

Title of Article: Nigeria's 'Megaphone Diplomacy' and South Africa's 'Quiet Diplomacy': A Tale of Two Eras

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Abstract: Nigeria, under Murtala/Obasanjo regime was widely acknowledged to have adopted an overtly active foreign policy toward the rest of Africa, and particularly, South Africa's apartheid regime, which was in tandem with her Afro-centric posturing at the time. This multilateral cum bilateral diplomatic relations earned Nigeria the status of a 'frontline state' and wider recognition at other multilateral levels, but much animosity from the West. South Africa, under Mbeki regime was acknowledged to have adopted an overtly active foreign policy relation toward the rest of Africa, but covert diplomatic relations with Zimbabwe, which was in tandem with her African-renaissance posturing at the time. This multilateral cum bilateral diplomatic relations earned South Africa the status of a 'backline state' and further diminution at the global stage. Nigeria and South Africa are arguably perceived as regional hegemonies in Africa, whose national interests vacillate between cooperation and conflict. The fate of contemporary Africa, however, rests on the convergence of these ambivalence of interests. The work adopts the realist framework of analysis to interrogate the permutations of Nigeria and South Africa diplomatic trajectories at the periods under investigation. Furthermore, comparative analysis is applied to the discourse with a view to placing the analysis within theoretical context. The understanding of the diplomatic calculations that governed these two eras and their implications for contemporary Nigeria/South Africa relations vis-a-vis African politics is instrumental. Ultimately, the fact that these diplomatic permutations played out within the context of the international economic capitalism makes the analysis more interesting.

