigeria, can protect access to resources such as oil and natural gas for the U.S., and facilitates U.S. presence in western Africa despite the burgeoning influence of other nations such as China and the European Union.<sup>4</sup> In return, Nigeria gains assistance to prevent and eliminate threats through improved maritime domain awareness (MDA), air domain awareness, security along its borders, improved infrastructure, and anti-crime/terror programs. In addition, security cooperation between the two countries will have important positive effects on the overall African economy by improving access to Nigeria’s resources.

## **Discussion**

AFRICOM should take the lead for increasing security cooperation with Nigeria due to the capabilities provided by its interagency staff. In addition, AFRICOM is responsible for supporting U.S. security objectives in Africa, so having a strong partner in a major region of Africa strengthens AFRICOM’s credibility and regional knowledge. For Nigeria, the expertise and resources that AFRICOM can provide or facilitate will help them meet their objectives and solve the problems they currently face to become a preeminent power in West

Africa, and the continent as a whole. To understand why a partnership will work, one must first understand the objectives of each country.

### *U.S. Objectives*

Strategically and operationally, objectives and actions of AFRICOM must align with the different strategies of the United States. Starting with the National Security Strategy (NSS), the U.S. states its objectives for the security of the Nation. Next, the National Defense Strategy (NDS) states how the DoD will meet the objectives stated in the NSS. Finally, AFRICOM's posture statement states how the command supports these objectives.

### *National Security Strategy*

In the NSS, two “pillars” guide the overall strategy. First, the U.S. will promote “freedom, justice, and human dignity” by ending tyranny, and promoting democracy through free trade and development.<sup>5</sup> The second pillar states the U.S. will “lead a growing community of democracies” by confronting many threats, including pandemic disease, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, human trafficking, and natural disasters that cross borders.<sup>6</sup> The strategy relies on multinational participation, but relies on the U.S. taking the lead to make the efforts happen.

These pillars have a clear relation to the challenges and opportunities in Africa. African countries, as a whole, have a long history of ethnic and racial tension, corruption, and poor governance. In addition, potential partners, as well as rivals, “China, India, Brazil, Turkey, Japan, Russia, European states, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) have all focused increasingly on Africa's oil and gas resources and its strategic significance.”<sup>7</sup>

Table 1 lists the nine NSS objectives that support the goals of freedom, justice,

human dignity; and the U.S. being a leader in the community of democracy.

**Table 1: NSS Objectives<sup>8</sup>**

1. Champion aspirations for human dignity
2. Strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends
3. Work with others to defuse regional conflicts
4. Prevent our enemies from threatening us, our allies, and our friends with weapons of mass destruction (WMD)
5. Ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade
6. Expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy
7. Develop agendas for cooperative action with other main centers of global power
8. Transform America's national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century
9. Engage the opportunities and confront the challenges of globalization

AFRICOM supports all the objectives; however, the transformation of security institutions objective (#8) is especially relevant. The command's structure is unique among combatant commands because it incorporates more civilians from the other government departments and agencies in an effort to better fulfill its diverse mission. In addition, some of these objectives have more correlation to West Africa. First, "champion aspirations for human dignity" applies based on the many ethnic issues, crimes such as human trafficking, and governance issues that impact the region. Next, Nigeria is an active supporter, and member of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM-TRANS SAHARA (OEF-TS) in the fight to defeat terrorism, and ranks in the "top 10 troop contributing countries to U.N. peacekeeping operations."<sup>9</sup> Third, with abundant resources, West Africa has become important to global economic growth, while also becoming more democratic.<sup>10</sup>

#### *National Defense Strategy*

Following the NSS, the National Defense Strategy (NDS) provides direction for the Department of Defense, and all its suborganizations, such as AFRICOM. The objectives stated in the NDS define US security interests in Africa as winning the "Long War,"

promoting security, deterring conflicts, defending the homeland and winning our nation's wars.<sup>11</sup> Defending the homeland, winning the "Long War" and our Nation's wars all tie to the terrorism threat in Africa due to the large ungoverned spaces. Partnering with Nigeria based on common objectives can lead to a more stable Nigeria, and in turn, can help stabilize West Africa. Finally, the objective to deter conflict applies directly to Nigeria, where the government is constantly working to prevent open conflict with separatist factions like the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). Overall, as a combatant command, AFRICOM must implement the NDS and support the objectives at the theater-strategic and operational levels of command.

#### *AFRICOM Posture Statement*

As a combatant command, AFRICOM is required to provide status to Congress on the direction for the command. AFRICOM provides this information through a posture statement that very clearly defines its strategy through theater strategic interests, endstates, and theater strategic objectives. All three relate back to the NSS and NDS as stated in the 2009 Posture Statement: "in accordance with U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives, [AFRICOM] creates, sustains, and supports opportunities to assist our African partners in their efforts to build enduring security capacity to prevent or mitigate...instability, conflict, transnational threats, and humanitarian disasters."<sup>12</sup>

AFRICOM's theater strategic interests further define what is needed to accomplish their vision. The interests were developed directly from the NDS and include topics such as prevent attacks on Americans by threats from Africa, prevent WMD, maintain our freedom of movement into and within the area of responsibility, contain conflict and foster stability, humanitarian/disaster relief, and contain pandemics.<sup>13</sup>

The DoD Guidance for the Employment of Force directs AFRICOM to support certain desired endstates for the continent. These endstates, listed in table 2, require the assistance of other government agencies, allies, and the African nations themselves.

**Table 2: AFRICOM Theater Strategic Endstates<sup>14</sup>**

**Endstate 1:** African countries and organizations are able to provide for their own security and contribute to security on the continent.

**Endstate 2:** African governments and regional security establishments have the capability to mitigate the threat from organizations committed to violent extremism

**Endstate 3:** African countries and organizations maintain professional militaries that respond to civilian authorities, respect the rule of law, and abide by international human rights norms.

For the purpose of this paper, the focus is on AFRICOM's theater strategic objectives guiding the security cooperation actions and programs of the command. The security cooperation programs with Nigeria need to support these objectives to show the benefit for U.S. national interests. AFRICOM's theater strategic objectives are listed in table 3.

**Table 3: AFRICOM Theater Strategic Objectives<sup>15</sup>**

1. Defeat the Al-Qaeda terrorist organization and its associated networks
2. Ensure peace operation capacity exists to respond to emerging crises, and continental peace support operations are effectively fulfilling mission requirements
3. Cooperate with identified African states in the creation of an environment inhospitable to the unsanctioned possession and proliferation of WMD capabilities and expertise
4. Improve security sector governance and increased stability through military support to comprehensive, holistic, and enduring USG efforts in designated states
5. Protect populations from deadly contagions

The U.S. security objectives show clear linkage and build from AFRICOM to the national level. However, U.S. security cooperation with a nation like Nigeria must be based on common interests and objectives. When analyzing Nigeria and West Africa, the situation is more complex because not only does Nigeria have its own defense objectives, but it also is a strong member in the African Union and Economic Community of West African States

(ECOWAS), which have their own objectives.

*Nigeria Security Objectives - Ministry of Defense (MoD)*

The Nigerian MoD's vision focuses on a modernized, professional, well-trained military "with adequate equipment, fire-power and communications" that is able to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities while also being able to conduct international peacekeeping.<sup>16</sup>

The mission statement expounds on the vision by highlighting the need to defend national territory, maritime interests and airspace; protect and defend the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; and contribute to peace-making and peace-keeping duties worldwide.<sup>17</sup>

**Table 4: Nigerian Security Objectives<sup>18</sup>**

1. Maintain men of the Nigerian Armed Forces in a state of combat readiness on land, sea and air.
2. Maintain a proper balance in arms and men to meet the needs of internal and external security
3. Make provision for the welfare of the men of the Armed Forces in terms of training, accommodation, health care and other benefits aimed at boosting their morale.
4. Enhance the capability and sophistication of the country's Defence Industries in order to reduce the country's dependence on foreign sources of supply.
5. Ensure security in the African continent by the promotion of a collective defence system through bilateral, sub-regional and continental co-operation to ward off external aggression and to attain the African objective of the national foreign policy
6. Contribute towards peace and stability in the world as a whole through the United Nations Organisation (UNO), African Union (AU) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

As a sovereign nation, Nigeria has its own security objectives for its national defense. Their objectives aimed at providing internal and external security with a well equipped, professional force strongly correlate with the AFRICOM desires for stability in West Africa established and maintained by the West African nations themselves.

*The African Union (AU)*

The AU is a key partner in the security of Africa, and works very closely with Nigeria

to meet the over-arching security interests of the continent and West Africa. The AU envisions an Africa that is “united and integrated... imbued with the ideals of justice and peace” that can take advantage of the globalized worlds for progress and prosperity of its citizens.<sup>19</sup> The AU’s objectives are not all security based because the organization is concerned with more than just security. However, its security focused objectives are similar to those of Nigeria in that they promote sovereignty and territorial integrity, unity, defense of common interests, international cooperation, human rights, and promotion of peace, security, and stability.<sup>20</sup> As AFRICOM’s civilian deputy, Ambassador Mary Yates shares her opinion, “I’m proud of what the AU has accomplished in seven years. And that’s why I’m so happy that the Africa Command wants to partner with the African Union in any way that we can.”<sup>21</sup>

*Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)*

ECOWAS is the third organization that AFRICOM must consider when working in West Africa. ECOWAS is focused primarily on economic and governance interests, but because 15 of the nations of West Africa, including Nigeria, are members, the organization is influential. The ECOWAS vision is “a borderless, prosperous and cohesive region where people have the capacity to access and harness its enormous resources through the creation of opportunities for sustainable development and environmental preservation.”<sup>22</sup>

ECOWAS also has objectives for West Africa, termed “conditions for success.” Again, these objectives support what AFRICOM wants to accomplish in the form of regional peace and security and good governance.

| <b><i>Table 5: Critical Conditions for Success</i></b> <sup>23</sup> |
|--|
| 1. Good governance and democracy                                     |
| 2. Regional peace and security                                       |
| 3. Citizen’s ownership/stakeholdership                               |
| 4. Resource mobilization and financing for development               |

Based on the theater strategic and national objectives of both the U.S. and Nigeria, security cooperation between the nations makes sense in the Africa theater of operations. Both nations depend on internal and external security; improvement in Nigeria likely to lead to improved external security for the U.S. Second, both countries are committed to democracy and good governance, and could benefit from the exchange of experience and perspectives. Finally, both nations are committed to supporting the international community in fighting terrorism, regional conflicts, and human suffering, and creating an opportunity to expand their partnership beyond organizations such as the U.N.

### **Current Security Cooperation Efforts**

The U.S. and Nigeria are currently making progress with theater security cooperation efforts designed to promote common national objectives focused on security and stability within the West African sub-region. To accomplish the effort, the U.S. is using a “three prong approach” with the DoD (AFRICOM), DoS, and USAID providing programs.<sup>24</sup>

#### *Department of Defense (DoD) Programs*

AFRICOM currently has numerous programs and activities occurring in Nigeria. The African Partnership Station (APS) has focused on the western coast of Africa with maritime safety and security through training, supply, and medical missions. The program is intentionally flexible based on what each nation requests during an APS visit.<sup>25</sup> During the recent 13 March 2009 visit to Lagos, Nigeria by the APS Nashville, the multinational team worked a joint hydrography project, workshops on fisheries enforcement by the Italian Coast Guard, and dive medicine for navy divers.<sup>26</sup> The plan is for the APS to provide more support in the future.

In addition to APS, Nigeria also participates in the exchange of personnel through

programs like International Military Education and Training (IMET). Through IMET, Nigerian military are able to gain familiarity with the American military while also receiving training in U.S. military strategy, doctrine, and tactics. The IMET program is also a chance for members from both militaries to share their views of good governance and the role of the military in a democratic state. AFRICOM also established offices of Security Cooperation, Defense Attaché, AFRICOM Liaison, Bilateral Assistance, and Maritime Assistance Officers, as well as other OEF-TS activities to further develop trust and partnerships.<sup>27</sup>

A third area of cooperation between DoD and Nigeria is through the Funded Military Funding and Funded Military Sales programs. In these programs, Nigeria is able to receive funding to purchase American made military systems to improve their security. For fiscal year (FY) 2008, Nigeria received, \$1.3M with a projected increase to \$1.35M for FY2009.<sup>28</sup> These programs provide Nigeria with funding and equipment to modernize its force with equipment that is more compatible to the systems used by the U.S. military and allies. An example of these programs would be USAFRICOM providing or assisting the purchase by Nigeria of smaller boats for riverine operations to secure the oil platforms, while also linking up the Nigerian military with other coalition partners with specific expertise, like the Columbians who are now experts in riverine operations.

#### *Department of State (DoS) Programs*

The U.S. Department of State is also very involved in building security cooperation with Nigeria. The focus has been on improving U.S./Nigerian relations since the restoration of democracy in 1999.<sup>29</sup> DoS programs are aimed at “fostering transparent and accountable governance; engaging civil society and government partners to battle corruption; increasing professionalism of the military and law enforcement agencies; strengthening health and

education systems to deliver quality services; growing the non-oil economy; and improving the environment for regional and international trade.”<sup>30</sup> In addition, DoS’s Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance program “trains roughly 20 battalions of peacekeepers per year.”<sup>31</sup> Overall, DoS has been overseeing the integration of the programs so they support the U.S. strategic objectives such as human dignity, combating terrorism, global economic growth, and opening societies and building democracy.

#### *United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Programs*

Since 2005, when USAID “resources [were] extremely limited, amounting to less than one dollar per Nigerian annually,” USAID funding in Nigeria has continued to increase.<sup>32</sup> Unfortunately, USAID still has very limited funds with which to work in Nigeria. Therefore, USAID must be very selective in which programs it chooses to invest, and has focused on women and their children, limiting other areas of investment.<sup>33</sup> USAID currently assists over 70 civil organizations aimed at improving governance and spreading democracy within Nigeria, assists farmers with new technologies to increase crop yields, works with the government to reform the budget process, and focuses efforts on improving basic education.<sup>34</sup> Nigeria has been a willing partner to USAID, and much still needs to be done.

#### **Importance of U.S./Nigeria Security Cooperation**

With the current economic situation and limited funds, some may wonder why the U.S. should continue to expend funds in Nigeria due to Nigeria’s history of instability and distance from the U.S. Moreover, Nigeria has a long history of failed democratic movements and the current government has experienced large amounts of turbulence during its 10 years of existence. Next, Nigerians, as well as the rest of Africa, are very protective of their sovereignty and don’t want AFRICOM HQ to be a permanent presence in their country, or

on their continent. Finally, with other nations showing interest in spending development dollars in Nigeria, could the U.S. spend its money elsewhere?

The concerns above hold some validity, but the U.S. stands to gain far more from a strong partnership with Nigeria. Nigeria is a very important partner to the U.S. due to its resources, geographic positioning, and influence in Africa. If done correctly, and with respect to Nigerian sovereignty, AFRICOM programs with Nigeria will assist in further growing the relationship of the two nations that strategically have much to gain from working together. In terms of security, both share common interests dependant on internal and external defense. Based on these objectives, the U.S. and Nigeria share security cooperation programs that will make a difference; however, more progress is needed to make Nigeria the strong, democratic, stable partner for West Africa. Finally, Nigeria is very influential based on having the largest population of any nation in Africa, large oil and gas reserves, and willingness to support peacekeeping operations all over the continent.

### **Current Threats**

Despite efforts of security cooperation, Nigeria and the region still have severe threats to security and good governance that must be addressed. Problems such as corruption, oil bunkering (theft), weakened military, trafficking crimes, and poor infrastructure prevent Nigeria from maximizing its potential. Perhaps the largest problem in Nigeria is the level of corruption. For 2008, the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index ranked Nigeria 121 of 180 nations based on the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials and politicians.<sup>35</sup> Nigeria acknowledges the corruption problem, and is working to fix it with the assistance of DoS and USAID governance programs, but progress has been slow. In addition, corruption facilitates oil bunkering which costs Nigeria

an estimated \$5 billion annually.<sup>36</sup> The bunkering has led to established oil cartels with militias that create competition with the government and increase violence and instability. Bunkering drains funds that should be used to improve infrastructure and education within Nigeria.

Second, Nigeria's military is not strong enough and needs to be strengthened. The equipment, manpower, and training are lacking to prevent crime and terrorism from occurring within its borders in key areas. The problem is evident in the Niger Delta where groups like the oil cartels and MEND are able to conduct business. LCDR Sam Bura, a Nigerian Navy IMET student at the U.S. Naval War College, states current efforts to stabilize the Niger Delta have not been successful because the Navy lacks enough "maritime patrol platforms to maintain a continuous presence in the vast rivers and creeks" that provide the bandits shelter and sanctuary.<sup>37</sup> On land, the military is fighting well armed militias capable of destroying infrastructure and villages.

Next, Nigeria cannot secure its own borders and maritime areas allowing it to act as a pass-through for organized crime in human trafficking, narcotics, and weapons. Today, "the U.N. estimates that 27% of all cocaine consumed annually in Europe transits West Africa."<sup>38</sup> Oil bunkering is also tied to the trafficking problem in that the same ships used to transport oil exchange guns, cocaine, and cash for the stolen oil.<sup>39</sup> Nigeria and other sub-Saharan countries also have problems protecting their ocean resources and fisheries where they are unable to prevent theft totaling over \$1.3 billion in the last year.<sup>40</sup>

Finally, Nigeria lacks the infrastructure of roads, schools, and air traffic control and maintenance facilities to provide lasting stability for its citizens. The Niger Delta is especially in need of infrastructure improvements due to damage caused by the various militant groups

from the cartels and MEND. Limited education contributes to the situation where Nigeria “continues to experience longstanding ethnic and religious tensions.”<sup>41</sup>

Because of its oil and gas resources, Nigeria has drawn the interest of peer competitors to the U.S. Many nations to include China, Russia, India and the E.U., have been willing to assist Nigeria with fewer restrictions than the U.S. to gain access to oil, gas, and other resources. In the past, China, Russia, North Korea, and India have also been more willing to sell military equipment to Nigeria, but now much of it is no longer operational.<sup>42</sup> With Nigeria on average supplying 11% of the U.S. oil imports, the U.S. must be careful to not let any peer competitor negatively impact the oil Nigeria supplies to the world market.<sup>43</sup> In addition, with its large reserves of natural gas and Russia’s actions to raise the price of their gas supplied to Europe, the E.U. is planning to invest over \$7 billion in the form of a pipeline that will start in Nigeria and extend to Algeria to quickly deliver gas north.<sup>44</sup> This gas will be used by some of our close allies in NATO reducing their dependency on Russian gas, which makes Nigeria’s security more important. Competition for Nigeria’s resources and access can be positive with Nigeria benefiting greatly, but the same competition could also lead to continued corruption and instability, putting U.S. interests at risk.

## **Recommendations**

### *Anchor State*

Nigeria is critical to U.S. interests in Africa and important on a national strategic level as well. West Africa is very important to the African theater because of its population, resources, and ports. Other nations in the area such as Liberia are openly willing partners for the U.S., but lack the resource, population, or influence requirements needed to be an anchor state to work with AFRICOM.<sup>45</sup> Anchor states are “the financial and infrastructure hub of its

subregion, and each...plays a robust role in regional peace and security.<sup>46</sup> Nigeria's leadership may require coaxing, but a strong, stable, and democratic Nigeria can benefit the African theater enormously. Nigeria is already an anchor state and by far provides the most troops and supplies for peacekeeping missions around the continent. The country is also undergoing many reforms and desires good governance. The emphasis of Nigeria as an anchor state should be coordinated with the African Union and aligned with more funding and political recognition through DoS, increased funding for USAID programs within the country, and additional resources made available through DoD. AFRICOM, with its staff consisting of the various government agencies like DoS and USAID, should take the lead for providing support and programs. Nigeria has become a key ally in combating terror in the African area of responsibility. An increase in the commitment of the U.S. through bolstered theater security cooperation efforts will assist in providing long-term solutions for the challenges being faced by Nigeria. Additionally, more robust security cooperation efforts will strengthen the cooperation and trust between Nigeria and the U.S. impacting the security and stability within the West African sub-region. A good first step to show U.S. support is for AFRICOM and DoS to support Nigeria's President Umaru Yar'Adua and his declaration of stolen oil as "blood oil" like the "trade in "blood diamonds" that fuelled bloody civil wars in West African neighbours Liberia and Sierra Leone."<sup>47</sup>

#### *Continue Current Programs*

Next, after giving Nigeria political acknowledgement of being an anchor state for West Africa, AFRICOM should continue doing the security partnership programs and working with the other agencies, inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations that are building trust and making progress in the region now. Many programs

like the APS are improving Nigeria's capabilities, especially in medical and MDA. In coordination with AFRICOM, USAID and DoS are focusing on governance by working with the Nigerian government to end corruption. Good governance is a foundation for other activities from the standpoint that it enables partnerships to be developed through trust, stability, and improved communication (transparency).

While Nigeria improves its governance, AFRICOM must continue to work with the Nigerian armed forces to build capacity to ensure Nigeria's security. Nigeria cannot assist others in West Africa if it is vulnerable to both internal and external threats, such as MEND and Al Qaeda which declared Nigeria was "ready for liberation" in 2004.<sup>48</sup> Next, MDA has assisted Nigeria, and its U.S. partners, to have a better understanding of whom and what are off its shores. Nigeria still has issues with piracy, illegal fishing, and sea-based oil bunkering, so MDA must continue to be developed and improved to provide the operational picture of the sea domain around Nigeria. Other programs such as military training, to include IMET and advisory teams, are also critical to building a partnership between the militaries, while also creating a professional core of officers and non-commissioned officers for Nigeria.

#### *New Programs*

As a combatant command, AFRICOM must be cautious about how it engages another nation such as Nigeria. Therefore, using the internal expertise of its many members from agencies such as DoS, USAID, et al, AFRICOM should work to improve areas that are directly impacting the Nigerian government's ability to protect and provide for its citizens.

The air domain has caused Nigeria problems and continues to limit the effectiveness of its border security efforts. Increasing air domain awareness and infrastructure will not only

make air travel safer within the country and region, but will also assist in intercepting any drugs, weapons or humans being trafficked by aircraft. Additionally, improvements in this area will help the air force and navy maximize their ability to do air patrols to protect the oil infrastructure against attack and bunkering, especially in areas like the Niger Delta. The Air Force component of AFRICOM, AFAFRICA, established the long term program of record called Air Domain Safety and Security program for West Africa. The program consists of AFAFRICA working “with interagency and host nation representatives to enhance the safety and security capacity of civil and military air domains comprising four mutually supporting elements of infrastructure, personnel, situational awareness, and response.”<sup>49</sup>

Next and also related to MDA, focusing on Nigeria’s coastline and fisheries is important to the stability and security of the nation. Currently, illegal fishing cost Nigeria \$1.3 billion U.S. dollars last year depriving its citizens of a very important resource that “could be devoted by a country to benefit its people and improve their infrastructure.”<sup>50</sup>

Using current efforts like MDA, as well as partnering with the Nigerian Navy to provide a credible deterrent to those nations that fish Nigerian waters illegally will help. In his U.S. Naval War College Joint Military Operations paper, LCDR Sam Bura makes a great recommendation for AFRICOM to provide “brown water” navy training and improved equipment to better protect Nigeria’s interests along its coasts and rivers.<sup>51</sup> However, DoS must also work with the AU and U.N. to attack the problem through diplomatic channels to impose sanctions on those nations that disregard the economic exclusions zones and sovereignty of others.

## **Conclusion**

As a combatant command, first and primary, AFRICOM is working to establish itself

as the source of the military element of national power supporting U.S. security objectives in the African theater of operations. However, due to Africa's diversity and the new era of globalization, AFRICOM will continue to be a key supporting command in the diplomatic, informational, and economic objectives that don't necessarily fit neatly as military responsibilities. The unique structure of AFRICOM will enable better interagency cooperation to support security, stability, and development across Africa. Nigeria's role on the continent and importance to U.S. interests make it a necessary partner for AFRICOM.

The U.S. and Nigeria's common objectives based on security and economic resources make the two countries natural partners for security cooperation. Security cooperation efforts in the African theater ensure a stable and secure Nigeria, assists access to resources for the U.S., and facilitates U.S. presence in western Africa despite the influence of peer competitors. In return, Nigeria gains assistance toward preventing and eliminating threats that impact its security such as corruption, oil bunkering, weak military, trafficking crimes, and poor infrastructure.

Current security cooperation efforts by AFRICOM, DoS, USAID et al are making some progress, but more can be done. Programs such as MDA, IMET, and FMF/FMS have strengthened Nigerian defense. However, making Nigeria an "anchor state" for West Africa and improving security cooperation for air domain awareness, "brown water" navy operations, and fisheries management and enforcement will enable AFRICOM to have an immediate impact on not only Nigeria's security, but the security of U.S. interests as well.

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