

Marsupial Babies in the Midst of Plenty: America's Dominance by Design in the Gulf of Guinea

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KEYWORDS Africa. Gulf of Guinea. Oil Politics. R2P. Africom. Underdevelopment

ABSTRACT The *leitmotif* of the United States of America (US) in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) is to have total control of fossil fuel in the region. In doing so, it has established the Africa Command (Africom) to replace the three cumbersome Europe, Pacific and Central Commands that shared *protection* of the African continent. Africa, the erstwhile less significant continent has been viewed as credible energy supplier since Middle East is littered with radical Islamic fundamentalism; also the need to protect the States' oil multinationals in failed and failing Africa oil producers further Africom and GoG Commission. Through various technical assistances in the form of aid and responsibility to protect (R2P) from America, Africa is on a daily basis robbed of its resources that would have made the 21st century, a century of the continent. Until Africa, in general, and GoG states in particular realise that America's occupation in Africa is not out of altruistic, but for plundering of available resources for the development of the North, the continent will hardly experience meaningful development.

INTRODUCTION

Oil politics continues to wear different outlooks as it is one of the main credible sources of economic and military power at the international level. The need to control oil has become a matter of life and death for industrialised states, which consume 32 times fossil fuel than Third World States (TWSs) (Friedman 2006: 495). Oil is unevenly distributed, concentrated in some parts of the world where America has uneasy relations with such countries due to perceived *clash of civilisation* and *clash of emotions*. This has forced the US to source for alternatives to fossil fuel with a little headway. Most Arab states considered as *rouge states* by the West, control credible sources of oil supply. Saudi Arabia, a friend of the US, and its major supplier of crude oil, was on its terrorist list after the 9/11 attacks. This is capped by Saudi Arabia's internal politics and various anti-American movements such as Saudi Wahhabi (Salafist) Islamic sect that advocated for the evacuation of US troops from the *Holy Land* (Albright 2007: 202-203; Gannon 2004: 36). Terrorist activities in Afghanistan, Palestine (Albright 2007: 272) and Pakistan with financial support from Riyadh, contributes to the US efforts to source for alternative sources of oil supply from the GoG.

Securing oil from Iraq and Iran remains a mirage because of the war that has been going on

in Iraq since 2003. On the other hand, Iran's nuclear programme, coupled with its membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation with Russia and China has relegated Tehran to a *rouge state* based on West standards because of its support for Hamas against Israel, arming Bashar Assad of Syria and support for Yemen's anti US forces (Calabresi 2015: 22; Hitchens 2008: 162). The 1990 invasion of Kuwait by the Saddam Hussein led government, though reversed by the Operation Desert Storm of George Bush, (1991), made cultural irredentism of the Ottoman Empire that Iraq laid claimed, to a worrisome issue that is worth considering. In South America, oil from Venezuela is cheap for America in terms of production cost and transportation, but for political differences between the two governments, the nationalisation of oil fields and refineries by the Hugo Chavez administration in April 2007 confirms its unreliability and unfriendly act against oil multinationals from the West. The Canadian unperturbed supply of oil to America is historical, but due to the quantity of oil needed by the US, Canada cannot meet such demand in isolation. Africa, mostly the GoG, is a reliable source for this commodity for the West. Despite agitations for fair sharing of oil proceeds by oil producing communities, which in most cases led to the disruption of production in Angola, Sudan, South Sudan, Nigeria and Chad, that remain promising suppliers to the US. Therefore, the neglect-

ed sub-Saharan African (SSA) region, even at the nadir of the CW era, has been drawn into geo-strategic and transnational economic relationships over which the littoral states have no genuine control (Glenn 2005: 185). The same led to the formation of a new international regime, the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GoGC) discussed below.

The Formation of the GoG Commission (GoGC)

As mentioned above the GoGC, is the brainchild of the US to ensure the free flow of crude oil to the West. The Arab-Israeli conflict that has been going on for years is one of the major remote reasons for the establishment of the GoGC. President George Bush Jr., in his electioneering campaign, was of the view that Africa “does not fit into the national strategic interest as far as I can see” but the sudden changes in the American policy towards the region is premised on the influence of the American Jews in the political calculation of US foreign policy. This was conceived by a think-tank, a brainchild of the ultra-conservative political party, Likud, in Tel Aviv and a major supporter of the American Republican Party (the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies, IASPS, set up in 1984 in Jerusalem, Israel). The 9/11 attacks on the US was an opportunity for the IASPS to organise a symposium attended by well-selected, but questionable participants. Executives of major oil multinational companies such as ExxonMobil, ChevronTexaco and investment funds were in attendance from the US. The outcome of the meeting led to the formation of an NGO known as African Oil Policy Initiative Group (AOPIG) headed by Paul Michael Wihbey. AOPIG served as a forerunner for the GoGC. Part of the AOPIG’s recommendations was a push for transparency in taxes, royalties and signature bonuses paid to oil producing states by multinational oil companies. Another position by AOPIG was a call for debt cancellation for oil producing states in Africa (Servant 2003).

AOPIG courted Nigeria through its Vice President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar (1999-2007) on the need to form a micro-oil cartel in the GoG with the aims and objectives contrary to OPEC’s. The inaugural summit was convened by Nigeria and hosted by the Gabonese government. The final treaty of the Commission was signed by the founding members (Angola, Cameroon, Congo,

EG, Gabon and Nigeria) aimed at strengthening cooperation and prevent conflicts among member states. It called for the use of dialogue and consultation to manage and resolve conflicts on commercial and exploitation of fossil fuel among member states. The US is conscious of the use of modern technology by member states in drilling oil from coterminous states without physically crossing international boundaries. Therefore, the need to have such a sub-regional organisation to resolve boundary problems that might emanate seems apropos for the unperurbed supply of oil to the international market.

Raison d’état of the US in the GoG

At official level, the presence of America in the GoG is to prevent terrorism and drug trafficking. Contrary to this, the major aim of its presence in the region is to secure the free flow of hydrocarbon energy to the US (Amin 2006: 94; Goodman 2013: 157-158) and possibly to monitor and counter the influence of China, India, Brazil and recently, Japan on the continent (Bajpae 2015: 108-145; Garcia and Kato 2015: 117-134; Hung 2015: 254-260; Hutton 2006; Khanna 2008; Kissinger 2012; Kuran 2011; Mohan 2006; Studwell 2002; Versi 2013). The former US Ambassador to Chad, Donald R. Norland, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for African Affairs, Michael A. Westphal, and the US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Walter Kansteiner, opined in 2002 that African oil was of *strategic national interest* to the US. This declaration at different places and time could not be too far from the May 2001 Report of the National Energy Policy Development Group chaired by the US Deputy President, Dick Cheney (Volman 2003: 573). The report laid more emphasis on offshore oil exploration from Canada through the Brazil basin to West Africa. Emphasis on offshore production was to avoid militancy in the Niger Delta (Nigeria) and the Cabinda crisis (Angola) (Amusan 2014a). The GoG states are of more strategic importance to the US because of their light-sulphur-free-oil that is technologically compatible with the East Coast markets of the US and a substitution to the Middle East (ME) oil (Volman 2003: 574). In 2005, for instance, while the US imported about seventeen percent of its total oil from the ME, it imported eighteen percent from Africa. The prospect that GoG could increase its export to twenty-five by 2015 was

the reason why the US could not neglect the region any longer.

Other reasons advanced by the US are: the need to energise “regional peace intervention and peacekeeping personnel, interoperability, training, equipment, logistics, and other necessary elements of peacekeeping with other military intervention”. The State’s position in the GoG are also to address political and economic volatility, border disputes, corruption, famine, internal conflicts, poverty, weak internal security capabilities and porous borders, poor infrastructure, natural disasters and vulnerability to terrorism. But America’s experience in Somalia and Vietnam are enough reasons why Washington could not contribute meaningfully to peacekeeping operations in Africa, especially in complex situations.

The question that begs for answer is why is the US interested in the region now, considering the fact that the Berlin Wall collapsed in 1985? When the Arab world was a reliable source of fossil fuel to the US, Washington did not see Africa in general as a priority area of concern. Africa was thus integrated with three out of the five US Commands set up to promote US imperial ambition at the global level (Coll 2012: 470). In accordance with the reasons mentioned above, there are some areas that are not of military solution that the US wanted to address. The provision of basic infrastructure, famine, poverty alleviation, promotion of education and health care services are not within the jurisdiction of the military. Instead, the US observed that other Departments in the US such as Agriculture, States, Energy and Education should work with the Department of Defence (DoD) in achieving these objectives. Alternatively, the Department of States (DoS) should have co-ordinated the States’ foreign activities as cultural and public diplomacy are under DoS (Finn 2003: 15-20; Pigman 2010). This would have shielded the States from its known stick diplomacy. If these were put in place, the Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria and al-Shabab operations in the Indian Ocean, Kenya and Somalia that relegated many countries to failing states would have been nib from the bud (Oyewole 2013). On the other hand, the security questions in landlocked states such as Niger Republic, Mali and Burkina Faso that are poor in fossil fuel are questionable. This could explain why the Mali crisis continues to be a nightmare for the African continent with no so-

lution in view. These states breed and accommodate terrorist movements in exchange for financial reward (Amusan 2013).

Another uncontested reason why the GoG will remain a very important region to the US is the Angolan, EG’s and Nigerian influence in the region. Increase in production of oil largely from offshore fields from these three states has some impact on the economy of America. Not only that, disruptions in the production and supply of oil from these states is likely to upset international oil prices; it might also affect job opportunities for thousands of Americans working in oil refineries and related industries in the US. Nigeria’s influence in the international oil market, like what Saudi Arabia used to be between 1970 and 1990, is likely to be felt for some time. For instance, the announcement of election results in Nigeria on 23 April 2007, considered to be Abuja’s internal affairs, led to an increase in the price of crude oil from \$60 to \$68.15 per barrel the following day. Also, the incessant disruption in oil production in the Niger Delta directly affected the US economy before the externally induced amnesty programme was introduced by the Umaru Musa Yar’Adua government (Adeniyi 2011: 68-69; *The Nation* Lagos, 14 June 2007). Therefore, the need for the DoD to have a physical presence in the GoG is all the more highly imperative.

Despite the call for transparency in extractive industries, which many GoG subscribe to, oil companies in Gabon and some other countries in Africa continue to pay questionable amounts of money to ruling political parties, government officials and their relatives as bribes and kick-backs. Before Cheney was selected by the Republican Party as a running mate for Bush in 2000, he was chief executive of Halliburton whose subsidiary, Kellogg, Brown and Root (KBR) paid \$5 million as kickbacks to secure a contract to build one of Nigeria’s biggest oil facilities worth \$6 billion liquefied natural gas plant at Bonny Island in Niger Delta (Burgis 2015: 190-191). The US banks are not left behind in this game as some debatable sums of money are usually deposited in the account of some African leaders in the country. The case of the perceived corporate social responsibilities (CSRs) of oil giants in sending children of political elites to American educational institutions such as Harvard, Colombia and George Washington universities is to promote the culture and values of

Americans because many of the universities' products are potential leaders in their home states (Islamic Revolution of Iran 1991:188-189).

ExxonMobil, ChevronTexaco, Marathon Oil, Amerada Hess and Ocean Energy are the American oil companies that are very active in the GoG. Not only that they are major sources of income for the US in terms of profit repatriation, they also project America's policies in the host states and provide employment for many Americans in the refinery industry as mentioned above. This also creates employment opportunities for Americans in the host states as expatriate workers. ExxonMobil's revenue in Nigeria in 2005 stood at N370.68bn (\$36.1bn) and increased to N377.64bn (\$39.5bn) in 2006. Shell Petroleum Development Corporation (SPDC), the most famous oil company in Nigeria realised \$25.3bn profit in 2006. Based on these, America opined that security in the region was part of its national interest, at least for the supply of oil to the States and to protect the interests of multinational oil companies (Coll 2012: 451-477).

Security Arrangements to Secure Oil in the GoG

A cursory look at oil producing states in Africa testifies to the major and common problems associated with them. They are all battling with separatist movements, irredentists organisation, and uprising of local communities anchored on increased share of revenue from oil earnings to be ploughed back to host region economy. This is associated with the problem of overbearing influence of political cliques on resources sharing. Majority of ethnic groups that are in control of national government believe that it is their right to determine what, when, how and where to allocate their state's values. This, in most cases, is to the disadvantage of the minorities who are not only deprived of their land for agricultural production, but also contend with environmental degradation resulting from the activities of oil giants and spill-over effects on health, welfare and employment opportunities (Amusan 2014a, 2010; Gunyer 2002: 111). Violation of basic human rights by governments with the help of oil multinationals is another common problem in the region. Competition between Sudan and South Sudan on the one hand, and the civil war in South Sudan on the other hand, are instructive (Amusan 2014b). The oil crisis in the

Niger Delta region, the incessant fracas in the Doba oil region of Chad and the costly civil war in Angola between Luandan government and UNITA opposition party for almost thirty years coupled with Cabinda separatist movement justify the political instability in oil producing states in Africa (Cilliers and Dietrichi 2000).

There is high rate of corruption and ethnic-based politics perpetrated by the ruling elite where meaningful development from oil revenue eluded the GoG. Tyranny of the majority, the hallmark of a democratic system, is the instrument that various governments in GoG employ to repress minority groups. Despite irregularities registered during the April 2007 elections in Nigeria, and despite pressure from the US human rights watch, Council on Foreign Relations and some US Congress members requesting Bush to condemn the elections, the White House saw the elections as free and fair. Instead, the Corporate Council for Africa, an Association of US companies doing business in Africa, put pressure on the White House to accept the results *as no perfect election could be conducted in Nigeria* (*The Punch*, Lagos, 25 April 2007.). The influence of the Council could have made the Bush government instructed the US-Africa Command to move to the Niger Delta in May 2007 to physically control the security arrangement of the oil producing region.

Having analysed the problems associated with oil producing states in the GoG, it is pertinent at this point to examine what the US has been doing in terms of proffering solutions to these problems and to ensure the unperturbed supply of oil. Important to the US is the protection of oil installations of oil MNCs and those of the friendly governments of oil producing states in order to keep them in power irrespective of their human rights record, the case of the ruling regime in EG is instructive.

The US government has been giving soft loans to oil producing states to procure arms to repress minority ethnic groups whose land is the major source of fossil oil. These minority groups are considered to be agents of terrorism when they advocate for the fair sharing of the oil revenue. The perceived altruistic military training in the GoG states is to understudy the terrain of oil producing states in case there is a need for military action against the *unwanted government*. This led to the formation of the GoG Guard Force (GoGGF); Nigeria, STP, Gabon,

DRC, EG, Angola and Cameroon are the members (*Guardian*, Lagos, 18 May 2007). The International Military Education and Training (IMET) programme of which Nigeria benefited more than any other GoG states is a gesture of cultural diplomacy to have total grip on the state policy making and security system. The more a state produces oil, the more IMET facilities, the amount of military loan and the weight of license accorded to such a state by the DoS to procure armament, even by some repressive governments (Nwoke 2014).

Ideally, the aim of doing this is to repress any perceived militant and agents of various *terrorist organisations*. Though it is the policy of the American government to curtail the establishment of military bases in the post CW *unipolar moment*, probably to check against attacks on installations of oil companies; the US is engaging with STP government in using South Africa's procured part of Príncipe to establish as a naval Lilly Pad is not in doubt (Amusan 2006: 130-136). In achieving this, the US Navy has been active in the provision of naval vessels, radar and communication equipment, coast guarding training and co-ordination; probably to understudy Chinese and Indian oil companies in the region. The establishment of a haven for oil workers in the midst of slum, poverty and hunger in the GoG is another problem associated with oil multinationals. In STP, with the support of a South African consortium, part of Príncipe was bought with the aim of making it an Export Free Zone and for the construction of a housing estate for oil workers, mostly expatriates. The choice of Príncipe in STP is not accidental, but a strategy to move away from São Tomé, the most populous city and highly educated compared with the traditional Príncipe 'that is ignorant, poor and stable' to guard against vandalisation in case Sãotomeans seek the fair sharing of oil proceeds through violence (Huntington 1996: 41).

The perceived CSRs of the US Navy is another issue that needs academic interrogation. In 2004, in the name of Community Relations, (COMREL), the Emory S. Land sailors engaged in community development in the form of renovating schools and refurbishing the navy vessels of the GoG states and conducting training on ship repairs. This, is far from energising GoG states developmentally and sustainably, but to know more about the military preparedness of

member states. The notion of bringing good governance to Africa with the help of military support is questionable. How can one merge military in governance with true democratic principles? Training in counter-terrorism and awareness on HIV/AIDS are to achieve multiple objectives. The US realised that the effects of HIV/AIDS transcend the control of any state. It is a global problem of which global solution is the only way out. On *terrorism*, looking into the activities of militants in Nigeria's Niger-Delta, it is self-evident that foreigners are the prime target of the militants, not only for financial reward and recognition, but also to attract attention in addressing unfairness and injustice in the distribution of the oil revenue and other mineral resources. Despite the GoG and America's Africom, Boko Haram is having its field days in members' states of the GoG such as Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad with no credible solution in view. Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) activities in Libya, al-Qaida in the Maghreb and al-Shabab in East Africa despite Africom acclaimed capabilities, capacities, command, control and intelligence military training in Africa.

Serving the interest of the American military-industrial complex is not too far from the US ambition in the GoG; the only African states with financial muscles to procure American arms are oil producing states. Therefore, military training in American styles is pertinent for the subtle promotion of arms manufacturing industries against weapons from Russia, China and other arms exporting states. The free access to obtain a license to procure arms and ammunition from America is another means of promoting authoritarian sit-tight regimes in the GoG. Saddam Hussein received the same from the US during the Iran-Iraq war, but immediately the relationship between Washington and Baghdad went sour, the US refused to supply spare parts to Iraq. When the US convinced the STP to destroy its Soviet-made weapons for a replacement from the US, it was not only to promote the military-industrial-complex of the Americans, but also to have a grip of the state politically, economically and militarily. The same applies to Angola, Chad, EG, Gabon and Nigeria.

In early 2004, for instance, US soldiers conducted a training exercise for the STP military with larger manoeuvres of the Navy to protect the exploration of offshore oil. STP, with a population of 192,993 (2013 census), the type of se-

curity arrangement by the US in the state appears to be more than the usual protection of the territorial integrity of the tiny impoverished Islands, but a means of promoting the interests of private US companies (Blum 2006: 2). America's military presence in some of GoG states negates the US declared objective of reducing its external commitment outside its territory. It is also antithetical to the whole tenet of sovereignty of states as enunciated by Stephen Krasner (1999: 9-25) and the post-sovereignty as captured through the transnational legal theory (Axford 2013: 141; Roughan 2013).

The loss of oil business in Sudan by the US in the pretext of Human Rights, on grounds that other states would do the same, forced multinational oil companies from America to get the Bush government back to the state. The same applied to EG when America left Malabo because of Obiang Nguema Mbasogo's human rights abuses, but with the discovery of oil deposits of commercial quantity in the state, America took a volte-face and returned to Malabo without any improvement in human rights in the state, presumably because of pressure from oil giants, George Bush and Dick Cheney's interest in oil business in EG (Barnes 2005: 237; Frynas 2004: 527-528; Hertz 2002: 125).

Another subtle means of controlling the flow of oil to the North by the US is the involvement in policies and laws that govern oil production in the GoG. This is common in newly discovered oil producing states. When hydrocarbon was discovered in STP, Chad, EG, Ghana and Cameroon, US not only moved to these states to have some military cooperation with them, but also got involved in the drafting of oil laws that would determine the relationship between these states and oil consortiums. In addition, the US is overseeing the revenue from the oil sales of which most of the income realised is expected to land in American banks. Expectedly, US oil consultants who provide these services are not only working for the interest of the oil giants, but also collaborating with the US government in drafting favourable laws that protect the interest of America in terms of the free flow of oil. In some cases, when the US is not directly involved in controlling the laws that guide oil production in the GoG, it uses international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) to do so. The execution of the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline

project is a case in point where the WB approved loans for the construction of the pipeline despite the displacement of indigenous peoples, destabilisation of the eco-system along the route of the pipeline and introduction of dirty investment (Amusan 2010: 113). When the first signature bonus was paid by Chevron and other oil companies to the Idris Derby government, part of the money was used to procure munition from the US and its allies in Europe. Derby's militarisation of Chad was not against its coterminous states, but to repress and suppress his perceived political enemies domestically and also to maintain support from security officials. The same money that was meant for sustainable development with special focus on education, health, poverty eradication projects was used to disarm environmentalist minority groups of oil producing areas in Chad (Burgis 2015: 154-155). In EG, the former US ambassador to Malabo (Chester Norris) negotiated for the entrance of a US oil company CMS Energy, headed by William McCormick. Norris later became energy adviser to the Malabo government. An American oil company (Ocean Energy) and law firm, LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene and MacRae were engaged in drafting oil laws and other regulations for EG. Norris, interest, expectedly, was to satisfy American oil policy in the state. America's inputs on border dispute negotiations between Nigeria and EG over Bioko Island was instructive; this also eventually brought about the establishment of ExxonMobil, Devon Energy, Amerada Hess and Marathon Oil, all US oil firms in Malabo (Frynas 2004: 531).

For the US to have total control on the GoG, pressure was variously mounted on the region, most especially the oil majors to either not attempt to join OPEC if they were not members before, while members such as Nigeria at a certain stage, were advised to leave the cartel (Servant 2003). Expectedly, this allegation was denied by Walter Kansteiner when he visited Nigeria in July 2002. In Angola, the US also tried to convince Luanda not to join OPEC, but for Nigeria's diplomatic prowess among the GoG states and AU, the state joined contrary to America's diplomatic pressure.

Implications of Oil Politics to the GoGC

The implications of the formation of the GoGC could be seen as a blessing and a curse to

the African continent. It is a curse because other African states that are not oil producers are possibly not going to attract foreign investment from the Western world. Salih Booker, head of the African-oriented lobby group in Washington, is of the view that “those countries that have oil, regardless of their democratic credentials, will get first service over other African countries” (Nigeriafirst 2003, February 18). The meeting between George Bush and the eleven presidents of African oil producing states in September 2002 confirmed the neglect of landlocked and other non-oil producing states. With the creation of Africom to oversee the security of oil installations and ensure free-flow of oil in the GoG region, less emphasis will be placed on human security of other African states. This, as discussed above, will defeat the objectives of the US in combating the activities of terrorist groups as the neglected states will be veritable sources of hatching various anti-American movements.

There is a contradiction between oil wealth and good governance in the GoG. The military power accorded to the GoG will further undermine the role of opposition parties that are supposed to serve as a balancer for political development. Though there were some checks and balances in the drafting of some oil laws in Africa, the importation of armaments to repress opposition parties and various environmental movements for fair sharing of oil proceeds at domestic level are yet to receive proper attention. The case of the Chadian government is instructive as discussed above. In Nigeria, the Odi (1999) and Odioma (2005) massacres inflicted by the military (Joint Task Force JTF) against defenceless civilians where the whole village was razed down by the Nigerian Army in 1999 is another example of the primacy of oil production over human security. As mentioned above, Mbasogo’s government in EG used military might against civilians while his relatives, cronies and ethnic group continue to enjoy the spoil of the oil revenue. Not only that, the US military-industrial-complex enjoys the revenue from the sales of armaments to GoG states, the military, the police and other security apparatus in GoG countries are in support of the importation of munitions because of the financial benefits accrued to high ranking government officials. The same encourage them to create an atmosphere of insecurity in their respective states for their

government to increase the security budget at the expense of other sectors. Little did they realise that focus on education, agriculture, science and technology and health are the only way for the long term solution to the military security problem (Amusan 2001: 60).

The most appalling situation about the involvement of the US in the energy sector of the GoG states is the creation of an atmosphere for terrorists to recruit from Africa in general and West Africa in particular. This has resulted in an attempt to create more gaps between the haves and have-nots. Training and supply of arms to governments in the GoG is another means of creating more *rogue states*.

The scrambling for oil in the GoG is the confirmation of another CW, but this time, not ideological. It is going to be a war of mineral resources (energy) as the majority of oil producing states registered their appearance at the peak point. America is not the only state that needs hydrocarbon, India, China, Japan, Germany, South Korea and Thailand are emerging states technologically and militarily to compete for the finite commodity (Moghalu 2013: 191-194; Rotberg 2013: 155-158). The price of war and unhealthy competition among oil consuming states are in the offing, despite gargantuan amount of financial commitment to alternative energy research, which may lead to military face-off. If not diplomatically managed, it could lead to invoking Roosevelt and Carter Doctrines of using military power against any oil producing states if there are changes in government or internal policy against the supply of fossil oil to the US and other major powers (Kunstler 2005: 83).

The promotion of development in the oil sector in the GoG perpetuates the Dutch disease by relegating the traditional agricultural sector and industrialisation to the background and positioning the states to mono-cultural enclave of mass unemployment and chronic poverty. Majority of oil producing states in Africa rely solely on revenue from finite oil.

CONCLUSION

So long as the US continues to sponsor GoGC in promoting the Washington energy agenda, the basis of sovereignty of these states will remain questionable. The admission of Angola to OPEC is a major blow to the US energy policy in Africa, if other major players in oil production

such as EG, Gabon (joined OPEC in 1975 and left in 1995, but move to re-join in 2016) Chad, Cameroon and STP could join the cartel, the envisaged power of the US could be curtailed. The GoG states could thus benefit from an increase in oil revenue. The need to guard against the Dutch Disease is another issue that should be addressed by member states. Majority of these states have not been able to move out of their economic underdevelopment despite huge revenues realised in the 1970s and the windfall of the Gulf War of the early 1990s. Sovereign wealth fund (SWF) that should have transformed and diversified their economy received little attention.

The objectives of the US in the GoG states primarily are to secure the supply of crude oil and to promote American oil multinationals in their host states. Also of importance to America is the endless supply of a munitions to oil producing states as a means of repatriating oil proceeds to the US. In doing this, other major players in international economic relations such as India and China are frustrated in doing business with some oil producing states until recently. The need for the GoG to diversify business relations is important as the tenet of globalisation allows for openness and transparency. Fair competition without undue carrot and stick diplomacy from America will contribute to a fair sharing in oil producing states believed to be cornered largely by the US and its Western allies.

Though the formation of the GoG is an eye opener for member states, one of the problems associated with it is the undermining of the Organisation of African Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC). The financing and support accorded to the GoG by the US is intentional as mentioned above, however, if carefully managed, the same organisation, GoG, could be used to promote the interest of both the oil and non-oil producing states. This may be in the form of attaching economic and financial aids to sub-regional economic organisations such as ECO-WAS, Central Africa Economic Community and, possibly, through African Union (AU). Such multilateral approach will benefit Sahelian states on the continent that are not oil producing states. With more commitment of the US on the energy sector, African states, mostly Nigeria and Angola, should put diplomatic pressure on the US to holistically address issues of development in general. Though, in 2016, the continent's oil producing states experienced the worst oil

revenue due to America's increase in its local oil production and availability of alternatives to fossil fuel, the importance of Africa oil continue to be relevant when contextualising this with the Chinese and Indian demand for the product. Attempt to ignore African oil may be a *sine qua non* to full engagement of oil producers with China, a development that America may not want to experience, at least for political and diplomatic influence in Africa.

NOTES

1. The military invasion of Kuwait by the Saddam Hussein's government was more than cultural and historical reason. The use of newly high technology by the oil multinationals to drill horizontally across its border into Iraqi oilfields also contributed to the invasion. A fact that US closed its eyes on (Kunstler 2005: 55).
2. Some of them are the US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Walter Kansteiner, Barry Schutz, a specialist on Africa, Lt-Col. Karen Kwiatkowski, some members of the Congress led by William J. Jefferson. Jefferson later became a controversial figure due to his relationship with Alhaji Atiku Abubakar over some oil money in Nigeria. He was subsequently charged in the US court of law for money laundering, racketeering, wire fraud, obstruction of justice, conspiracy, and violation of the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. In August 2005, his home was raided where \$90,000 was found believed to be part of the \$100,000 bribe from FBI officer. Security agent raided his office again in May 2006. This caused some frictions between Legislature and Executive arms of government in Nigeria on one hand, and the US on the other (Obasanjo, 2014: 150; *Vanguard* Lagos, 2007. 5 June).
3. Some of the aims of the US in sponsoring the formation of the GoG are among others: (a) To maintain free flow of crude oil to the consuming states in the North. (b) To maintain stable price for the crude oil that is acceptable to the US government (c) To see to the preservation of the oil installations against vandalisation partly by the militant in the Niger Delta, but primarily to check against the potential threat from terrorists attack on these facilities. (d) To install an acceptable government in the oil producing states in the GoG.
4. For more information on this, see (<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Africa/wm1349.cfm>) (Retrieved on 18 April 2014).
5. William McConnick is a close ally of the Bush administration that contributed \$100,000 to his presidential inauguration ceremony; he eventually became a pacesetter for other US oil companies to colonise EG oil business (Frynas 2004: 531).

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Paper received for publication on February 2016
Paper accepted for publication on September 2016