



The Nigeria's National Symbols: Implication For National Development

**MARTINS,
Olugbenga Lawrence Ph.D**

Department of
Politics Science,
Joseph Ayo Babalola
University,
Ikeji-Arakeji, Osun State.

martinslawrence364
@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The country Nigeria got her independence on October 1, 1960 from the British Colonial Master. However, the independence of any nation requires much more than simply structures of governance after self-determination. Thus, a universe of images or symbols needed to be created by any newly independent nation to the wider world as a real sovereign entity. It is on this note that the study embarked on the national symbols that represent the country, Nigeria. However, two of these national symbols became the focus of this study. They are the National Flag and the Coat-of-Arms which were the immediate made-in-Nigeria symbols designed to celebrate the declaration of sovereignty on October 1, 1960, while other symbols came thereafter. The National Anthem "Nigeria, we hail thee", sang to celebrate the independence, was composed by the British Officials which was, therefore, not a surprise when it was changed in 1978 to "Arise, O Compatriots". The study also examined the National Ordinance, which is the law that governed the procedures and usage of the two national symbols. The study employed the primary and secondary sources of data collection to aid the study, while descriptive technique was adopted for writing the Report. The study showed that the two national symbols constituted the most significant symbolic representations of the ideals of Nigeria; the insignia of authority and state power.

Keyword: *Nigeria, Independence, Sovereignty, National Symbols, National Flag, Coat-of-Arms, National ordinance, Patriotism, National Development, Rivers Niger and Benue.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The name Nigeria is a combination of two words – Niger and Area. In other words, Nigeria coined her name from the River Niger, which is one of the most important physical features of the nation. Thus, Nigeria implies “Niger Area”. The “Niger” is also popularly known as ‘River’, the most famous or historical river in the country. Therefore, Nigeria means the land and the people of the area around the Niger River. Historically, Nigeria as a name was suggested by a British Journalist, Flora Shaw who later became Mrs. Flora Lugard, haven married to the first Governor – General of Nigeria after the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates in 1914. One should recall that Nigeria was formally a British colony after the Great Africa’s partition by the European powers in 1864. However, on October, 1st1960 the country gained political independence from her colonial master, Britain. But not until 1963, that Nigeria became a Republican nation, which means a free country where her citizens could decide her destiny, who leads the country and how the leaders should lead, according to the extant law, Constitution. Added to this is that Nigeria is a Federation comprises a number of regions or ethnic groups which were united to form one strong country in the common interest of all the united regions or ethnic groups or citizens. Thus, the country is a federation because all Nigerians agreed to come together to serve common purpose better for common public good. The implication of this scenario is that the country is now being called the “Federal Republic of Nigeria”, which ordinarily means, the owners of the land that covers the areas around the Niger River that agreed together to determine the destiny, fate and affairs of the new sovereign nation from 1963 (Ogbor, 2008).

The country Nigeria belongs to more than 400 ethnic groups with over 250 dialects. Today, many Nigerians live in different parts of the country while many of them speak the languages of their host communities. Basically, there are three major ethnic groups in the country namely – Yoruba in the West, the Igbo in the East, and the Hausa Fulani in the North. Population – wise, Nigeria is the most populous black state in the world, with estimation of about 200 million citizens. The external structure of the country has remained basically the same since independence Nigeria is in South of Sahara and in West Africa. The geographical co-ordinates of Nigeria are: it is bordered in the West by the Republic of Benin; Niger Republic on the North; on the East by the Republic of Cameroun; and on the South by the Gulf of Guinea. The internal structure of the country consist of six (6) geographical zones namely: South East, South-South; South West; North Central; North East, and North West. The Federal

Capital Territory is in Abuja, the Federal Capital of Nigeria (FRN. 2014).

SUBJECT MATTER

The high points above are the glance history and geography of Nigeria as an independent country. However, the independence of a country requires much more than simply structures of governance after self-determination. A universe of images or symbols needed to be created by any newly independent nation to the wider world as a real sovereign entity, and as well to promote inculcation of spirit of nationalism among the populace. In other words, in the immediate wake of independence, the project of creating national sentiments to rally the citizens of the newly created nation to continue their resistance to colonization, and the personification of the nation and its ideals becomes a desired great task and priority than an option or a choice.

The foregoing prompted this study, and on this note, the study, therefore, aims at examining the national symbols of Nigeria at independence in 1960. But critical to this study are the Two (2) immediate major national symbols that represent Nigeria as a sovereign nation, namely the National Flag and the Coat-of-Arms; at the independence on October 1st 1960, which have always been the immediate and urgent tasks of any newly independent country to accomplish or design along with the declaration of sovereignty or self-determination. The study shall unveil their significance and the thrust of the legal instrument, that is, the National Ordinance Number 48 of 1960, now Act of the Parliament that governed the usage of the two national symbols; and the implications of them to the national development. To aid the study, primary and secondary sources of data collection shall be employed to accomplish its stated objectives. However, the experience of the researcher as a retired top officer in the National Orientation Agency (NOA) an organization that is the custodian of the Nigeria's national symbols, shall play critical primary role for a successful study, as a first hand authority.

2.0 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

There are three conceptual explanations that this study shall explore from the literature. They are: National Ordinance; National Development; and National Symbols.

2.1 NATIONAL ORDINANCE

According to NOA Handbook on National Symbols (2015), National Ordinance is a legal instrument embodying an order or instruction on specific usage of the Nigeria's national symbols. The law that governs the usage of the national symbols is referred to as the National Flag and Coat-of-Arms Ordinance Number 48 of 1960. The law imposes by the Federal Republic of Nigeria at the independence in 1960 as a new sovereign state. It is a law governing some details of procedures or conducts enforced by the government on the rules,

regulations or procedure guiding or governing the handling and usage of the newly designed national symbols at independence, binding on the citizens of the country National ordinance is a law equal to an Act of parliament in an emergency situation or when the legislature was not in session. Though, it is still subjected to the approval of the legislature. It is an apt word which embodies the order of a quasi-legislature body such as the executive arm of government. It is a replica of the Executive Orders some governments prescribed in specific situation on a specific subject. Its use plays a key role in Constitution, public administration or public order.

National Ordinance is a rule, law, precept or statute imposed by a sovereign authority, urging the obligation of all citizens for obedience on a specific policy of government. It is used to designate the enactment of a law that does not have the consent of the nation's legislature. The National Ordinance Number 48 of 1960 is a good example of such law enacted by the national government at independence for immediate recognition of the nation's national symbols by the citizens of the country and other countries of the world, implies that Nigeria is a sovereign nation. It is this law that empowers the National Orientation Agency (NOA) to celebrate the Nigeria's national symbols September 16 of every year (NOA, 2015).

2.2 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTUALIZATION

Development as a concept is very popular in policy and scholarly circles today. Its popularity explains the fact that the concept has become highly controversial, subjective and normative. It has provoked heated debate among different scholars, hence it has been accorded different definitions, and it will never be, and never can be defined to universal satisfaction. It is not in the intention of this researcher to dabble into it in this study According to Mabogunje (1991), that national development in the past, was conceived of narrowly as no more than an increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but today, emphasis is placed on the content of the GDP as well as on other indicators of the quality of life of the citizens of a nation. He, therefore, perceived national development to include social indicators as: reduction in infant mortality, reduction in maternity mortality, shifts in social status or standards of living, employment opportunities, enhanced life expectancy, decrease in fertility, as well as social infrastructure. In short, national development now emphasizes people as the object of attention, not just about growth in the volume of goods and commodities National development is now thought to be a process concerned with people's capacity in a defined period to manage and include positive change; that is to predict, plan, understand and monitor change and reduce or eliminate unwanted or unwarranted change. In such a situation, increases in the GDP could then be seen as intermediate in the process; that is, as the product of the change process and the input for further change.

2.3 NATIONAL SYMBOLS

National symbols are those things and objects by which a nation is identified or those things or objects that make a nation unique and different from other nations of the world. National Symbols are emblems that are usually peculiar to a nation. They are the material and non-material representation of traits. Examples of materials symbols are national Flags, Coat-of-Arms, nation's Passports, Currency, Constitution national identify card etc while non-material symbols are national days, nation's Anthem, Pledge, etc. National symbols de-emphasis the different cultural or traditional or historical traits, and emphasizes national loyalty or building. They are symbols of any country designed by any newly independent entity manifesting itself to the outside world as a sovereign nation, distinguishing her from other nations as unique and distinct. These symbols are quite unique to each nation or country (Ejiogu, 2000).

National Symbols represent the entire country while other symbols represent individuals or groups within a nation, to set themselves apart from other groups. Examples are the emblems, crests or flags of organizations such as the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Nigeria Medical Association, Boys Brigade, Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) etc.

3.0 NIGERIA'S NATIONAL SYMBOLS

Nigeria at independence in 1960 is not left out among the countries that have their own distinct and unique national symbols as a sovereign nation. As 'giant' of Africa, she has a number of symbols connecting her to her own history and heritage. Here are the lists of some of the Nigeria's national symbols (Oyekunle, 2011)

- National Flag
- National Coat-of-Arms
- National Anthem
- National Pledge
- National Identity Card
- Nigeria's Currency
- Nigeria's Passport
- Nigeria's Constitution etc.

However, among the Nigeria's national symbols listed above, there are two national symbols that are major emblems and signs that represent the country as a sovereign entity, or her history, beauty and cultural heritage. The most critical of them all are which are those captured by the National Ordinance No. 48 of 1960 for the October 1, 1960 independence day are:

- The National Flag
- The Coat-of-Arms

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, this researcher shall focus on the listed important national symbols above. The two selected national symbols constitute the most significant symbolic representations of the ideals of Nigeria, the insignia of authority and state power; and the rallying focus of calls to patriotism and national duty. This paper shall treat them one after the other:

3.1 THE NATIONAL FLAG

A national flag is a piece of cloth with coloured designs or pictures. Each sovereign nation has one flag, and no two countries have a similar flag, which represent and symbolizes a nation. A national flag is designed with specific meanings of its features. It is one of a nation's national symbols that makes a sovereign nation unique in her own style, usually simple, colourful and beautiful in design and carries powerful historical meanings and messages to the citizens of a country. Normally, national flag is not usually mentioned in a nation's constitution, but in another law of a country, which is a secondary law, like the Nigeria's National Ordinance Number 48 of 1960, which has detailed descriptions or procedures of its usage. National Flag is an emblem of a sovereign nation (NOA, 2015).

Nigeria at independence has a simple well designed national flag, as a national symbol of the country. The Nigeria's national flag was designed by a student, Mr. Taiwo Akinkunmi in 1959. He was an Electrical Engineering student at the Norwood Technical College, London. The National Flag competition was advertised in a national daily newspaper, through which he submitted his own entry to the authority in Lagos. Taiwo's entry was lucky to be shortlisted by a Panel of Judges, as his entry was adjudged the best among other entries. The original design of the present national flag has the image of red blazing sun in the coloured white space, which the panel had to modify by removing the red blazing sun. The flag's colour has two lines, with three lines with green lines on the sides, and white in the middle. In other words, the Nigeria's flag is a horizontal bi-colour of green and white. The winner of the Nigerian national flag, Mr. Taiwo Akinkunmi was given a monetary reward of cash price of One hundred British pounds, (£100), which was the official currency in the country that time, and a great fortune that time too. By providence, he was also shortlisted for a national honour by the Goodluck Jonathan administration, and therefore, honoured with the National Award of the Officer Of the Order of the Federal Republic (OFR) on 29th September, 2014, and as well placed on monthly salary till death, in addition with an official car (Oyekunle, 2011).

The National Flag has three (3) vertical stripes of equal sizes. The left and right stripes are Green while the centre stripe is White. In other words, the flag is a horizontal bi-colour of Green and White. The flag was publicly displayed by the Nigerian government on the independent day of Nigeria on October 1,

1960, a day the country got her independence or self-determination from the British Colonization, when the Nigeria's British flag called "The Union Jack", was replaced in the mid-right of October 1, 1960. This signified that Nigeria as a country was a sovereign entity.

3.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL FLAG

The Nigerian National Flag has three (3) vertical stripes of equal sizes. The left and right stripes are Green while the centre stripe is White. In other words, the flag is a horizontal bi- colour of Green and White. The Nigerian Green is an emerald green while the white is immaculate white. The colours used in the National Flag are very special and made to international colour standards as follows (NOA, 1999):

- a. British standard Number B.F. 2660 of 1965 0-0-010
- b. British Colour Council C.C.104-CC.105
- c. SILOR International Colour Chart 193-173: Emerald Green.

3.3 DIMENSIONS OF THE NATIONAL FLAG

The dimension of the Nigeria Flag are a simple ratio of the length of the Flag being double that of the Flag breadth; and when folded into two – length – wise, it take the shape of a square (NOA, 1999):

	Size	Breadth	Length
i.	Big	1.2 metres	2.4 metres
ii.	Medium	0.9 metres	1.8 metres
iii.	Small	0.6 metres	1.2 metres

3.4 NIGERIAN NATIONAL FLAG LAW

The Nigerian National Flag is governed by the Flag and Coat-of-Arms Ordinance of 1960. The law, Section 5 of it described the procedure, rules and regulations that governed its design, usage or display. In other words, there are some rules that have been laid down regarding the usage and hoisting of the National Flag in order not to denigrate it. These rules are called the "Flag Code of Nigeria". Therefore, every treatment of the National Flag must be done with great caution and respect. They are as follows (NOA, 2015):

- i. The cloth material or the fabric, which is used in producing the National Flag, must be of a very high standard and on a single material. This implies that it is not by cut and sews materials.
- ii. National Flag is screen-printed on a single material, not sewn together of different colours of Green and White mere clothes.
- iii. It must always be hung, not to be found laid flat horizontally, except on the casket of a deceased national hero. A license must be granted by the Government before this is done. This is a belief that Nigeria is alive, active, strong, mobile, and cannot fall or die;
- iv. The National Flag is always hoisted and flown ceremoniously and briskly

in the morning (6:00pm) and at the sunrise lowered (6:00am) in the same manner. An exception when the national flag could be hoisted beyond sunrise or in the night period is only on very important national events. For an example, when the national football team is playing a football match in the night, but must be under flooded light at light. The national flag must always be hoisted in the day and in the night because light brings about unity, peace, faith and progress, while darkness implies disunity, hopelessness, war, horror etc.

- v. The National Flag must be hoisted at the peak or the top of the post outside public buildings. It can only be hung at half-mast during memorial days or state burials as a mark of respect, but with government permission.
- vi. National Flag, when hung in a room or anywhere, no other flag, emblem or insignia should be placed higher than the nation's flag.
- vii. When the National Flag is in a procession, the carrier of it must be properly dressed, very neat, and must be in the front.
- viii. Always, the National Flag must be in the front where there are two or more, flags that are not national flags e.g Red Cross, WAI Brigade, etc.
- ix. In a hall, auditorium or before an audience, the national flag must be on the right hand side of the first row.
- x. In a situation when a group of flags are displayed, the Nigerian Flag must be at the centre, apart from being in the front;
- xi. An occasion when a speaker on a platform, the National Flag must be on the speaker's right hand side as he/she faces the audience, while other flags should be at the left side or in subordinate positions.
- xii. On funeral occasions, Remembrance Day or National disaster; the national flag is flown at half mast. Examples are when the former Head of State General Sani Abacha died, or President Alhaji Umaru Yar' Adua died or when the nation lost many army officers in a plane crash in Lagos.
- xiii. A National Flag that is dirty, tattered, old, torn and mutilated must not be hung.
- xiv. It is an offence to hoist national flag in a defaced or bad manner;
- xv. To dispose a disused or torn national flag must be with utmost decent and respectful manner;
- xvi. The display or hoist of a national flag on an official vehicle must be mounted centrally on the radiator cap or attached to the right fender of the vehicle chassis.

The only special public functionaries or officers that allowed by the law to mount and fly the National Flag on their officials vehicles are (NOA, 1999):

- The President Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation
- The Vice-President
- The Senate President
- The Speaker of the House of Representatives

- The Chief Justice of the Federation
- The State Governors
- Depute State Governors
- Other Dignitaries (if any) permitted by protocol.

3.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NATIONAL FLAG

As earlier mentioned, the colours of the National Flag of Nigeria are Green, White, and Green. These colours have historical significance or meanings. Generally speaking, the National Flag is a symbol of national pride and identity. It remains a symbol of authority and instrument of state power. Indeed, considering its importance, national flag is the only National Symbol worth dying for. It tells the history of a people and their aspirations. The Nigeria's national flag is designed with specific meanings for its colours or symbols;

i. **The Green Colour** – It depicts the country's wealth, and vast rich national resources or beautiful land. It signifies agriculture, which is the mother of all occupation. It represents the main occupation of Nigerians

ii. **The White Colour:** The White colour in the Nigeria's National Flag represents unity, peace and love. The colour is so significant to Nigeria because of her multiplicity of culture, ethnicity and religions hence the white colours stands for brotherliness, oneness, togetherness, harmony, peaceful co-existence, progress etc in diversity.

Indeed, the National Flag of Nigeria represents the history and aspirations of Nigeria, and the collective national wealth and prosperity of the nation. The white colour tells the world that Nigeria is hospitable and peace-loving nation while the green colour of the flag creating awareness of the abundant national resources of the country to the international community for diverse investments in the country.

4.0 NIGERIA'S NATIONAL COAT-OF-ARMS

In the ranking of National Symbols world-wide, after the National Flag, second or next in national importance is the National Coat-of-Arms. This national symbol is otherwise called the "Armorial Bearings".

National Coat-of-Arms is a very distinctive heraldic bearings, or shield of a sovereign nation. It is heraldic or visual design on a surcoat; escutcheon or tabard. Every sovereign nation has her Coat-of-Arms, and Nigeria as a sovereign nation is not left out. A shield is the flat heart in which a Coat-of-Arms is designed and painted. A Coat-of-Arms is an armorial bearing, containing sign, message about a nation – motto, goal, history or aspirations of a people. It is a crest or insignia which every nation uses as a symbol of identity. Nigerian Coat-of-Arms first created and adopted in May 1960, which consists of the images that express different meanings. At the Nigeria's independence in 1960, the central government, and each regions, and later each of the twelve states had its own Coat-of-Arms. In other words, before the

formal adoption of the extant or present Coat-of-Arms, each of the country's political unit had its own version. This is as a result of the federal system of government adopted by the nation, in which the component units or states were allowed to have their own Coat-of-Arms. It was, therefore, in 1975, that a uniform Coat-of-Arms the country is using till today came into existence, designed and adopted by Murtala/Obasanjo military regime (Ogbor, 2008).

4.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE NIGERIAN COAT-OF-ARMS

The Coat-of-Arms of Nigeria consists of a black shield with a wavy white pall. It is a unique insignia design on a black shield which has two (2) white lines that form a letter "Y" shape, and two white horses; one on each side. And on top of the shield is a green and white band, with an eagle perches on the top of the band. Till today, unlike the designer of the National Flag that was officially known and documented, the designer of the Nigeria's Coat-of-Arms was not officially documented or made public.

On the Nigeria's national Coat-of-Arms, there are seven (7) conventional elements or features that can be found on it. They are as follows (NOA, 1999):

- i. The Shield
- ii. The Two (2) wavy bands on the shield
- iii. Two (2) supporters on the two sides of the shield
- iv. The flora/foilage, that is, *Coctus Spectabilis* (flowers on which the shield rest)
- v. The Eagle
- vi. The Wreath on which the Eagle stands.
- vii. The Nigeria's Motto inscribed below the shield.

In a sum, the shield is the main base of the Nigeria's Coat-of-Arms. The shield is painted black.

4.2 NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COAT-OF-ARMS

Each country of the world has its own unique Coat-of-Arms with special symbols or features that depict various meanings or virtues such as dignity, bravery, freedom, unity etc. In other words, it is not just a mere picture or design as it portrays important information about the country, which depicts profound meanings. The question now is what does the Nigeria's Coat-of-Arms represents (NOA, 2015).

- i. **The shield:** The shield is painted black and is the main base of the Coat-of-Arms. The shield itself depicts honour, which means Nigeria is a country with honour, and thereby, deserves honour from every Nigerian, and people of other countries. The black colour on the shield represents the good earth of Nigeria. It represents the predominantly fertile arable land of the country, and signifies her agricultural potentials. It also signifies the abundant rich mineral resources on the land or earth, that is,

the earth of Nigeria is rich in all sense of it.

- ii. **The Wavy Silver Bands:** The letter “Y” shaped silvery wavy band represents the two dominant rivers in Nigeria, which are Rivers Niger and Benue. It shows how the two rivers joined together in peace at the centre of Nigeria, and then flow down into the ocean. The two rivers are the major inland water-ways of the country. They serve as water resources for irrigation as well as national drainage. Where the two rivers met is called their Confluence. The silvery bands or colour depicts cleanliness and integrity of the country.
- iii. **The Two Horses:** Horse is a very strong animal which has multi-purpose advantages. The animal is used for heavy tasks that man cannot even endure, and can also be ridden by warriors or knights to the battle. A horse which is used to fight war is called a charger.. Thus, the two white horses are chargers that support the black shield. The two white horses, therefore, stand for dignity and integrity of Nigeria. They also stand for hard work, loyalty, peace and progress, which also collaborates what the white colour stands for in the Nigeria’s national flag. The horses are known for their obedience and loyalty to their owners, so Nigerians are expected to respect the laws of the land and loyal to their country, and any country they found themselves in the world.
- iv. **The Eagle:** Eagle is a brave and strong bird. It can be regarded as the lion of the birds. The eagle on the Coat-of-Arms signifies the Nigeria’s strength and pride of the nation. The red colour of the eagle symbolizes respect and reverence to the nation from all Nigerians, and foreign nationals.
- v. **The Wreath:** It is on the wreath on which the eagle perches. The wreath is in Nigeria’s national colour of Green and White, which symbolizes what the Green and White colours in the Nigeria’s national flag implies, which has been earlier discussed in this paper. Anyway, the two colour remains love, peace, progress, beauty, unity and uniqueness of the nation.
- vi. **The Flora/Foliage:** It is on which the sheild stands. The grass is known as coctus – spectabilis, grows and available all over the country. It is a common flower found throughout Nigeria. The flower represents the beauty, love and uniqueness of the nation. It also symbolizes the unity in diversity, in similarity in the vast vegetation and agricultural potentialities of the country.
- vii. **The Nigeria’s Motto:** The Motto of Nigeria is written or inscribed below the shield on which the shield stands. The motto of Nigeria therein is: “Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress”. The concept motto is a few words that express a people’s belief, values, goals, objectives or aspiration. It is the watchword or guide of the people of Nigeria. A motto of a nation is also her vision and mission statements of the country and her people. It should be noted that before 1979, the original motto of Nigeria was just “Unity and Faith: It was in 1979 that Peace and Progress” were added to

the earlier two words. The motto expects Nigerians to be united, faithful, peaceful and progressive towards Nigeria project for the common good of the country, or for her national development.

4.3 NIGERIA'S NATIONAL COAT-OF-ARMS LAW

Like the Nigeria's National Flag, the Coat-of-Arms is as well governed and regulated by the Flag and Coat-of-Arms Ordinance of 1960, and that section of the Ordinance tagged it as "Coat-of-Arms Code of Nigeria". The code regulated how the shield can be displayed in public offices in the country. The following are the display or usage of the shield in government buildings or offices:

The presence of the Nigeria's government in the government buildings or offices and public places are shown by placing the Nigerian Coat-of-Arms side by side with the portrait of the President, and Commander-in-Chief. The Coat-of-Arms is usually placed in the centre, while the portrait of the Commander-in-Chief is normally placed in the right side of the coat-of-arms and the portraits of other principal officers (the state Governor, Minister or Head of Establishment) are placed on the left side of the Coat-of-Arms. This position on the display of the nation's shield remains valid.

On important occasions, when the President of Nigeria or the Executive Governor of the State or Nigerian Judges is addressing the nation or the judges in their courts are in sessions, the Coat-of-Arms is usually encapsulated in the seal of the nation; and it is placed above the Head of these important public or government figures. The shield stands for power and authority, and therefore, whatever it is pronounced under that Coat-of-Arms positioning, it becomes law, and is binding. In other words, the portraits of the government figures should always support the Coat-of-arms where it is positioned.

In displaying the coat-of-arms, it is an offence if it is improperly placed or displayed, while it is also crime not to display it at all in the offices of government principal officers or chief executives.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The national flag and national coat-of-arms are the two most significant symbolic representations of the ideals of any nation, in which Nigeria keyed herself to at independence in 1960. These two national symbols are major physical designs critical to symbolize self-determination or sovereign nation. These two national symbols are quite significant to Nigeria's independence, as other national symbols follow thereafter. For example, the first Nigeria's National Anthem which was officially sang at the independence was composed by a British citizen, Miss Williams. Thus, the anthem is not an initiation of the Nigeria's government or citizen at independence in 1960.

National symbols are not just mere designs; they are the most prominent symbols of any country, having profound and deep meanings. They are symbols of national unity, authority and State power. They symbolize the

essence of virtues associated with Nigerians such as bravery, freedom, peace, dignity, strength, unity, hardwork etc. The symbols created awareness for the citizens of the country and even the yet unborn generation about how they are connected by history, culture, tradition or heritage, that is, reminding them about past events, and future aspirations of Nigeria as a nation. In other words, national symbols define Nigeria as a whole, convey her history, besides her rich tradition and culture. The symbols have the potent power to instill pride, patriotism and nationalism in the citizens of the country, and can be used to communicate the history and culture of Nigeria. The national symbols represent Nigeria as a sovereign nation, and urging the citizens to rally around to serve her in the best way possible. The two symbols showcase the faith of the citizens towards Nigeria, and their aspirations to ensure the nation succeed. They represent the past and the present milestones of the nation, and the faith in the course of building Nigeria.

If patriotism is regarded as unflinching love, loyalty, dedication, sacrifice, passion and the likes to one's country, Nigerians must be seen patriotic to the nation's national symbols, by showing honour and respect to them. The significance, and meanings of all the features of the national flag and Coat-of-Arms have defined Nigeria as a country along with abundant opportunities and national resources showcased by the symbols to the citizens of the country to harness and utilize to socio-economically empower themselves, which would also promote and enhance indices or indicators of national development in the contemporary world.

The nation's national symbols have spiritual, value, socio-economic translations and implications for the country. It is high time the Nigerian leaders and the citizens in general imbibed and exhibited national value that the national symbols convey in the art of governance, politics, socio-economic transactions or relation at both the public and private life in Nigeria. For examples, both the features on the national flag and Coat-of-Arms imply peace, unity, harmony, dignity, loyalty, hardwork, strength, love, beauty, industry, pride etc which are expected to manifest in the citizens' endeavours towards nation building or Nigeria project. The nation's national symbols convey to Nigerians that there are abundant resources in the country for individual and national self-reliance. It is, therefore, imperative to exhibit the value of producing what we need, and consume what we produce, which is falling in love with made in Nigerian products, which logically implies fall in love with Nigeria which will drastically save the nation's foreign exchange, and thereby enhance the nation's foreign reserve. The capacity to harness and mobilize the abundant human and natural resources in the country for her benefits or self-reliance is true national development in actions. This will generate or create jobs for the teaming Nigerian population, which is development.

The nation's national symbols are the country's national identity. National identity simply refers to those identifiable characteristics and emblems that

distinguished one's nation from other nations of the world such as national flag and Coat-of-Arms that are the cornerstone of this paper. If the real desire of the leaders and citizens of Nigeria is true national development, it is time for the citizens and their leaders, especially the political leaders and public office holders, transferred their tribal or ethnic or regional loyalty, irrespective of their religions, to national loyalty or towards Nigeria as a whole. The value or expression of the national symbols is "we", and not "they" or "them". Thus, national identity is the feeling by people of a nation to feel, accept and agree together that they are a nation, that is, emotional attachment towards one's nation, sharing burdens and opportunities together. In other words, it is the strong awareness of the people of a nation of their obligations and responsibilities or commonality of purpose towards nation building, which is a function of national symbols.

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The truth is that, no meaningful development can be achieved in an atmosphere of ethical crisis and crisis of national identity. This paper unfolds the structural link between the nation's national symbols and national development. The values expressed by the national flag and coat-of-arm and national development or nation building. In other words, national identity as argued in this paper as a function of national symbols is a critical factor in national development. The national symbols provide the compass for developmental processes in Nigeria, and just as national development is multifaceted; the patriotism demand for national symbols is also equally multi-dimensional.

The topic is national ordinance and national symbols. One of the provisions of the National Ordinance Number 48 of 1960 that governed the instruments of the national flag and the coat-of-arms is the necessity for a relevant organ of government to get a day every year as the national Ordinance Day. The National Orientation Agency (NOA) has set aside September 16 every year as the National Ordinance day to re-awakening the national consciousness, patriotism, loyalty or nationalism among Nigerians to the Nigerian nation, enlightening the public on the significance or values of the nation's national symbols. The truth is that many Nigerians do not aware there is a National Ordinance Day, a day dedicated for the nation's national symbols of their procedure, usage, importance, values or profound deep meanings they entail. It is, therefore, suggested that, for effective public enlightenment, orientation and mobilization of the national symbols, there should be multi-stakeholders' notional conference or seminars involving relevant federal and State government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and relevant civil society organizations in the federation, to jointly design and implement public enlightenment programmes on the nation's national symbols.

In other words, the celebration of the National Ordinance Day September 16 every year should no longer be left alone for the NOA in a country with estimated

population of about zoo million. The implementation of the programmes should be simultaneous and concerted, using various methodologies or strategies to achieve desired national impact that is development oriented. Thus, there are various cultures and traits in Nigeria at independence which do not enhance the development of national traits, but national symbols are the materials representations of national traits. And the national traits such as nationalism, dignity, hardwork, honesty, sacrifice, loyalty, love, self-reliance, patriotism, peace, pride, harmony, selfless service, peaceful co-existence, faith etc. In a united Nigeria are strongly and profoundly emphasized in the national symbols; that are expected to drive the nation. They are the real harbingers of nationhood, and national development.

References

- Alubo, O. (2004), *Citizenship and Nation – Marking In Nigeria: New Challenges And Contestations: An Afro–Asian Dialogue* 5 (1).
- Ejiogu, A. (2000), *Morality and National Development: A Case for National Rebirth; Occasional Publication of the National Orientation Agency, No. 2* Abuja.
- Mabogunje, A. (1991), *Elements of Development, In Farm House Dialogue – Principles And Guidelines, Africa Leadership Forum Abeokuta, ALF Publications.*
- National Institute (2006), *National Value Orientation for Socio-Economic Development*, Kuru, National Institute.
- National Orientation Agency (NOA) (1999), *National Symbols*, Abuja, NOA Occasional Publication.
- National Orientation Agency (NOA) (2015), *National Symbols, (New Edition)*, Abuja, NOA Occasional Publication.
- Ogbor, O.U. (2008), *Nigeria First: A Formative Patriotism for the Nigerian Child, Cross River State*, Wusen Publisher.
- Oladele, O. (2018), *Basic Concepts of Civil Education for Senior Secondary Schools In Nigeria*, Ibadan, HOLAD Publishers.
- Oyekunle, O. (2011), *Rasmed Civic Education for Secondary Schools*, Lagos, RasmedPublications Ltd.

