
ORGANISATION OF PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES (OPEC): A CHRONICLE OF NIGERIA'S KEY CONTRIBUTIONS TO ITS GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS

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ABSTRACT: *This study dwells extensively on Nigeria's contributions to the attainment of the goals and aspirations of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) from 1971 when it became a member of the organisation till date. It relies on secondary sources of data collection obtained from textbooks, newspaper, articles, journals as well as the organisation's website. It also utilizes Neo-liberalism as a framework for analysis. The findings which are ascertained via content analysis show that OPEC exists fundamentally to coordinate and unify petroleum policies among member countries, in order to secure fair and stable prices for petroleum producers; ensure an efficient economic and regular supply of petroleum to consuming nations; and a return on capital to investors in the industry. And that Nigeria has contributed immensely towards meeting these goals and aspirations of the organisation either through the acceptance of the appointments of her citizens into important positions in the Organisation, including that of the Secretary General, OPEC Presidency or as host nation where lingering issues are resolved. Nigeria has also been a faithful, committed and loyal member, keeping to the rules of the organisation and assisting its planning endeavours with regular supply of up-to-date data on her petroleum sector. All these and many more have earned her great respect among member countries and beyond as her citizens are being honoured across the world for sterling performances. Finally, the study also makes some recommendations, among which are as follows: Nigeria's contributions to the attainment of OPEC goals have been quite huge. Effort should, therefore, be intensified towards consolidating on these feats; OPEC member countries have demonstrated over and over their confidence and trust in Nigeria's leadership by entrusting her citizens with key leadership positions, including that of Secretary General as currently occupies by a Nigerian. This gesture should be sustained as a way of recognition for her tremendous positive role in the organisation; Data is essential for effective planning. Nigeria has shown good example as one that wants OPEC to plan effectively by submitting its data timely. This effort should be emulated by other member countries to enhance appropriate planning in the organisation, etcetera.*

KEYWORDS: organization, petroleum, exporting, OPEC, Nigeria's contributions, goals

INTRODUCTION

The petroleum industry is one sector that has progressively gained global traction since the discovery of underground oil by the Chinese several centuries ago (Gbadamosi, Kupolokun and Oluleye, 2007:3). This is basically so because of the huge benefits/potentials inherent in the sector which analysts consider useful for human existence. For instance, the crude oil from the industry “is a central part of modern life and the world’s most important energy resource [which] we rely on [...] in many ways for the food we eat, the clothes we wear and the electronic we use at home and in the workplace” (OPEC, 2013:22). Also products such as “heating oil, jet fuel, kerosene, dentures, diapers, fertilizer, lipstick, shampoo, deodorant, shaving cream, crayons, musical devices, cameras, computers, glue, contact lenses, toothpaste, synthetic fibres, tyres, artificial hearts and even aspirin” (OPEC, 2013:23) are equally produced from the industry. Given this importance, attempts had always been made by the industrialized world to control the activities of the industry to the detriments of those Third World Countries whose soils the oil is extracted from. This was the prevailing situation where the “Seven Sisters” international oil companies owned by the West dominated and dictated the fortune of the industry up until the Third World Countries rose to challenge the status quo by establishing the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1960 “to coordinate and unify the petroleum policies of its Member Countries and ensure the stabilization of oil markets in order to secure an efficient, economic and regular supply of petroleum to consumers, a steady income to producers a fair return on capital for those investing in the petroleum industry”(EuroPetrole, 2018).

So far, the organisation has succeeded in reasserting the right of the Third World Nations in the petroleum industry. It has also brought great influence to bear on the international oil market (Gbadamosi, Kupolokun and Oluleye, 2007:27) as it is reported to have “possessed 79.3% of global proven crude reserves and was responsible for 60.3% of the world’s crude oil export” in 2009 (Khusanjanova, 2011:14). Nevertheless, many have argued that the global influence of the organisation is fast reducing due to the advent of new technologies which, on one hand, place less emphasis on the use of petrol and on the other, boosted oil production, thereby leading to a significant drop in the prices of oil (Chen, 2018).

Nigeria joined the organisation on the 10th of July, 1971 as the eleventh member (Eckson, 2017) “with the purpose of trading her natural resources to improve on her exchange earnings and to boost her economy” (Austin, 2010: xi). Since then the country has been playing prominent role in promoting the activities and existence of the organisation with high regards and admirations by member countries. This position has also been shared by Birai (1996:158) who confirms that Nigeria is a leading member of the organisation and as such her views are respected by all, stressing that “the successful election of a Nigerian Alhaji Rilwanu Lukman (one time Minister of Petroleum Resources) as the Secretary General of OPEC at a time when the organisation required strong team work, is a testimony of the confidence

members of the organisation have in Nigeria”. Affirming this position by Birai, Okoromadu, (July 7, 2018) concludes that “Nigeria has historically assumed a strong, proactive leadership in OPEC”. In the same vein, Nigeria has also gained a lot from being a member of the organisation as the platform has given her “a unique voice among the comity of nations and influence in the world institution such as UN” (Austin 2010:xlii).

The paper is basically an attempt at assessing the contributions of Nigeria to the growth of the OPEC since becoming a member in 1971. One undeniable fact is that there seems to be a strong acquiescence among scholars that Nigeria’s role in the organisation has been tremendous whether as President of OPEC Conference, the Secretary General through which her citizens took revolutionary decisions or as host country for OPEC Conference where lingering issues were addressed.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts Neo-liberalism for the purpose of analysis. Neo-liberalism, a strand of liberalism, is an international Relations theory that emphasizes the ability of international institutions in resolving international conflicts through coordination and cooperation (Beavis, 2017). In other words, neo liberalists emphasize “the importance of international organisations in reducing international conflict and tension” (Dauda, 2013:11). The Theory emerged in the 1980s as a response to the realists’ argument that international system is anarchic thus, making genuine cooperation among states impossible. In a nutshell, the realist scholars see the world as a place where nations struggle for power in order to dominate and rule over the less-powerful. As a result of this struggle there are always conflicts, crises, and wars which make cooperation impossible. However, scholars of neoliberal persuasion have argued otherwise, stressing that when nations come together to discuss their problems, conflicts in the world will be reduced as peace will reign and people will understand themselves better. And that even when there is a conflict, if states cooperate using international organisations or institutions to discuss that conflict, the agreement they will reach from the cooperation can bring peace or end the conflict(Keohane (1984); Nye and Keohane in Beavis, 2017). This position has been shared by Meiser (2017:25) who believes that “the essence” of this framework in international relations “is that states can benefit significantly from cooperation if they trust themselves and live up to their agreement”.

The adoption of this theory to analyze the role played by Nigeria as a member of OPEC is justified on the ground that the organisation was formed through the cooperation of member states when the whole oil industry was confronted with low price crisis occasioned by the activities of the so-called “Seven Sisters” international oil companies. But instead of taking up arms against these oil companies for their nefarious dealings, OPEC member countries decided to, as a way of finding lasting solutions to their common problems, established OPEC. Nigeria has contributed immensely to ensure peace, stability and harmony in the organisation in several ways, including mediation, facilitation of cooperation and dialogue with other OPEC and non-OPEC countries; resolution of lingering and contentious issues

regarding the appointment of Secretary General, the choice OPEC Summit venue among others. All these have, in a way, provided the needed support in meeting the goals and aspiration of the organisation.

The Formation of OPEC

The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, like every other international organisation, was established after due consultations with the pioneer member countries. Accordingly, it is reported that the idea was first conceived by the government of Venezuela who then approached Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in 1949 requesting their support for “regular and closer cooperation on oil matters”(OPEC Bulletin, 2010:7). But the actual move for the creation of OPEC came as a result of the nefarious activities of the so-called “Seven Sisters” International Oil Companies (IOC) namely; Exxon, Texaco, BP, Shell, Gulf, Standard Oil, and Mobil Oil (Austin 2010: xvi; Rezzouk, 2004:10) that were detrimental to the economic interest of the oil producing states majorly from Third World Countries which they wanted to put an end to. As noted by Shihab-Eldin (2005) these “major oil companies from the industrialized world determined the quality of crude oil produced from the poorer nations; the price at which this oil was sold, and to cap it all, what share to give to the owner of the natural resources. This was part of the one-sided concessionary agreement made under mostly colonial rule. And with this accord binding, the impoverished producer nations were limited on what they could do.”

The implication of this was that oil prices were at exclusively low levels, with minimal returns for those countries within whose borders the crude resources lay” (Lukman, 2010:39). This, therefore, necessitated the urgent step by the founding member states in order to salvage the situation. Consequently, the governments of Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia met in Cairo in 1959 in what became known as the First Arab Petroleum Congress with Iran and Venezuela in attendance and took a resolution requesting the International Oil Companies (IOC) to consult with the oil producing countries before altering the posted price of oil (OPEC, 2013:50) as the IOC had done in 1959. However, as revealed by the above source, IOC disregarded the call and went further to lower the price of oil in August, 1960. This, in the words of Shihab-Eldin (2005) was “the final straw” that broke the camel’s back. In response, the five founding countries represented by the following delegates: Faud Rouhani from Iran, Dr Tala’at al-Shaibani from Iraq, Ahmed Omar from Kuwait, Abdullah Al-Tariki from Saudi Arabia and Dr Juan Pablo Perez Alfonzo from Venezuela (OPEC, 2013:52) convened a meeting from September 10-14, 1960 in Baghdad, Iraq and established OPEC on the 10th September, 1960 (Khusanjanova, 2011:14) as a permanent intergovernmental organisation (Chen, 2018). After the formation, the organisation’s headquarters was first located in Geneva, Switzerland but after five years it was moved to Vienna, Austria and it is currently housed in an eight-storey building at Helferstorfertrasse 17 (OPEC Bulletin, 2015:1). The decision to relocate the OPEC headquarters from Geneva to Vienna as explained by one OPEC official was for the organisation to have a neutral country. It was also because Austria was willing to grant diplomatic status to the organisation and its officers (OPEC Bulletin, 2015:12).

OPEC used its early years of formation to consolidate itself so as to meet the aspirations of its members in a market dominated by the “seven Sisters” international oil companies. But by 1970s the organisation began to rise in “influence as its members took control of their domestic petroleum industries and had a major say in the pricing of crude oil on world market” (Gbadamosi, Kupolokun and Oluleye, 2007:27). It is important to stress that that influence has continued even till date with support from member countries, including Nigeria who has been noted for this influential role.

Objectives of OPEC

The main objectives of OPEC as robustly articulated in article 2 its Statute include the followings:

- i. The coordination and unification of the petroleum policies of member countries and the determination of the best means for safeguarding their interest individually and collectively;
- ii. The Organisation shall devise ways and means of ensuring the stabilization of prices in international oil markets with a view to eliminating harmful and unnecessary fluctuations and;
- iii. Due regard shall be given at all times to the interests of the producing nations and to the necessity of securing a steady income to the producing countries; an efficient ,economic and regular supply of petroleum to consuming nations; and a fair returns on their capital to those investing in the petroleum industry (OPEC Statute, 2012:1).

Membership of OPEC

OPEC is currently composed of 13 member countries. These comprise the five founding members of Iran (1960) Iraq (1960) Kuwait (1960) Saudi Arabia (1960) and Venezuela (1960) as well as others that later joined the organisation, including Libya (1962) United Arab Emirates (1967) Algeria (1969) Nigeria (1971) Ecuador (1973) Gabon(1975) equatorial Guinea (2017) and Republic of Congo (2018) (Europetrole, 2018; OPEC Bulletin,2012:10; OPEC Bulletin, 2018:3; Khusanjanova, 2011:14). Two former members of the organisations–Qatar (1961) and Indonesia (1962) are not included here because they have withdrawn their memberships. While the withdrawal of Indonesia took effect from the 31st of December, 2016 (OPEC Bulletin, 2018:3), Qatar’s commenced on 1st of January, 2019 (Europetrole, 2018). The membership of OPEC provides a geographical spread from Latin America in the West to the South East Asia in the east, with African and the Middle East in between. Also the organisation has a total population of half a billion with diverse cultures, religion inclination and languages (Lukman, 2000:40)

Organs of OPEC

There are basically three organs of OPEC. These are: The Conference, The Board of Governors and The Secretariat. These are discussed fully below:

The Conference

This is the supreme authority of the organisation. It is made up of Heads of delegations from each member states, and it is responsible for the formulation of the organisation’s general policies. It meets

twice a year in ordinary times and can also meet at extra-ordinary times(OPEC, 2013:60), According to Article 15 of the OPEC Statute (2012:7-8) The Conference shall: Formulate the general policy of the Organisation and determine the appropriate ways and means of its implementation; Decide upon any application for membership of the Organisation; Confirm the appointment of Members of the Board of Governors; Direct the Board of Governors to submit reports or make recommendations on any matters of interest to the Organisation; Consider, or decide upon, the reports and recommendations submitted by the Board of Governors on the affairs of the Organisation; Consider and decide upon the Budget of the Organisation, as submitted by the Board of Governors; Consider and decide upon the Statement of Accounts and the Auditor's Report, as submitted by the Board of Governors; call a Consultative Meeting for such Member Countries, for such purposes, and in such places, as the Conference deems fit; Approve any amendments to this Statute; Appoint the Chairman of the Board of Governors and an Alternate Chairman; Appoint the Secretary General; Appoint the Auditor of the Organisation for a duration of one year as well as all matters that are not expressly assigned to other organs of the Organisation. In addition, the quorum of three-quarters of the delegations is enough for the Conference to convene (Stoehr, 1979:96)

The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is composed of representatives (Governors) nominated by member countries and confirmed by the Conference (OPEC, 2013:60). It is the managerial branch of the organisation. The meeting of this organ requires two-third members to hold. Each Governor is entitled to one vote while decision is reached via a simple majority. Also, unlike the Conference, the Board of Governors is a permanent organ (Stoehr, 1979:97). Article 20 of the organisation's Statute outlines the functions of the Board of Governors to include the followings: direct the management of the affairs of the Organisation and the implementation of the decisions of the Conference; consider and decide upon any reports submitted by the Secretary General; submit reports and make recommendations to the Conference on the affairs of the Organisation; draw up the Budget of the Organisation for each calendar year and submit it to the Conference for approval; nominate the Auditor of the Organisation for a duration of one year; consider the Statement of Accounts and the Auditor's Report and submit them to the Conference for approval; approve the appointment of Directors of Divisions and Heads of Departments, upon nomination by Member Countries, due consideration being given to the recommendations of the Secretary General; convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference; and prepare the Agenda for the Conference (OPEC Statute, 2012).

The Secretariat

Generally speaking, the Secretariat performs the executive function of the organisation. It is headed by the Secretary General who functions as the Chief Executive of the Secretarial and the legal representative of the organisation. He is appointed for the period of three years and the appointment is renewable (Stoehr, 1979:98). Dr Faud Rouhani of Iran was the first OPEC Secretary General (OPEC, 2013:61) while the current Secretary General of the organisation is Mohammed Sanusi Barkindo from Nigeria.

He was appointed since 2016(OPEC, 2016). The official language of the organisation is English. The Secretary General is to: organize and administer the work of the Organisation; ensure that the functions and duties assigned to the different departments of the Secretariat are carried out; prepare reports for submission to each Meeting of the Board of Governors concerning matters which call for consideration and decision; inform the Chairman and other Members of the Board of Governors of all activities of the Secretariat, of all studies undertaken and of the progress of the implementation of the Resolutions of the Conference; and ensure the due performance of the duties which may be assigned to the Secretariat by the Conference or the Board of Governors (OPEC Statute, 2012:7-8)

Achievements of OPEC

The organisation has recorded some landmark achievements in line with its objective since formation. Some of these achievements are highlighted below:

Stable Supply of Oil:

OPEC throughout its existence has been able to ensure steady supply of petroleum products to the consumers across the world even during market developments and unforeseen happenings. For example, “when capacity from Iraq and Kuwait were withdrawn from the market in 1990, other OPEC members increase exports to help meet the shortfall. And from 2003 to 2006, OPEC responded swiftly to a demand surge and supply disruption in the market by increasing its production by more than 5mb/d” (OPEC, n.d).

The OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID).

One other area OPEC has recorded tremendous achievement is in the OPEC Fund which was an initiative that came out of the 1975 solemn declaration adopted by the Conference of OPEC Sovereign and Heads of state in Algiers, Algerian capital “for the promotion of a more equitable global economic system with emphasis on poverty alleviation and other vices in developing countries” (Lukman, 2000: 39). Since then, “peoples in 122 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and Europe have benefited from OFID’s programmes. These programmes have included clean water and energy projects, building schools, hospital and roads; and developing industries and expanding trade opportunities” (OPEC, 2013:63). According to the source above, by June ending, 2013, OFID’s total approved commitments stood at US\$15.7 billion with US\$10.1 billion already disbursed.

Promotion of Dialogue and Cooperation through the Formation of International Energy Forum.

The formation of OPEC was based on cooperation by member countries who wanted to safeguard their interests in the oil industry. The cooperation and dialogue have been extended to different parts of the world in order to ensure stability in the industry. As stated by OPEC(n.d) the main effort in this direction emerged in the 1980s following the 1986 collapsed of oil price and the realization among non-OPEC Producers across the world that necessary measures are needed to support OPEC to ensure market stabilization. Accordingly, their effort resulted in the formation of the International Energy Forum (IEF)

in 1990s to provide the setting for such dialogue. IEF has become a reliable medium through which OPEC meets with non-OPEC members to dialogue on issues concerning the oil market.

Defending the Third World Country

OPEC has repeatedly defended the member countries, which are majorly from the Third World against the dubious activities of the “Seven Sisters” with great commendation. For instance, its insistence on the principle that taxes and royalties should be calculated on the basis of posted rather than realized prices in OPEC member countries has helped to prevent the exploitation of the Third World Countries in the early days of the organisation (Al-Sahlawi,1999)

Adoption of Petroleum Policy

Closely related to the above was the declaration statement of petroleum policy in member countries at the 16th OPEC Conference in June, 1968 that empowered “member states to go into direct exploration and development of their hydrocarbon resource, where feasible.... This historic statement laid the foundations for the leadership role which the producing countries grouped within OPEC was to play in the direct exploitation of their resources” (Al-Sahlawi, 1999)

Settlement of Oil Market Crisis

Several crises in the oil market have occurred since the formation of OPEC but as stated by Al-Herbish in OPEC Bulletin (2010) whenever there is such crisis, OPEC quickly steps in to address it. “This was very true, for example in 1981, in 1990, and in 1997-98. Sometimes this is to increase production and sometimes to reduction production” (OPEC Bulletin, 2010:52)

Challenges of OPEC

Despite the number of achievements recorded by OPEC, there are still external and internal problems that confront the organisation, thereby limiting the complete realization of its set goals. For instance, Stoehr, (1979:104) has argued that the “major external threat to OPEC’s existence appears to be either a large discovery of oil in a non-OPEC area thus, ending OPEC domination of the market or a reduction in oil’s importation in the world energy market”.

External factor relating to the discovery of oil in many non-OPEC countries such as Russia, India, Egypt, Brazil, Columbia, Syria, Oman the North Sea, Alaska, Mexico, the US(Ibrahim, 1988) are really a huge challenge to the organisation. For instance, in 2013 the US Shale oil production was reported to have witnessed a sharp increase and was expected to add nearly 1m bpd to its output of oil and other liquid fuels in 2014 (Husain, 2013). This, according to the source above, was worrisome for member states of OPCE because US was going to be energy independent.

There is also the challenge of unanimity in terms of the number of barrels (quotas) each member country can supply within a given period of time. For example, Bijan Zangeneh, the Oil Minister of Iran

sometimes in the past was quoted to have disagreed with OPEC saying: “under any circumstances we will reach 4mbpd even if the price of oil falls to \$20 per barrel” (Husain, 2013). This was after a successful negotiation to lift a ban on her oil due to her nuclear programme. So, she planned to increase oil production from 2.7m bpd to 4m bpd regardless of OPEC’s measures to cut production for price enhancement. Besides, Iran, Saudi Arabia is also noted for not adhering to the quota system by OPEC. Such a desperate move by member states has always thwarted the genuine effort of the organisation.

Also due to the challenge of global warming and overspending many advanced countries are taking drastic measures to reduce emission of carbon into the atmosphere. Consequently, the German Upper Legislative Chamber has passed “a resolution calling a ban on combustion engine cars by 2030”. Also the Paris Agreement signed in December 2015 was a move to reduce further emission of green house gas. (see Ulatowski, 2018: 22-23). The implementation of these measures will pose a serious threat to regular income from the sales of oil by OPEC member states. Moreover, to reduce the cost of energy, new innovations are now out to conserve energy in cars, Air conditioners, Aircraft, refrigerators etc. All these have affected the overall demand of oil globally hence, a challenge to OPEC.

The incessant security challenges in member countries have also constitute burdens to OPEC. This is true in that during such crises oil production activities are disrupted and as such the OPEC quotas for member states in crisis cannot be supplied. This usually caused the organisation to mobilize other members to increase production to meet up with global demand due to the shortfall. However, experience has shown that this is not always easy to achieve immediately.

OPEC and Nigeria’s Contributions to its Goals and Aspirations

Following the discovery of crude oil in Oloibri in 1956 in present day Bayelsa State in South-South geopolitical zone of the country by the Shell BP, which was the sole concessionaire at the time, Nigeria began preparation to assume the status of oil producing country, which she eventually attained in 1958 when its oil first came on stream, producing 5,100bpd (NNPC, 2018a). Since then oil explorations have expanded and more discoveries have been made. Approximately, Nigeria is said to “possess 159 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of proven natural gas reserves, giving the country one of the top ten natural gas endowments in the world”. Also, its oil proven reserves have been estimated at “37.2 billion barrels ($5.91 \times 10^9 \text{m}^3$), ranking her the largest oil producer in Africa and the 11th largest in the world, averaging 2.28 billion barrels per day ($362 \times 10^3 \text{m}^3/\text{d}$)” in 2006 (NNPC, 2018b). Nigeria is equally ranked as the sixth largest revenue earner among OPEC member countries, earning a total of #7.93trillion (\$26billion) from oil export between January and July, 2018 (Bolashodun, 2018). In 2018, her OPEC daily quota was 1.738 million bpd but due to the oversupply the country is expected to cut down its supply to 1.685 in 2019 (Asu, 2018). In the global oil industry market, Nigeria is a country to reckon with. This is based on the fact that “Nigeria’s crude oil from Forcados, Qua Iboe, Escravos, and Bonny oil fields commonly referred as ‘Sweet Crude’ is a special blend of crude generally sought after by consumers for its low Sulphur content” (Kyari, Oct 23, 2018)

As stated earlier, in 1971 Nigeria became the 11th member of OPEC and right from then her role in the organisation has never been in doubt. For instance, Birai, (1996) has recorded that “Kuwait and Saudi Arabia had expressed in 1983 their appreciation to Nigeria for ‘positive role’ in OPEC”. He writes:

The then Kuwait oil Minister Sheik Al- Sabah noted with appreciation that Nigeria is a country which despite its problems adheres to OPEC resolution. An official of Saudi statement also acknowledged the positive role of Nigeria in the organisation. The kingdom always looks upon Nigeria as an important factor of market stability in OPEC and there is no doubt at all about its positive attitudes with regard to the strengthening of unit (Birai, 1996:158).

From the aforementioned testimonies, it is clear that Nigeria’s contributions to OPEC’s growth have been without any iota of doubt. It is based on this reality that we now proceed to discuss in specifics these contributions of Nigeria.

Contribution as OPEC Secretary General

Nigeria’s Contributions to OPEC through the activities of her illustrious citizens as OPEC Conference Presidents and Secretaries General have been well documented. In fact, between 1971 when Nigeria became a member of the organisation and today, 2019, the country has produced Four Secretaries General with Dr Rilwanu Lukman serving twice. He was the organisation’s Secretary General for six years between 1995 and 2000 and served as President of the OPEC Conference on a number of occasions between 1986 and 1989 and in 2002.

Table 1 OPEC Secretary General from Nigeria

S/No.	Name	Period
1.	Chief M. O. Feyide	1 st July, 1975 - 31 st 1976
2.	Dr Rilwanu Lukman	1 st July, 1986- 30 th June, 1988
3.	Dr Rilwanu Lukman	1 st January, 1995 - 31 st 2000
4.	Dr Edmund Maduabebe Daukuro	1 st January, 2006-31 st December, 2006
5.	Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo	1 st August, 2016 - till date

Source: (OPEC, 2012:23; OPEC, 2016).

During these periods of service, Dr Lukman,

Helped guide OPEC through the Asian financial crisis in 1997 and 1998. He also managed the organisation’s participation with number countries in the very early United Nations COP environmental meetings and over saw the Second OPEC Summit of the Heads of State and Government of Venezuela in 2000 after a very long gap of 25 years...Lukman also played pivotal role in the evolution of the producer-consumer energy dialogue, a hallmark of the organisation’s collective approach towards a stable oil market, with non-OPEC producers and consumers (OPEC Bulletin, 2014:39).

It was under his leadership that OPEC Member states took a decisive step during the OPEC Conference in March, 1999 to join forces with the four fronts-non-Produced- Mexico, Norway, Oman and Russia

to reduce oil output by 2,104million barrels a day with effect from April 1, 1999. The outcome of this decision was the upward movement of crude oil prices from \$11/b to over \$20/b by August 1999 (Lukman, 2000:40). His contributions to OPEC earned him Several Awards including the Fellowship of the Imperial College, University of London, which he was the first African ever to bag; The Knight of British Empire in 1989 (OPEC Bulletin, 2014:41) among others.

Another Nigerian who is currently the Secretary of OPEC is Mohamed Sanusi Barkindo. He became the Secretary General of OPEC in 2016 and has since distinguished himself in a number of ways. For instance, it is reported that his

Untiring effort culminated in the signing of three landmark OPEC agreements- the Algiers Accord in September, the Vienna Agreement in November and the declaration of Cooperation between OPEC and non-OPEC oil producing countries in December, which came into force on 1 January 2017 and which commits some 24 producers (13 OPEC, 11 non-OPEC) to a production cut of 1.8 million barrels of crude oil per day (OPEC Press Release, Jan.5, 2017).

In recognition of his service to OPEC, *The Daily*, an African Online Newspaper decided to honour him with the “Man of the Year Award”, stressing that his choice is anchored on his several strategic engagements “all of which culminated in the rise of crude oil prices from less than \$30 to over \$50 per barrel in the global oil markets” (OPEC Press Release, Jan. 5, 2017). Besides, Barkindo was the architect of first Long Term Strategy (LTS) at OPEC (OPEC, 2016)

Contribution as OPEC Conference Presidents

Nigeria has produced a number of Presidents for OPEC Conference with sterling qualities and performances. As seen in **Table 2**, His Excellencies (HE) Shettima Ali Monguno, Mallam Yahaya Dikko, Dr Rilwanu Lukman, Prof. Jubril Aminu, Dr Chu S. P. Okongwu, Dr Edmund M. DauKuro have all served as OPEC Conference Presidents at various periods of the organisation’s. Also OPEC appointed Dr Diezani Allison Madueke OPEC Conference President with effect from January 1, 2015 (OPEC Bulletin, 2014:12). With the coming of President Buhari, Dr Ibe Emmanuel Kachikwu, the Nigeria’s Minister of State for Petroleum was elected by OPEC to the same position in December, 2015 (OPEC Press Release, Dec.4, 2015)

Table 2: OPEC Conference Presidents from Nigeria, 1972-2012

Conference	Venue	Year	Nigerian Representative
31 st Conference	Lagos	1972	HE Shettima Ali Monguno
32 nd Conference	Vienna	1973	HE Shettima Ali Monguno
33 rd Conference	Vienna	1973	HE Shettima Ali Monguno
60 th Conference	Geneva	1981	HE Mallam Yahaya Dikko
61 st Conference	Geneva	1981	HE Mallam Yahaya Dikko
64 th Conference	Quito	1982	HE Mallam Yahaya Dikko
65 th Conference	Vienna	1982	HE Mallam Yahaya Dikko
66 th Conference	Vienna	1982	HE Mallam Yahaya Dikko
67 th Conference	London	1983	HE Mallam Yahaya Dikko
78 th Conference	Brioni	1986	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
78 th Conference	Geneva	1986	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
79 th Conference	Geneva	1986	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
80 th Conference	Geneva	1986	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
81 st Conference	Vienna	1987	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
82 nd Conference	Vienna	1987	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
83 rd Conference	Vienna	1988	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
84 th Conference	Vienna	1988	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
85 th Conference	Vienna	1989	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
86 th Conference	Vienna	1989	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
89 th Conference	Vienna	1991	HE Prof. Jubril Aminu
90 th Conference	Vienna	1991	HE Prof. Jubril Aminu
92 nd Conference	Vienna	1992	HE Dr Chu S. P. Okongwu
105 th Conference	Vienna	1998	HE Chief (Dr) Dan Etete
113 th Conference	Vienna	2001	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
114 th Conference	Vienna	2001	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
115 th Conference	Vienna	2001	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
116 th Conference	Vienna	2001	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
117 th Conference	Vienna	2001	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
118 th Conference	Vienna	2001	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
119 th Conference	Vienna	2002	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
120 th Conference	Vienna	2002	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
121 st Conference	Osaka	2002	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
122 nd Conference	Vienna	2002	HE Dr Rilwanu Lukman
134 th Conference	Vienna	2005	HE Dr Edmund M. Daukuro
135 th Conference	Isfahan	2005	HE Dr Edmund M. Daukuro
136 th Conference	Vienna	2005	HE Dr Edmund M. Daukuro
137 th Conference	Vienna	2005	HE Dr Edmund M. Daukuro
138 th Conference	Vienna	2005	HE Dr Edmund M. DAnkuro
139 th Conference	Vienna	2006	HE Dr Edmund M. DAnkuro
141 st Conference	Vienna	2006	HE Dr Edmund M. DAnkuro
142 nd Conference	Vienna	2006	HE Dr Edmund M. Dankuro
Cons. Mtg.	Doha	2006	HE Dr Edmund M. Dankuro
143 rd Conference	Abuja	2006	HE Dr Edmund M. Dankuro

Source: (OPEC, 2012:13-21)

Contribution as Host Country of OPEC Conference

In 2006, Abuja, the Nigeria's Federal Capital played host to the 143rd Extraordinary meeting of the OPEC Conference. The Conference which coincided with the period when a Nigerian, HE Dr Edmund M. Dankuro doubled as the OPEC Conference President and Secretary General took place from 13-14 December 2006 had "highly been described as one of the most successful in the history of the 46 year-old international organisation going by the number of very important lingering issues that it resolved" (OPEC Bulletin, 2006:6). One such lingering issues which Abuja OPEC Conference under the leadership of a Nigerian resolved was the appointment of a new substantive secretary by name Abdalla Salem El-

Badri of Libya after three years due to lack of consensus among members. The second pending issue was the choice of the venue for the Third OPEC Summit. OPEC Summit is a very crucial meeting where Heads of state and government of member countries usually discuss ways to assist poor countries. Its first meeting was held in 1975 in Algiers, Algeria during which the OPEC Fund for International Development was established. In 2000 the second meeting equally took place in Caracas, Venezuela. And it was there that member states agreed to be convening the meeting every five years (OPEC Bulletin, 2006:9). But due to conflicting interests between Libya and Saudi Arabia about the hosting right, there was no unanimity as a result the summit could not hold in 2005 until the Abuja Conference where it was resolved in favour of Saudi Arabia. The third lingering issue was the reduction of crude oil production. The volume of crude oil in the international market as well as the 2007 outlook was a major concern at the Conference. In fact, it was held that “there is more than ample crude supply, high stock levels and increasing spare capacity”. And after much deliberation, the Conference decided to reduce OPEC production by 500,000 b/d to commence from February 1, 2007 to balance demand and supply (OPEC Bulletin, 2006:16).

Furthermore, Nigeria’s contribution can also be seen from the fact that it was during the OPEC Conference in Abuja that Angola’s application for OPEC membership was accepted as the 12th member of OPEC under the leadership of Dr Edmund Maduabebe Daukuro as OPEC Secretary General (OPEC Bulletin (2006:17)). The above source documented that even before the Conference, President Obasanjo wrote to Angola and Sudan requesting them to join OPEC. Thus, with Angola’s admission, Nigeria has helped to extend OPEC’s membership to Southern African region. What a great feat!

Accurate and Timely Submission of Data

The relevance of accurate data to any organisation or establishment cannot be overemphasized as data helps in planning and record keeping. In the petroleum industry where everything is calculated or measured either in litre, barrels or cubic feet, the need for accurate data is even much higher. It is on record that Nigeria is currently the third best among the member countries of OPEC in terms of data submission (Warami, 2018). Confirming this, Dr Omar Ibrahim, OPEC Governor for Nigeria, was quoted to have said “...OPEC is very happy with us; the accuracy of data has improved. Also the timeliness has improved tremendously...as at today we are the third in the hierarchy of data submission” (Warami, 2018). The significance of this feat is that, Nigeria is helping the organisation not only to have reliable information about the industry but also supporting it to achieve its strategic planning effectively.

Gender Issue

Another area of Nigeria’s contribution which has brought great reputation to OPEC was the introduction of gender through appointment of a first female delegate to represent her at the OPEC Conference. Affirming this, the President of OPEC Conference during his Opening Addressing at 157th meeting of the Organisation, noted that “Nigeria is the first country to sent female delegate to OPEC” (OPEC, Oct.

14, 2010). This has helped to portray OPEC as organisation that is becoming gender sensitive, especially at the Conference levels as other member countries are now sending women delegates also to OPEC.

Finally, Nigeria has equally performed creditably well in the area of mediation on behalf of the organisation. This, as pointed out by Ogbu (2018) included the mediation by Gowon administration on the 1973 hijack of aircraft. The peace and stability that accompanied such mediation had helped in the general growth and expansion of the organisation's activities.

CONCLUSION

The study discussed elaborately the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Country (OPEC) as well as Nigeria's key contributions to its goals and aspirations. Regarding the OPEC, the paper traced the formation of the Organisation to the activities of the "Seven Sisters" International Oil Companies that were detrimental to the economic interest of the oil producing countries, majorly from the Third World Nations. These companies exploited the oil from their soils without adequate compensations, and were equally responsible for fixing low prices. Efforts by some Third World countries involved to draw the attention of the "Seven Sisters" to these ugly practices proved abortive. Consequently, the five founding member states of Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Venezuela and Saudi Arabia met in Baghdad, Iraq and established OPEC on September 10, 1960 to among others, coordinate and unify the petroleum policies of its Member Countries as well as ensuring the stabilization of oil prices in the global market. So far, OPEC has done a lot to achieve its goals though not without some challenges.

Nigeria's key contributions to the goals and aspiration of the organisation being the main thrust of the study also received adequate attention, specifically in the second part of the work. Accordingly, these contributions by Nigeria were identified in areas of appointment as Secretary General, Conference President as well as the hosting of OPEC Conference through which Nigerians provided strong leadership for the betterment of the organisation. For instance, as a host country of OPEC Conference in 2006 in Abuja, a Nigerian, Dr Edmund Maduabebe Daukuro, who doubled as OPEC Conference President and Secretary General then assisted significantly to midwife three paramount resolutions to issues that were commonly referred to as "lingering and contentious" in the organisation. Thus, "...for over three years until the Abuja Conference, some issues which had become so contentious, had kept recurring on the agendas of both the ordinary and extraordinary meetings without a solution being found and thus having them deferred from one meeting to the next (OPEC Bulletin, 2006:6). All these, among others as discussed in the study have actually proved beyond doubt that Nigeria's immense contributions to the organisation have been enormous.

Recommendations

1. Nigeria's contributions to the organisation's goals as noted in the study have been quite huge. Effort should, therefore, be intensified towards consolidating on these feats.

2. OPEC member countries have demonstrated over and over their confidence in Nigeria's leadership by entrusting her citizens with key leadership positions including that of Secretary General which is currently occupied by a Nigerian. This gesture should be sustained as a way of recognition for her tremendous positive role in the organisation.
3. Data is essential for effective planning. Nigeria has shown good example as one that wants OPEC to plan effectively by submitting its data timely. This effort should be emulated by other member countries to enhance proper planning in the organisation
4. More efforts should be channeled towards sustaining the already existing dialogue with non-OPEC countries to ensure stability of oil price in the global market.
5. OPEC member countries should adhere to the organisation's quotas system guidelines/directives when necessary to enhance better price for the oil commodity

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