

## Communication and Diplomacy as an Instrument of Good Governance and Sustainable Economic Development

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### Abstract

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There is a tendency in recent development literature to couple the concept of good governance with the concept of sustainable development. The coupling of the two concepts witnesses to the correlation that subsists between good governance and sustainable development, such that given that sustainable development is a function of good governance, where there is good governance, we should not only expect that there will be progress, but, more importantly, we should also expect that the progress is sustainable, so that the situation is one of growing from strength to strength rather than one of progress today and retrogression tomorrow. Yet paradoxically just as sustainable development is predicated on good governance, good governance itself is a function of effective communication, so that where there is lack of effective communication the result is always bad governance, which, in turn, means the possibility of sustainable development is impeded, as we cannot maximize the resources at our disposal, but wallow in endless recrimination and negativities that fail to contribute to our overall well being. Our aim is to show that there is a direct correlation between diplomacy and good governance on the one hand and good governance and sustainable development on the other, so that the best way to promote sustainable development in every sphere of life is to ensure an effective management of the resources at our disposal such as to satisfy all legitimate and competing interests.

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**Keywords:** communication, diplomacy, good governance and sustainable development

### Preamble

Very rarely does development occur in any sphere of life without a proper management of the resources at our disposal. The basic truth is that the more we are able to effectively manage the resources at our disposal, the more we are able to get from them, so that now and in the future we can guarantee the possibility of our well being.

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It is not surprising therefore that there is a tendency in recent development literature to couple the concept of good governance with the concept of sustainable development.<sup>2</sup> The coupling of the two concepts witnesses to the correlation that subsists between good governance and sustainable development, such that given that sustainable development is a function of good governance, where there is good governance, we should not only expect that there will be progress, but, more importantly, we should also expect that the progress is sustainable, so that the situation is one of growing from strength to strength rather than one of progress today and retrogression tomorrow.<sup>3</sup>

Yet paradoxically just as sustainable development is predicated on good governance, good governance itself is a function of effective communication, so that where there is lack of effective communication the result is always bad governance, which, in turn, means the possibility of sustainable development is impeded, as we cannot maximize the resources at our disposal, but wallow in endless recrimination and negativities that fail to contribute to our overall well being.<sup>4</sup> Indeed what we discover, if we interrogate our experience properly, is that very often we can make the best of a difficult and seemingly impossible situation by applying tact and diplomacy.<sup>5</sup> With diplomacy we get far more from a situation than we can imagine, making it to yield its unhidden treasures.<sup>6</sup>

In view of this consideration, it is not surprising that a striking feature of international politics since the end of the Second World War is the increasing recognition of the importance of communication and diplomacy as an instrument of good governance by all stake holders in national and international affairs.<sup>7</sup> As a result of this more and more people believe that the best way to deal with any problematic situation is through the means of dialogue and negotiated settlement of the issues involved.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See Rene Kemp and Saeed Parto, "Governance for Sustainable development: moving from Theory to Practice" in *International Journal Sustainable Development*, Volume 8, Nos.1/2 2005, pp. 12-29

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> See Abdul Aziz Said, Charles O. Lerche and Charles O. Lerche III, *Concepts of International Politics in Global Perspective*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (New Jersey, Englewood Cliffs. Prentice-Hall, 1996), pp. 68-74. See also "Diplomacy and Good Governance", Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, retrieved on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Cf. John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the Global Stage*, Ninth Edition (Connecticut: The McGraw-Hill Companies, 2003), pp. 1-26 ; See also Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (New York: HarperCollinsCollegePublishers, 1996), pp. 1-6

<sup>8</sup> Cf. David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2009), pp. 243-262

This is true in respect of issues relating to intra-personal relationship or inter-personal relationship as well as issues relating to intra-state relationship or inter-state relationship, or again issues relating to culture, education, environment, economy or the question of sustainable development as a whole.<sup>9</sup>

Indeed in finding solution to issues that arise in these domains, our contention is that the importance of communication and diplomacy cannot be over-emphasized. Thus in considering the status of communication and diplomacy as an instrument of good governance and sustainable economic development, our aim is to show that there is a direct correlation between diplomacy and good governance on the one hand and good governance and sustainable development on the other, so that the best way to promote sustainable development in every sphere of life is to ensure an effective management of the resources at our disposal such as to satisfy all legitimate and competing interests. When there is effective management of resources through the deployment of tact and diplomacy in addressing issues that arise, the result is sustainable development in every sphere of life.

For sake of convenient exposition we develop our argument in terms of the following procedure. After a brief examination of the concept of communication and diplomacy and the relationship that subsists between them, we consider the role of communication and diplomacy in good governance; and then how good governance impacts on the question of sustainable development, with specific focus on the case of sustainable economic development. By way of critical appraisal, the final moment of our reflection briefly considers how our discourse relates to the Nigerian predicament. Let us begin then by immediately focusing attention on the concepts of communication and diplomacy, the relation that subsist between them and how they relate to the larger question of good governance.

## **2. The Concepts of Communication and Diplomacy**

In considering the meaning of the concepts of communication and diplomacy we should start perhaps with the question of the relationship that subsists between the two concepts. Is there any difference between communication and diplomacy, or are they the same? If the two concepts are different what is the difference and how are they related? Arguably of the two concepts, the broader concept is the concept of communication, which means that the concept of diplomacy presupposes the concept of communication, but communication is not necessarily diplomacy unless communication fulfils an additional requirement, namely, unless communication is

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid. See also Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, pp. 1-6

informed by tact and is effective in the sense of creating rapport or enhancing rapport between the parties in communication.<sup>10</sup>

## 2.1. Communication and the question of its meaning

Thus to say that the concept of communication is broader than the concept of diplomacy is to suggest that the concept of communication is foundational for the concept of diplomacy, albeit is not constitutive of the concept of diplomacy. Nonetheless a clarification of the concept of communication can serve as a point of departure for understanding what is at issue in the phenomenon of diplomacy. Derived from the Latin, "communicare", which means "to share", communication can be defined "as an act of conveying intended meaning from one entity or group to another through the use of mutually understood signs and semiotic rules."<sup>11</sup> In other words, as Merriam-Webster Dictionary conceptualizes it, "communication is the act or process of using words, sounds, sign or behavior to express or exchange information or to express your ideas, thoughts, feeling, etc to someone else."<sup>12</sup>

From this definition we can deduce immediately that communication is a two-way process involving two polarities and in which one polarity sends out a message and the other polarity receives and decodes the message relayed and responds to the message, so that the communicative act remains incomplete unless what is sent is received and decoded and replied.<sup>13</sup> In this sense the communicative act involves a certain call-response circle and one communicative moment consummates only to initiate another communicative moment. Thus communication by its very nature is an integral part of human relation such that without communication human relation is virtually impossible, given that human relation thrives on the very possibility of dynamic interaction between two or more people, with communication being the vehicle of such interaction.<sup>14</sup> If communication is a sine qua non for human relation as suggested, we can indeed argue that communication is constitutive of what it means to be human, so that we cannot conceivably exist without communicating. Indeed communication is so constitutive of human nature such that we communicate even in the very process of trying not to communicate.

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<sup>10</sup> Abdul Aziz Said, Charles O. Lerche and Charles O. Lerche III, *Concepts of International Politics in Global Perspective*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, pp. 69-72. See also "Diplomacy and Good Governance" Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, retrieved 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

<sup>11</sup> See "Communication" Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, retrieved on 28 September 2016

<sup>12</sup> See Merriam-Webster Dictionary online

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, "The Future of Diplomacy" in Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis (editors), *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, pp. 1-6. See also See "Diplomacy and Good Governance" Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, retrieved on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

This immediately suggests that communication is a highly ramified phenomenon.<sup>15</sup> Hence it is little wonder that scholars of communication usually distinguish between different forms of communication such as verbal communication and non-verbal communication, intra-personal communication and inter-personal communication.<sup>16</sup> Yet the crucial point is that regardless of the species of communication in question, what is evident is that communication in all its ramifications is a process of interaction in which there is exchange between the communicating polarities.

Beyond the fact that the notion of communication involves a basic interaction between the polarities the other point we should make is that communication by its very nature can either be successful or unsuccessful. The communicative act is successful when the message communicated is received and understood as intended and possibly receives an appropriate response as legislated by its inherent meaning otherwise the communicative act is unsuccessful. In other words the communicative act fails, if the inherent goal of establishing a rapport between the two polarities as a result of what is communicated is not achieved either because what is communicated is not grasped in its meaning or is misunderstood.<sup>17</sup> In this sense we speak of breakdown in communication as the intended exchange between the two polarities is frustrated. In other words communication fails or is incomplete when what is communicated is misunderstood or is not validated in terms of appropriate response.

Of course, generally the natural telos of the communicative act is to succeed, so that more often than not we take extra care to formulate our intended message such that it is not misunderstood; for, if misunderstood, the point of communication is defeated, as it cannot succeed in establishing a rapport between the polarities. Instructively, it is on this topos that the difference between communication qua communication and communication as diplomacy can be established; for, against this backdrop emerges the crucial distinction between effective communication and ineffective communication, bad communication and good communication or, again, successful and unsuccessful communication.

## **2.2. Diplomacy and the question of its meaning**

While diplomacy generally is a form of communication, what sets it apart as a unique form of communication is the fact that it is a form of communication that places great premium in achieving the goal of communication by ensuring that what is

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. David P. Barsh and Charles P. Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, pp. 221-240

<sup>16</sup> See "Communication" Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, retrieved on 28 September 2016

<sup>17</sup> The Art of Tact and Diplomacy [www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/tact.diplomacy.html](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/tact.diplomacy.html) downloaded Wednesday 28th September 2016

communicated is not only understood as intended but also serves as a vehicle for creating, or managing or strengthening the rapport between the communicating parties.<sup>18</sup> In other words the point of diplomacy is not just to communicate but to communicate effectively, so that the very essence of diplomatic communication is effective communication and effective communication itself is good and successful communication, as contradistinguished from bad communication and unsuccessful communication. If the essence of diplomatic communication is effective communication, it is evident that diplomatic communication must strive to avoid bad communication and unsuccessful communication.

In view of this consideration it is not surprising that diplomacy is often seen not just as a form of communication but also as a method used to aid effective communication, especially during negotiation and when attempting to be persuasive or assertive.<sup>19</sup> In this sense diplomatic communication is strategic communication, so far as it self-consciously strives to avoid booby traps in communication that would truncate the success of the communicative act. Against this backdrop we can understand why John Rourke would aver that "diplomacy has to do with finding peaceful means of conflict resolution".<sup>20</sup> Indeed, Rourke says explicitly in characterizing the nature of diplomacy that "diplomacy is all about handling (managing) human relationship such as to avoid conflict or when conflict arise to find amicable way of settling them"<sup>21</sup>

Associating diplomacy with strategic communication aimed at resolving conflict, as Rourke does, means that diplomacy necessarily involves a process of negotiation in which the goal is to get all the disputing sides to discuss the matter of their differences and arrive at an agreed settlement of the issues, using different mechanisms of communication by way of dialogue.<sup>22</sup> The implication is that at the heart of diplomacy is the concept of negotiation which involves the mediation of different points of views with a view to harmonizing or reconciling them. The desire for such harmonization and reconciliation is the very engine that drives diplomatic communication.

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. Abdul Aziz Said, Charles O. Lerche and Charles O. Lerche III, *Concepts of International Politics in Global Perspective*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition pp. 68-74. *The Art of Tact and Diplomacy* [www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/tact.diplomacy.html](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/tact.diplomacy.html). downloaded Wednesday 28th September 2016

<sup>19</sup> See David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, Chapter 11

<sup>20</sup> John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the Global Stage*, p. 275

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

What the foregoing conceptualization of diplomacy presupposes is that an essential part of what is involved in tact and diplomacy is taking the other person into account.<sup>23</sup> In other words, it presupposes that we are able to read the thinking and feeling of the other and relate with the other appropriately in this wise, whether in respect of making concessions where concessions need to be made or demands where demands need to be made.<sup>24</sup> To be able to read the other accurately means that we not only integrate ourselves into his world but we also anticipate how he will act and react, given the situation at hand or any situation for that matter. It is this knowledge of the other in terms of his thinking, feeling and expectation that leads us to relate with the other appropriately, adjusting our comportment as the situation requires, such as to make the best of the situation.<sup>25</sup>

If we are able to read properly and relate accordingly, it will lead to effective communication and this in turn will yield an improved relationship. On the contrary if we fail to read at all or do not sufficiently take into account the contemporary situation of our subject in his thinking, feeling and expectation with all the ambiguities involved therein, then our communication is sure to be ineffective. Indeed it is more likely than not that we will end up causing offence by what we say or do and this will have an adverse effect on the relation as our rapport with the other is undermined.<sup>26</sup>

### **2.3. The inter-face between communication and diplomacy: diplomacy, human relation and conflict resolution**

From what we have said so far, it is evident that the goal of diplomacy and tact in relationship is to avoid conflict or rather to minimize the incidence of conflict and when a relationship is already enmeshed in conflict and misunderstanding, we can resort to tact and diplomacy in sorting it out. Yet this will not happen until we have interrogated the situation and understood what is going on or what has conditioned the contemporary situation of conflict as well as its inner dynamics.<sup>27</sup> In view of this consideration it is not surprising that many commentators view diplomacy as a tool for managing human relationships. Consequently, diplomacy becomes handy in dealing with all forms of relationship in which conflicts occurs.

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<sup>23</sup> John W. Young and John Kent, *International Relations Since 1945: A Global History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 1-15. See also "The Art of Tact and Diplomacy" [www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/tact.diplomacy.html](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/tact.diplomacy.html). downloaded Wenesday 28th September 2016

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* See also Abdul Aziz Said, Charles O. Lerche and Charles O. Lerche III, *Concepts of International Politics in Global Perspective*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, pp. 71-72.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

We can think of domestic relationship where there is disagreement within the family, where siblings disagree or where children are at logger-head with their parents; or again where husband and wife disagree. We can think also of disagreement between friends or disagreement between co-workers. We are all too familiar with these species of disagreement from the standpoint of our daily experience and they all require the resources of tact and diplomacy in order to handle them.

No less is true of domestic disagreement that occurs within the state where various elements of the state are at logger-heads with each other, or where a section of the state is at logger-head with the state as a whole. We are all too familiar with cases of conflicts in the domestic sphere of the nation state and here as elsewhere the pertinence of diplomacy in dealing with the situation is beyond question.<sup>28</sup>

Yet apart from disagreement in domestic sphere of the individual and the nation state, we also have conflicts at the international sphere in respect of the relationship between one state and another state, or again one state and the whole of the international community as occurred during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. International disagreement no less than domestic disagreement within nation state requires the tool of tact and diplomacy in order to address them. Indeed since the end of the cold war, the international community has witnessed greater effort to deal with conflicts through the means of diplomacy rather than force, although the question arises again and again as to the relationship between diplomacy and force, whether the two are necessarily opposed or can be combined in realizing the objective of quest for peace.

Of course, force offers an alternative approach to the resolution of conflicts and up until the end of the Second World War it remained the predominant approach in dealing with conflicts in International relations. This mode of conflict resolution is often predicated on the principle of might is right, as each of the parties pursue their unbridled interests unilaterally. Given that each party takes its interest as sovereign and non-negotiable it is not surprising that this approach often ends in war.<sup>29</sup>

Nonetheless, with the events of the First and Second World Wars, humanity has come to learn painfully that such realist ideology of international relation can hardly guarantee international peace and security but must lead to recrimination upon recrimination, hence following the end of the Second War, concerted effort has been made to counter balance the realist emphasis on force with the emphasis on co-operation through the means of dialogue and negotiation.

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<sup>28</sup> John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the Global Stage*, p. 275

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* Chapter 11. See also Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, pp. 1-6

Indeed the world is learning more and more that in any conflict situation, it is better to jaw-jaw than to war-war.<sup>30</sup> To jaw-jaw rather than war-war not only means that there can be a better understanding of the situation of conflicts, but more importantly, it also means there is a possibility that through peaceful settlement of the dispute, the disputants with time may come to understand their differences and even become friends of a sort.<sup>31</sup> There is no doubt that the shift from the realist emphasis on force to the idealist emphasis on co-operation established through the means of dialogue and diplomatic communication has affected the way in which diplomacy is conducted in the contemporary context and indeed as many commentators argue it has left the world a much peaceful place.<sup>32</sup> That conflict is a natural feature of human relationship in all its ramifications means that tact and diplomacy will continue to be relevant as a means of conflict resolution at various levels of human relationship.<sup>33</sup>

Indeed in view of importance of diplomacy in managing and maintaining human relationship, tact and diplomacy is a quality everyone must cultivate. Indeed if are to make a success of our lives and vocation, we all need to be diplomats of a sort, for it means that armed with the basic skills of diplomatic communication, we can always handle difficult situations in human relationship and make the best of them without allowing them to mar us.

### **3. Communication, diplomacy and the question of the dynamics of good governance**

In what follows we turn our attention to the sub-topic of the role of diplomacy (understood as diplomatic communication) in good governance. The question is what is the relationship between diplomacy and good governance? In what sense can diplomacy be considered as an instrument of good governance?

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, pp. 243-247. See also Abdul Aziz Said, Charles O. Lerche and Charles O. Lerche III, *Concepts of International Politics in Global Perspective*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (New Jersey, Englewood Cliffs. Prentice-Hall, 1996), pp. 69-72 and Stanley Hoffmann, "The Uses and Limits of International Law" in Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, pp. 127-131

If what we said in the preceding section about diplomacy in relation to management and maintenance of human relations by way of conflict resolution is correct, it is evident that diplomacy has indeed a positive role to play in good governance; for, at the heart of governance is the task of coordinating various elements within a system to achieve specific goal.<sup>34</sup> But before we consider in detail the status of diplomacy as an instrument of good governance we must first clarify the concept of good governance. What is governance? What makes for good governance and how can it be distinguished from bad governance?

### 3.1. The concept of governance

Commentators are in agreement regarding the difficulties associated with defining the concept of governance.<sup>35</sup> Because the concept often means different things to different people in different contexts there is no one definition that captures the meaning of the term.<sup>36</sup> Nonetheless scholars believe that at the heart of the concept of governance is the idea of the conduct of public affairs and management of public resources in view of the growth and development of the system in question, where system can refer to any social unit such as family, church, state, class, or any organization for that matter.<sup>37</sup>

Associated with the Greek word, *kubernau*, which means to steer a ship, the meaning of the concept is traced back to Plato who first used it metaphorically in the context of steering men. Against this backdrop, it means therefore that governance basically involves the process of directing the affairs of a group.<sup>38</sup> In this sense, it is a political concept that pertains to the question of who controls a group or an organization or, again, who determines what happens in a group or organization, how things are done and who does what in order to ensure that the affairs of the group is managed such as to realize its set goal.

Yet while the concept can be used with reference to the management of the affairs of any organization or group, it is usually deployed in conceptualizing the specific case of administration of a nation state or its various units such as regions, states and local governments. When used in this strict sense it refers to the whole complex processes, institutions and norms by which a country is led.

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<sup>34</sup> See Rene Kemp and Saeed Parto, "Governance for Sustainable development: Moving from Theory to Practice" in International Journal Sustainable Development, Volume 8, Nos 1/2 2005, pp. 12-29

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> "Diplomacy as Instrument of Good Governance", Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, retrieved 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

<sup>37</sup> Cf. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, "What is Good Governance?"

<sup>38</sup> See "Good Governance", Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, retrieved on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

This emphasis is evident in the definition of the concept of governance offered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its 1997 policy paper, to the effect that governance is the “exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a country’s at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences”.<sup>39</sup> Instructively, UN’s definition is corroborated by the World Bank when it defined governance in 1993 as “the method through which power is exercised in the management of a country’s political, economic and social resources for development.”<sup>40</sup>

What is clear from both definitions is that regardless of the species of social unit in question governance always has to do with the general idea of central control in respect of the affairs of any group, whether it is governmental or non-governmental, or again, whether it is church, tribe, family, market or any network for that matter. The central authority that controls the affairs of the group not only takes responsibility for the group but it is also accountable to the group in the context of ruler-ruled relationship.<sup>41</sup>

One key area where the authority exercises its responsibility and control over the group is in the area of decision making.<sup>42</sup> Governance is virtually inconceivable without this consideration. Because of the centrality of the burden of decision making in the whole dynamics of governance it is not surprising some simply conceptualize governance as the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented.<sup>43</sup> If governance is so defined, it is important to stress that decision making is never a burden that the government or central authority of the group takes alone.

In the context of governance decision making is always a corporate affairs involving several stakeholders within the system with the central authority (government) being them main actor. Of the other actors that have a stake in decision making, we can mention such groups as the landlord association, religious leaders, leaders of thought and opinion within the society, finance institutions, political parties, the military, the media, the lobbyists of various kinds, NGOs, Multinational corporations.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> See Rene Kemp and Saeed Parto, “Governance for Sustainable development: moving from Theory to Practice” in *International Journal Sustainable Development*, Voume 8, Nos 1/2 2005, pp. 12-29

<sup>42</sup> Cf. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, “What is Good Governance?”

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

All these groups together make up what is usually known as the civil society and they exist to provide critical support to the government in the task of governance.<sup>44</sup> Because they have a stake in what happens they are usually consulted in decision making and their contribution can go a long way in influencing the decisions that are made. Because the various segments of the civil society reflects several and often diverse interests their involvement ensure that decision making takes into account and counter-balance all the interests at play.<sup>45</sup> In other words the elements of the civil society ensure by their various voices that the decision making process is open, fair, objective as well as consensual.

### 3.2. The concept of good governance

In view of the forgoing considerations which cast light on the concept of governance as well as its architectonic, we can then move on consider the concept of good governance. The notion of good governance implicates the notion of bad governance as one is simply the negation of the other.<sup>46</sup> Yet it is not sufficient to define good governance by saying that good governance is not bad governance otherwise it is simply a tautology.

Perhaps a useful point of departure in decoding the concept of good governance is that good governance and bad governance flow from the stream of the concept of *governance qua governance*. Yet whereas bad governance is a negation of what true governance ought to be, good governance is a realization of what true governance ought to be. Hence one way to pin down the credentials of good governance is to identify those concrete qualities that make for ideal governance. For, these qualities arguably are also qualities of good governance. It is usual to recognize eight of such qualities and the idea is that when governance exhibits such qualities it can be said to be good governance otherwise it is a case of bad governance.

What are these qualities in question? First is participation. Good governance involves people as much as possible, giving them the opportunity to express themselves and contribute their quota. Governance which to not allow people to participate is not good governance. Secondly, good governance has respect for rule of law. It follows due process and does not operate arbitrarily. Governance in which the established norms are not the *modus operandi* in resolving issues cannot be said to be good governance. Thirdly is transparency. Good governance is one that is transparent. Transparency means that enough information is provided and is provided in easily accessible modes and media. Fourth is responsiveness. Good governance is proactive in responding to the demands of stakeholders.

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

It requires that institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe and do not keep people waiting unduly. Fifth is consensus oriented. Good governance takes into account wide range of interests and opinion and does not discriminate against any interest group. On the contrary it mediates different points of view and interests in the society in reaching a decision on what is best for the society. Sixth is equity and inclusiveness. Good governance is equitable and inclusive and does leave anyone feeling he is excluded from what is happening. It ensures that the most vulnerable especially are carried along and have the opportunity to improve their well being. Seventh is effectiveness and efficiency. Good governance means that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. Eighth is accountability. Good governance is one in which accountability is a key requirement. Government institutions as well as private sectors and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders.<sup>47</sup>

It is important to stress that good governance is an ideal in the final analysis in the sense that it is difficult to realize all of these qualities. Very few organizations, societies or countries come close to approximating good governance. Even western countries that are often held up as model of good governance in contrast to developing countries do not achieve good governance in its totality, meaning that the work of trying to achieve good governance is always an unfinished business relative to which the largest room is the room for improvement.<sup>48</sup> Because the absence of these qualities indicate bad government, most aid awarding institutions use good governance as a benchmark in deciding which country or group merits to receive aids.<sup>49</sup>

### **3.3. The question of inter-face between diplomacy and good governance**

This leads us immediately to the question of the interface between diplomacy and good governance. If we confront the qualities of good governance with the hallmark of diplomatic communication we see immediately that good governance and diplomacy are indeed dancing partners in the sense that all the qualities required by good governance appears to be part and parcel of what makes for diplomatic communication. Indeed the crucial qualities of diplomatic communication such as ability to listen, emotional intelligence, empathy, assertiveness, rapport, politeness, delay of gratification and detachment is key in maintaining a healthy human relationship with others.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> See Rene Kemp and Saeed Parto, "Governance for Sustainable development: moving from Theory to Practice" in International Journal Sustainable Development, Voume 8, Nos 1/2 2005, pp. 12-29

<sup>49</sup> Cf. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, "What is Good Governance?"

Incidentally these qualities are also qualities that can foster good governance, so that arguably good governance and diplomatic communication collapse into each other.<sup>50</sup> If part of the essence good governance is to bring together various elements of the society in making and implementing decisions that affect the well being of the society, we cannot underestimate the importance of maintaining a synergy between the various elements. Creating and maintaining synergy between peoples and groups without question is a department of human relations, and if at the heart of diplomatic communication is the management of human relations such as to avoid conflicts or deal with them constructively when they arise, then it is obvious that diplomatic communication is an asset to governance, so that without it, the purpose of governance can hardly be accomplished.<sup>51</sup>

Thus it is evident that that diplomacy will always be a potent instrument in governance. If governance is to proceed at all levels the various stakeholders have to take each other into account. The logic of governance in this sense cannot be divorced from the logic of negotiation. If decision making is at the heart of governance and if there are so many contending interests and perspectives that need to be harmonized and taken into account, then it is inevitable that the stakeholders must be diplomats of a sort.

It is not surprising therefore that at all levels of national and international politics, diplomats have a key role to play in mediating the various interests groups.<sup>52</sup> As noted already in situations of conflicts, it is diplomats that undertake the onerous task of negotiating peaceful settlement of disputes. This is true in respect conflicts within a state or again in respect of conflicts between states in the international community.<sup>53</sup> Resolution of conflicts that occur in national and international politics can hardly be done without the deployment of the resources of diplomacy.

#### **3.4. Diplomacy and good governance: the question of limits of diplomacy**

But it is important to stress that nothing is perfect under the sun. While the synergy between governance and diplomacy is evident, it is nonetheless the case that there is sometimes a short fall between theory and practice in diplomatic practices and this must surely affect the extent to which diplomacy can be an effective instrument in promoting good governance.

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<sup>50</sup> Cf. Abdul Aziz Said, Charles O. Lerche and Charles O. Lerche III, *Concepts of International Politics in Global Perspective*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, pp. 71-72.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, "What is Good Governance?"

<sup>52</sup> David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, pp. 243-250

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*

For diplomacy to be as effective as possible as an instrument of governance, it means diplomacy must be free from ideological politics and politics of narrow national interest.<sup>54</sup> This is arguably the Achilles heel of diplomacy as far as its role in fostering good governance is concerned.

We must see immediately that a negotiator that is biased or is driven by narrow interest cannot be as objective as possible and if he has to oversee important negotiation then his bias is bound to affect the decision making process and its outcome. In this sense the weakness of the diplomat easily robs on the quality of the decision process and its results so that we cannot always expect the best from the process. Arguably this was a major weakness that confronted international diplomacy in the wake of the cold war as the ideological battle between the West and Soviet Union meant that diplomats were compromised from the start and became more or less lame ducks as far as the task of diplomacy in negotiating peaceful resolution of conflicts is concerned. This is bound to be the case whenever we have a dualistic opposition between stakeholders, as the risk always is that people will be divided along ideological lines.<sup>55</sup>

We can see how this adversely affected the conduct of foreign relations among African nations, for throughout the period of the war it was as if African Countries virtually had no foreign policy independent of their ideological patrons, so that the whole of African was more or less divided between the West and Soviet Union with Africa cut in up in the middle of the ideological struggle such that it was difficult to address the interests of Africa as they are in themselves. With the collapse of the cold war, however, we have a much improved situation for beyond the ideological divide that held sway hitherto the challenge is to see things as they are and not as mediated by ideological interests.<sup>56</sup>

Indeed it is arguable diplomacy has undergone a rebirth in this new context of post-cold war international politics and it is better off for it, for it means that it is better positioned to play its role more effectively as an instrument of governance at all levels, national and international.

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Abdul Aziz Said, Charles O. Lerche and Charles O. Lerche III, *Concepts of International Politics in Global Perspective*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Chapter 4

<sup>56</sup> Cf. John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, Chapter 1. See also Howard Handelman, *The Challenge of Third World Development* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1996), Chapter 3

Yet because the international system is an anarchic system in which for the most part self-interest is the principle of operation rather than genuine mutual co-operation, diplomacy can hardly be ever neutral or purely objective and this means that the role it can play in governance is inevitably limited.<sup>57</sup>

But here, as in other context of human endeavor, the rule is to continue to strive to overcome one's limitation. We must say that the multi-lateral context of contemporary diplomacy is much more improved than what obtained hitherto under the regime of the cold war. Yet now the challenge is for diplomacy to become more democratic in its manner of operation; for, if that happens, it will be in a better position to contribute more effectively to the task of governance.<sup>58</sup>

Consequently, just as the process of governance should be more democratic in its mode of communication diplomacy as well needs to become more democratic in respect of its modus operandi; for, this can only solidify the synergy between diplomacy and good governance. Surely a more democratic and open diplomacy is better equipped to bring about a more democratic and open governance. The synergy between diplomacy and governance in this sense of openness that inform both perhaps explains the contemporary appeal of democracy as a system of governance without prejudice of course to the limitations of democracy.

#### **4. Good governance and the question of sustainable economic development**

In what follows we turn our attention to a consideration of how good governance impacts on the question of sustainable development with specific focus on the case of sustainable economic development. Here our modest thesis is that good governance is naturally a harbinger of sustainable development, so that where good governance abounds, we should expect that sustainable development will be the natural end result. Given the synergy we established as subsisting between diplomacy and good governance in the preceding section, it is easy to see that the same synergy is transferred from the logic of diplomatic communication through the route of good governance to the domain of sustainable development. In other words just as diplomacy impacts positively on good governance, diplomacy also has the same effect on the whole question of sustainable development and its possibility; for, the more governance becomes democratic as a result of proper coordination of various sectors and their respective stakeholders through the mechanism of diplomatic communication, the more there is a guarantee of the possibility of sustainable development and its expansion.

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid. See also Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, pp. 1-6 and John W. Young and John Kent, *International Relations Since 1945: A Global History*, pp. 1-15

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

#### 4. 1. The question of sustainable development

But before we argue the case of the positive impact of diplomacy on sustainable development, we need to first clarify the concept of sustainable development and expose its correlation with the concept of good governance. Like the concept of good governance, the concept of sustainable development is difficult to pin down because the concept can have different meanings for different people depending on their ideological persuasions.<sup>59</sup> Yet beyond the ambiguity that bedevils the concept the general idea is that sustainable development is a notion of development that is not only holistic, integrating various dimensions of human life such as economy, society and the eco-system, but more importantly, it also extends over a long period of time, possibly over several generations, or indeed as many generations as it can possibly cover and not merely circumscribed within the contemporary generation.<sup>60</sup>

Thus at the very heart of the notion of sustainable development is concern for the content of development in question, that is, whether or not it is as ramified as possible and not just limited to just a segment of human life, say the material component or the cultural component. But there is no less concern for the time-frame in terms of which provisions of the development in question is operational. Consequently it is arguable that sustainable development is integral development since the idea is that all aspects of life should be taken into account as far as the calculus of well being is concerned just as the present as well as all future generations should be taken into account as well and not just the present generation.<sup>61</sup>

This emphasis on need for integrity with respect to the claim of the development in question, if it will pass as sustainable development, is clearly brought out in the definition offered by United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development in its 1987 report entitled, *Our Common Future* to the effect that, "sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of "needs", in particular, the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitation imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet the present and future needs."<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> See "Sustainable Development, Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia, retrieved 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> See Pope Francis, *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home*, Chapter 1, 17-61

<sup>62</sup> Cited in "Sustainable Development", Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, retrieved Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Beyond the provisions of the Brundtland Report, as *Our Common Future* is also known, the concept of sustainable development has advanced beyond the initial inter-generational framework that drove it to take into account the goal of “socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic growth” as should be evident from the proceedings of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development which outlines the building of a just, sustainable and peaceful global society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The action plan Agenda 21 for sustainable development makes a similar contribution of intensifying our concept of sustainable development by “identifying information, integration and participation as key building blocks to help countries achieve development that recognizes these interdependent pillars.”<sup>63</sup>

The core emphasis is the inclusiveness of the concept of sustainable development so far as, first, “everyone is a user and provider of information”, just as there is need to involve everyone in decision making process as well as co-ordinate and properly integrate the social, political and the ecological in all development processes as a basic pre-requisite for sustainable development.<sup>64</sup> Indeed the Millennium Development Goals formulated mainly for Africa, Asia and Latin America and its successor, namely, The Sustainable Development Goals, essentially an agenda for realizing sustainable development by 2030 takes into account a broad based focus in conceptualizing the meaning of sustainable development.<sup>65</sup>

The overall point therefore is that if the development in question is not holistic but is merely limited to an aspect of life, say the economy, to the neglect of the eco-system and social justice, or again, if it is merely generational, focusing on the narcissistic needs of contemporary generation to the neglect of the legitimate claim of future generations, then we cannot genuinely speak of sustainable development or if we must, we must do so only with accommodation and gross limitation to the extent that the situation in question approximates these ideals.

The basic truth is that the goal of every entity—and this includes, any individual, group, society, country or even humanity as a whole—is to thrive and realize its optimum possibilities not only now but also in the future. Nothing is as desirable as stable and continuous enjoyment of well being all through one’s life and even beyond. But unless in actual and concrete terms we fulfill the condition for the possibility of this, which is another name of sustainable development that desire remains merely a wish.

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

Of course we can speak of growth or progress in every sphere but unless the progress or growth is sustainable and covers the future in all its ramifications we are not dealing strictly speaking with a case of sustainable development, if at all we can speak of development.<sup>66</sup>

I suppose the crucial point here is that growth does not necessarily translate into development but even when it does we do not have sustainable development unless the various ramifications of life are positively captured by the growth and change in question and indeed can be sustained across generations. Consequently it is evident that the problem of sustainable development fundamentally has to do with how we can sustain development over a long period of time with as many dimensions of human life positively influenced by such a change.

While, as noted, the goal of every entity is to realize and guarantee such scenario sustainable development—and perhaps this is the cardinal objective of governance—the painful reality is that very often there is a sharp reality between desire and reality, between theory and practice. In other words despite our best effort it is not always the case that sustainable development is realized. In fact for the most part realizing the ideal sustainable development is a problem that requires a systematic investigation in order to excavate its root causes and address it radically and constructively.

#### **4. 2. Global poverty and environmental degradation and the question of sustainable development**

Instructively two fundamental considerations have been pivotal in problematizing as well as popularising the issue of sustainable development, namely, the problem of global poverty and the problem of environmental degradation. As one studies put it in explaining the historical origin of the concept of sustainable development, “The concept of sustainable development arose from two main sources: increasingly worrisome evidence of ecological degradation and other biophysical damage, both despite and because of the greater wherewithal provided by economic growth and the largely disappointing record of post-WW11 ‘development’ effort, particularly the persistence, and in some places worsening, of poverty and desperation in a period of huge overall global increases in material wealth.”<sup>67</sup> In focusing on the issues of poverty and environmental degradation as highlighted above, it is important to see that the crux of the matter in the end pertains to a certain misplacement of priorities as far as the demands of global governance is concerned.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> See Rene Kemp and Saeed Parto, “Governance for Sustainable development: moving from Theory to Practice” in *International Journal Sustainable Development*, Volume 8, Nos 1/2 2005, pp. 12-29

First global economic growth and the wealth associated with it seems to be accomplished at the expense of the health of the eco-system, so far as the degradation of the eco-system is the result of exploitation of natural resources in view of maximization of economic growth, so that it is as if one robs Peter to pay Paul, so that we must wonder whether it adds up in the final analysis.

If the eco-system is degraded, what is the point of economic growth that results from the exploitation of the eco-system? In the short term, one may celebrate his accomplishment but the resulting economic capital grossly undermines the natural capital upon which it is radically dependent. Thus over a period of time the likelihood is that the depletion of the environment, that is, the depletion of natural capital is bound to undermine all future economic productivity and growth so that we are caught in a circle that easily passes as a case of "penny wise and pound foolish", so far as for the sake of current situation we have invariably mortgage the future by failing to protect and nurture the environment while exploiting it for our benefits.<sup>68</sup> Consequently it is a matter of scandal that the degradation of the eco-system can be allowed to cohere with economic growth that does not take into account the situation of future generations as far as the potentials of the eco-system as the foundation of economic activity and growth is concerned.

The second issue, namely, the problem of global poverty confronts us with a similar paradox; for the question is: how can there be so much poverty amidst global affluence. When we consider the sharp disparity in social condition between the countries of the Southern hemisphere and the countries of the Northern hemisphere the situation inevitably raises crucial question of social justice and so far as we are faced with such imbalance we can hardly justify poverty amidst wealth, for it means that there is lack of distribution of global wealth.<sup>69</sup>

Both of these issues not only perplex the rational mind, but they are also scandals that beg for explanation and the quest to understand these phenomenon is at the heart of the emergence of the concept of sustainable development, for these scandals are indicative of failure of governance, failure to ensure equitable distribution of global wealth as well as failure to ensure a balanced management and preservation of the environment for the present and future generations.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Cf. "Sustainable Development" Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, retrieved Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

<sup>69</sup> See John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, Chapter 18. See also Stephen D. Krasner, "Power Vs Wealth in North-South Economic Relation" in Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, pp. 299-318

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

Not only are they indicative that we cannot coherently speak of sustainable development, but they also indicate that as long as the situation is allowed to stay we cannot guarantee peace and security. Moreover, and perhaps more troubling, the situation constitutes a serious threat to the future of humanity.<sup>71</sup>

#### **4.2.1 Oloibiri, environmental degradation and the question of sustainable economic development**

We can illustrate the above issues at the heart of the problem of sustainable development and the challenges they constitute by referring to the case of Oloibiri, the Niger Delta community in Bayelsa state where oil was first struck in commercial quantities about sixty years ago. Oloibiri, without question, is part of the engine house that has sustained the Nigerian oil-based economy since independence and the stupendous oil wealth that Nigeria boasts of. Paradoxically recent report has it that “sixty years after oil exploration began in Olibiri, Oloibiri community has nothing to show for the wealth tapped from their soil but for dry and rusty wells, a polluted environment and a host of health, economic and social challenges. As Magnus Eze puts it in his “Day ‘Oloibiri’ stormed Abuja for reparation” Rather than benefit from the oil discovered on its soil, Oloibiri is “a classical case of “used and dumped” as today it lacks every known social amenity coupled with the attendant implication of the rapacious degradation of its eco-system.”<sup>72</sup>

It is easy to see that Oloibiri’s case is multifaceted. The community without doubt is rich in human resources but sadly has not enjoyed its benefits. Second it has not only being exploited but its environment is destroyed, so that it is not only poor now but she risks to be poor in the future, incapable of supporting herself on account of the degradation of her environment. If the degradation continues without check it might come to a point where everything breakdown and the eco-system is no longer able to sustain any economic activity and productivity. In this case it will be natural fortune turned into misfortune. It is sad that she has been abused and impoverished, but it will be even sadder if in the future the environment is destroyed beyond recovery. This will be a worst evil and it all stems from unbridled exploitation of natural resources without care for the issue of preservation and the fate of future generation.<sup>73</sup>The case of Oloibiri is a metaphor for what can happen if the eco-system is exploited selfishly for economic gains without care for the environment and the situation of future generations.

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<sup>71</sup> See “Sustainable Development” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, retrieved Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

<sup>72</sup> Magnus Eze, “The Day Oloibiri Stormed Abuja for Reparation” [sunnewsonline.com/day-oloibiri-stormed-abuja-for-reparation](http://sunnewsonline.com/day-oloibiri-stormed-abuja-for-reparation). September 21, 2016 downloaded on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

<sup>73</sup> Ibid

It can yield much wealth, but in the end we cannot say that sustainable development is guaranteed.<sup>74</sup> Indeed the case of Oloibiri can be enlarged writ large and applied to the entire issue of environmental degradation and what it means for the whole question of sustainable development. When we do so we discover that it is a similar issue we face in the problem of global warming and climate change; for, it emerges that we are not just dealing with a local matter, rather we are dealing with a global matter with serious repercussion for the future of humanity.<sup>75</sup> Exploiting the environment can yield immense economic interest but to do so in such a way that endangers the continuity of the human kind is a matter that makes nonsense of the wealth that accrues there from.<sup>76</sup>

Yet there is a sustained political dimension to the issue of global warming, climate change and environmental degradation such that one suspects that very often it is unbridled self-interest that prevails in a matter that requires that everyone co-operates in order to preserve the environment and save the future of the eco-system and the future of humanity.<sup>77</sup> The basic truth is that while the economic dimension is not unimportant it pales into insignificance compared to the significant threat that the entire situation constitutes for the eco-system and indeed the whole of humanity.<sup>78</sup>

The same challenges we find here is what obtains in respect of the scandal of poverty amidst global wealth. Interestingly more and more studies are beginning to establish a link between terrorism and poverty, arguing that it is only natural that people become restive and resort to violence in expressing their frustration and anger if they believe that global economic and social environment in which they operate does not guarantee a good deal for them but is in fact responsible for their poverty and deprivation.<sup>79</sup> While this is not a justification for terrorism it is a good explanation for the phenomenon and that should send a clear message that the sharp disparity between developing and developed countries do not in any way foster global human solidarity.<sup>80</sup> On the contrary it is a scandal that will continue to cause division and the more insensitive the rich is to the plight of the poor the more the international system will be insecure, so that amidst such situation of poverty amidst wealth we cannot speak of sustainable development as far as the situation of the international system is concerned.<sup>81</sup> Unless there is redistribution of wealth and a real effort to bridge the gap between the poor and rich the stability of the international order is not secure.

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<sup>74</sup> See Rene Kemp and Saeed Parto, "Governance for Sustainable development: moving from Theory to Practice" in *International Journal Sustainable Development*, Volume 8, Nos 1/2 2005, pp. 12-29

<sup>75</sup> Cf. John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, Chapter 11

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> See David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, Chapter 3

<sup>80</sup> See John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, Chapter 11

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

Thus from the ecological standpoint there is a formidable threat to the stability of the international system just as there is also a formidable threat from the standpoint of issues of social justice raised by the problem of disparity between the rich North and the poor South.<sup>82</sup>

### **4.3. Diplomacy, good governance and the question of sustainable development**

In view of the foregoing consideration it is not surprising that the question of sustainable development has become a burning issue in the Twenty First century. This should be clear from the definition of sustainable development offered by the United Nations and its allied bodies. This is equally evident from the various efforts that has been undertaken and are currently being undertaken by the United Nations to address the problem of poverty and environmental degradation. We must see that these initiatives are indeed contribution the quest for sustainable development.

Yet in all these the correlation between communication and diplomacy on the one hand and governance and sustainable development on the other is patent. For it is arguable that the problem of poverty and environmental degradation, as they affect the issue of sustainable development, is first and foremost a problem of governance. Not only are they problems of governance but fundamentally they reflect failure in governance and if they must be addressed in the final analysis it is through the means of governance that this can happen. We cannot fail to remark that for the most these problems arise and have persisted as a result of global corruption driven by unbridled self-interest that prioritizes economic gains over and above other more important consideration such as the health of the eco-system and the future of humanity as a whole.<sup>83</sup>

If we consider that many multi-national companies which, for the most part front for their home countries exploit natural resources without caring much for the preservation of the environment we begin to under how we can have this sort of mess in our hands. Yet it is one thing to understand why we are where we are as far as the threat of depletion of the environment and its natural resources is concerned, it is another thing to know what to do in order to arrest the situation and actually do it such as to guarantee the possibility of sustainable development. Yet this can hardly happen unless the activities of the multi-national companies are constrained.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> See Rene Kepm and Saeed Parto, "Governance for Sustainable development: moving from Theory to Practice" in International Journal Sustainable Development, Voume 8, Nos 1/2 2005, pp. 12-29

The efforts of the United Nations and its several agencies need to be acknowledged, but the question is how far can these efforts go so long as the international system remains an anarchic environment in which matter are dictated by pure self interest even it appears that Nations agree to co-operate.<sup>85</sup> We can take the case of global warming and the efforts by the United Nations to get various countries to sign up to the agreement to reduce their carbon emission and honor the commitment. More often than not the matter and negotiation is overshadowed by politics as interacting nations sometimes place their national interest over and above the interest of humanity as a whole.<sup>86</sup>

We can see this in respect of the attitude of the United States in failing to ratify the Kyoto accord. Amidst this sort of scenario, we are faced the issue of diplomacy, for in the absence of a supra-national authority to which nations of the world are subject, the international system remains anarchic and it is only through the means of diplomacy that nations can be persuaded to honor their agreement.<sup>87</sup> While this is obviously a matter for global governance, it remains to be seen how governance can be ultimately effective at this level if each nation is its own master and would do only what serves its interest.<sup>88</sup>

Perhaps this sum up the paradox at the heart of the correlation of governance and the problem of sustainable development as far as the situation in the international community is concerned. Now while the picture looks somewhat bleak, since, given the principle of sovereignty on which the international system is built, any nation is always free to back out of any agreement if she considers that it does serve her interests, we must say that this does not leave us with strong system as far as the architectonic of global governance is concerned.<sup>89</sup>

#### **4.4. Good governance and sustainable development: the question of limits of diplomacy**

While diplomatic communication is the means of making progress in this terrain diplomacy is nonetheless grossly limited in what it can accomplish in the final analysis. But it is already a commendable effort and progress that nations of the world, with diverse and sometimes conflicting interests can gather to discuss matters that affect our common humanity.

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<sup>85</sup> See Manfred B Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Chapter 6

<sup>86</sup> Cf. John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, Chapter 11

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* See also Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, Chapter 6

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> See John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, Chapters 1 and 2

The limits of diplomatic communication in securing the best deal for all against the hegemony of one over many partly explains why there is an increasing advocacy of an international government that will assume an oversight function over and above all the nations that comprise the international community.<sup>90</sup> If that ever happens it means that there is a better framework of governance and it will make it easier to get nations to co-operate on matters that affect our common humanity. But the price for such supra-national authority is the erosion of the principle of sovereignty on which the current international system is built.<sup>91</sup> Should such supra-national authority emerge in the future it will surely warrant a re-thinking of the international system and such rethinking is bound to affect our understanding of international relations as well as the place of diplomacy in international relations.<sup>92</sup> Nonetheless in the absence of such body, it means that international system will continue to be bedeviled by ambiguities in respect to the issue of global governance just as diplomacy will also be limited in what it can achieve without prejudice of course to its possibilities.<sup>93</sup>

The challenge always is one of how to check global corruption that undermines the possibility of sustainable development at the global and what diplomacy can contribute in enabling governance to accomplish this. Without question through the means of diplomatic communication governance can help to put legislations in place that will regulate the activities of state actors and non-state actors, but the problem is how far can this be implemented, if the international system is ultimately anarchic rather than democratic.<sup>94</sup> The problem of global poverty and environmental degradation really expose the equivocation inherent in diplomatic communication and governance at the global level; for the truth is that, for the most part, people know what is right but the problem that they lack the political will to do the right thing as in a show of *realpolitik*, self-interest is prioritized over and above what is right.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> See David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, Chapter 13

<sup>91</sup> See Damian Ilodigwe, "Globalization and the Question of African Identity", Paper presented at the International Mancept Workshop on Political Theory, 7-9 September 2016 at University of Manchester, United Kingdom.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid

<sup>93</sup> See John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, Chapters 1 and 2

<sup>94</sup> This is arguably one of the challenges facing International law in current situation of International relation and the role of international law in regulating the behavior of various actors in the international area especially state actors that are supposed to be sovereign without recognition of any other ultimate authority beyond itself. See David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, Chapter 15. See also John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, pp. 304-327. See also Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, pp. 1-6

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, chapter 1. Cf. John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 1-14

## 5. Communication, diplomacy and the Nigerian predicament: good governance and the question of sustainable development

What we find to be the case in global politics where the international system is anarchic is what obtains in many national politics in the developing countries of the world such as Nigeria, where politics is enmeshed in corruption.<sup>96</sup> Because democratic institutions are either weak or non-existent, private interests often prevail over national interest or private interests prevail over common good, so that governance is hardly transparent, accountable, nor consensus-oriented.<sup>97</sup> Rather governance is built round powerful individuals who control the system and hold it to ransom rather than on democratic institutions that counter-balance the over-sight and coordinating function of the central authority.

Given that the *modus operandi* of the system is not rule of law, things are not done according to due process, so that a curious situation arises where certain individuals become more influential in the scheme of things than the government. Not only does this situation undermine good governance but the end result is sure to be institutional corruption. In this sort of scenario sustainable development cannot be guaranteed; for given that things are done arbitrary and the will of private individuals supersede and hold to ransom the general will we have a situation where a few people pocket the wealth of the nation! With the institutionalization of corruption as a way of life, the system is sure to breakdown with time; for, in truth where there is not rule of law or where is it not effective we cannot genuinely speak of a government, since in the first place governance is supposed to take responsibility for the people as well as be accountable to the people.<sup>98</sup>

This arguably is the story of Nigeria since independence till date. It is a shining example of how bad governance has impeded the possibility of sustainable development. How else do we explain the fact that after more than fifty years of independence and with all the stupendous wealth that accrued from oil majority of Nigerians still live in poverty?

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<sup>96</sup> See Damian Ilodigwe, "Globalization and the Question of African Identity", Paper presented at the International Mancept Workshop on Political Theory, 7-9 September 2016 at University of Manchester, United Kingdom.

<sup>97</sup> Recently report had it recently that some Governors lavished billions of naira on bullet proof cars for themselves and their wives. In a country currently in recession with many people out of employment and workers not paid for month, their action raises serious question about their sense of priority and accountability. It is definitely not a healthy sign as far as the state of governance in concerned and this sort of behavior allows us to understand why it has been difficult for Nigeria to forge together as a nation as for the most part individuals hardly take the national interest into account. See Punch Newspaper, Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2016

<sup>98</sup> See Damian Ilodigwe, "Globalization and the Question of African Identity", Paper presented at the International Mancept Workshop on Political Theory, 7-9 September 2016 at University of Manchester, United Kingdom.

Not only has the wealth of the nation not being harnessed for the well being of the people, the future of the upcoming generations has also been compromised in the process. But given the resources of diplomatic communication all hope is not lost as the current situation of economic recession and the crisis of confidence it provokes for the national psyche might be a reality check that will compel the nation to take the bull by the horn by looking at the matter as it is and undertake the onerous task of restructuring the architectonic of governance, so as to ensure that there is openness, transparency and accountability in the manner in which public resources are managed.<sup>99</sup>

It is always better to jaw-jaw rather than war-war. Perhaps that is the perennial appeal of diplomatic communication and democratic governance.<sup>100</sup> It may not yield immediate solution to the matter but the light it casts on the matter in its true nature is already a point of departure in getting a hold on the situation. The fact that there is all kinds of “civil war” within the Nigerian nation either in the name of terrorism or Boko Haram insurgency, or Niger Delta crisis, or again, herdsman terrorism is a clear indication that all is not well with the country. That the country has suddenly slipped into recession certainly does not help matters, but this might provide a renewed opportunity to get it right, given that crisis has a way of bringing the best out of us, so long as we allow it to become a moment of sober reflection that enables us to re-anchor ourselves upon reality rather than mere shadows.

## 6. Summary and conclusion

To return from the Nigeria’s failed attempt at nationhood so far to the situation in the global world, the correlation between communication and diplomacy on the one hand and governance and sustainable development on the other hand cannot be over-emphasized. Throughout our exposition we have maintained in respect of the global situation as well as the Nigerian predicament that there can be no genuine sustainable development without good governance.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> This point was well made by Hilary Clinton when he visited Nigeria in 2009. She said in respect of the need for Nigeria to put in place a strong mechanism of internal democracy: “Again, to refer to President Obama’s speech, what Africa needs is not more strong me, it needs more strong democratic institutions that will stand the test of time. Without good governance, no amount of oil or no amount of aid, no amount of effort can guarantee Nigeria’s success. But with good governance, nothing can stop Nigeria. It’s the same message that I have carried in all my meetings, including my meetings this afternoon with your president. The United States supports the seven-point agenda for reform that was outlined by President Yar’ Adua. We believe that delivering on roads and on electricity and on education and all the other points of that agenda will demonstrate the kinds of concrete progress that the people of Nigeria are waiting for.” See “Good Governance”, Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia retrieved 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

<sup>100</sup> David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, Chapter 11

<sup>101</sup> See John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, Chapter 11

Sustainable development is always the result of good governance, the result of effective and efficient management of public resources through the process of decision making and implementation of decision in view of securing the well being of the people.<sup>102</sup> Unless governance takes responsibility for the people and is accountable to the people exercise of governance cannot lead to sustainable development. Bad governance is the root cause of under-development and at the heart of bad governance is corruption in which the integrity of the system is not only undermined but narrow selfish and private usurps the priority that naturally belongs to the system.<sup>103</sup> Wherever private interest supersedes group interest, sustainable development cannot be guaranteed.

This arguably is the current situation of the international system ridden as it were by all sorts of corruption, inequality and social injustice. If the international system is not transparent or democratic it means it contains its own seed of destruction; for, it is going against the holy grail of good governance and the price for this is always insecurity, division and recrimination. So we must consider it quite significant that it is precisely at the peak of the global wealth that the phenomenon of globalization has created that the system is suddenly engulfed by insecurity of a more dangerous kind in the name of global terrorism.<sup>104</sup> Like in the case of all crises, the crisis of insecurity that terrorism has unleashed on the international system is opportunity to step back from the situation and understand the true nature of things and how such a scenario could have developed. With resources and benefits of diplomatic communication a lot can be accomplished in terms of coming to terms with the situation as it is and what needs to be done to remedy the situation.

As we have maintained all through our exposition a fundamental function of diplomacy is the management and maintenance of human relations such as to forestall conflict situations or deal with them constructively when they have arisen. With respect to the situation in the international system and the challenges it creates for the whole question of sustainable development, we cannot underestimate the role of communication and diplomacy in bringing succor to the situation. Without doubt we cannot question the correlation between communication and diplomacy on the one hand and governance and sustainable development on the other. It is largely in view of this correlation that communication and diplomacy can serve as instrument of governance and sustainable economic development.

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<sup>102</sup> See "Sustainable Development", Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia retrieved Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

<sup>103</sup> Cf. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, "What is Good Governance?"

<sup>104</sup> Cf. John T. Rourke, International Politics on the World Stage, Chapter 1