

## TRUMP'S POLICY ON CLIMATE CHANGE: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** Climate change is the average rise in surface temperature on earth due to the use of fossil fuels by humanity. Since the ascendance of the Trump's Presidency in 2016, the United States has conspicuously withdrawn from climate change agreements, as it is evident with the Paris Accord. Trump's rejection that the emissions of carbon dioxide are effects of human activities is worrisome. Indeed, this has attracted global criticisms and nations are in search for alternative ways to curtail the unprecedented dangers climate change hurls on its citizens. In this paper, the strategy of Trump's policy on climate change agreement will be examined, focusing on the consequences of his withdrawal and its effects on sustainable development in Nigeria. Exploring the realist approach that states are main actors in the international arena, struggle for power and act in pursuit of their national interests, Trump's policy exhibits the primacy of state sovereignty on the issue of climate change agreement. Thus, the withdrawal from the agreement is a re-establishment of the sovereignty of America. Using secondary sources such as journals, books, and the internet, the potential measures to counter the withdrawal and the implication on Nigeria are analyzed as well as a study on the next action for both countries on the climate change, arguing that, the immediate benefits of Trump's policy would come with future damages, and Nigeria must create strong governance policy and collaborate with regional neighbors.

**Keywords:** Climate Change, Paris Accord, Trump's Policy, Realist Theory, Development

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Climate Change is the long term changes in the average weather pattern of a region observed over a period of time. The weather conditions that are key in this change are precipitation, temperature, and sea levels. It is caused by increases in greenhouse gases (GHG) in the Earth's atmosphere which is emitted mainly by the burning of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, coal). When these gases are soaking with heat from the sun, the heat becomes trapped instead of leaving the earth's atmosphere. This makes the Earth warmer, causing droughts, floods, heatwaves, and storms, etc. The main greenhouse gases (GHGs) that cause climate change are Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), Nitrous Oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), hydro fluorocarbons (HFCs) and Tropospheric Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>). The major ways these gases impede the escape of heat received initially from the sun by the surface of the earth is by sending back to space short wave energy. Thus, the accumulation of these heating waves over the decades is what is called climate change.

In spite of the multilateral actions already put in place to minimize the emissions of the major greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, methane and also fluorinated gases, (HFCs, PFCs, SF<sub>6</sub>), which led to a series of international summits and negotiations, success towards an economy of low-carbon has not been achieved and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions continue to steadily rise. This fight is also anchored through President Barack Obama's speech of Feb.25, 2009, saying that, "To truly transform our economy, to protect our security, and save our planet from the ravages of climate change, we need to ultimately make clean, renewable energy the profitable kind of energy" (New York Times, 2009).

According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), 2015-2019 was the warmest five-year period on record, with global average temperature increase by 1.1°Celsius since the pre-industrial period, and by 0.2°Celsius compared to 2011-2015. With the growth of the severe climate events such as the Hurricanes Maria and Irma that hit the Caribbean and Florida in 2017, and environmental degradation. Also, in Nigeria, the increasing temperatures and sea levels across the country led to the loss of lives and properties due to flooding and drought across cities in 2019. Notwithstanding the alarming data on climate change, the entrance into the potency of the Paris Accord on Climate Change on 4 November 2016 was applauded as a successful historical milestone and a growth of multilateralism. This has been seen as the first multilateral treaty of the century and as a trajectory across the gridlock of climate change, which the Copenhagen Conference failed to determine in 2009.

Undoubtedly, this is the first time in the history of the United Nations that 195 Member States inclusive of the European Union had a consensus to take solid steps towards climate change mitigation and adaptation, committing to limit increased global temperature to below 2°C from the pre-industrial levels. This remarkable event ushered in a renowned role of the United States in the multilateral climate era, considering that, the administration of President Obama was actively involved in the process of negotiation. However, as soon as the Republican Donald J. Trump ascended as the President of the United States, he created a disturbing aura amongst environmentalists. It is quite pertinent to note that, the US President and his team of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are skeptics of climate change and have clung to the side of the Counter Movement on Climate Change, which rejects the nexus between human activities and climate change. Trump's policy towards climate change is quite obvious: Trump's policy exhibits the realist perspective which argues that states are the main actors on the international stage, struggle for power, and act in pursuit of their national interests. The primacy of state sovereignty on the issue of climate change agreement cannot be over-emphasized. Hence, America's withdrawal from the Paris Accord is a re-establishment of its sovereignty. Additionally, climate change is not an important element of the foreign policy of the US, for this reason, an internal environmental policy must not overburden the economy of the US and domestic jobs in an excessive way (for instance, through higher electricity prices and higher taxes). Similarly, Trump views his predecessor's environmental regulations as inordinate and also the major cause of loss of jobs in the oil & gas and coal mining industries (this is clearly demonstrated in the Executive Order n. 13783 of 28 March 2017).

The implication of this policy on Nigeria is that since they are relatively still a developing economy, they have not in any way contributed adversely to the effect of climate change. Even though, Nigeria ranks 5th among the major emitters in Africa, there is a need for an economic initiatives that will enhance growth and to us to the stage of industrialization to benefits our citizens. This paper examines Trump's policy on climate change using reviewed kinds of literature from journals, books, and the internet. It shall provide some insight into the Paris Accord, the potential measures to counter Trump's withdrawal, and the hostility towards the multilateral climate change exhibited by his administration. Therefore the problem does not only rely on the Parish Accord compliance, but it also lies in the concerted efforts to disengage from all processes backing such action with domestic excuses of "America First". The implication on sustainable development in Nigeria will be analyzed as well as a study on the next action for the US on climate change, arguing that, the immediate benefits of Trump's policy would come with future damages. In this framework, potential measures or retaliation that could be used by Nigeria to cushion the impact of US withdrawal will be examined.

## 2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

A fundamental insight from the sub-discipline of international relations, and from which this study proceeds is that climate change plays an important role in defining the behavior of states in the international system. Climate change is one of the most contentious discourses in international relations in the modern era. It is an unstoppable trend that affects both natural and artificial resources all over the

world. The failure by nations to unanimously provide leadership (governance), policy and finance to tackle this destructive element is a huge concern by many. Unlike other phenomenon in the global arena, climate change is rapid and acute in manifestation and ready to leave devastating marks on all nation's (ratified or not) national resources and security. Since climate change impacts national interest, security and sovereignty of nations, it is deemed appropriate to explore Hans Morgenthau's (1904-1980) realist thought of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to explain the trend, climate change. Hans, postulates that, states are the main actors in the international environment, as they all struggle for power and act in the pursuit of their national interests and aspirations. For this reason, climate change affects all nations as it unleashes its destructive consequences on the human race across the globe. Climate change is one of those disruptive trends that respect no barriers such as governance, territories, sovereignty or human rights. Its damage is generally impactful and grave on both living and non-living things. Since climate change is not restricted to only rising temperatures but also extreme weather conditions like hurricanes, tornadoes, sea levels rise, storms, flood, drought, shift in habitats and wildlife populations, and a range of other effects. Similarly, insofar as it is argued to have been caused by human activities by releasing heat trapping gasses (GHG) into the atmosphere, the onus also lies on humans to put in measures to tackle the menace.

For these reasons, the United Nations in 2016, through its Framework for Climate Change (UNFCCC), convened its 197 members all over the world in Paris to chart a way forward in the efforts to fight and adapt the effects of global climate change through a consensus agreement. This agreement stipulates in its article 4 and 7, to deal with emissions from greenhouse gases, its adaptation, finance and mitigation, and also to increase the support to aid developing nations against climate change issues. In this analysis, the realist thought which remains the most famous, promotes state power in inter-state relationships, and is indisputable in the evolution of modern era hypothesis and application in international relations has been used to explain President Trump's behavior as he withdraws from the Paris agreement, noting that nations always act to protect their own interest and influence. Despite the increased interdependent characteristics of inter-state dealings in the contemporary state system, the state-centric approach that relies more on power influence, largely affects the objectives and directions of international relations. Nigeria can also exhibit its power and influence as the most strong and viable economy in Africa towards climate change. Stating that, as a country whose income and livelihood depends largely on agriculture, it has not contributed half a quarter to the effects of greenhouse gases and may not have the finances the developed nations have to engage nor follow through the adaptation and mitigation processes and the Independent Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) required under the Paris Agreement that countries should reduce national emission and adapt to climate change effects. This study notes the renewed interest in global climate change multilateral processes. It acknowledges that scholars of climate change have begun to draw attention to the challenges and implications of the threats posed, including governance, policy and finance as well as the importance of collective action to ensure that emerging economies are not dragged into huge economic and social deprivation by the developed economies.

### 3. CLIMATE CHANGE

For over 200 years, there has been an ongoing debate on Climate Change. Although scientists intensified arguments in the 19th century when they started seeking to know if ice has covered Northern Europe thousands of years ago. In the 1820s Jean Baptiste Joseph Fourier discovered that "greenhouse gasses" trap heat radiated from the Earth's surface after it has absorbed energy from the sun. In 1859 John Tyndall suggested that ice ages were caused by a decrease in the amount of atmospheric carbon dioxide (The Guardian, 2007). Also, in 1896 Svante Arrhenius showed that doubling the carbon dioxide content of the air would gradually raise global temperatures by 5-6C - a remarkably prescient result that was virtually ignored by scientists obsessed with explaining the ice ages (Harding, 2007).

Predictions about climate change continued until Guy S Callender suggested that the warming trend revealed in the 19th century had been caused by a 10% increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels. Even at this stage, scientists were not perturbed, they were confident that most of the carbon dioxide emitted by humans had dissolved safely in the oceans. However, in 1957, it was predicted that it was a complex chemical buffering system that was used to prevent seawater from holding on to much atmospheric carbon dioxide. This was when the possibility of humans contributing to climate change came to limelight, as scientist became serious in their investigations through the collection of evidence to test the observation that temperatures across the globe were increasing on an alarming rate with greenhouse gas emissions, hence, they began to design mathematical models for future climate predictions.

In 1958 Charles Keeling began long-term measurements of atmospheric carbon dioxide at the Mauna Loa observatory in Hawaii (Course Hero, 2011). Now, the figures show an indisputable annual increase, with roughly 30% more of the gas relative to pre-industrial levels in today's atmosphere - higher than at any time in the last 700,000 years (The Guardian, 2007). Temperature readings also reveal the average warming of 0.5-0.6C over the last 150 years(Harding, 2007). It was At this point, that skeptics began to argue that the records from the predictions were as a result of high urbanization near weather stations but today, it is accepted widely that urbanization is significantly unrelated to climate change as most of the heat has been detected over the poles and oceans not close to the metropolis. Since the 60s, evidence of climate change has continued to increase.

According to Harding, in 1998 Michael Mann and some of his colleagues published a detailed analysis of global average temperature over the last millennium known as the "hockey stick graph." Since the industrial revolution, this is the most revealing increase in rapid temperature. Despite concerted efforts to find fault with Mann's methodology, his basic result is now accepted globally as sound .Then, in 2005, just as the Kyoto Protocol for limiting greenhouse gas emissions was ratified, the American Professor of climate science, James Hansen, and his noble team detected dramatic warming of the world's oceans – not surprising about a climate world. Similarly, the increase in temperature over the two centuries has left no doubt on many as debates surround the origin. Some have argued that the increase is due to vigorous solar energy output, others say it is as a result of greater volcanic emissions of carbon dioxide, while others think differently.

Furthermore, the huge spread of scientific agreements in 2005 about climate change and the sudden irreversible damage it may cause around 2050 if the average global temperature continues to increase and exceeds 2C is worrisome, as scientists have already noted a few facts that, the Greenland ice cap may melt away in large proportions, there will be free increased of carbon dioxide from the soils, the extinction of the Amazon forest, the emission of methane from permafrost, and many other unpredictable occurrences. In Nigeria, even though not yet an industrialized nation, many other factors account for seasonal variations, leading to climate change prediction for 2018/ 2019 by the Nigeria Meteorological Agency (NiMet), which said to be very hot years. The mean annual difference and trend of rainfall over the last five decades in Nigeria reveals several important changes of extreme wet and dry years leading to increase droughts, erosion, heat waves, and floods in many parts of the nation. These climate conditions if ranges between 18-32C with the humidity above 60% will, however, lead to epidemics like cholera, malaria, and other diseases.

Another worrisome fact is, these conditions may impede agricultural production which is the mainstay for all Nigerians. About 23% of the nation's Gross Domestic Product is from Agriculture. (Source) Thus, to sustain the full potentials of Nigeria's development goals, actions must be taken to avoid the significant threat climate change poses for the nation. Hence, this new wave of "instant climate change" which has reversed earlier predictions of slow changes in climate is what has prompted many scientists to forewarn that, the failure nations, international organizations to put in modalities of mitigation on



climate change may threaten millions of lives, lead to a global greater economic depression by 2050 and eventually a total fall of modernization. These mitigation procedures are now frontline deliberations as can be seen through many conferences, summits, and multilateral agreements on climate change in the international milieu.

#### 4. PARIS ACCORD

In the year 2016, the world converged to chart a new path in the efforts for global climate change through a consensus agreement at a Convention held in Paris. This agreement is known to be historic, as for the first time all the members of the United Nations( including Nigeria), gathered for a common cause to put forth ambitious efforts to fight and also adapt climate change effects, with increased support to aid developing nations. Championed by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), it stipulates in its article, to deal with emissions from greenhouse gases, its adaptation (Art. 7), finance and mitigation (Art. 4). Nevertheless, it is pertinent to note, the turning point which determined the inclusion of emerging economies in the new Agreement was represented by the deal between former President Obama and the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Xi Jinping during the APEC Summit (Joint Statement on Climate Change of 11 November 2014). China, for the first time, recognized its interest in contrasting climate change, given its unsustainable impact on the health of the Chinese population.

The axis between the USA and China is the geopolitical foundation of the Paris Agreement. Undeniably, the involvement of fast-growing emerging economies, such as China and India, is the novelty of the Paris Agreement (Pavone, 2018). The Paris agreement was signed on 22, April 2016 by 195 member states with the European Union inclusive. This came into effect on 4 November 2016 as the world's most cooperative agreement ever. To this effect, it won the Princess of Asturias Award for International Cooperation. However, today, all members of the UNFCCC who signed the agreement have become part of it excluding Turkey and Iran, even though they are undoubtedly among the important emitters.

Strategically, the aim of the Paris Accord is to strengthen global responses to the threats climate change presents, by ensuring to keep global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius(Art. 2 UNFCCC, 2016). Also, it focuses to strengthen the capacity of countries to deal with the effects of climate change. In achieving these ambitious goals, suitable financial flows, a new framework of technology and an improved framework to build capacity (Art. 9,10 and 11) shall be put in place, hence aiding action by the most vulnerable and developing countries, in tandem with their national goals. Additionally, the Agreement provides for improved transparency of action and support through a more robust framework of transparency (Art. 13). Through “nationally determined contributions”, such as regular reports and implementation actions on emissions, 5 years global stock-taking (Art. 14) to assess collective progress on the agreement is required by all members to bring to fore their best practices for future successes. Significantly, the aspect that replaced the Kyoto agreement with the Paris Agreement and made it relevant is the instrument of the voluntary and nationally determined targets. Also, developing Nations like Nigeria shall have the opportunity to create climate change policies with indigenous characteristics looking at its prevalent challenges for the world to see.

In article 4, Para. 2, the agreement states that Each Party shall prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions that it intends to achieve (UNFCCC, 2016). Parties shall pursue domestic mitigation measures, with the aim of achieving the objectives of such contributions (UNFCCC, 2016). By early 2017, more countries ratified to this agreement to reduce and mitigate their greenhouse gas emissions in order to maintain global temperature rise to below 2degrees Celsius returning to the pre-industrial period. Today, the ambitious estimates of 2 Celsius have become the sign of negotiations on climate matters. Since 2018, the Paris agreement has been operationalized through a

work program launched in Paris by different subsidiary bodies to develop procedures, modalities, and guidelines on wide-scale issues. Nevertheless, it is low expectation that the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDCs) will be sufficient to realize the 2 degrees Celsius target in the Paris Agreement, despite the language used in the deal, it is seen quickly to be out of reach, even though ambitious.

The Agreement also contains a long-term emissions goal at Article 4, where it states that parties aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible and to achieve “a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century”(Pavone, 2018). Most importantly, the Paris Agreement has abandoned the initial bottom-up approach of the Kyoto Agreement which divided the countries of the North and South, by acknowledging that both developed and emerging economies cannot be required to drastically reduced emissions simultaneously. Now both sides are committed to reducing their GHGs (the Paris Agreement strives towards net-0 emissions by the second half of 21st Century), even if only on a voluntary basis.

Furthermore, article 2, Para. 4, affirms that “Developed country Parties should continue taking the lead by undertaking economy-wide absolute emission reduction targets. Developing country Parties should continue enhancing their mitigation efforts, and are encouraged to move over time towards economy-wide emission reduction or limitation targets in the light of different national circumstances”(UNFCCC). In addition, some elements of the Paris Agreement such as the pledge to review and increase ambition level over time, low carbon development roadmaps, support for developing countries, and global stocktaking need to be recognized.

The low level of obligations of the Paris Agreement is known to be highly enhanced by President Barack Obama, the former US administration who skipped the vote of the US Senate in order to be able to participate in the new climate change agreement. Today, these efforts have been undermined by the Trump Administration. Hence, without the former multilateral promoter and the second polluter in the world on climate change negotiations, the Paris agreement remains but only a soft treaty.

## 5. THE RATIFICATION IN NIGERIA

The Nigerian delegation engaged in the negotiations on the climate change deal ratified the 2915 Paris Agreement on 16 May 2017. Considering that Nigeria is one of the top six greenhouse gas emitters in Africa. This is commendable. Also, Nigeria ratified the Kyoto Protocol on 10 December 2004. Now, Nigeria is on board the climate change train as exhibited in its Intended National Determined Contributions (INDC) to see the success of the Paris climate change agreement by growing its economy sustainably while reducing carbon pollution through the use of clean and renewal energy like the solar systems and pledging to develop about 13000 gig watts worth of renewable solar electricity off the grid in the years ahead. If achieved fully, it will give way for a low carbon economy resulting in about 50% reduction in emissions annually, also an average prediction economy growth rate of about 5% by 2030.

This represents a significant milestone in tackling climate change challenges in Nigeria. According to the Federal Ministry of Environment, Nigeria is also pursuing its domestic mitigation measures to foster low carbon, high economic growth and build a climate-resilient society, through improving climate change-related science, technology, and Research and Development to enable better and greater participation in international scientific/ technological cooperation on climate change, the enhanced national capacity to adapt to climate change, high public awareness campaigns with private sector involvement to address climate change difficulties and to build up different mechanisms through national institutions to enhance economics, legislation and policy for a suitable and functional governance framework on climate change. These will deliver immediate sustainable development growth benefits without a compromise, as ambitious mitigation action will be economically efficient and socially desirable for Nigeria besides

climate benefits. Also, it will alleviate poverty, increase social welfare and inclusion, as well as improve individual well-being, which includes a healthy environment. Also, the cost of climate change adaptation is huge, the failure of Nigeria to put in place these measures, will attract a significant fine from climate change exacerbation. Thus, Section 3.2.2 of the National Adaptation Strategy and Plan of Action for Climate Change (NASPA- CCN), states the following measures; a. Improve awareness and preparedness for climate change impacts b. Mobilize communities for climate change adaptation actions c. Reduce the impacts of climate change will have on key sectors and vulnerable communities d. Integrate climate change adaptation into national, sectoral, state, and local government planning and into the plans of universities, research and educational organizations, civil society organizations, the private sector, and the media.

## 6. TRUMP'S POLICY WITHDRAWAL AND CONSEQUENCES

The US policy on climate change is characterized by a historical divide between Democrats and Republicans. While Democrats are traditionally more sensitive towards environmental issues, Republicans believe that the economic interests of US companies shall prevail over the collective interest to the protection of the environment (Pavone, 2019). It is a tradition for the Republican Party to withdraw from UN multilateral processes and negotiations especially on environmental treaties. A clear depiction is the Montego Bay Convention on the Law of the Sea, Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, Convention on Biological Diversity – CBD, and the Kyoto Protocol preceding the Paris Accord. This action is also exhibited on many other treaties ranging from human rights to access to justice, and access to information and many matters.

However, it is noteworthy that under the Nixon administration in the 70s, the Republicans supported some environmental measures such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) which was created under his watch. They also supported the Stockholm global summit in 1972, but many became more critical of environmental matters under Ronald Reagan. Following the tradition of the Republican's hostility to environmental policies and multilateral agreements, it is not hard to interpret Trump's policy withdrawal on climate change. It appears President Trump is more in line with his electoral college (those who voted him) than what his critics suggest. In fact, his withdrawal has re-emphasized George Herbert W. Bush's statement in 1992 that "the American way of life is not negotiable", as he withdrew from the Kyoto protocol, and the subsequent attitudes of the senate since the mid-90s.

Although, the Al Gore and former president Obama US-led teams are exceptions on climate change treaties Congress effectively hindered their efforts. President Trump has severally accused China of trying to destroy the US industry through what he calls a "hoax" (climate change). He sees it as 'Unnecessary restrictions' on the main sources of energy, such as coal and onshore and offshore oil and gas, stating, the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions must not take place at the detriment of the domestic industry. This stand opposes the United Nations regulations on reduction but rather accepts the self-regulatory mechanism by domestic companies supervised by the central government. With the announcement of Trump's withdrawal during the White House Briefing on 1st June 2017, he stated that "The United States will withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord" and "The United States will cease all implementation of the non-binding Paris Accord and the draconian financial and economic burdens the agreement imposes on our country"(Trump,2017). The President Trump added that his decision is to end the implementation of the nationally determined contribution and the Green Climate Fund "which is costing the United States a vast fortune." With this, the Trump administration also breached the Agreement by stating publicly that the United States won't implement the Paris Agreement. This is one among the unique withdrawals from international treaties as Canada also withdrew from the Kyoto Protocol in 2004. Although, since states usually do not declare officially that they will no longer follow the 'rules of the game'. The action violates international law, considering that a State Party to a treaty is

obliged to respect its international obligations, even if it decides to withdraw, until completion of the exit process (3 years).

Many have also argued that if the US had waited for the duration stipulated in the Agreement for when parties can withdraw (November 2020), it would have upheld its reputation on the international scene and enjoyed a more profitable policy. It might even have incurred minor consequences due to fear of retaliation by the other Parties and the United States would have continued to remain a trustworthy ally and State which respects its international duties. Since there is no mechanism for compulsory compliance in the international arena, reputation remains the 'watchword'. Global reactions have been unanimous in condemning Trump's policy decision.

According to the UN Secretary-General, Trump's decision is "a major disappointment for global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote global security" (Guterres, 2017). The French President Macron labeled the US decision as a "mistake both for the U.S and for our planet", while German Chancellor Merkel "deplored" US leaving the Paris Agreement. Since the act of withdrawal also implies a breach of the Paris Agreement, it is pertinent to examine the consequences under international law. A withdrawal only might have covered the United States from legal and political consequences from a public breach of the agreement. However, failing to comply with the INDC pledges, and also submit an INDC contained therein, implies a State responsibility as states are legally bound by nature. This wrongful act entitles the injured states to the agreement to retaliate by taking countermeasures for instance to forestall future occurrences. The consequences of Trump's withdrawal are minimal but important as nations can pair up in retaliation to also withdraw from treaties that involve the US.

Also, under international law, the withdrawal attracts the *erga omnes* (towards all) obligations to climate change as a shared and highly significant cause. But it is very hard to see a small state that is adversely affected by the effect of climate change take on a countermeasure against the United States which is a "World Leader" and a 'geopolitical giant'. Therefore, non-injured States could lawfully respond to a violation of the Paris Agreement through countermeasures, whose ultimate goal would be of forcing the US to comply with its international obligations to tackle global warming, in line with Article 30 of the Draft Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts (International Law Commission (ILC, 2001): "the State responsible for the internationally wrongful act is under an obligation to cease that act" (Art. 35). Therefore some argue that the European Union, for instance, can impose lawfully on the US a countermeasure on trade, such as carbon tax import on US industrial companies.

Practically, countermeasures against the US appear, but, unrealistic as many scholars argue that, whether there is compliance or breach, the Paris agreement does not attract any sanctions from the withdrawal. Also, the aim of a countermeasure would imply a request to the United States to reduce their emissions within the parameters of Paris Agreement, which would mean reducing the use of fossil fuels to produce energy. It is highly improbable that President Trump could reverse its environmental policy against the coal and oil lobby that supports him. In the same way, it is difficult for anyone to prove below the levels, the causal link between the activities of carbon dioxide emissions envisaged in the Paris Agreement that is supposed to have caused the damage (i.e. sea-level rise of Small Islands Developing States (Pavone, 2019). Also, such avenues as the securitization of climate change within the Security Council, which would pave the way to economic sanctions, are doomed to failure because the United States would probably exercise its veto power.

## 7. IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Nigeria is a humid-tropical country in West Africa, it lies between longitudes 2°49' E – 14°37'E and latitudes 4°16N-13° 52N and has a land area of 923, 850 km. Over 70% of Nigeria's population is



engaged in agriculture as their primary occupation and means of livelihood. Small-scale, resource-poor farmers operating in 0.1 to 5 hectares with low-level traditional technologies dominating this large population (Idowu, A.A et. al. 2011). Also, Nigeria is known as one of the most endowed black nations in the western region of Africa. It is rich in natural resources such as rubber, cocoa, groundnut, yam, cassava, oil and gas, coal, steel, tin, etc. However, it is poor in capacity and productivity. Thus, climate change across Nigeria will deeply affect the above-mentioned activities and leave the population in wanton crisis and untold hardship.

The implications for sustainable development in Nigeria as President Trump withdraws from the Paris agreement in November 2020 present in enormous ways and will be enumerated in this study through the lens of scholarly argument. The Paris agreement recognizes technological measures to encourage frameworks to build capacity and support for emerging economies in respect to their INDCs, and also to aid limitation by preventing dangerous climate change to well below 2C and a further reduction to 1.5C. For Nigeria, this is highly capital intensive and requires funds and commitment on the part of the government to achieve these set objectives. They required funds to execute the national pledges and the recorded and tracked INDCs are to be sourced within a country that goes hand in cap many a time for assistance. Has this been included in Nigeria's annual budget? Has the governance or policy on climate change been aligned with Nigeria's development goals? At the United Nations General Assembly in 2017, President Muhammadu Buhari laid out the nation's plan of action to tackle climate change. The decision is timely, essential, and ambitious as he stated. However, no clarity on the conceptualize master plan for the citizens to understand and the way to achieve these objectives. Nigeria is still indebted to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund and now China. Can Nigeria afford to invest the funds it does not have to climate change matters? Has it created the required awareness and transparency on climate change danger to the citizens from local to national levels as stipulated in articles 4 and 13 of the agreement? These and many more are questions needing answers as even big financial giants across the pacific(the USA and Canada)who were the promoters of the Paris agreement have decided to withdraw due to high financial involvement and domestic/national interest( America First). Interestingly, this move has come just one year after the climate change agreement had entered into force, giving the international community the compulsory three years withdrawal notice binding by all parties to the agreement.

Economically, everything looks bleak, as Nigeria like many of her counterparts in Africa is still only developing and struggling to meet its sustainable development goals. Nigeria has a huge population of about 200 million. The Bureau of Statistic records that 23.1% is unemployed, 20.21% underemployed, while 55.4% of youths are unemployed/underemployed (NBS, 2018). Many live below \$1 (dollar) per day while the nation is engulfed in huge century debts from IMF,World Bank, and the EXIM Bank of China. With a relatively low economic record and gross domestic product (GDP) of about 2.52% estimation(Statista,2020), weak institutions and governance structure, huge dependence on crude oil, lack of industries and lack of mechanized agriculture, compared to the developed nations, Nigeria contributes very low to greenhouse gases(GHGs) that can cumulatively lead to any large atmospheric disruption. Although it can be argued, that Nigeria produces oil and gas, hence carbon dioxide, methane, and other dangerous substances can be emitted as a result of gas flaring, but, the effect is quite negligible when compared to the magnitude of pollutants caused by industrialized China, Germany, and the United States.

Insomuch as, interaction in the international system is more about responsibility and reputation and not compulsory compliance, Nigeria can also withdraw from the Paris agreement, stating national interest, as it looks inward to harness its numerous resources, build domestic capacity, rebrand internal socio-economic and political development policies to redeem respect and better recognition in the international community (Nigeria: Good people, Great Nation)in the words of the lateProf. Dora Akunyili, the former Minister of information and communications. Also, to continue to free-ride just as

the US, by remaining in the treaty while bidding time to build industries (Proudly Nigeria) and process locally instead of exporting agricultural products. Through primary and secondary raw agricultural materials based like rubber, cassava, soya beans, cashew nuts, sugar, coconut etc., and primary based minerals like tin, limestone, silica and gypsum, Nigeria has the working force that can produce to over capacity and meet the local consumption needs of its population. Then, it can be seen to be ready to lead and build a clean solar energy society. Until then, Nigeria will only chase but the wind in the hope to actualize the dream to limit CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and comply with climate change adaptation and mitigation procedure.

Politically, Nigeria's governance structure is relatively weak, bereft of stable policies, vision, consistency, lack of recognition for the rule of law, and misapplied political ideologies. On 10, September 2019, the Nigeria National Assembly (the 9th parliament) through its House of Representatives during its session presented a draft on the climate change bill, (HB.357) under the stewardship of Hon. Samuel Onuigbo. This has passed the first reading. But no actions so far on the status of the bill. This clearly shows the lack of understanding of the Paris agreement. Nigeria has to formulate sound and proactive policies on climate change that can aid the achievement of sustainable development goals for its citizens through agriculture, education, science and technology, research, and health. Nigeria may have to be penny-wise on how to expend huge funds on projects that will be a heavier burden on the population than elevating them from the state of impoverishment. Nigeria's domestic needs should be paramount in pursuing many of these multilateral agreements including climate change.

In a constant changing landscape, researchers argue that climate change requires a policy that is technologically led. A policy to fund research and development (R&D) that is exclusively based on a carbon tax. A tax that will start out gradually and over time

Increase. This one measure is enough and there is no need for any targets for reductions in emissions or for any other measures to increase existing carbon efficiencies (Markandya, 2020). In Nigeria, the citizens are already overburdened by multiple taxation, it will be hard to derive any milestone on this perspective, as majority do not own cars or machineries that emit emissions of any kind. Thus the governance policy framework for the generation of renewable electricity and energy sources in Nigeria should be designed to build capacity, quality and maximize profit to enhance development as many youths will be gainfully employed and the country can also derive huge revenue from production and distribution.

In so doing, public perception would be raised and schemes to significantly support investors' trust be considered adequately for greater gains. The unstable policy environment and obstruction by stakeholders cause insecurity among investors and lead to a lack of investment in renewable energy. Avenues to collaborate with organizations on renewable energy should be sought to overcome these barriers by building regional coalitions in Africa (Nigeria, Kenya, Morocco, and South Africa) for the clean solar energy society.

Education is another perspective on climate change and environmental issues. Education is a major tool for development of any society. A new generation of children and some adolescents are gradually and increasingly taking steps in ensuring their future wellbeing is stable against the implications and dangers of climate change. Therefore, since they are key actors in the society, consideration should be taken when creating educational policies that affect changes in behaviour that are necessary to fight climate change. Studies show that the best ages to educate children about climate change is from around 8.5 to 11 years old; this is when children are most proactive and really want to learn about climate change (Ramirez, 2020). For instance, Greta Thunberg, the winner of the kids Rights Children's Peace Prize in 2019, is a kid advocate for climate change through the -school strike for climate- initiative in Sweden.

However, in Nigeria, it is difficult to identify a tangible kids program on climate change that has attracted global attention. In the current world situation, to sustain development by emerging economies like Nigeria, national climate change education campaigns must be established to promote environmental friendly attitudes among citizens and to embrace the subject, starting with the local community schools to the advance schools in the cities. This is important, as an expansion on climate change education will provide better strategies to help us improve and adapt to climate change. To achieve this, Nigeria must leverage on family participation as it's obtained in other climes, to educate and empower children agents on climate change. Children usually will act to assist their parents to advance behavioral changes.

Similarly, the Convid-19 pandemic has caused a global disruption that has impacted enormously on climate change. The great reduction in travels has caused the world to experience a decline in air pollution. According to scientists, the lockdowns in China, US, India, Italy and German and other steps have reduced about 25% and 50% in carbon and nitrogen oxides emissions, estimated to have saved about 77,000 lives in two months (Ramirez,2020).Also, the pandemic has distorted diplomatic efforts on climate change; it has caused the 2020 United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNCCC) to be rescheduled, and a projected economic outcome to delay investment in technologies of green energy.

## 8. FINDINGS

At the United Nations General Assembly's 72nd session held on September 21, 2017, it affirms clearly through the President's speech that the attention climate change has garnered in the global system cannot be undermined. The number of ratified states to the agreement has grown astronomically over the past years and has become the most ratified agreement ever on environmental issues in the history of mankind. The major polluters of the environment (GHG), China, India, the EU, and Brazil have also signed the treaty. In spite of the wide acceptance of the Paris agreement, President Trump's administration has announced withdrawal thereby establishing an instant breach of the treaty as he waits for final exit in November 2020 (except a new President comes into the white house to overturn his decision). Trump's policy has thrown the United States into persona non grata on the global stage as the US reputation is questioned on climate change, followed by other trade wars (2018) and the harm of his present and continuous incongruous statements on Convid-19 pandemic (2020) with other states and international organizations (WHO), all in one season. Many scholars in the international community have argued that the United States is a country you will like to love, hate, and pity concurrently. Obviously, the Trump's administration is not perturbed by any of these realities, and also does not plan to obey the rules of the game (Paris Agreement) not considering what non-compliance or withdrawal could harm US status and also attract steps to retaliation from ratified states. Nevertheless, the approach of Trump to remain in the UNFCCC until the duration of exit elapses, allows the US to be prone to further attacks and rivalry on the global stage.

The Nigeria economy is emerging; to adhere to the principles of the Paris Agreement will be difficult as it requires huge funding, awareness through education and strong effective policies on climate change. Saddled with it domestic issues ranging from poor governance policy (the climate change bill, HB.357, has not passed first reading in the 9<sup>th</sup> parliament), corruption, lack of the rule of law, inadequate infrastructure, such as education, research and development institutes, and the current Covid-19 pandemic that is ravaged even the developed nations. If the United States (industrialised Giant) has withdrawn from the Paris Agreement citing financial burden, then Nigeria should also be worried for immediate and future dangers. Thus, methods to collaborate on climate change to ease funding should be sought, to overcome these barriers by building a regional coalition in Africa (Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa) for the clean solar energy society.

For the US economy, the immediate gains presents, as Trump claims domestic policies are priority compared to some binding international treaty as he withdraws from the climate change agreement. The administration is aware it is more beneficial to be in the wait to withdrawal as others plough in their

finances in climate change agreement while reducing the financial burdens and maintaining a pliable status, as he continues to advance the use of energy resources in his administration. In future, as the promoter of the existing treaty, the US action will critically weaken the gains the Paris agreement would have had on other ratified parties. But it will also fall victim of the threats of climate change and other environmental issues as no country is an island and climate change effects have a cumulative, colossal and disruptive trends, with no respect for barriers.

As Trump emphasizes the US national interest and domestic issues is significant, he needs to know that all countries also act in the interest of their nations. The Chinese in this regard will also not have any concession on currency and trade as in 2020, it declared a Digital Currency Electronic Payment (DCEP), pegged 1:1 to the Chinese National currency-the Ren MinBi-(RMB), as a national digital currency (Yuan) of China to be use in both domestic and external transactions which may compete closely with the US dollar. These and many more retaliations and repercussions are envisaged to be witnessed on the international stage even from small island nations. Sadly, Trump cannot distinguish between domestic governance and international policy.

Furthermore, Trump administration quest for a unilateral posture is dangerous. For instance, the fight against the United Nations since he took office in 2016, the air strikes that killed the Iranian top military general- Qasem Soleimani on 3 January 2020, and the current tsunami fight against China and the World Health Organization (WHO), on Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, all may possess a huge effect on efforts of climate change multilateralism.

## 9. CONCLUSION

In summary, the Trump administration is one of –withdrawals- from all things whether good or bad. From history, the US has been linked to the collapse of the League of Nations as it withdrew from the multilateral treaty in the 40s. As a founder and supporter, this impacted its operations and the League of Nations became powerless and never took off from the ground. Trump actions have replicated another darkest encounter for the international law and international community.

To limit CO<sub>2</sub> emissions below 2C and sustain it, the whole world needs to collectively work together to quickly reverse present GHG emission patterns and redesign the industrial system in order to achieve the ultimate objectives of an economy of low-carbon. This is unachievable if all countries refused to comply with the ambitions of climate change and work in the path to a clean energy economy. The withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement might have serious consequences on the entire multilateral process on climate change and sabotage decades of negotiation efforts especially on developing economies.

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