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– SEMINAR SERIES –
EPISODE 2

NIGERIA AND THE NATION-STATE: RETHINKING DIPLOMACY WITH THE POSTCOLONIAL WORLD

THURSDAY 25 MARCH 2021

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VIA ZOOM



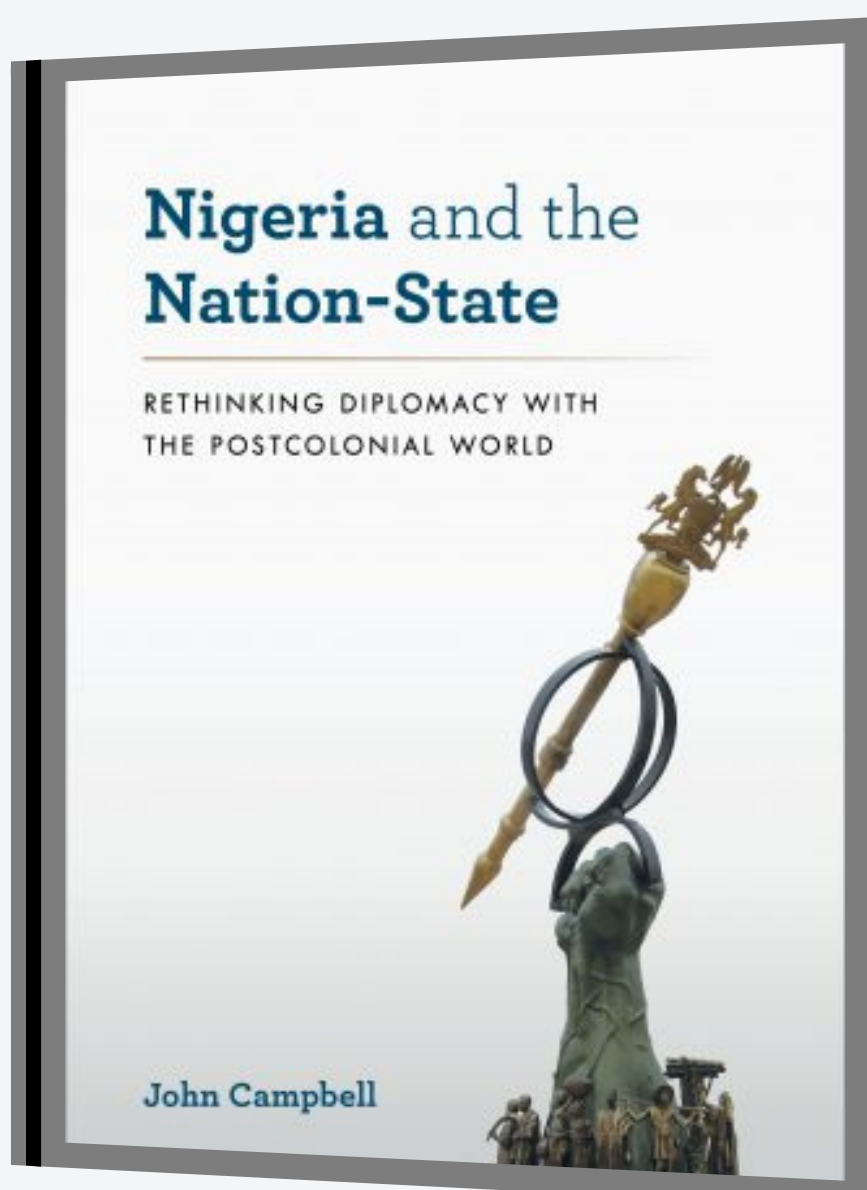
JOHN CAMPBELL

Ralph Bunche senior fellow for Africa Policy studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and a former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria



Discussant: FOLA AINA

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ABSTRACT: In his new book, *Nigeria and the Nation-State: Rethinking Diplomacy with the Postcolonial World*, John Campbell argues that Nigeria deserves greater attention. Already considered the "Giant of Africa" with a population of around 220 million, by far the largest on the continent, Nigeria is projected to have the third-largest population in the world by mid-century. While the country has occasionally made international headlines for Boko Haram attacks or, more recently, mass kidnappings, Western media coverage of Nigeria remains intermittent and simplistic. More consequentially, American policymakers have long neglected and misunderstood this dynamic country.

Campbell, the Ralph Bunche senior fellow for Africa Policy studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and a former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, in his book argues that Nigeria is neither a fully formed nation nor state. Ethnic violence, weak governance, and endemic corruption are all products of the country's conception as an arbitrary colonial entity. To help address these challenges and build more durable ties with this strategically significant country, Amb. Campbell urges U.S. officials to stop projecting their own image of the nation-state onto Africa and embrace a more decentralized approach to diplomacy.

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