

## REFORMING THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL: AFRICA'S PERMANENT SEAT AND NIGERIA'S STRATEGIC CANDIDACY

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### **Abstract**

The underrepresentation of Africa in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) remains a central challenge to the legitimacy, representativeness and effectiveness of global governance. Although African states constitute a substantial proportion of the United Nations membership and feature prominently in the Council's peace and security agenda, no African country holds permanent membership. This paper examines the case for Africa's permanent representation and assesses Nigeria's strategic candidacy in light of its demographic weight, regional leadership, peacekeeping contributions, diplomatic engagement and commitment to multilateralism. The study adopts a qualitative documentary research design, drawing on United Nations, African Union, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Nigerian policy documents, alongside recent scholarly literature published between 2021 and 2026. It is guided by Representative Legitimacy Theory and Regional Security Complex Theory. The analysis identifies Nigeria's sustained role in ECOWAS peace and security initiatives, participation in United Nations peacekeeping, hosting of ECOWAS institutions and diplomatic engagement as relevant considerations in evaluating its candidacy. It also identifies constraints relating to continental consensus, competing African aspirations, domestic capacity, financial obligations and the broader politics of Security Council reform. The paper argues that Nigeria presents a substantial case for consideration, while emphasising that selection must remain an African Union decision. It recommends a coordinated African strategy, evidence-based articulation of Nigeria's credentials, sustained diplomatic engagement and institutional reforms to strengthen Nigeria's readiness for a permanent role.

**Keywords:** United Nations Security Council; Africa; Nigeria; Global Governance; Peacekeeping; Security Council Reform

### **1.0 Background to the Study**

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) occupies a central position in the international system, with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Its authority to adopt binding decisions, impose sanctions and authorise peace operations gives its composition considerable significance for global governance. However, the Council's permanent membership reflects the power distribution that emerged from the Second World War, rather than the contemporary demographic, political and regional composition of the international community. The United Nations has consequently continued to confront calls for a more representative, inclusive and effective Council, particularly from regions that remain excluded from permanent membership (United Nations [UN], 2024a, 2024b). The Pact for the Future,

adopted in 2024, recognised the urgent need for Security Council reform and identified the redress of Africa's historical underrepresentation as a priority (UN, 2024a).

The debate is not confined to Africa. European states have also advocated changes to the Council's composition and working methods, although their positions differ on the form and extent of expansion. Germany's participation in the Group of Four (G4), alongside Brazil, India and Japan, reflects a broader demand for additional permanent membership, while France has expressed support for greater African representation. These positions demonstrate that Security Council reform is shaped by competing proposals concerning permanent and non-permanent seats, regional representation, veto powers and the relationship between enlargement and institutional effectiveness (UN, 2024b; UN General Assembly, 2025). The European experience also illustrates that reform requires negotiation among states and groups with distinct interests, rather than a single universally accepted model.

Within Africa, the reform question is framed by the continent's longstanding exclusion from permanent membership despite its extensive participation in the United Nations and the Council's consideration of African conflicts and peace operations. The African Union's Common African Position, articulated through the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration, calls for no fewer than two permanent seats with the same prerogatives and privileges as existing permanent members, including the veto for as long as it remains available, and five non-permanent seats. The position also maintains that the African Union should determine the continent's representatives (African Union [AU], 2022, 2024). This is not simply a demand for one country to occupy a permanent seat; it is a collective claim concerning Africa's representation and voice in global decision-making.

The African position gained renewed visibility during the 2024 high-level Security Council debate on Africa's participation, where speakers reiterated the demand for two permanent African seats and additional non-permanent representation. The adoption of the Pact for the Future further placed Africa's underrepresentation within the agreed parameters for reform, while subsequent African Union statements in 2026 reaffirmed the Ezulwini Consensus and the need for coordinated diplomatic action (UN, 2024a, 2024b; AU, 2026). Nevertheless, the process remains dependent on intergovernmental negotiations and the eventual agreement of UN member states, including the permanent members whose consent is necessary for Charter amendment.

In West Africa, the regional security environment has been shaped by conflict, unconstitutional changes of government, violent extremism and cross-border instability. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has developed regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, mediation and peace support operations, while Nigeria has played a prominent role in the organisation's institutional development and security initiatives. ECOWAS' headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria, and its continuing peace and security activities provide a practical context for examining Nigeria's regional contribution (ECOWAS, 2025a, 2026a). Nigeria's engagement in the region has included diplomatic mediation, troop contributions and material commitments to collective security initiatives, although these contributions have also involved financial, political and operational costs (Ogele, 2022; Obono, 2024).

Nigeria's case for consideration in a reformed UNSC is associated with its population, continental role, peacekeeping record, regional diplomacy and participation in multilateral institutions. Its contributions to ECOWAS-led operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone, its participation in UN peacekeeping missions and its role in regional security cooperation form important elements of this case. UN peacekeeping records confirm Nigeria's continued participation in international operations, although current troop and police contributions should be distinguished from the much larger historical deployments associated with earlier missions (UN Peacekeeping, 2025, 2026). Nigeria also hosts ECOWAS institutions in Abuja, including the Commission, Parliament and Community Court of Justice, reinforcing its institutional role in West African integration (ECOWAS, 2026a).

Yet, the strategic case for Nigeria must be considered alongside the African Union's collective position and the need to avoid presenting national ambition as an established continental decision. The AU has not, through the Common African Position, designated Nigeria as the sole candidate for a permanent African seat. Nigeria's credentials must therefore be evaluated in relation to the continent's agreed principles, the capabilities expected of a permanent member and the political feasibility of achieving an African consensus. This study examines these considerations and proposes a policy pathway through which Nigeria can strengthen its candidacy while advancing Africa's broader objective of permanent representation.

## **2.0 Statement of the Problem**

Africa's absence from the permanent membership of the UNSC remains a structural limitation in global security governance. Although African states are frequently affected by Council decisions and contribute substantially to UN peacekeeping and regional peace initiatives, the continent has no permanent seat through which it can exercise continuous participation in the Council's highest decision-making category (UN, 2024b; AU, 2024). The AU's Common African Position provides a collective framework for addressing this imbalance, but implementation remains unresolved amid competing reform proposals and the complex amendment requirements of the UN Charter (AU, 2022; UN, 2024a).

Within this continental demand, Nigeria is frequently discussed as a potential candidate because of its demographic scale, diplomatic reach, regional leadership and contributions to peace support operations. However, a compelling national case requires more than assertions of size or historical prominence. It requires a structured assessment of Nigeria's peacekeeping and regional security record, its institutional and financial commitments, its diplomatic capacity and the extent to which its candidacy could command continental confidence. Current contributions, including UN assessments and peacekeeping deployments, must also be distinguished from historical achievements and evaluated using verifiable evidence (UN Peacekeeping, 2025, 2026; UN General Assembly, 2026).

The problem addressed by this study is therefore the need to assess Nigeria's strategic candidacy within Africa's collective campaign for permanent UNSC representation. It examines the basis of Nigeria's credentials, the institutional and diplomatic constraints on its candidacy, and the measures required to align national advocacy with the AU's Common African Position.

### 3.0 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine Africa's demand for permanent representation on the UNSC and assess Nigeria's strategic candidacy.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine Africa's demand for permanent representation and the implications of UNSC reform for global governance.
- ii. Assess Nigeria's contributions to African peacebuilding, peace support operations and regional security.
- iii. Analyse Nigeria's institutional, diplomatic and financial credentials, alongside constraints affecting its candidacy.
- iv. Propose a strategic framework for advancing Nigeria's candidacy in alignment with the AU's Common African Position.

### 4.0 Research Questions

- i. What are the implications of Africa's demand for permanent UNSC representation for global governance?
- ii. How have Nigeria's contributions to African peacebuilding, peace support operations and regional security shaped its strategic candidacy?
- iii. What institutional, diplomatic and financial credentials and constraints affect Nigeria's candidacy?
- iv. What strategic framework can advance Nigeria's candidacy in alignment with the AU's Common African Position?

### 5.0 Conceptual Clarification

#### 5.1 United Nations Security Council Reform

UNSC reform refers to proposed changes to the Council's composition, membership categories, regional representation, working methods and decision-making arrangements. The ongoing intergovernmental negotiations consider equitable representation and expansion, including the concerns of underrepresented regions such as Africa (UN General Assembly, 2025). In this study, reform is understood as a negotiated institutional process through which the Council's legitimacy and representativeness may be strengthened.

#### 5.2 Africa's Permanent Representation

Africa's permanent representation refers to the continent's demand for permanent membership in a reformed UNSC. The AU Common African Position calls for at least two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats, with the AU retaining the right to select its representatives (AU, 2022, 2024). It is therefore a collective continental objective rather than an automatic entitlement of any individual African state.

#### 5.3 Nigeria's Strategic Candidacy

Nigeria's strategic candidacy refers to the proposition that Nigeria's demographic scale, diplomatic engagement, peacekeeping record, regional leadership and institutional contributions make it a state worthy of consideration as one of Africa's representatives in a reformed UNSC.

This is an analytical proposition to be assessed against the AU's collective position, not a claim that Nigeria has already been selected by the continent.

#### **5.4 Peace Support Operations**

Peace support operations encompass activities undertaken by international, regional or subregional institutions to prevent, manage or resolve conflict, protect civilians and support conditions for sustainable peace. In West Africa, ECOWAS operations and UN peacekeeping have formed important elements of regional and international responses to conflict (ECOWAS, 2026b; UN Peacekeeping, 2026). This study considers Nigeria's contributions to these activities as one component of its broader diplomatic and security credentials.

### **6.0 Theoretical Framework**

#### **6.1 Representative Legitimacy Theory**

Representative legitimacy provides a useful analytical lens for examining whether global institutions reflect the interests and composition of the populations and states affected by their decisions. The Pact for the Future's commitment to redressing Africa's underrepresentation demonstrates the continuing relevance of representation to the legitimacy of the UNSC (UN, 2024a). Applied to this study, the theory explains why Africa's permanent exclusion raises questions of equity and institutional credibility. It also cautions that Nigeria's candidacy would require legitimacy not only through national capacity, but also through an accepted African selection process.

#### **6.2 Regional Security Complex Theory**

Regional Security Complex Theory emphasises the interconnected nature of security challenges among neighbouring states. West African conflicts and political instability can have cross-border consequences, creating incentives for regional cooperation and collective responses. ECOWAS' peace and security mechanisms reflect this regional interdependence, while Nigeria's contributions to regional operations provide a relevant case for examining the relationship between regional security leadership and global representation (ECOWAS, 2026b; Ogele, 2022). The theory helps explain why Nigeria's regional role is relevant to its candidacy, while not treating regional influence as an automatic qualification for permanent UNSC membership.

### **7.0 Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative documentary research design. It draws on AU and UN policy documents, ECOWAS publications, UN peacekeeping records, Nigerian government statements and recent scholarly literature published between 2021 and 2026. The documents were analysed thematically around four areas: Africa's representation in global governance; Nigeria's regional peace and security contributions; its institutional, diplomatic and financial credentials; and the strategic requirements for advancing its candidacy.

The study distinguishes between official institutional positions, recorded contributions and analytical interpretation. Historical peacekeeping engagements are considered through recent retrospective scholarship and institutional records, while current UN troop contributions and financial assessments are treated as time-specific indicators rather than permanent measures of national commitment. The study does not claim to establish a ranking of African candidates or

predict the outcome of future UNSC reform negotiations. Its conclusions are policy-oriented and should be complemented by further empirical research and updated official data.

## **8.0 Africa's Demand for Permanent Representation on the UNSC**

The current composition of the UNSC reflects a post-1945 global order that predates the independence of most African states. Africa's absence from permanent membership is therefore a persistent concern in debates about the Council's legitimacy and its capacity to represent contemporary international realities. The Pact for the Future explicitly recognised the need to redress Africa's historical underrepresentation and to make the Council more representative, inclusive and effective (UN, 2024a).

The Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration constitute the central basis of Africa's common position. They call for two permanent seats with all existing privileges, including the veto while it remains available, and five non-permanent seats. The AU also insists on its right to select Africa's representatives, reflecting the view that continental representation must be determined collectively rather than through unilateral national claims (AU, 2022, 2024).

The African position also presents a challenge of internal coordination. While member states share the objective of correcting Africa's underrepresentation, agreement on the selection of individual permanent representatives is a separate political question. Any national candidacy must therefore be reconciled with continental consensus, regional balance and the AU's established position. A durable African outcome depends not only on securing additional seats but also on ensuring that the selection process is regarded as legitimate by member states (AU, 2024, 2026).

The reform process itself remains complex. The UN General Assembly's intergovernmental negotiations continue to address the size and composition of an expanded Council, categories of membership, regional representation, veto-related questions and working methods. Charter amendment requires broad political agreement, including ratification by all five existing permanent members, making reform dependent on sustained negotiation and coalition-building (UN General Assembly, 2025).

## **9.0 Nigeria's Contributions to African Peacebuilding and Regional Security**

### **9.1 Nigeria and ECOWAS Peace Support Operations**

Nigeria has played a significant role in the development of ECOWAS' peace and security capacity. Its contributions to the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone remain important elements of the region's collective security history. Nigeria supplied substantial personnel and financial resources during these interventions, which sought to contain conflict and support political transitions. Recent scholarship on Nigeria's ECOMOG engagements also notes the scale of its role, while identifying the operational, financial and diplomatic limitations of interventions heavily dependent on a single state (Ogele, 2022; Adeniji & Silas, 2025).

Nigeria's regional peace and security contributions are relevant to its candidacy because they demonstrate experience in multilateral security operations and willingness to commit national resources to regional stability. At the same time, a balanced assessment must recognise that ECOMOG was a collective regional undertaking, not a solely Nigerian initiative. The

contributions of other ECOWAS member states and the institutional evolution of the regional organisation should therefore remain part of the account (ECOWAS, 2026b; Ogele, 2022).

## **9.2 Nigeria's Contributions to United Nations Peacekeeping**

Nigeria's participation in UN peacekeeping has extended beyond West Africa. Its personnel have served in international peace operations, contributing military, police and expert capabilities. UN peacekeeping data provide an official basis for assessing current contributions, although monthly figures vary and should not be conflated with the much larger historical deployments of earlier decades (UN Peacekeeping, 2025, 2026).

These contributions are relevant to Nigeria's strategic candidacy because peacekeeping participation demonstrates operational experience and engagement with multilateral security responsibilities. However, the strength of this credential should be assessed through transparent indicators, including the duration and scale of deployments, personnel safety, training, performance, financial contributions and compliance with UN standards. A credible candidacy should rely on verifiable evidence rather than generalised claims of being Africa's leading peacekeeper.

## **9.3 Nigeria's Diplomatic and Regional Leadership**

Nigeria's role in ECOWAS has included participation in regional diplomacy, conflict prevention and the development of collective security mechanisms. The country's hosting of ECOWAS institutions in Abuja provides a significant institutional contribution to regional integration. The ECOWAS Commission identifies Abuja as its headquarters, while the regional organisation's institutional arrangements also place key community bodies in Nigeria (ECOWAS, 2026a).

Nigeria's hosting role should be understood as an institutional and logistical contribution to regional integration, rather than a standalone qualification for permanent UNSC membership. Its relevance lies in the broader pattern of engagement with regional institutions, alongside diplomatic initiatives and participation in peace support operations. Nigeria's candidacy would be strengthened by demonstrating how these contributions have generated regional public goods and how it would continue to consult and represent African interests in multilateral decision-making.

## **9.4 Nigeria's Financial Contributions and Multilateral Responsibilities**

Financial responsibility is an important consideration in assessing the credibility of any state seeking a greater role in multilateral institutions. The UN's Committee on Contributions publishes annual assessments and payment records for member states, enabling the status of assessed contributions to be verified against official records (UN General Assembly, 2026). Nigeria's payment record should therefore be assessed using the relevant year's official UN data, distinguishing regular-budget assessments from peacekeeping assessments and other voluntary contributions.

Nigeria's regular-budget payment in 2025 was recorded by the UN's Committee on Contributions, with the payment date and amount appearing in the official honour roll. However, this historical record does not, by itself, establish that Nigeria has no outstanding obligations in 2026 or across all UN funding categories (UN General Assembly, 2025, 2026).

Accordingly, the claim that Nigeria “does not owe dues” should be used in a scholarly manuscript only if supported by a current, comprehensive official statement covering the relevant UN assessments. A sustained record of timely payment would strengthen Nigeria’s case by demonstrating compliance with multilateral financial obligations. It should be presented as one measurable component of institutional readiness, not as an exclusive entitlement to permanent membership.

### **10.0 Assessing Nigeria’s Strategic Candidacy**

Nigeria’s candidacy can be assessed through a combination of demographic, diplomatic, security, institutional and financial considerations. Its population and regional significance provide context for its international role, while its participation in ECOWAS and UN peacekeeping offers a documented basis for examining its contribution to collective security. These factors are relevant to a candidacy assessment, but they do not automatically confer a right to permanent membership, which would depend on the outcome of the AU’s selection process and broader UN reform negotiations (AU, 2022; UN, 2024a).

Nigeria’s regional role is particularly relevant because West African security challenges have required sustained multilateral engagement. Its participation in ECOMOG and ECOWAS security initiatives provides a record of involvement in regional peace operations, while its hosting of ECOWAS institutions illustrates a continuing contribution to regional integration (Ogele, 2022; ECOWAS, 2026a). Yet, Nigeria’s case should also account for the perspectives of other African states and the importance of avoiding a national claim that could undermine the AU’s common position.

A credible strategic candidacy also requires domestic institutional strength. Permanent UNSC membership would involve sustained diplomatic engagement, policy coordination, analytical capacity and financial obligations. Nigeria would need to demonstrate its ability to maintain a consistent foreign policy, contribute to multilateral processes and consult effectively with African states. These requirements are particularly important because a permanent seat would carry responsibilities extending beyond Nigeria’s immediate national interests.

Nigeria’s candidacy must also be considered within the broader politics of reform. The intergovernmental negotiations involve competing proposals on membership categories, veto powers, regional representation and working methods. Even a strong national case cannot independently resolve these structural and political questions (UN General Assembly, 2025). Nigeria’s most credible pathway would therefore combine evidence-based national advocacy with support for the AU’s collective position and sustained coalition-building across regions.

### **11.0 Constraints and Strategic Considerations**

#### **11.1 Continental Consensus and Candidate Selection**

The AU’s Common African Position reserves the right to select Africa’s representatives. Nigeria’s candidacy must therefore be advanced through continental consultation and a legitimate selection process. Treating Nigeria’s claim as already settled could create unnecessary divisions among African states and weaken the collective reform campaign (AU, 2022, 2024).

#### **11.2 Competing Reform Proposals and Veto Politics**

UNSC reform involves disagreement over the number and categories of new seats, the future of the veto and the balance between representativeness and effectiveness. The requirement for Charter amendment, including ratification by all five permanent members, presents a substantial political constraint (UN General Assembly, 2025). Nigeria's candidacy must therefore be pursued as part of a wider negotiation strategy rather than a standalone national campaign.

### 11.3 Domestic Institutional and Financial Capacity

A permanent seat would require sustained diplomatic staffing, research capacity, multilateral engagement and financial commitments. Nigeria's historical peacekeeping contributions are relevant, but current readiness should be evaluated through updated data on UN assessments, peacekeeping commitments and institutional capacity. Official UN contribution records provide a basis for such assessment (UN General Assembly, 2026; UN Peacekeeping, 2026).

### 11.4 Regional Perceptions and Representation

Nigeria's demographic scale and regional influence may be viewed as strengths by some stakeholders, while others may emphasise the need for equitable regional representation and collective African ownership. A credible candidacy should therefore demonstrate a commitment to consultation, transparency and the representation of shared continental priorities, rather than presenting permanent membership as an exclusively national achievement (AU, 2024, 2026).

### 12.0 Proposed Strategic Framework for Nigeria's Candidacy

This study proposes a Nigeria–Africa Strategic Representation Framework (NASRF) to align Nigeria's candidacy with the AU's Common African Position. The framework is not intended to substitute for the AU's authority to select Africa's representatives. Rather, it provides a structured approach through which Nigeria can strengthen its credentials while contributing to the continent's collective reform campaign.

The framework comprises four interconnected pillars:

- i. **Continental consensus and legitimacy:** Nigeria's candidacy should be advanced through AU-led consultations, respect for the Ezulwini Consensus and transparent engagement with African regional groups.
- ii. **Evidence-based credentials:** Nigeria should maintain a verified record of peacekeeping contributions, regional diplomacy, institutional commitments and financial compliance.
- iii. **Diplomatic coalition-building:** Nigeria should engage African states, existing permanent members and reform coalitions in support of Africa's agreed position on representation.
- iv. **Institutional readiness and accountability:** Nigeria should strengthen diplomatic capacity, policy coordination, research support and public reporting on its multilateral commitments.

**Figure 1. Nigeria–Africa Strategic Representation Framework**

*Source: Author's conceptualisation, informed by AU (2022, 2024), UN (2024a) and UN General Assembly (2025).*

The framework should be implemented through existing Nigerian foreign-policy institutions and AU processes. It should avoid creating a parallel continental selection mechanism or implying that Nigeria's candidacy supersedes the AU's collective authority. Its progress should be evaluated through measurable indicators, including documented AU consultations, verified contribution records, diplomatic engagements and demonstrated alignment with the Common African Position.

### **13.0 Discussion of Findings**

The documentary analysis confirms that Africa's demand for permanent UNSC representation is grounded in an established continental position and has received renewed recognition in the UN reform process. The Pact for the Future's commitment to redress Africa's underrepresentation provides a significant political reference point, although the process remains dependent on intergovernmental negotiations and agreement on the terms of reform (UN, 2024a; UN General Assembly, 2025).

The findings also indicate that Nigeria has a substantial record of regional peace and security engagement. Its role in ECOWAS peace support operations, participation in UN peacekeeping and hosting of regional institutions are relevant elements of its strategic candidacy (Ogele, 2022; ECOWAS, 2026a; UN Peacekeeping, 2026). These contributions support a serious assessment of Nigeria's candidacy, but they should not be treated as conclusive proof that Nigeria is the only or formally selected African candidate.

The analysis further demonstrates that Nigeria's financial and institutional credentials require current verification. A payment recorded in one year cannot establish full compliance across all UN assessments or subsequent years. Similarly, historical peacekeeping deployments should not be presented as current troop contribution levels. A transparent, regularly updated evidence base would strengthen Nigeria's credibility and improve the quality of its diplomatic advocacy (UN General Assembly, 2025, 2026; UN Peacekeeping, 2026).

Finally, the study finds that Nigeria's candidacy is inseparable from the AU's collective position. Its prospects for continental consideration depend on consultation, diplomatic confidence and demonstrated commitment to shared African interests. The proposed NASRF therefore places continental legitimacy, verified credentials, coalition-building and institutional readiness at the centre of the strategic approach. The framework is a policy proposal derived from documentary analysis and requires further empirical evaluation.

## **14.0 Recommendations**

### **Recommendation One**

The African Union should intensify coordinated diplomatic efforts to secure Africa's permanent representation on the UNSC in accordance with the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

- i. AU Committee of Ten to sustain structured consultations with African member states and coordinate a unified position on the reform negotiations.
- ii. AU Commission to publish periodic progress updates on Africa's Common African Position and the status of intergovernmental negotiations.

### **Recommendation Two**

The Federal Government of Nigeria should develop an evidence-based national case for consideration as one of Africa's representatives, subject to the AU's selection process.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

- i. Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prepare a verified dossier of Nigeria's peacekeeping, regional diplomacy, institutional and multilateral contributions.
- ii. Nigeria's Permanent Mission to the UN to communicate the dossier through diplomatic engagements consistent with the AU's Common African Position.

### **Recommendation Three**

The Federal Government of Nigeria should strengthen its institutional and financial readiness for the responsibilities associated with a potential permanent UNSC seat.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

- i. Federal Ministry of Finance in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to review and publish verified records of Nigeria's UN assessed-contribution obligations and payments.
- ii. Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs to strengthen diplomatic staffing, policy research and multilateral coordination capacity for sustained UNSC engagement.

### **Recommendation Four**

The Federal Government of Nigeria should pursue a coalition-based diplomatic strategy that advances Nigeria's candidacy while preserving African unity and regional confidence.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

- i. Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs to convene periodic consultations with African states and regional groups on Nigeria's candidacy and Africa's collective reform priorities.

- ii. Nigeria's Permanent Mission to the UN to engage reform coalitions and UN member states in support of equitable African representation.

## 15.0 Conclusion

This study examined Africa's demand for permanent UNSC representation and assessed Nigeria's strategic candidacy within the wider context of global governance reform. The analysis established that Africa's claim is grounded in the AU's Common African Position and the continuing recognition of the continent's underrepresentation in the UN reform process. It also identified Nigeria's contributions to ECOWAS peace support operations, UN peacekeeping, regional diplomacy and institutional cooperation as relevant credentials for consideration.

However, Nigeria's candidacy should not be treated as a settled continental decision. The AU retains the right to select Africa's representatives, and the credibility of Nigeria's case depends on continental consultation, verifiable evidence and demonstrated readiness for the responsibilities of permanent membership. Claims concerning financial compliance and current peacekeeping contributions must be supported by up-to-date official records.

The proposed Nigeria–Africa Strategic Representation Framework provides a pathway for aligning national advocacy with the AU's Common African Position. By strengthening continental consensus, documenting its contributions, building diplomatic coalitions and improving institutional readiness, Nigeria can contribute constructively to Africa's campaign for permanent representation. Ultimately, the objective is not merely to secure a seat for an individual country, but to advance a more representative and legitimate global security system in which Africa has a sustained voice in decisions affecting international peace and security.

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