

REPORT ON THE SECOND FOREIGN POLICY LECTURE SERIES OF THE NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Relevance of the United Nations in World Order

On Wednesday, 5 November 2025, the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) hosted its second Foreign Policy Lecture Series, with the title, *Relevance of the United Nations in World Order*. The focus was on the relevance of the United Nations, eighty years after its establishment, and its role in promoting global peace, security, and development; emphasizing Nigeria's active participation in peacekeeping, diplomacy, and advocacy for Africa as key parts of its foreign policy in the UN. The Chairman of the event, Prof Sir Bolaji Akinyemi, the Chairman of the Institute's governing council, was ably represented by Amb. Akinremi Bolaji. In his welcome address, he noted that the UN still faces major challenges such as inequality, conflict, climate change, migration, pandemics, and the need for Security Council reforms. He also stressed the importance of involving the public in understanding and supporting foreign policy goals.

The distinguished Director-General of the Institute, Prof Eghosa Emmanuel, ably represented by Prof. Chinasa Ohiri, Head, International Economic Relations, gave the welcome remarks. She highlighted the importance of the discourse as being centered on the UN amid global challenges such as conflict, inequality, climate change, and technological change, while reaffirming Nigeria's active role in peacekeeping and advocacy for developing nations. She highlighted that the lecture was aimed at encouraging dialogue and policy ideas that could strengthen Nigeria's role in global affairs while exploring how the UN can remain effective, inclusive, and responsive in a rapidly changing world.



The lecturer, His Excellency, Professor Muhammad Bande, former Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the UN and former President of the UN General Assembly, shared insights on strengthening multilateral cooperation and Nigeria's position in the global system. His lecture examined the evolution of the world order and how shifts in capitalism, globalization, and technology have shaped international relations and governance. He explained that today's global system is built on production efficiency and interconnected economies, which influences how



nations cooperate and compete. He emphasized that the United Nations, established after World War II to maintain peace and global stability, remains a vital institution but must continue to evolve with the new geopolitical realities. Professor Bande outlined the UN's structure, its principal organs, agencies, and supporting bodies, as the foundation for global cooperation and accountability. He noted the importance of law, equality among states,

and responsible management of great power rivalries to prevent instability and protect future generations.

His lecture also highlighted how modern challenges such as cybercrime, migration, border tensions, and human rights violations cannot be solved by a single nation. He argued that this makes international collaboration through the UN more important than ever. Despite political rivalries, major powers still recognize the need for multilateralism and the UN as a platform for addressing global issues. Prof. Bande noted that the UN has played a major role in maintaining peace and preventing nuclear war since 1945 through Security Council resolutions and peacekeeping missions. Although peacekeeping efforts have faced criticism for their costs and occasional misconduct, their overall contribution to peace and humanitarian progress has been substantial. The UN's continued relevance depends on its ability to uphold global norms, mediate conflicts, and advance human rights.

In the discussion, attention was drawn to persistent inequality and the shared social and economic struggles facing nations worldwide. Professor Bande emphasized that no country is exempt from these challenges and that the UN's mission of leaving no one behind remains essential. He pointed out that the UN's strength lies in its ability to bring all states, whether large or small, into dialogue on equal terms, even amid disagreements. However, he also noted systemic problems such as power imbalances, limited resources, and bureaucratic delays that hinder reforms. The lecture underscored the growing influence of NGOs, civil society, and data-driven initiatives in promoting inclusive and transparent governance.

Finally, the conversation addressed current conflicts like the wars in Ukraine and Gaza as examples of territorial aggression and humanitarian crises. He condemned any violation of international law and called on member-states, including Nigeria, to fulfill their UN obligations, strengthen their institutions, and build diplomatic capacity to contribute more effectively to global peace and development.

At the closing remarks, Amb. Bolaji Akinremi thanked Professor Bande for his scholarship, and lasting contributions to national peace and development while noting that the United Nations remains an essential platform for dialogue, diplomacy, and global justice. He also reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to supporting a strong and reformed United Nations system. Appreciation was extended to the management of NIIA, students, scholars, policymakers, and all participants for their active involvement and insightful engagement throughout the session.

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