

Foreign relations of Nigeria

Since independence, with Jaja Wachuku as the first Minister of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, later called External Affairs, Nigerian foreign policy has been characterised by a focus on Africa as a regional power and by attachment to several fundamental principles: African unity and independence; capability to exercise hegemonic influence in the region: peaceful settlement of disputes; non-alignment and non-intentional interference in the internal affairs of other nations; and regional economic cooperation and development. In carrying out these principles, Nigeria participates in the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth of Nations, and the United Nations. There are many Nigerian organizations outside the country. Prominent among them is the Houston, Texas United States-based Nigerian Union Diaspora (NUD), which is the umbrella Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) for the economic and political empowerment of the people of Nigerian descent outside Nigeria.

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Nigeria and the liberation of Africa

Upon gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria quickly committed itself to improving the lives of the people of the country and harnessing the resources that remain vital to the economy of the country and her neighbours. By observing at what benefits and appropriate for the country, Nigeria became one of the founding members of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), which later became the African Union. The Organisation for African Unity checks political stability of any African countries and encourages them to be holding regional meetings for the union. Nigeria backed the African National Congress (ANC) by taking a committed tough line with regard to the South African government and their military actions in southern Africa. Nigeria and Organisation for African Unity (OAU, now the African Union), has tremendous influence in West Africa nations and Africa on the whole. Nigeria has additionally founded regional cooperative efforts in West Africa, functioning as standard-bearer for ECOWAS and ECOMOG, economic and military organisations, respectively

Similarly, when civil war broke out in Angola after the country gained independence from Portugal in 1975, Nigeria mobilised its diplomatic influence in Africa in support of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). That support helped tip the balance in their favour which led to OAU recognition of the MPLA over the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

Nigeria extended diplomatic support to another cause, Sam Nujoma's Southwest Africa People's Organization in Namibia, to stall the apartheid South African-installed government there. In 1977, the new General Olusegun Obasanjo's military regime donated \$20 million to the Zimbabwean movement against the apartheid government of Rhodesia. Nigeria also sent military equipment to Mozambique to help the newly independent country suppress the South African-backed Mozambican National Resistance guerrillas. Nigeria also provided some military training at the Kaduna first mechanised army division and other material support to Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe's guerrilla forces during the Zimbabwe War in 1979 against the white minority rule of Prime Minister Ian Douglas Smith, which was backed by the apartheid -government of South Africa.

Due to mismanagement of her economy and technology, Nigeria announced that she was launching a nuclear programme of "unlimited scope" of her own but failed. After the Nigerian Independence in 1960, Nigeria demonstrated her seriousness in improving the economy for the people and embarked on nationalizing some multi-national companies that traded with and broke the economic/trade embargo of the apartheid South African regime, the local operations of Barclays Bank was nationalised after that bank ignored the strong protests by the Nigeria populace.

Nigeria also nationalised the British Petroleum (BP) for supplying oil to South Africa. In 1982, the Alhaji Shehu Shagari government urged the visiting Pontiff Pope John Paul II to grant audience to the leaders of Southern Africa guerrilla organisations Oliver Tambo of the ANC and Sam Nujoma of SWAPO. In December 1983, the new Major General Muhammadu Buhari regime announced that Nigeria could no longer afford an apartheid government in Africa.

Nigeria and West Africa

In pursuing the goal of regional economic cooperation and development, Nigeria helped create ECOWAS, which seeks to harmonise trade and investment practices for its 16 West African member countries and ultimately to achieve a full customs union. Nigeria also has taken the lead in articulating the views of developing nations on the need for modification of the existing international economic order.

Nigeria has played a central role in the ECOWAS efforts to end the civil war in Liberia and contributed the bulk of the ECOWAS peacekeeping forces sent there in 1990. Nigeria also has provided the bulk of troops for ECOMOG forces in Sierra Leone.

Nigeria has enjoyed generally good relations with its immediate neighbours.

Nigeria and International Organisations

Nigeria is a member of the following organizations:

- [African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States](#)
- [African Development Bank](#)
- [African Union](#)
- [Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South](#)
- [Commonwealth of Nations](#)
- [Economic Community of West African States](#)
- [Food and Agriculture Organization](#)
- [Group of 15](#)
- [G-19](#)
- [Group of 24](#)
- [Group of 77](#)
- [International Atomic Energy Agency](#)
- [International Bank for Reconstruction and Development](#)
- [International Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [International Civil Aviation Organization](#)
- [International Criminal Court](#)
- [International Development Association](#)
- [International Finance Corporation](#)
- [International Fund for Agricultural Development](#)
- [International Hydrographic Organization](#)
- [International Labour Organization](#)
- [International Monetary Fund](#)
- [International Maritime Organization](#)
- [International Mobile Satellite Organization](#)
- [International Olympic Committee](#)
- [International Organization for Standardization](#)
- [International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement](#)
- [International Telecommunication Union](#)
- [Interpol](#)
- [Non-Aligned Movement](#)
- [Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons](#)
- [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries](#)
- [Organization of Islamic Cooperation](#)
- [Permanent Court of Arbitration](#)
- [United Nations](#)
- [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development](#)
- [United Nations Economic Commission for Africa](#)
- [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization](#)
- [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#)
- [United Nations Industrial Development Organization](#)
- [United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission](#)
- [United Nations Institute for Training and Research](#)
- [United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo](#)
- [United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara](#)
- [United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)
- [United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka](#)
- [United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan](#)
- [United Nations University](#)
- [Universal Postal Union](#)
- [World Confederation of Labour](#)
- [World Customs Organization](#)
- [World Federation of Trade Unions](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)

- [World Intellectual Property Organization](#)
- [World Meteorological Organization](#)
- [World Tourism Organization](#)
- [World Trade Organization](#)
- [Ojay](#)

The Babangida regime joined the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC, now the [Organisation of Islamic Cooperation](#)), though President Obasanjo has indicated he might reconsider Nigeria's membership. Comments are being made for Nigeria to establish more bilateral relations

Africa



[Angola](#)

Angolan-Nigerian relations are primarily based on their roles as oil exporting nations. Both are members of the [Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries](#), the African Union and other multilateral organizations.

The President of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, sent a message to his Angolan counterpart, José Eduardo dos Santos, in which he manifested his interest in keeping and strengthening the excellent relations that exist between both countries, aiming at generating better benefits for the two peoples.



[Cameroon](#)

A long-standing border dispute with [Cameroon](#) over the potentially oil-rich [Bakassi Peninsula](#) was resolved by a 2002 decision by the [International Court of Justice](#) which granted Cameroon ownership of the region and the 2006 signing of the [Greentree Agreement](#) which led to the withdrawal of Nigerian troops from Bakassi in 2008 and complete administrative control being taken over by Cameroon in August 2013.^[1] Nigeria released about 150 Cameroonian prisoners of war in late 1998.



[Chad](#)

Nigeria's 1983 economic austerity campaign produced strains with neighbouring states, including Chad. Nigeria expelled several hundred thousand foreign workers, mostly from its oil industry, which faced drastic cuts as a result of declining world oil prices. At least 30,000 of those expelled were Chadians. Despite these strains, however, Nigerians had assisted in the halting process of achieving stability in Chad, and both nations reaffirmed their intention to maintain close ties.



[Ghana](#)

Ghana-Nigerian relations have been both bitter and sweet. In 1969 numerous Nigerians were deported from Ghana. Relations in the 70's were good. Ghana-Nigeria relations began on a sour note in the early period of PNDC rule. Tension rose immediately after the PNDC deposed [Limann](#) in 1981. In protest, Nigeria refused to continue much-needed oil supplies to Ghana. At the time, Ghana owed Nigeria about US\$150 million for crude oil supplies and depended on Nigeria for about 90 percent of its petroleum needs. Nigeria's expulsion of more than 1 million Ghanaian immigrants in early 1983, when Ghana was facing severe drought and economic problems, and of another 300,000 in early 1985 on short notice, further strained relations between the two countries.^[2]

In April 1988, a joint commission for cooperation was established between Ghana and Nigeria. A bloodless coup in August 1985 had brought Major General Ibrahim Babangida to power in Nigeria, and Rawlings took advantage of the change of administration to pay an official visit. The two leaders discussed a wide range of issues focusing on peace and prosperity within West Africa, bilateral trade, and the transition to democracy in both countries. In early January 1989, Babangida reciprocated with an official visit to Ghana, which the PNDC hailed as a watershed in Ghana-Nigeria relations.^[2]

Subsequent setbacks that Babangida initiated in the democratic transition process in Nigeria clearly disappointed Accra. Nonetheless, the political crisis that followed Babangida's annulment of the results of the June 1993 Nigerian presidential election and Babangida's resignation from the army and presidency two months later did not significantly alter the existing close relations between Ghana and Nigeria, two of the most important members of ECOWAS and the Commonwealth of Nations. After the takeover in November 1993 by General Sani Abacha as the new Nigerian head of state, Ghana and Nigeria continued to consult on economic, political, and security issues affecting the two countries and West Africa as a whole. Between early August 1994 when Rawlings became ECOWAS chairman and the end of the following October, the Ghanaian president visited Nigeria three times to discuss the peace process in Liberia and measures to restore democracy in that country.^[2]

However, Nigeria and Ghana have a close relationship, and they collaborate on various issues. Ghana and Nigeria are both Commonwealth republics

Libya

Nigeria recalled its ambassador, Isa Aliyu Mohammed, to Libya on 18 March 2010.^[3] The recall was in responses to a suggestion by Libyan leader, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, that Nigeria should separate into a Muslim northern state and a Christian southern state.^[4] Gaddafi had made the suggestion in light of recent violence between the rival religions in Nigeria which had resulted in hundreds of deaths.^[4] In addition Gaddafi had praised the Partition of India, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, as the kind of model that Nigeria should follow.^[4]

The Nigerian foreign ministry stated that it was recalling Mohammed for "urgent negotiations" due to the "irresponsible utterances of Colonel Gaddafi".^[4] The Nigerian National Assembly has requested that the government ask the United Nations to prohibit Gaddafi from calling for the division of Nigeria.^[3] The National Assembly also passed a motion urging the government to order an African Union investigation into whether Libya was attempting to destabilise the country through "infiltrators".^[5]

Niger

Nigeria maintains close relations with the Republic of Niger, in part because both nations share a large Hausa minority on each side of their 1500 km border. Hausa language and cultural ties are strong, but there is little interest in a pan-Hausa state.^[6] The two nations formed the Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission for Cooperation (NNJC), established in March, 1971 with its Permanent Secretariat in Niamey, Niger.^[7]

Asia

Bangladesh

Nigeria and Bangladesh established diplomatic relations in 1972, following the Bangladeshi war of independence from Pakistan. Both nations are members of the Commonwealth, the OIC and the Developing 8 Countries, and are identified as Next Eleven economies. Nigeria has a high commission in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka.

China

Nigeria and the People's Republic of China established formal diplomatic relations on February 10, 1971.^{[8][9]} Relations between the two nations grew closer as a result of the international isolation and Western condemnation of Nigeria's military regimes (1970s-1998). Nigeria has since become an important source of oil and petroleum for China's rapidly growing economy and Nigeria is looking to China for help in achieving high economic growth; China has provided extensive economic, military and political support.^{[10][11]} In 2004 and again in 2006, Chinese President Hu Jintao made state visits to Nigeria and addressed a joint session of the National Assembly of Nigeria. Both nations signed a memorandum of understanding on establishing a strategic partnership.^[12] China has supported Nigeria's bid for a seat in the U.N. Security Council.^[8]

India

The bilateral relations between the Republic of India and the Federal Republic of Nigeria have considerably expanded in recent years with both nations building strategic and commercial ties. Nigeria supplies 20% of India's crude oil needs and is India's largest trading partner in Africa.

Israel

Both countries established diplomatic relations in 1960. Between 1973 and 1992, diplomatic relations were severed. Since September 1992, bilateral relations are better. Since April 1993, Israel has an embassy in Abuja and Nigeria has an embassy in Tel Aviv.^{[13][14]}

Pakistan

Pakistan has a High Commission in Abuja and Nigeria has a High Commission in Islamabad, as well as a Consulate-General in Karachi. The two states have maintained a close relationship, a relationship which is described by the Nigerian Defence Minister as "friendly" and like a "family tie".^[15]

South Korea

From the Republic of Korea to Nigeria 1982 August President Chun Doo-hwan 1994 May Special Envoy of the President Roh Young-chan 1999 May Special Envoy of the President Choi Kwang-soo 2002 September Minister of Construction and Transportation Lim In-taek as a Special Envoy of the President 2006 March President Roh Moo-hyun 2007 May Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Kim Ho-young 2007 July Minister of Construction and Transportation Lee Yong-seob 2007 December 2 Vice Minister of Commerce Industry and Energy 2009 May CEO of Korea National Oil Cooperation 2010 September Former Prime Minister 2011 May Special Envoy of the President.^[16]



Defence attachés from Pakistan and Russia visit the communications tent at the Nigerian Air Force Base, Abuja, Nigeria, on July 21, 2008, during *Africa Endeavour 2008*

Turkey

- Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs about relations with Nigeria

Nigeria has an embassy in Ankara. Turkey has an embassy in Abuja.^[17] Both countries are full members of the D-8.

On September 22, 2017, Nigerian officials were scheduled to meet the Turkish ambassador after hundreds of rifles allegedly from Turkey made it to the country falsely labelled as plumbing materials. It was the fourth time in 2017 that Nigerian customs officers had intercepted illegal arms shipments from Turkey at the Nigerian ports.^[18]

Rest of world

Armenia

Both countries established diplomatic relations on 4 February 1993.

Barbados

- Formal relations between Nigeria and Barbados started in 1970-04-24.^[19]
- Nigeria is accredited to Barbados from its High Commission in Port of Spain, (Trinidad and Tobago).

- Currently the Barbadian Government does not have foreign accreditation for Nigeria, however the Nigerian Government has said that it was highly desirous of Barbados establishing an embassy directly to Nigeria.^[20]

In 2006 the Governor Otunba Gbenga Daniel of the Nigerian state of Ogun announced that Barbadians would be given free land if they wished to move to Nigeria.^[21] Nigeria has pushed for more investment from Barbadian companies and investors and the in 2008 for the establishment of direct flights between both nations.^{[22][23]}

Brazil

Bilateral relations between Nigeria and Brazil focus primarily upon trade and culture, the largest country in Latin America by size, and the largest country in Africa by population are remotely bordered across from one another by the Atlantic Ocean. Brazil and Nigeria for centuries, have enjoyed a warmly friendly and strong relationship on the bases of culture (seeing as many Afro-Brazilians trace their ancestry to Nigeria,) and commercial trade.

Canada

- Date started: 1960
- Canada has a high commission in Abuja and a deputy high commission on Lagos.^[24]
- Nigeria has a high commission in Ottawa.^[25]
- Both countries are full members of the Commonwealth of Nations
- Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade about relations with Nigeria

Greece

Nigeria has an embassy in Athens.^[26] Greece established a diplomatic mission in Nigeria in 1970, and today has an embassy in Abuja and a consulate in Lagos. Trade between the two countries is imbalanced, with imports from Greece to Nigeria exceeding exports. Greek-owned tankers have an important role in shipping Nigerian oil and natural gas, its main exports. Recently a Greek tanker was involved a dispute over crude oil smuggling.^[27] There is a small Greek business community in Lagos.^[28]

Mexico

- Mexico has an embassy in Abuja.^[29]
- Nigeria has an embassy in Mexico City.^[30]

Russia

- Nigeria has an embassy in Moscow
- Russia has an embassy in Abuja and a consulate-general in Lagos.

United Kingdom

Nigeria, formerly a colony, gained independence from Britain in 1960. Since independence, Nigeria has maintained favourable relations with the UK.^[31]

- Nigeria has a high commission in London.^[32]
- United Kingdom has a high commission in Abuja and a deputy high commission in Lagos.^[33]

United States

After the June 12, 1993, Nigerian presidential election was annulled, and in light of human rights abuses and the failure to embark on a meaningful democratic transition, the United States imposed numerous sanctions on Nigeria. These sanctions included the imposition of Section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to refuse entry into the United States of senior government officials and others who formulated, implemented, or benefited from policies impeding Nigeria's transition to democracy; suspension of all military assistance; and a ban on the sale and repair of military goods and refinery services to Nigeria. The U.S. Ambassador was recalled for consultations for four months after the execution of the Ogoni Nine on November 10, 1995.

After a period of increasingly strained relations, the death of General Abacha in June 1998 and his replacement by General Abubakar opened a new phase of improved bilateral relations. As the transition to democracy progressed, the removal of visa restrictions, increased high-level visits of U.S. officials, discussions of future assistance, and the granting of a Vital National Interest Certification on counter-narcotics, effective in March 1999, paved the way for re-establishment of closer ties between the United States and Nigeria, as a key partner in the region and the continent. Since the inauguration of the democratically elected Obasanjo government, the bilateral relationship has continued to improve, and cooperation on many important foreign policy goals, such as regional peacekeeping, has been good.

The government has lent strong diplomatic support to the U.S. Government counter-terrorism efforts in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks. The Government of Nigeria, in its official statements, has both condemned the terrorist attacks as well as supported military action against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Nigeria also has played a leading role in forging an anti-terrorism consensus among states in Sub-Saharan Africa.

As a member of the International Criminal Court, Nigeria signed a Bilateral Immunity Agreement of protection for the US military (as covered under Article 98). A comprehensive passage is updated.

- Nigeria has an embassy in Washington, DC and consulates-general in Atlanta and New York City.^[34]
- United States has an embassy in Abuja and a consulate-general in Lagos.^[35]

International disputes

Delimitation of international boundaries in the vicinity of Lake Chad, the lack of which led to border incidents in the past, has been completed and awaits ratification by Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria; dispute with Cameroon over land and maritime boundaries around the Bakasi Peninsula is currently before the International Court of Justice; maritime boundary dispute with Equatorial Guinea because of disputed jurisdiction over oil-rich areas in the Gulf of Guinea.

Nigeria and the Commonwealth of Nations

The Federation of Nigeria became independent from the United Kingdom in 1960 with Queen Elizabeth II as Queen of Nigeria. Nigeria became a Commonwealth republic in 1963, when the Governor-General of Nigeria, Nnamdi Azikiwe became the first President of Nigeria.

Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth of Nations from 1995 until 1999, when its full membership was restored.

See also

- Indonesia–Nigeria relations
- Jaja Wachuku - First Nigerian Foreign Affairs Minister
- List of diplomatic missions in Nigeria
- List of diplomatic missions of Nigeria
- Malawi-Nigeria relations
- Malaysia–Nigeria relations
- Nigeria–Philippines relations
- Nigeria–Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic relations
- Nigeria-South Africa relations

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External links

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