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Nigeria-US Relations: A Conceptual Exploration

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Abstract:

This paper provides the background as well as critical insights into the issue of asymmetry between the United States of America and Nigeria. The two countries are not in any way of equal capabilities and endowments. The United States is a global player in terms of politics and economy while Nigeria is still contending with being a regional actor. There is no doubt therefore that in relations like these, the principal partner with overwhelming influence, may want to subordinate the partner with weak political and economic structures to a client state. But the issue is not as simple as it seems. There are complex dimensions to it: the extent of advantage is difficult to determine because so many variables are involved. The advantage may not be an wholesale affair since the weak partner, in this case, Nigeria, may lack the political power to wield, but certainly has the economic influence to exploit. The United States finds its oil irresistible because of its quality and because the US is a major energy consumer which cannot ignore the fifth largest oil producer in the world. It is therefore imperative to understand how both countries play up their advantages as they relate to political and economic actions. The truth is that they both need each other one way or the other. How this relationship is managed is crucial to our understanding of the dynamics of asymmetry.

1. Introduction

A fundamental fact of our reality in this global age is that we live in a world determined by a generally volatile international environment and one dominated by a single super-power. This has redefined the fundamental questions guiding the relations of a nation to the world around it. The practice of controlling foreign governments through loans, gifts and outright subordination through the instrumentalities of political and economic policies and decisions has become notorious. According to Susan Strange:

- The long debt crisis of the 1980s was just one more example among many of how economic events have both been triggered by political decisions and had highly political consequences, so that the dividing lines collapsed – both those that separated politics and economics and those that separated domestic political economies from the international political economy.¹

Secondly, the efforts of international governments and the politics of controlling the behaviour of other countries and their governments have become the direction of international politics in the contemporary period. This was amplified by Gerth and Mills:

- When everyone is equal there is no politics for politics involves subordinates and superiors.²

It is therefore clear that the scope of politics in the international arena has undergone a vast expansion since the beginning of the Cold War. It is within this context that the issue of superiors and subordinates is discussed. Thus, from the foregoing, it is clear that a discourse on Nigeria-US relations from any perspective will naturally and automatically provoke a feeling of inequality. However, such impression may appear misguided if it is not situated within the context of certain realities both at the domestic level and within the international system. The history of the international system is a history of inequality *parexcellence*. This is not only because political formations vary greatly in those natural endowments that contribute to their power and wealth but also because of the basic condition in which they have always existed.³

It is understandable that the natural inequalities of states should impress the observer of state relations. In their physical extent, population, natural resources and geographical position, states are, as it were, born unequal; so much so, indeed that by comparison the natural inequalities among individuals appear almost marginal. Moreover, to the inequalities that attended the birth of political collectives must be added the unevenness that marks their subsequent development. The age of industrial civilization has strikingly accentuated this unevenness of development, thereby heightening earlier disparities of power and wealth.⁴

These two concepts; power (politics) and wealth (economy) are the major indices used for the evaluation of the relationship between a nation like Nigeria with the emblem of a Third World status and a country like the US touted as the most powerful country in the world. The need to understand the significance and effects of political economy in the disparity between and among the states in the international system as well as the imperative to establish the extent of political and economic inequality among the states, specifically between Nigeria and US, is the major focus of this study. The objective is to understand the interface of power relations between Nigeria and the United States to be able to determine the extent of asymmetry. Besides, there is need to also analyse the attitudes and perceptions of these countries towards one another so that we can establish the extent to which these influence capacity-building, policy-making and decision-making between the states. In this study, it has been identified that some of the elements of state relations are constant while some vary. Also, there are those that fit into both situations. Ordinarily military, economic, political and geographical capabilities are some of the identified factors that play dominant role in state relations but all these do not constitute the only determinants that give advantage to one state over the other.

The asymmetry of power relations, however, is often stressed to a degree that would make it logically contradictory to speak of 'bilateral' power relations or 'equality of power' in bargaining or conflict.⁵ Peter Blau maintains that interdependence and mutual influence of equal strength indicate lack of power.⁶ Such assertions risk going too far in severing power relations from their roots in social interaction in its generic form, for the asymmetry of power relations is at least immanent in the give and take of dyadic interaction between equals, in which the control of one actor over the other's behaviors is reciprocated by a responsive act of control by the other. Asymmetry exists in each individual act-response sequence but the actors continually alternate the roles of a power holder and power subject in the course of their interaction.⁷ Extending the discourse to this study, while the formal equality of states is a valuable and, on the whole, valued convention of international relations, it is evident that in peace, no less than in war, differences of size have political consequences for both large and small nations. All things being equal, the state with the greater economic resources and a large population has more influence on events outside its frontiers, greater security from pressure and attack, more prestige, and a larger element of choice in respect of the national policy it pursues.⁸ It is presumed that a small state is more vulnerable to pressure, more likely to give way under stress, more limited in respect of the political options open to it and subject to a tighter connection between domestic and external affairs. In other words, the smaller the human and material resources of a state the greater the difficulties it must surmount if it is to maintain any valid political options at all and, in consequence, the smaller the state the less viable it is as a genuinely independent member of the international community. However, Israel and Cuba have shown over time that this may not be true. The two of them have on numerous occasions demonstrated the capacity and the resilience to rebuff the intimidation of bigger states especially the Arab nations and the United States.

	United States	Nigeria
1	The population of US was 309,349,689 and was ranked 3 rd highest in the world. Sources :i) United Nations Population Statistics ii)World Bank statistics	The population of Nigeria was 158,258,917 and was ranked 7 th highest in the world. Sources :i) United Nations Population Statistics ii)World Bank statistics
2	The defence budget of US (including overseas and contingency operations) was \$680 billion dollars. Source: Fiscal year budget 2010 of US Wikipedia (Military budget OMB, Defence Department Budget)	The defence budget was \$1.7 billion. Source: Journal on Security Challenges and Security votes in Nigeria by Eme Okechukwu 2008-2013.
3	US was rated number one in military strength out of 67 countries ranked. Source: Global FirePower (GFP)	Not among the 67 countries ranked. Source: Global FirePower (GFP)
4	GDP US \$14,958 trillion dollar GDP (per capita) \$46,612 dollars Source: World Bank National accounts Data and OECD National accounts data	GDP \$228,638,000,000 GDP (per capita) \$1,443.21 Source: World Bank National accounts Data and OECD National accounts data
5	Life Expectancy: 78.54 years Source: United Nations Population division, world population prospects	Life Expectancy: 51.9 years Source: United Nations Population division, world population prospects
6	Corruption perceptions index USA – 7.1/10 (perceived to be clean) Source: Transparency International Organisation	Corruption perceptions index 2.4/10 (perceived to be corrupt) Source: Transparency International Organisation
7	Industry (Factory Output) \$2,689,500,000,000 Source: World Bank National accounts Data and OECD National accounts data	Industry (Factory Output) (2007) was \$66,749,450,000 Source: World Bank National accounts Data and OECD National accounts data
8	Agriculture (Value Added) US farm output \$158,800,000,000 ranked 3 rd in the world. Source: World Bank National accounts Data and OECD National accounts data	Agriculture (Value Added) (2007) was \$53,715,618,000 Source: World Bank National accounts Data and OECD National accounts data
9	U.S.A is technologically advanced	Nigeria is technologically developing
10	Oil production level in USA 8.5million barrels per day- 3 rd largest in the world. Source: CIA World Fact Book	Oil production level in Nigeria 2,211,000 barrels per day 1 st in Africa, 12 th in the world. Source: CIA World Fact Book
11	US is an influential and strategic member of the following international organizations: (a) UN security council (Permanent member) (b) International Monetary Fund (IMF) (c)World Bank (d) Paris Club (e) World Trade Organisation (WTO) (f) Group of Five (G5) (g) Group of Seven (G7) (h) Group of Eight (G8) (i) Group of Ten (G10) (j) North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) (k) International Energy Agency	Nigeria is an influential and strategic member of the following international organizations: (a) African Union (AU) (b) Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (c) Organisation of Oil Exporting Countries (OPEC) (d) Non-Aligned Movement (e) African Development Bank (f) Lake Chad Basin (g) New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) (h) Commonwealth (i) Organisation of Islamic Countries

Figure 1: A Glance at the Elements of Asymmetry between Nigeria and the United States of America in 2010

By and large, the issue of asymmetry in Nigeria-US relations is better examined now than before because Nigeria needs to know its actual strength, rediscover its capability potential, re-evaluate its core values with others, reposition its resource distribution, re-design its concept of interaction, reassess its identity and reflect on the basis of its existence as a nation and a people, and of course, recreate and re-channel its energies towards stimulating growth and development in its polity.

The economy of Nigeria in the 1970s, fortified and strengthened by sulphur-free oil and a virile and credible currency, attracted and in fact, commanded substantial admiration, respect and credibility from the international community. Psychologically, this added some clout to Nigeria's status and gave it a vocal voice in matters relating to world affairs.

Convinced that with a very strong economic base it could guard jealously its political independence, Nigeria never saw itself as a stooge or a subservient nation to the US. Rather, it saw itself as a nation with the potential to develop to a great power sometime in the future. Coincidentally, the military leadership then could boast of a degree of respectability and popularity. It had a vision and a mission of what it wanted to make of the country. It made credible and realistic projections via series of Development Plans aimed at constructive and progressive development of the state. The object was to begin a gradual but systematic development of the country by harnessing its resources and pooling them for national growth. Prior to the 1970s, Nigeria was in the same league with countries like Iran and Venezuela in terms of oil production. But because of the mismanagement of its oil resources and its inability to develop complementary technological expertise, there was gradual decline in the fortunes of Nigeria.

Quite naturally, a decline in the economic fortunes of Nigeria was bound to affect its relevance and power in the international system. A country that was once vociferous on global issues began to lose its voice because of a weakened and battered economy brought about by successive military administrations whose only mission in power was looting of the nation's treasury. Having seen what role Nigeria played in the 1970s when it had a very strong economy, we need to situate recent developments in the international system as they affect Nigeria-US relations within some contextual parameters to determine if this economic decline has not reduced further our ability to convert inequality in resource endowment to an advantage. Some salient questions become pertinent at this stage.

- With good leadership, harnessing and full utilization of the nation's resources, can Nigeria strike a balance in its relationship with the US?
- Can it ever be taken as a partner and treated as such which is what relationship between nation-states should be?
- Considering the fact that the US power actualities reach all over the globe, can we still talk of a balance or is this conditional and/or situational?
- As a regional power with potentials for further development, can we envisage a future of equal power relations between the countries?
- Does an asymmetrical relationship indicate a perpetual domination of one country over the other?
- How does a country like Nigeria handle the issue of asymmetry especially from the perspectives of economy, military power, leadership and holistic appreciation of the political economy and society?

Since this is purely an analytical examination of the relations between the two countries within the context of power dynamics, the approach will be descriptive, interpretative and historical.

Marxist – Leninist political economy studies the relations of production or the society's economic basis, not only interaction with the productive forces, but also with the superstructure rising on that basis. Although the superstructure is determined by the economic basis, it exerts a reciprocal basis, accelerating or slowing down its development.

Naturally, many deep – rooted phenomena in the economy and politics of present –day capitalist societies cannot be explained without a profound understanding of the essence and forms of that intervention.⁹

It was obvious at this stage that while the US was establishing structures of economic and political dominance in the national system, it was also heading towards what Marxist scholars have come to refer to as 'monopoly domination'.¹⁰ There was no doubt that the kind of economic networking that the US was undertaking was to strengthen itself as a dominant monopolist wielding enormous political power as a result of its monopolization of the international monetary system. Obviously, this development expanded the degree and scope of asymmetry between it and Nigeria. The world power status and its extensive economic dominance in the international system contributed immensely to the disparity that already existed in human and material endowments between the two countries.

In discussions of the US position there is a tendency to view US hegemony, or its internationally dominant position, as not only benevolent but also in decline.¹¹ This thesis therefore examines how economic policies have affected political actions of these two nations using power as our unit of analysis to examine the influence of political economy on the dimensions of the relations between Nigeria and the United states.

2. Conceptual Issues

Power naturally becomes the framework of analyzing the interaction between a superpower like the US and a small power like Nigeria. The need to understand its applicability in a relationship of this asymmetrical nature makes a comprehensive study of its tendencies and dynamics very compelling. But the absence of a universally acceptable definition of power makes a conceptual understanding and interpretation a difficult exercise.¹²

At its simplest, power in interstate relations may be defined as a state's ability to control, or at least influence other states or the outcome of events.¹³ It is the right to command, authority: ability to do anything; influence, control, capacity for producing an effect.¹⁴ Giving a very modest but philosophical description of power, Russell says power enables us to realize more of our desires than would otherwise be possible, and since it secures deference from others, it is natural to desire power except in so far as timidity interferes.¹⁵ In supporting the influence concept, Goldstein defines power as the ability to get another actor to do what it would not otherwise have done (or not to do what it would have done.)¹⁶

A variation on this idea is that actors are powerful to the extent that they affect others more than others affect them.¹⁷ These definitions treat power as influence. If actors get their way, they must be powerful. But Dennis prefers older definitions for as long as they are "intellectually adequate".¹⁸ Hence he adopts a modified version of Russell's definition: power is the capacity of some persons to produce intended and

foreseen effects on others.¹⁹ However, Morgenthau explores power from the realists' perspective by extending the discourse beyond mere influence. According to him, international politics, like all politics is a struggle for power. Whatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim.²⁰ He therefore subscribes to the view that power means man's control over the mind and of other men. By political power, we refer to the mutual relations of control among the holders of public authority and between the latter and the people at large.²¹

Political power is a psychological relation between those who exercise it and those over whom it is exercised. It gives the former control over certain actions of the latter through the impact which the former exerts on the latter's mind. That impact derives from three sources: the expectation of benefits, the fear of disadvantages and the respect or love for men or institutions. It may be exerted through orders, threats, the authority or charisma of a man or of an office, or a combination of any of these.²²

In view of this definition, four distinctions must be made: between power and influence, between power and force, between usable and unusable power, between legitimate and illegitimate power. This possibly was why Greene describes power as a game. In games, you do not judge your opponents by their intentions but by the effect of their actions. You measure your strategy and their power by what you can see and feel.²³ Another scholar describes power as a portmanteau concept which is difficult to define with any precision.²⁴

But according to Goldman terminological diversity increases the probability that time will be wasted on pseudo-problems. The controversy about power being inherently coercive or not is trivial. Whether a political actor exercises power when succeeding to convince others by rational argument to do what he wants is a terminological question.²⁵ It is interesting to discuss the conditions for an actor getting what he wants by rational argument; it is less interesting to argue about whether this is 'power'. This is why it has been suggested that the offensive and defensive power of an international actor is unlikely to be based solely on its military capability or its position in the international economic structure; it is more likely composed of a complex set of interacting factors of a highly diverse kind. The possession of power may be a matter of degree, and that the power an actor has in relation to another actor may vary with issue-area and situational conditions as well as with the influence.²⁶

Expanding the scope of discourse on power, Morgenthau says political power must be distinguished from force in the sense of the actual exercise of physical violence. In international politics, armed strength as a threat or a potentiality is the most important material factor making for the political power of a nation.²⁷ Therefore, whenever economic, financial, territorial or military policies are under discussion in international affairs, it is necessary to distinguish between economic policies that are undertaken for their own sake and economic policies that are the instruments of a political policy – a policy, that is, whose economic purpose is but the means to the end of controlling the policies of another nation.²⁸ This position agrees totally with that of Lindblom who is of the view that "in all the political systems of the world, much of politics is economics, and most of economics is politics."²⁹ This is what is called political economy. In examining relations between two countries, in our own case, Nigeria and US, the use and exercise of power is manifested in the political and economic policies of both nations. The organization of international market is made possible by the political agreements that nations reach. It is international power that defines legal relationship, creates and destroys economic opportunities.³⁰ Similarly broad in its relevance to world affairs is the fact that the international military and political power of a nation rests largely on the dynamism of its economy.³¹

It has been suggested that when we probe the links between power and economics, matters become complex. Things are usually not quite as simple as "the strong always win, and the weak lose" though this sometimes happens.³² Powerful relationships are also crucial when we shift attention to the interactions of nations of sharply different capabilities. Much of the developing world is at a considerable disadvantage in the world economy.

In specific terms, because of its past colonial experience, Nigeria is tied to the major metropolitan powers who have historically been the country's principal trading partners, the major suppliers of technology, capital, military assistance, etc. Being an underdeveloped country, Nigeria is tied structurally as an appendage to those centre countries of the world economy.³³ In the post-colonial era, the United States, though not an ex-colonial power, has, nevertheless, served as the neo-colonial mentor of metropolitan countries in their African relations in the former colonized areas.³⁴ Some four decades after colonial rule, the American mediation in Africa has been a welcome relief to former European colonial powers whose dominant presence was threatened by the onslaught of African nationalism on the eve of independence. All the former colonial powers are today reliable allies of the United States in the post-colonial African countries, including Nigeria.³⁵ In addition to the underlying political and security considerations of US economic relations with key African countries, the US role in Africa has effectively secured the continent for expanded penetration of Euro-American transnational corporations. The new, unipolar world of globalization has perfected the conditions and primary element of US objective in its relations with Nigeria.³⁶

In the global economy, Nigeria is an underdeveloped, raw materials supplying country while the US is an advanced, industrialized country. While America owns and controls the means of production i.e. capital and technology, Nigeria is a "have-not" country with regards to those power assets. The use of investment, trade, aid, technology, etc to influence the course of events in international politics has been an important reason why nations engage in international economic relations. A country with extensive international markets will tend to also have some measure of political influence over its not-so-privileged trading partners.³⁷

A country, like Nigeria, which depends entirely on the export of raw commodities for survival, has to conform to the wishes of the major importers of its products so as to retain its sources of survival, especially if the country does not have absolute monopoly of the raw commodities. Similarly, a country like Nigeria that depends on external sources for most of its machinery and spare parts is often at the mercy of its suppliers. In international economic relations, generally, the weaker nations, especially those like Nigeria, on the fringes of the international market are usually subjected to manipulation by the stronger nations.³⁸

This may not be entirely true if recent developments between the two nations are to be considered from the power paradigm. Some of these issues have shown Nigeria to be a very tough talking country that is ready to back its words with action. Its reaction to some of the actions taken by the US against certain policies of the government did not in any way portray Nigeria as a country that is ready to be manipulated or subservient in as much as it is ready and willing to sustain its friendship and relations with the United States.

On the Charles Taylor issue, which the US Congress was still insisting must be revisited by the Nigerian government, the Nigerian government had stated in clear terms that the release of Charles Taylor to be tried for war crimes which was what the US wanted, was a closed issue. The government had gone ahead to provide a befitting accommodation for the former Liberian President and had also provided

very tight security around him. The US never expected the Nigerian government to react to its overtures the way it had. They were still expecting a very docile and subservient country that was ready to be manipulated by a stronger nation like the US.

The second issue was that of Virgin Nigeria and the refusal of the US government to allow the airline to fly into the US on the excuse that the deal that produced the new Nigerian flag carrier was a negation of the Open Skies Agreement between Nigeria and the US.³⁹ But in a retaliatory manner, the Nigerian government refused to grant approval to Continental Airlines, a US based carrier. Without any equivocation, the Federal Government explained that the ban on Continental Airlines would not be lifted until the American government reconsidered its stand on Virgin Nigeria.

The Federal Government position was crafted thus:

- We felt we were unfairly treated by the American government. We set up our own company that will do business internationally. That is the reason why we have not allowed Continental to come until when we get clearance that Virgin Nigeria is going to be allowed to come to America . . .⁴⁰

The conceptual problem that has arisen from this discourse is that a weak state allows itself to be manipulated or subjugated by a stronger nation if it feels intimidated by the sheer physical size of the other country without taking into cognizance that its own little endowment was sufficient to give it a power emblem. The other argument is that power is a manifestation of the inequality in state endowments. And quite naturally, states with greater resource endowments tend to appropriate unnecessary power advantage in their favour, thinking that inequality in endowments is synonymous with inequality in political power.

These questions cannot be usefully addressed without reminding ourselves of the sources of inequality in international society. The inequality of states stems in the first instance from their varying natural endowments. In a reversal of Rousseau's claim respecting individuals, we may say that political collectives are born unequal and that in consequence of their different natural endowments they are destined to remain unequal.⁴¹ The degree to which physical extent, geographic position, natural resources, and population determine collective inequalities of power and status has varied considerably. This is so because the significance of these characteristics depends upon the techniques available in a given period for exploiting them and, of course, upon a collective capacity and will for doing so.⁴²

This is why it is often argued that power relations are asymmetrical in that the power holder exercises greater control over the behavior of the power subject than the reverse, but reciprocity of influence – the defining criterion of the social relation itself – is never entirely destroyed except in those forms of physical violence which although directed against a human being, treat him as no more than a physical object.⁴³ The asymmetry of power relations, however, is often stressed to a degree that would make it logically contradictory to speak of 'bilateral' power relations or of 'equality of power in bargaining or conflict. Thus Gerth and Mills write: 'when everyone is equal there is no politics, for politics involves subordinates and superiors'.⁴⁴ And Peter Blau maintains that "interdependence and mutual influence of equal strength indicate lack of power".⁴⁵

Such assertions risk going too far in severing power relations from their roots in social interaction in its generic form, for the asymmetry of power relations is at least immanent in the give and take dyadic interaction between equals, in which the control of one actor over the other's behavior is reciprocated by a responsive act-response sequence, but actors continually alternate the roles of power holder and power subject in the course of their interaction. While it may sound generous to refer to the US as the power holder and Nigeria as the power subject, there is no doubt that there exists some suspect reverence for each other. The US has been very cautious in its dealings with Nigeria not because it is afraid that in the unlikely event that there is an outbreak of hostilities, the Nigerian state can put up any formidable resistance. But the fact is, any issue that would push the two to the point of outright confrontation or military hostilities must be such that are very fundamental to the national interests of both nations. This also has its flaws as the principle of national interest has been dismissed as not being a useful and analytical tool to interpret interactions of states talkless of using it to determine basis for military action by the states. It is further seen as an inadequate and unappealing guide to foreign policy because, by positing the good of a single state as an acceptable rationale for diplomatic action, it excludes consideration of the rights and interests of most of mankind.⁴⁶

National interest gives a superficially plausible justification to national egotism and to a grasping and perhaps aggressive foreign policy.

Even if the national interest is formulated to benefit, not simply an elite, but the whole of the national community, that national community forms only a small part of the world community. Because it ignores the world community, the national interest is too narrow a foundation on which to construct an enlightened international policy.⁴⁷

Despite this position, there is no doubt that Nigeria-US relations are influenced first and foremost by certain basic national interests. It is also a settled fact that there are very wide disparities in the resources of both countries. It is also very obvious that the natural endowments of both countries have made them unequal, that is, there is glaring inequality between the two states. It cannot also be contested that the US which by contemporary rating is the unipolar power, enjoys more power dominance than Nigeria. Whether it is called power, influence or capability, the fact is that the US is in a better position than Nigeria to wield the three in the international system without any major disruption. We have also established that the economic structures of both countries are shaped by their political systems or structures and that only a proper understanding of one can enable or connect us to the fundamentals of the other, and invariably, the variables. We can safely call US the power holder and Nigeria the power subject. But we still need to show whether the US power advantage over Nigeria is extensive, comprehensive or intensive. It is extensive if the control over Nigeria is total; it is comprehensive if the variety of actions to which the US can move Nigeria is considerable and finally it is intensive if the bidding of US can be pushed far without loss of compliance.⁴⁸

The two instances already mentioned as classical cases of saying outright 'No' to the request of the power holder and retaliating an action by the power holder demonstrate the uncompromising stance of the power subject to allow its resource handicap hinder it from asserting its sovereignty as an independent nation. The Charles Taylor debacle, an instance where Nigeria had said 'No' to the release directive of the US Congress and government, illustrates the political capacity and will of the Nigerian government to ensure that it does not sheepishly and stupidly do the bidding of the US at the expense of its own credibility in the international society. The second case which is the reprisal to the US ban on Virgin Nigeria also presents Nigeria as a country that was ready to match the actions of the US where its strategic interests are involved.

These are some of the conceptual problems of power as a tool of analysis. It is difficult to predict the reaction of the power subject and to know the extent to which physical power can place limitations on a nation's resolve to protect its image and guide its pride. In an anarchical

environment such as the international system, it is very difficult to find a state that will allow its resource disadvantage to expose it to the whims and caprices of stronger nations without putting up some form of resistance or bravado.

The Nigeria-US situation presents a classical example of a weak nation not prepared to allow stronger nation rubbish its sovereignty and desecrate its nationhood. It is in the character of powerful nations to subjugate the weak states to subservience. Nonetheless, some weak states are not ready to sacrifice the sanctity of their independence for egocentric countries whose major objective is to force their interests on weaker countries while subduing the interests of these nations.

It is clear that the resistance of weak states in whatever form is not an indication of power parity. However, the truth is that political power should not necessarily and automatically provoke subservience.

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