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# The United Nations Counterterrorism Strategy in West Africa

## C. Olawole OLUWASUJI & Muyiwa B. AFOLABI

### Abstract

*Terrorism has undoubtedly become a potent security issue not just to West African nations but to the entire world. September 11, 2001 experience of the United States has strategically repositioned sub-regional, regional and international organisations to employ diverse counter-terrorism measures to address the menace. This article assesses the counterterrorism strategy of the United Nations (UN) in an attempt to ascertain the relevance, adequacy and challenges of the legal, institutional and policy instruments of the UN in West Africa. It is a truism to state that the African States have been threatened with terrorism incidences. Efforts of individual states and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are not yielding expected results due to infiltration of terrorist groups; weak government institutions; porosity of international borders, youth unemployment, poverty and a host of other internal factors. The article concludes that the UN counter-terrorism strategy has the potential, together with the existing regional and sub-regional instruments to expeditiously derogate heinous terrorist attacks and related problems in West Africa. It is recommended, therefore that, there is a need for improved collaborative efforts between UN and ECOWAS in order to achieve goals of the UN counterterrorism strategy while good governance is needed to ameliorate government weakness and failures.*

**Keywords:** United Nations, Counter-terrorism, Strategy, West Africa

### Introduction

September 11 in the United State opened a new vista in the counter-terrorism effort not only in the US but all over the world. Before the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the United Nations (UN) played a very small part in counter-terrorism efforts. The General Assembly had failed numerous times to negotiate a convention outlawing terrorism, though its members had successfully negotiated 12 international conventions banning a number of terrorism-related activities. While the Security Council reacted to several terrorist events since its founding, its permanent members did not think of terrorism as a threat to international peace and security. A majority of UN members shared this opinion, emphasising that it was a problem that could be best addressed at the national level. Many states did not ratify the General Assembly’s conventions dealing with terrorism. As a result, the UN’s role in counterterrorism before 11 September 2001 was very informal, encouraging, rather than requiring members to combat terrorism. However, the attacks of 11 September transformed the UN’s role in counter-terrorism. Using its quasi-legislative powers, the Security Council passed Resolution 1368 and 1373, establishing the three pillars of the current global counter-terrorism system (Talmon, 2005). The first pillar is based on Resolution 1368’s principle that states have a right to self-defence when attacked or threatened by terrorist groups or state supporters of terrorism (UN Security Council Resolution, 2001). The second pillar is the establishment of a universal counter-terrorism legal framework. According to Resolution 1373, the Security Council obligates all states to criminalise terrorism, to ratify the 12 international conventions mentioned above, and to modify their counter-terrorism laws in accordance with international best practices (UN Security Council Resolution, 2001). In other words, the Security Council required all states to build their capacity to fight terrorism at the domestic level in order to constrain terrorist groups’ ability to operate globally. Also, the Security Council has argued that if all states adapt their legal infrastructure in accordance with international law and emerging best practices, it would improve interstate cooperation on counter-terrorism efforts.

The final pillar is the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) following the Security Council’s adoption of Resolution 1373, and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), a specialised staff created in 2004 by the Security Council to assist the CTC’s efforts (UN Security Council Resolution, 2004). The CTC and CTED are subsidiary bodies of the Security Council. Thus, the Security Council is at the system’s centre. These bodies’ role is to collect and analyse data on states’ compliance efforts. The CTC and CTED do not provide technical assistance or set the standards that inform states’ counter-terrorism operations. Donor-states and intergovernmental bodies, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, provide financial and technical assistance bilaterally, while international bodies, such as the Financial Action Task Force, the World Customs Organisation, International Maritime Organisation or the International Civil Aviation Organisation, set standards. As such, the Security Council’s role is more strategic, than operational. The CTC and CTED work with other intergovernmental bodies to evaluate the international community’s global struggle against terrorism and to act as a “switchboard” pairing states that need technical or financial assistance with donor states or intergovernmental organisations. Consequently, the Security Council, by design, established a decentralised, state-centred system, where the UN plays a necessary supportive role and the states are the primary actors in the global struggle against terrorism.

The collapse of the Soviet Union, and subsequently the end of the Cold War, had a major impact on international terrorist activities across the globe because it saw many terrorist organisations lose one of their primary means of support, the Soviet Union. This led to terrorist groups seeking new sources and locations, especially in Africa (Kushner, 1998).

In West Africa, terrorism has had an immense impact on the social, political, economic and security fabrics of the many fragile states. Terrorist acts lead to insecurity and political instability, while also affecting the economic bedrock of West African societies. In the economic context, terrorism has not only discouraged foreign investment and tourism but has led to the use of funds for purposes other than they were meant for (Walker, 2009). Religious and ethnic tensions in countries such as Nigeria have created space for terrorism to prevail. Failed states have fuelled terrorism, specifically as politicians finance and support groups who use terrorist acts to exploit internal conflicts and promote political agendas. The West Africa sub-region is arguably a fertile ground for breeding terrorist networks due to the prevalence of transnational criminal networks, illegal firearms manufacturing and trafficking, armed robbery, piracy, money laundering, illegal natural resource transfers, human and drug trafficking. The root causes of the precarious security in the sub-region can be linked to governance deficits, poverty, underdevelopment and youth unemployment. These contribute to conflicts and the proliferation of criminal groups that are ready to collaborate with terrorists to undermine security in the region. More worrying is the youth bulge without corresponding economic growth and social safety nets. Most often, frustration and alienation drive many to join ethnic, religious, or political groups, some of which may be hostile to the state. For example, it has been proven concretely that problems of insecurity and Boko Haram insurgency arose from bad governance, injustice, poverty, corruption, unemployment, among other factors (Idowu, 2013).

However, Africa’s development agenda is hampered so long as it remains vulnerable to terrorism. For example, the fight against Boko Haram has led to a surge in Nigeria’s defence spending to an estimated US$2.35bn and US$2.25 in 2013 and 2014 respectively (International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2015). This increase in expenditure has come at the detriment of development in the largely impoverished north of Nigeria in particular, and the rest of the country in general. Although it is too early to assess the effectiveness of the strategy, it is not clear whether the declaration and the strategy and implementation plan can adequately combat terrorism in West Africa. While the UN has historically been generally supportive of the security initiatives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), not much can be identified in the area of counterterrorism. On the part of ECOWAS, its collective security approach has been undoubtedly laudable but has its own problems and does not clearly explain the lack of synergy between the two important organisations. The critical issue for ECOWAS is the preparedness of the organisation and its member states to ensure compliance and effective implementation of the adopted strategy. It has been observed severally that compliance and implementation of ECOWAS normative frameworks are often fraught with challenges such as inadequate financial and technical resources, and lack of political will and coordination among member states. Besides, the dependence on external funding to implement regionally agreed goals tends to affect the realisation of those goals in cases of non-availability of funds.

Against this background, the study aims to evaluate the counterterrorism strategy of the UN to ascertain the relevance, adequacy and challenges of the legal, institutional, and policy instruments of the UN in West Africa.

### United Nations and Global Security

Terrorism is a term that has defied a generally accepted definition. The 1937 Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism defines terrorism as “all criminal acts directed against a State and intended or calculated to create a state of terror in the minds of particular persons or a group of persons or the general public” (Duffy, 2006). Terrorism is often employed to achieve political ends, even when it also evinces other motives, such as religious, economic, ethnic or social. But while every terrorism has a political purpose, there are technical and moral dissimilarities, civil dissidence, and other forms of civil violence, or revolution, which are also political phenomena in themselves (Harmon, 2000).

According to Bolaji (2010), the attack on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, by a terrorist group known as Al-Qaeda re-awakened the world to the threat posed by the phenomenon to international peace and security. It also renewed the interests of stakeholders in fighting terrorism anywhere it could be found in the world. However, fighting terrorism is no tea party because it entails a lot of financial commitments. Hence, it appears that it is only the great powers that are confronted with the threat of terrorist attacks and have enough resources to fight. However, Africa is not exempted from the spate of attacks in Kenya, Tanzania and Somalia in the early part of the decade. In addition, the activities of pirates in the African high sea illustrates the threat posed by terrorism to African countries. The situation escalated by Africa’s litany of bad governance and economic disarticulation, leading to conflicts, war and the proliferation of criminal groups in several parts of the continent. Unfortunately, most African countries do not possess the resources and required technology to individually fight terrorism. The UN is a primary focal point for conflict resolution and the establishment of universal legal norms and the setting of human rights standards. In the field of international terrorism, the UN system as a whole has taken a sustained interest in developing an effective multilateral legal response to acts of terrorism, as incidents and diverse forms of terrorism have gained prominence in the last four decades (Norman, 2004). In the aftermath of the attacks on 11 September 2001, both the issues of non-ratification and the lack of an overall convention on terrorism were brought to the fore by the then UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. He posited that “the fight against terrorism must begin with ensuring that the 12 legal instruments on international terrorism already drafted and adopted under United Nations’ auspices are signed, ratified and implemented without delay by all states. It is also important to obtain agreement on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism” (UN Secretary-General, November 2001).

As of September 11, 2001, only two countries had ratified all twelve of the UN conventions related to terrorism– the UK and Botswana (Ward, 2003). It will be seen below that the lack of widespread ratification and effective implementation of these longstanding legal instruments featured prominently in the unprecedented UN Security Council’s formal response to September 11. The international community’s poor track record in unrealised universal legal norms, poor implementation, and the subsequently patchy picture of international cooperation against international terrorism has become one of the main focal points for remedial action after September 11. Crucially, the most powerful organ of the UN, the Security Council, led this and the apparent results achieved to date raise the prospect of both a globally recognised universal legal framework for countering terrorism and the development of effective proactive and preventive executive responses in all states. Whilst some may regard the response of the UN after 11 September 2001 as a positive indicator of the UN system in action, it is now clear that both financial backing and technical aid have underpinned the realisation of state commitments in the post-9/11 regime. More so, the Group of Eight most industrialised nations of the world have funded much of the UN’s work. Also, the UN Security Council has adopted a strategy to explicitly engage other international, regional and sub-regional organisations, to cooperate and coordinate bilateral and multilateral technical aid and assistance to states that would not otherwise realise the ambitious counter-terrorism objectives. This engagement raises important issues of ‘tasking’ and the role of regional organisations and the impact of power in formulating counter-terrorism in practice within this new regime of global counter-terrorism. The fall-out of these developments have also been tangible in human rights concerns and the response of certain states to increase action against internal dissent and those seeking to gain self-determination. This has led, somewhat reluctantly at first, to the Security Council explicitly involving wider UN agencies with responsibilities to uphold the universal human rights standards.

### United Nations and Counter-Terrorism

Counter-terrorism activities within a nation’s borders operate in the context of each nation’s laws and policies, history, politics, and culture. In democratic societies, “the rule of law is guaranteed by the legitimacy legal norms enjoy from whom such norms apply, on one hand, and by the threat of enforcement from specialised agents of control on the other” (Oche, 2014). But how vigorously can democratic countries fight terrorism and remain a democracy? How can democracies play by their own rules when terrorists obey no rules? Which of our civil liberties should we be willing to give up, and what kind of proof do we need that sacrificing our personal freedom is an effective antidote to terrorism? The counter-terrorism strategies take a critical look from the perspective of the United Nations. The former Secretary-General of the UN, Kofi Annan identified five elements that he termed the five Ds for which is the principle and comprehensive strategy to counter terrorism in Africa in his keynote address at the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism and Security in 2005. These are:

1. Dissuade disaffected groups from choosing terrorism as a tactic to achieve their goals;
2. Deny terrorists the ability to carry out their attacks;
3. Deter them from supporting terrorists;
4. Develop capacity to prevent terrorism; and
5. Defend human rights in the struggle against terrorism.

The United Nations and its agencies have developed a number of international agreements to enable the international community to take actions to counter-terrorism and bring those responsible to justice (Oche, 2014). Treaties, mainly in form of conventions, oblige member states to take stringent steps to root out terrorism out of the globe. The conventions are transformed into actions by specialised agencies of the UN such as the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). These actions include the development of measures to improve the security of air and sea travel. The UN Security Council, the United Nation’s principal organ for maintaining peace and security has also been very active in combating terrorism. The Security Council adopted a number of resolutions regarding terrorism and the countering thereof in Africa. The first resolution is 1044 of 1996 which called Sudan to extradite the three suspects wanted in connection with the assassination of the then President of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, to Ethiopia. The second resolution 1054 called on countries to develop sanctions against the Sudanese government in consequence of their non-compliance with the aforementioned resolution (Oche, 2014). The Security Council’s management of the incidence was interrupted by US airstrikes on a pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum, wrongly thought to be producing chemical weapons for terrorist use. The third resolution adopted by the UN Security Council relating to Africa is Resolution 1189 of 1998. This resolution concerned the terrorist bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998 (Oche, 2014).

Finally, in the case of the UN building bombing in 2011 in Nigeria, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon dispatched security operatives. In January 2012, Ban Ki-Moon reiterated the need for coordinated efforts between member states and international organisations to implement counter-terrorism measures in the country. Likewise, Nigeria’s Ambassador Abdulahi Omaki urged the UN to increase security sector assistance and partnerships, citing the “external influence” of international terrorists (Copeland, 2013)

### West Africa and Security Challenges

Conflict is part of human society, which exists in various forms, be it religious, political, cultural, social or economic. It is a truism that there is hardly any society without one form of conflict challenging its corporate existence. However, reliable conflict resolution measures define societies whether developed or developing (Yakubu cited in Owutu, 2014). In other words, African conflicts present some unique security challenges such as small arms proliferation, cross-border banditry, terrorism and public order in post-conflict societies. Notable examples being Liberia and Sierra Leone conflicts of the 1990s and beyond that challenged the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The capacity of regional security apparatus in managing African conflict is very significant despite the political consequences of globalisation in which “the power, authority and influence” of states are in decline as globalisation advances (Olayode, 2006). Economic globalisation leads to development as Ate (2001) asserts that “there has been a new perception that socioeconomic development cannot be assumed to result automatically… without a conducive security environment” (Ate, 2001).

Akinade (2009) submitted that security is defined as “a state of being secured, that is, a state of freedom from apprehension, as well as freedom from danger or risk. It is also a state of psychological confidence in the safety of one’s person, security is taken to mean the freedom of citizens from apprehension and the creation of a psychological environment in which citizen feels safe.” In line with this, Afolabi (2015), described security generally as a feeling of being safe from harm, fear, anxiety, oppression, danger, poverty, defence, protection and preservation of core values and a threat to those values. Abolurin (2003) concluded that security refers to all measures in use to frustrate the activities of a saboteur. The importance attached to security varies from one country to another. The more complex a society is, the more likely the degree of security is, every society requires some good security measures in other to function effectively.

Furthermore, Abolurin (2003) was of the view that internal security is a totality of the nation’s equilibrium state, which needs to be maintained so that the nation can carry out its formal function without unnecessary interruption from anywhere. Internal security involves government coordination of all those actions that would ensure that the equilibrium of the state is constantly maintained by any form of civil disturbances. Internal security could also mean the citizens’ expectation of government to make provision for the protection of life and property and the safety from criminals and armed robbers (Abolurin, 2003 cited in Owutu, 2014). Akinyeye (2001) quoted Arnold Wolfer as seeing security as concerned mainly with such indices as the “military aspect of a nation’s goals, competition between satisfied and dissatisfied powers, strategic issues of superpowers alliance-building processes, independence and sovereignty, civil-military relations, the economic basis for strategic forces, conflict spots in international relations and the problem of maintaining systematic balance” (Akinyeye, 2001 cited Owutu, 2014). From all the submissions above, one can easily identify the common demand to all definitions of security as that of protection against threats to interest and values of individual state or nation-state.

The West African region is expected to be the most advanced in designing and nurturing structures and institutions to fight insecurity in Africa. Ironically, it is the most vulnerable to terrorist attacks because of the availability of small arms and light weapons, bad governance, management problem in the extractive industries, trans-border criminal networks capitalising on the free movement of people in the region and activities of external interests, among other factors. Simmering indicators of possible terrorist presence in the region included Islamic fundamentalists’ activities in Northern Nigeria and militancy in the Niger Delta region, Tuaregs insurgency in Mali, and violence in the Casamance region of Senegal (Bolaji, 2014). Pirates have already hijacked 8 Nigerian Vessels off the Niger Delta coast while 64 attacks have been carried out against Nigerian Merchant Ships in 2008 alone (Osagie and Nzeshi, 2008 cited in Bolaji, 2014). The crisis in the Mano River region in the 90s has demonstrated that they may, if not checked, have contagious effects and spread to other countries in the region.

ECOWAS was founded in 1975 as a sub-regional organisation aimed at regional integration and economic development of its member states. Unfortunately, over the years, the sub-region was beset with a number of violent conflicts, which force the member states to divert the scarce resources available for regional economic development and integration to military purposes and peacekeeping. ECOWAS, the sub-regional body in the region is not unaware of this fact and has put in place some structures for good governance and conflict prevention, to not only prevent conflicts but also safeguard the security of member states from all forms of hostilities, including terrorism. The founding fathers then thought it necessary to revise the ECOWAS Treaty of 1975 in July 1993 and among the innovation was their acknowledgement of the fact that economic prosperity and regional cooperation can only be fully realised in a peaceful, stable, secure and democratic environment. It, therefore, made a shift in emphasis to peace and security in member states as a pre-requisite for achieving regional economic development and integration as envisaged by the founders (Adefuye, 2008 cited in Bolaji, 2014). The ECOWAS structures for mainstreaming good governance and conflict management include the Council of Elders, the ECOWAS Early Warning System, Peace-keeping Missions in collaboration with the United Nations. Peace-building Operations in collaboration with the UN Peace-building Commission, Elections and Democratic Elections and Human Security (Ndinga-Muvumba and Lamin, 2006). However, these initiatives have proved insufficient in putting an end to security threats, especially terrorism in West Africa.

### The UN Counter-Terrorism Strategy: An Overview

In 2001, the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 established the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) as part of a wider effort to stop terrorism in all of its forms. The Council also passed Resolution 1624 (2005) designed to improve border security and encourage member countries to submit updates to the CTC. At a much broader level, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy has attempted to consolidate and enhance the various streams of counter-terrorism measures among the Member States through the General Assembly while they are increasingly coordinating their counter-terrorism efforts and continuing their legal norm-setting work. Apart from formal treaties, these countries also discuss ways and means to combat terrorism on a regular basis and pledge their commitment to counter this menace through solemn declarations and resolutions of the General Assembly. The Security Council has also been active in countering terrorism through resolutions and by establishing several subsidiary bodies. At the same time, a number of programmes, offices and agencies of the United Nations system have been engaged in specific activities against terrorism, further assisting the Member States in their counter-terrorism efforts. The findings agree with Oche (2014) who stressed that the United Nations and its agencies have developed a number of international agreements to enable the international community to take action to counter terrorism and bring those responsible to justice.

Terrorism cannot be addressed through military force alone. It requires a range of policy responses, including capacity building, promotion of human rights, and development assistance, both to strengthen each country’s capacity to combat terrorism and address underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. According to the Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations, “if international cooperation to assist developing countries in building up their resilience against terrorism is to be effective, we need to overcome a recurrent hesitation to combine the development and the security agendas. Including counter-terrorism capacity building as an aspect of development programmes is a delicate but important task” (United Nations, 2008). In support of these views, Norman (2004), stressed that the United Nations is a primary focal point for conflict resolution and the establishment of universal legal norms and the setting of human rights standards. In the field of international terrorism, the UN system as a whole has taken a sustained interest in developing an effective multilateral legal response to acts of terrorism, as incidents and diverse forms of terrorism have gained prominence in the last four decades (Wardlaw 1989 cited in Norman, 2004).

Largely, the UN Counterterrorism Strategy can be taken as a crucial step forward in the institutional approach to confronting the menace of terrorism especially in its ability to encourage a collective approach involving a multiplicity of different actors. For example, the UN counterterrorism programme has been broadened to include the entire UN membership, thus shifting the focus from the Security Council, which had dominated the UN programme since 2001. In addition, for the first time, the United Nations’ global membership has agreed that long-term efforts to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism are an essential part of an effective and comprehensive strategy to combat and prevent terrorism, thus moving beyond the Council’s emphasis on law enforcement and other security measures. The Strategy is also clear about the imperative for respecting human rights and promoting the rule of law across every element of the document and throughout its implementation.

As noted earlier, it acknowledges the wide range of stakeholders, beyond states, that have a role to play in its implementation and is the first UN document on counterterrorism to include a role for civil society organisations. Part of the Strategy’s significance lies in the fact that it is an “instrument of consensus” on an issue where unanimous consent has been difficult to achieve within the United Nations General Assembly. Although, it does not add anything not already contained in pre-existing UN counterterrorism resolutions, norms, and measures, the Strategy pulls them together into a single, coherent, and universally adopted framework. Contributions from a wide range of stakeholders, including not only member states and the relevant parts of the UN system but also civil society, are needed to implement that framework. In particular, the role of CSOs in furthering the objectives of the UN Charter cannot be over-emphasised. As the Chair of the UN Secretary General’s Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations–Civil Society Relations noted, Civil Society Organisations are “the prime movers of some of the most innovative initiatives to deal with emerging global threats.” The UN Strategy specifically encourages “non-governmental organisations and civil society to engage, as appropriate, on how to enhance efforts to implement the Strategy.”

Indeed, the Strategy which emphasises the wide inclusion of stakeholders has been hailed as a “living document” that will evolve. Civil society organisations, with their long-term presence in the field and often deep understanding of the local context in which the Strategy needs to be implemented, can play an important role in ensuring that implementation keeps pace with the changing realities on the ground. For any comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy to be effective, civil society needs to be part of its development and implementation, as broad-based engagement between the state and civil society organisations can help serve as a medium for addressing concerns between the state and the public in the context of specific counter-terrorism actions.

Also, the Strategy’s explicit reference to the role of civil society may lend an added degree of legitimacy to civil society organisations, which have previously been treated by some governments as subversive for working on terrorism and counter-terrorism issues. Further, the Strategy, by enabling Civil society organisations to link their existing work with counter-terrorism and the larger pools of funds often connected with it, may open up new resource flows for Civil society organisations from donors, including governments. Moreover, the adoption of the Strategy may make it easier for civil society organisations to have access to and a dialogue with the “harder edges” of the national security apparatus. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the UN Strategy, with its holistic, human rights-based approach, offers a counter-narrative to less inclusive approaches, such as the U.S.-led “war on terror,” which could help bring coherence and balance to national and UN counter-terrorism efforts and create more space for civil society to operate.

### Incidences of Terrorism and State of Security in West Africa

The threat of terrorism in West Africa is enormous and poses daunting challenges not only to security management but also to political stability and economic development, in the region. The regularity and enormity of the terror unleashed by insurgents in various parts of West Africa make the need for strategies and solutions to the phenomena unarguably expedient. According to Human Rights Watch, Africa ranks second only to the Middle East in terrorist incidences in 2014. In addition, the West African sub-region also ranks significantly high as one of the hotbeds of increasing violence occasioned by terrorism. The security situation in West Africa has been a major concern for not only the region but also the international community, which considers it a huge symptom of state weakness. These are clear in the porous borders, the infiltration of Al-Qaeda’s elements in Africa as a whole, and the growing rate of anti-Western sentiments in the mostly Muslim dominated regions. Many African countries are categorised as weak or failed states where terrorists’ operations flourish more. The breakdown of authority, law and order gives them the ability to conduct their operations without significant interference. Many weak and failed states in West Africa hold a lot of attractions for terrorists. Sometimes, most of these failed states take to smuggling and trafficking to raise funds.

More so, prominent groups such as the Boko haram, which emerged in the predominantly Muslim region of North-eastern Nigeria, is believed to have allegiance to a network of older and perhaps, global terrorist organisations such as Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab. The suspicion of probable Al-Qaeda connection in the financing of the Boko Haram was also heightened by the presence of the Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which operates actively in the Sahel-Saharan belt in the West and Central Africa. The activities of the AQIM in this belt are facilitated by the porosity of international borders and the existence of weak government institutions which are unable to ensure effective security within and across the various national and international boundaries. Evidently, the operations of the sect have been transformed from the use of crude implements like knives, bows and arrows to the reliance on various degrees of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs).

Consequently, there will be a need for the continued flow of weapons and tactfulness. This is coupled with the fact that there now exist enormous national and international attention on its operation since they now not only constitute threats to Nigeria’s national security but also the regional, Sahel-Saharan belt and the wider global arena. Indicators such as high rate of poverty, corruption, high population density and human rights violation among others are the hallmark of weak or failed states and these are profoundly pronounced regarding the countries in the West African region. Widespread youth unemployment and poverty have been identified as a major challenge to addressing transnational organised crimes and terrorism in West Africa. These twin challenges are believed to have worsened the spate of terrorists’ activities in the sub-region as a large number of idle and impoverished youths continue to populate the rank and file of existing armed groups such as the militias, criminal gangs, and vicious terrorist groups. According to Udeh (2010), unemployment and poverty are the greatest threats to peace and security. Yakubu (2005, cited in Owutu 2014) agreed to the above submission by asserting that African conflicts present some unique security challenges such as small arms proliferation, cross-border banditry, terrorism and public order in post-conflict societies while Olayode (2006), explained that the capacity of regional security apparatus in managing African conflict is very significant despite the political consequences of globalisation in which “the power, authority and influence” of states are in decline as globalisation advances, current realities suggest otherwise. The intensity, networking, growing capacity and capability of terrorists and other armed groups in West Africa lends ample credence to the worrisome fact that widespread acts of terror have become cumbersome, overwhelming and almost intractable despite existing regional conflict resolution instruments.

### Assessment of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy in West Africa

The United Nations in fulfilling the international community’s unity of purpose and commitment has continuously offered a comprehensive framework for an effective international response to terrorism in the West African sub-region. It gives priority attention to addressing some underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, such as poverty, prolonged unresolved conflicts, dehumanisation of victims of terrorism, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, socio-economic marginalisation and lack of good governance and emphasises the imperative for respecting human rights and promoting the rule of law that is absolutely essential to the successful combating of terrorism in West Africa. Others feel that UN resolutions/policies to stop terrorism in West Africa have not proven effective.

The efforts at dealing with terrorism and terrorist funding in West Africa can be discussed at three mutually reinforcing levels, global, continental and regional initiatives. First, the international community, according to Ohia, Olugbode, and Oyeyipo (2011), has responded to the increasing spate of money laundering and terrorism financing. One of the measures is the establishment of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in 1989 by the G-7 countries to respond more effectively to money laundering. The FATF Special Recommendations require countries to criminalise the financing of terrorism, terrorist organisations and terrorist acts. Besides, there is the UN Convention on Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Vienna Convention), the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (Palermo Convention), the UN Convention against Corruption and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (Ohia, Olugbode, & Oyeyipo, 2011). These Conventions and Covenants contain provisions relating to the tracing, freezing, seizing and confiscation of instrumentalities and proceeds of crime. These are laudable but have not achieved much in West Africa in terms of interfering with various activities related to terrorism financing. Hence, Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups appear to be making further inroads into the region, particularly into Nigeria.

The commitment of the international community to protect the integrity of the international financial system and prevent its abuse especially by terrorist organisations and organised crime groups have led to the intensification of measures to combat money laundering and financing of terrorism. This commitment, intensified at national, regional and international levels, stems from an acknowledgement that robust regimes against money laundering and the financing of terrorism constitute vital strands in the implementation of the United Nations Counter-terrorism Strategy and the pursuit of global financial stability.

The three main sources of international obligations on combating the financing of terrorism are derived from the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism of 1999, the United Nations Resolution 1373 of 2001 and the Nine Special Recommendations on Terrorist Financing issued by the Financial Action Task Force. The international response also resulted in the adoption of the United Nations’ Convention against Transnational Organised Crimes (also referred to as Palermo Convention) and as well as the United Nations Convention on Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Vienna Convention) in 2000.

Finally, there exists a strong partnership between the UN and ECOWAS in the development and promotion of security mechanisms especially in relation to the growing security threats by non-state armed groups in West Africa. For the sub-regional organisation, the need to co-opt security initiatives into the broader goal of economic transformation continues to drive ECOWAS’ activities. As observed by Adefuye (2008) cited in Bolaji (2014), economic prosperity and regional cooperation can only be fully realised in a peaceful, stable, secure and democratic environment. ECOWAS, therefore, made a shift in emphasis on peace and security in member states as a pre-requisite for achieving regional economic development and integration as envisaged by the founders.

Indeed, key programmes and mechanisms under the ECOWAS counter-terrorism strategy are not only greatly patterned after the UN’s instruments for combating terror, but are shaped by the fundamental ideals upon which the UN seeks to build a free, peaceful and stable world. Stressing this further, Ndinga-Muvumba and Lamin (2006) opined that the ECOWAS structures for mainstreaming conflict management include the Council of Elders, the ECOWAS Early Warning System, and Peacekeeping Missions in collaboration with the United Nation, Peace-building Operations in collaboration with the UN Peace-building Commission, Democratic Elections and Human Security. These, according to Ndinga-Muvumba *et*.*al.*, also reinforce the importance of good governance in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding. Without a doubt, the presence of these structures and existing joint efforts by the UN and ECOWAS is expected to improve the peace and stability of the West African sub-region and stem the tide of terrorism.

### Challenges and Prospects of the UN Counter-Terrorism Strategies in West Africa

The UN counter-terrorism strategies in West Africa have encountered various challenges both regionally and locally among countries in the West African sub-region. The ability to prevent terrorists from organising and moving freely across the territories of Member States in the West African sub-region depends not only upon the effectiveness of bilateral and sub-regional cooperation but also on measures taken to put in place international codes and practices related to law enforcement and border control and upon the effective protection and monitoring of borders, coasts and interior regions. All States have cash-based economies except a few that have just started the cashless policy, and this increases the risk that terrorist financing will occur by means of physical cross-border transportation of currency and bearer negotiable instruments or by means of informal transfers of money and value through alternative remittance systems. Besides, the region continues to face challenges relating to law enforcement, the rule of law and respect for human rights

Also, very few money-laundering cases let alone terrorism-financing cases have been prosecuted and resulted in a conviction in many West African countries, despite an increase in the number of suspicious transaction reports. Judiciaries generally need to be strengthened in terms of capacity and independence. Many countries’ financial intelligence units cannot still analyse suspicious transaction reports for the administrative freezing of terrorist assets. These challenges coupled with the fact that there is no sub-regional action plan on counter-terrorism or sub-regional organisation with a dedicated counter-terrorism unit. Even though most West African states have introduced partial measures to detect forged travel documents with some states partially implementing measures to prevent and suppress the movement of terrorists across borders, lengthy and open land borders continue to pose challenges to border control. There are still no properly integrated border management programmes. The majority of police border posts lack the tools and equipment to perform their missions effectively, and national border-control agencies do not sufficiently cooperate among themselves or with their counterparts in neighbouring states due to factors that include corruption.

Bolaji (2010), opined that the West African region ironically is the most vulnerable to terrorist attacks because of the availability of small arms and light weapons, bad governance, management problem in the extractive industries, trans-border criminal networks capitalising on the free movement of people in the region and activities of external interests, among other factors. There is an obviously limited law enforcement capacity in many West African countries, which serves as an incentive to transnational organised crimes and terrorist financing in the region. This is a challenge that must be conquered to close all avenues of terrorist financing that comes from various sources including transnational organised crimes.

Aside from the aforementioned, there are problems associated with the UN engagement of certain key actors despite written and verbal commitments to do so. For instance, due to lack of resources, the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (Task Force) is yet to seek ways to involve civil society organisations in its work or develop an outreach plan, but it needs to do so. Further, the traditional UN counterterrorism actors within the United Nations, for example, the Security Council’s Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), its Executive Directorate (CTED), and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime’s (UNODC) Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) have generally not sought to engage with Civil society organisations in their work. This attitude likely reflects the state-centric view of counter-terrorism tends to dominate UN policymaking over the years and is not surprising, given the ambivalence of some member states and parts of the United Nations toward civil society, particularly when dealing with sensitive national security issues.

In addition, targeting civil society is challenging, particularly in a framework as broad as the Strategy, not least because civil society represents a multiplicity of actors with often divergent concerns and interests and includes many elements that will be reluctant to reciprocate. The crucial message that articulates what the Strategy offers civil society organisations in return for their engagement has not been developed or disseminated either by the United Nations or its member states. Although such a message will need to be tailored to take into account the interests and concerns of the particular group of civil society organisations being targeted, some benefits may have broad applicability. For example, the Strategy may offer civil society organisations new networking opportunities with other civil society organisations, intergovernmental bodies, and states on the range of issues that are now linked in the framework of the Strategy. Two prerequisites to increasing the involvement of NGOs and other civil society organisations to promote UN Strategy implementation are raising awareness of it among Civil society organisations and more clearly identifying how the UN Strategy is relevant to their concerns and interests while providing reassurance that supporting implementation will not just further narrow government interests. So far, neither of these has been satisfied. Awareness of the Strategy among Civil society organisations remains low, with informal surveys by some Civil society organisations indicating that only a small percentage of stakeholders with whom they are interacting report having any previous knowledge of the Strategy.

### Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

West Africa has been a major area of interest for terrorism and terrorist activities. Subsequently, the lack of well-coordinated border control systems has been a major cause of the infiltration of terrorists into the region. Coupled with this challenge are prevalent high levels of poverty and unemployment that predispose a large number of youths to join the bandwagon of violent, extremists’ groups such as Boko haram. To this end, the United Nations counterterrorism strategy is an important milestone in the global efforts to halt terrorism and its attendant consequences of deaths, rights’ violations, human displacement and instability. Despite the initiative, there remain pressing issues relating to poor funding, lack of awareness of the strategy due to the relatively low presence of CSOs and other sundry issues.

Conclusively, terrorist’s activities constitute grave threats to the stability of the West African sub-region and the UN Counter-terrorism strategy has the potential, together with existing regional and sub-regional instruments, to effectively address the myriad of terrorist-related problems more than it currently does. Its comprehensive approach which admits the need to revitalise the governance processes in West Africa will no doubt help address the root causes of terrorism but needs to be swiftly undertaken. Also, improved collaborative efforts between the UN and ECOWAS can assist in fast-tracking the achievements of the set goals of the UN Counterterrorism strategy. However, In the light of the above, there is the need for the UN to broadly engage all stakeholders, in particular, civil society organisations. A large presence of CSOs will potentially bring awareness about the strategy itself. Given the resource challenge to developing regions, and their greater exposure as a breeding ground for untoward activities by terrorists’ groups, financial, technical as well as training assistance will greatly aid regional organisation’s counter-terror operations. A reassessment of the strategy that takes cognisance of the many peculiarities of Africa and in particular the West African sub-region may also be necessary. Likewise, sharing ideas, intelligence and best practices would go a long way in preventing conflict and restoring peace to troubled regions like West Africa.

Finally, good governance is needed to offset governance failure in West Africa. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that all member states of ECOWAS adhere strictly to the Protocol on Democracy and Good governance. This will minimise corruption, enthrone transparency and accountability. Good governance will also deliver democratic dividends to the people and reduce frustration and aggression that lead to involvement in terrorism and criminality.

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# Revamping the Roles of Non-State Policing Actors: An appraisal of KAROTA in Kano Metropolis

## Timothy Zakimayu BARJE & Abdussalam Umar ABEDO

### Abstract

*The challenges of everyday policing in a large commercial city like Kano makes it expedient for the state government to consider alternative solutions using non-state policing actors in maintaining law and order. The popularity of non-state policing actors is fast becoming acceptable even amongst state governors who exploit the opportunity to establish those using state laws for specific functions. By looking at the establishment and activities of the Kano Roads and Transport Agency (KAROTA), this research aims to examine how non-state policing groups are instrumental in maintaining law and order within the Kano metropolis. Being residents of Kano when KAROTA was newly established, the authors relieved some of their experiences in writing the research, coupled with interviews conducted with other residents, agents and administrators of the agency and some newspaper reports. It concludes that with proper handling some of the negative tendencies of KAROTA can be corrected and the agency aligned for greater services.*

### Introduction

Policing is not restricted to a single state structure, established and controlled by recognised authorities, which has the sole function to maintain law and order by apprehending and punishing offenders. Policing is measures and actions taken by a variety of institutions and groups (both formal and informal) in the society to regulate social relations and practices in order to secure the safety of members of the community (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2003). In other words, actions that are meant or targeted towards public peace and order and rendering assistance and service to all citizens, which may be done by an organised group of persons, who are either recognised or not recognised by the law are considered as policing. Hence, the term is not strictly associated with the police institution alone, the concept is broadened to embrace the entire process of social regulation that governs everyday living (Baker, 2003).

The concept of non-state actors is said to have gained currency worldwide in the past couple of decades (Ulimwengu, 2007), and in Nigeria, there has been the proliferation of several non-state actors providing policing services that cut across different sectors of the society and most of these actors are operating with little or no backing from the law. Baker (2010) defines non-state policing as a wide range of local collectives providing everyday policing which could include associations, non-government organisations, informal levels of government agencies, ethnic associations, etc. However, amid the various non-state groups operating and fully functioning in the security and justice system of the nation, there are those who receive some form of legal backing from the authorities at the state level. The fact that they are considered here as non-state is attributed to the fact that federal laws do not permit them to perform police functions. This has remained a subject of controversy between the states and the federal government in Nigeria over the legitimacy of the establishment of these groups backed by the state’s legislative laws.

The establishment of these groups by state governors have always been greeted with some form of controversies, even though the discussion in this article is not within the purview of such controversies. Despite the many controversies generated by the creation of these groups, it remains to be argued whether they have contributed negatively or positively to the policing landscape of the country. Some of these non-state policing groups are established for security purposes in curtailing crime and nefarious activities. These include Operation Rainbow in Plateau State (Barje, 2016), Bakassi Boys in the east, the newly established Amotekun in the south-western states, etc. Some others are meant to serve religious purposes as a kind of moral police in the society like the Hisba corps in some of the northern states. Others are meant to complement the police in patrols and community watch such as the Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN). Some of these established groups like the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) and the Kaduna State Traffic Law Enforcement Agency (KASTLEA) are responsible for regulating traffic and maintaining law and order by motorists and other road users. Given this background, the research intends to study the establishment and the operation of a similar group established by the Kano State Government, the Kano Roads and Traffic Agency (KAROTA). It intends to examine the establishment of the agency and the impacts of its activities in the Kano metropolis.

### The Establishment of KAROTA

KAROTA was established by an act of the Kano State House of Assembly titled “A Law to provide for the regulation, control and management of traffic in the state.” It is known as the Kano State Law No 12 of 2012 signed into law on the 16th of May 2012 by former governor Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso (the Kano State of Nigeria, 2012). The agents popularly known as the *yan* *karota* have, within a short, period created a huge imprint on the people living in metropolitan Kano where they operate. Kano is known for its notorious traffic gridlocks and long traffic queues due to several factors that include: population, narrow roads, crowded intersections and roundabouts, reckless disregard for traffic rules and the limited number of police and traffic wardens to handle the huge demand for traffic control in the city. The state government decided to establish an agency to check the growing number of traffic offenders and the inability of some agencies responsible for traffic control to effectively manage the situation (Zarewa, 2016). The shortage of policemen in Kano made Kwankwaso’s administration establish the agency, having observed that there were only 8,000 policemen in Kano, as of 2015, while Kaduna and Lagos have 13,000 and 30,000 policemen respectively (Mudashir, 2015).

KAROTA was formed in Kano to help control and maintain healthy traffic and to ensure that all road users, especially transport owners both private and commercial, obey the traffic laws. The state government has strategically empowered KAROTA to arrest and fine defaulters to generate revenue for the state. Towards this end, the agency was established with the mandate to generate about N100 million monthly for the state government (Askira, 2015), a target which many believed became one of the driving forces for their strictness, notoriety and corruption. The agency has a dual mandate of being traffic police and revenue generators (Zarewa, 2016).

#### Organisation and Operations

To meet its dual function of serving as traffic/road police and revenue-generating agency for the state government, KAROTA was well-positioned by the laws establishing the agency to meet its objectives. Though KAROTA was established with some policing functions attached to the agency, the Director of Administration in the agency pointed that it operates a ‘purely civil service structure’ when it comes to administration, grading of the staff or agents, disciplinary actions and other matters (Abdullahi, 2016). KAROTA was established as an agency under the State Ministry of Works and some of its requisition has to go through the Commissioner of Works in the state. The basic function that makes KAROTA act within the ambit of policing functions is in terms of its operations and patrols where the agents were empowered by the law to carry out arrests of persons who break traffic rules and regulations.

At the head of the agency is the Managing Director (MD) who is also the Chief Executive Officer. Four officers are answerable to him. These are the Legal Adviser/Secretary, Public Relations Officer, Internal Auditor and Intelligence Officer. Next to the MD are three Directors: Administration and General Services, Operations and Revenue. These are the top principal officers. But the operation of the agents in the field of duty is the responsibility of the Director of Operations. The officers or agents are graded on salary levels as obtained in the state civil service but their titles matched their duties as road traffic agents. The lowest cadre on Grade Level (GL) 02–06 is the Road Traffic Attendant (RTA), with Primary School Certificate as the minimum qualification needed for the position. Next is the Road Traffic Assistant from Grade 1–5 who are placed on GL 03–07 and the minimum qualification for the position is an SSCE Certificate. The Road Traffic Superintendent cadre has those on GL 06–14 with the minimum entry requirement being a Diploma/National Certificate of Education (NCE) certificate. Finally, there is the Road Traffic Officer cadre on GL 08–16 with the minimum entry requirement of a Bachelor’s degree or HND.

There are about 94 traffic offences with their fines listed in the laws establishing KAROTA and since the agents do not have the right to prosecute offenders, a magistrate court was established mainly for KAROTA within the office complex in Kano. It is the same traffic laws and operational methods used by the Nigeria Police traffic warden that was adopted for use in KAROTA laws (Zarewa, 2016. Offenders who resist arrests or refuse to own up to their offences when arrested by KAROTA are the ones usually taken to the court. There are two categories of offenders: those who accept their faults and pay the fine when arrested and those who object to their arrest and are charged to the court (Zarewa, 2016). The court sits twice weekly.

Two units are established under the Director of Operations that are responsible for ensuring orderliness on the road and compliance with traffic rules. These are the Enforcement Unit and the Traffic Control Unit. The traffic control unit is responsible for controlling traffic within Kano city; agents in the units are posted to junctions, roundabouts, intersections and places where there are traffic lights. Their duties are to ensure that motorists and other road users obey the traffic lights and to ensure that there is a smooth flow of traffic at the major traffic grid points in the city. In the city, one could see KAROTA agents on almost every roundabouts, junction and intersection. Their presence is remarkable and, to a very large extent, they have succeeded in ensuring that the traffic gridlock Kano was known for has been reduced to a considerable extent. Motorists in Kano are careful to observe the lines at every traffic point and are cautious in observing the traffic lights due to the presence of KAROTA who are often swift to arrest those who default by crossing the traffic lines unduly. Others who make ‘U’ turns where it is illegal are also apprehended by the agents. The Enforcement Unit has some of the heavier tasks and its duties include patrolling the city to ensure that motorists and trucks do not park at the wrong places; when they do, they are towed to the office yard until the defaulters pay their fines. In Kano, there is a proliferation of illegal Motor Parks and some are located right on the streets in the busiest sections.

Aside from creating a traffic gridlock where such parks are located, some of these parks are managed by louts, touts, area boys or street thugs who for a small token from drivers, help to get passengers aboard the commercial vehicles. Members of the public often prefer to patronise these illegal roadside Motor Parks because they are quick and are free from the hassle experienced when they go to the government control Motor Parks or the government-approved ones (Sodangi, 2016). The negative side of allowing these illegal parks to exist has to do with encouraging touts’ activities and violence that usually characterise such parks. There is also an issue with the safety of the passengers because most of the commercial drivers who are popularly known as *yan* *gada*-*gada* are not registered with the recognised Road Transport Union. Rather, they are private. Unfortunately, some of these private commercial vehicles are usually driven by criminals who end up robbing passengers along the way or kidnapping them for ritual and sexual abuse.

In order to curb the issue of illegal motor parks, KAROTA in collaboration with the Road Transport Union produced a ‘Manifest’ which is a form given to every commercial driver that uses the approved motor parks. The form contains information about every passenger aboard the vehicle. Passenger’s information on the manifest includes passenger’s name, address of departure, address on arrival, phone number of next of kin and passenger’s phone number. The form also has the vehicle number and the type of car. The Vehicle Manifest, according to the Director of Operations, serves two purposes: The first has to do with the welfare of the passengers. Information provided on the manifest ensures that passengers are easily contacted in case they forget luggage in the car, and their relatives are easily reached in case of emergency. The second purpose is to ensure that illegal commercial drivers, who carry passengers from illegal motor parks are identified.

#### Some Achievements of the Agency

Part of the duty of the Enforcement Unit is to arrest drivers and vehicles that do not have the Manifest, especially those plying inter-state routes and longer routes to Local Government areas distant from the city. Some major Motor Parks that are known to be approved by the government in the city are Kano Line, now popularly known as KAROTA Park, Unguwa Uku Motor Park, etc. The places known to be notorious for illegal motor parks are Gyadi-Gyadi Fly Over, just before Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Hotoro Roundabout and Dan Marke. These are strategic locations because they are on inter-state roads, especially on the busy Zaria Road that leads to Kaduna, Abuja, North Central States and the South; while the busy Kano-Maiduguri road links Kano to the entire North Eastern States. Commercial drivers who default on these rules are mostly found on the Kano–Zaria road and places around Hotoro and its roundabout because it is the only link to the Kano–Maiduguri road. Daily one could see the KAROTA enforcement team patrolling the city in their Hilux pickup truck and around various intersections and round-about.

The Enforcement Unit is also saddled with the responsibility of arresting street traders hawking their wares at major junctions and traffic spots in the city. These street hawkers constitute serious problems on traffic holdups where they use the opportunity to hawk their wares when the traffic light stops vehicles. KAROTA also arrests animals that stray on the streets in the city. Staff from the Livestock Unit, from the Ministry of Agriculture in the state, is assigned to the agency and is responsible for handling animals that are arrested while straying on the roads and the streets. Owners who come for claims have to pay a fine and also pay a fee of N100 per day for the number of days the animal spends in detention (Chiranchi, 2016).

For many in the city, KAROTA has done a wonderful job in ensuring that traffic laws are obeyed in Kano. The streets are unburdened with the usual clutter that characterised major roads of the metropolis due to the presence of KAROTA agents. When KAROTA was first established there was an awe and aura of fear that pervaded the city due to the activities of the agents. Many attributed the boldness of KAROTA to the support they received from the former Governor, Kwankwaso who was said to have given them limitless powers through his utterances. Perhaps the support they got from the governor was part of the reason they eventually became very unpopular and a sore to the people of the city. KAROTA has demonstrated its dedication to service delivery in the state in various areas. For instance, when there were fire outbreaks in Singer market and Sabon Gari market, KAROTA were on hand with the other security agencies in the state to offer their assistance in ensuring the control of traffic in the affected areas, and to check looters, who came with vehicles in the guise of shop owners to evacuate goods from stores that do not belong to them (Chiranchi, 2016).

One of the major achievements that KAROTA recorded, with support from other security agencies like the police, is ensuring that the ban on commercial motorcycle operators in Kano was achieved and complied with. For many dwellers of the city, it was almost unimaginable to believe that the city of Kano would be free from the activities of commercial motorcycle operators known popularly as *acaba*. For the records, it was believed, though without any official records, that Kano city, before the ban on acaba in 2013, uses to have the highest number of commercial motorcycle operators in the country with an estimated number of riders put between 1 million and 2 million unregulated cyclists who competed for the road with cars, buses, lorries and tricycles (Hills, 2012). Before the suspension of the motorcyclists in 2012, they have been accused of being used to perpetrate evil in the city. With the outbreak of Boko Haram activities in the city, there was an increase in attacks in the city by members of the sect, especially those who use bikes to attack innocent citizens. It was believed that the commercial motorcyclists were either assisting them or the sect members disguised themselves under the cover of being legitimate acaba operators. The attacks through the use of motorcycles were brought to a climax when on 19 January 2013 the late emir of Kano, Ado Bayero was attacked by bike-riding gunmen, who killed six persons and wounded several others including Bayero’s two sons. This attack was believed to have given the Kano state government enough reason to impose a ban on commercial and private motorcycle use in Kano.

On 21 January 2013, the government announced a ban on motorcycle operations in the state, in a broadcast presented by the then deputy governor, Abdullahi Ganduje. The ban took effect on24 January 2013. The ban prohibits any form of commercial motorcycle operation in the state and permits only single riders on private motorcycles without a passenger even if it is a relative. KAROTA and other agencies were instrumental in ensuring that commercial and private motorcycles owners complied with the ban. KAROTA agents were stationed in strategic traffic locations in the city to ensure that the ban is effective. The ban has been successfully sustained as the only riders of motorcycles seen within the city are private motorcycle owners.

#### Challenges and Limitations

With the seeming success recorded by KAROTA, it is obvious for anyone living in Kano to say that KAROTA is probably the most despised and dreaded law enforcement agency in Kano at the peak of their operations between 2012 and 2014. Consisting mainly of street boys who are mostly illiterates, the agents eventually evolved to be oppressive and excessively officious in carrying out their duties. Their excesses led to a situation in which residents within Kano city preferred to fall into the hands of the police than to be arrested by members of KAROTA for traffic offences. Their popularity in the city was mainly stemmed not out of appreciation for their duties but their oppressive and corrupt practices. There is no doubt about these, as the agency administrators consider the establishment of mutual and cordial relations between the agents and members of the public as one of its greatest challenges (Zarewa, 2016). They admitted that the relationship has not been cordial and this made them embark on a sensitisation campaign to rebrand the agency.

The foundation that was laid for the kick-off of KAROTA was largely faulty due to the way and manner the state government embarked on the recruitment and empowerment of the agency. A lot of Kano inhabitants have blamed former Governor Rabiu Kwankwaso for instigating violence in the actions of KAROTA due to some of his utterances. For instance, the governor was quoted to have said “it is better to offend me than to offend the KAROTA officials;” it was again alleged that it was at his behest that the agents are extorting anyone who spoke in the English language to them ₦5,000. (Mudashir, 2014). At the initial stage, the KAROTA was first seen as a kind of police force owned by the state government and specially created by Kwankwaso as a means to intimidate his political opponent. The whole idea of creating a force like KAROTA could be seen at the inauguration of Kwankwaso as the executive governor of Kano where the presence of some kind of security guards were seen during the swearing-in ceremony in 2011. Shortly after the swearing-in, people in the state accused the state governor of trying to float a ‘private army’ of men without any legal backing, known as *askarawan* *Kwankwasiya*, as their presence was said to be noticed in government functions and major events in the state (Mohammed, 2011). They were seen kitted in white on a green uniform with the symbolic red cap known as the trademark for *Kwankwasiya*– a term synonymous with the political movement that promotes Kwankwaso’s idea of good governance.

When eventually the law establishing KAROTA was passed in 2012, it was believed that the majority of the about 1,600 men employed as Road Traffic Attendants were illiterates, and mostly street touts. The choice of this category of youths was first to intimidate and exploit their fearless nature to ensure that motorists and road users are cowed into obeying the traffic laws since these thug-like agents are ready to use force if possible. Some are even accused of being drug addicts as they could be seen at the side of the road smoking substances. Their illiteracy was exploited by the government to minimise the cost of hiring well-educated agents. As much as the motive to provide gainful employment for these street urchins is commendable, the negative impact the choice of these agents created outweighed the benefits.

While noting the problem, the agency expressed the desire to change the status quo by filling the vacancies for other ranks in the agency with educated personnel. Though provision was made in the law establishing the KAROTA for cadres of rank that would accommodate qualifications above primary and secondary certificate holders, it is evident that of the over 1,610 Traffic Agents in KAROTA, over 95 per cent of them were placed between grade level 2 and 7 as mainly Road Traffic Attendants and Road Traffic Assistants (Kano Road Traffic, 2015). That is why of the over 90 traffic law offences enshrined in the law establishing KAROTA, the agents are known only to enforce less than five of these laws (such as crossing the line at a traffic stop, illegal parking, overloading and lack of manifest) because most of them could neither read nor write (Zarewa, 2016).

**Table 1** KAROTA Agents Ranking and Grades

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Rank** | **Educational Qualification** | **Grade Level (GL)** |
| **Road Traffic Attendant**  Road Traffic Attendant Grade II  Road Traffic Attendant Grade I  Snr. Road Traffic Attendant  Head Road Traffic Attendant  Chief Road Traffic Attendant | Primary School Certificate | GL 02-06 |
| **Road Traffic Assistant**  Road Traffic Assistant Grade II  Road Traffic Assistant Grade I  Snr. Road Traffic Assistant  Head Road Traffic Assistant  Chief Road Traffic Assistant | Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSCE) | GL 03-07 |
| **Road Traffic Superintendent**  Assistant Road Traffic Supt.  Snr. Road Traffic Supt.  Head Road Traffic Supt.  Chief Road Traffic Supt. | Diploma/NCE | GL 06-09 |
| **Road Traffic Officers**  Terminates at Director Road Traffic | Bachelor’s Degree/HND | GL 08-16 |

The poor choices made by the government in selecting these policing agents have a lot of negative effects. At the peak of their operation in 2013/2014, KAROTA agents brazenly flaunt their illiteracy with an irking pride, as they charge motorists and other road users an extra fine of ₦5, 000 for speaking English to them instead of Hausa when arrested for breaking a traffic law. For visitors in the state and other non-Hausa speaking inhabitants of the city as well as educated elites, this was considered as the height of impunity and harassment by KAROTA agents. Secondly in their drive to ensure that all commercial taxi drivers and buses pick passengers from the legal motor parks by checking the manifests, KAROTA agents have harassed a lot of innocent commercial drivers who usually come into the city with traders and other business people to purchase the merchandise for their businesses in Kano. Often, not knowing the law in place, they fall victims to KAROTA agents who make them pay fines as much as N50,000 and above for not having their manifest from the motor parks they picked passengers in their states, or for ignorantly dropping a passenger or parking their vehicles in the NO PARKING area marked by KAROTA (Abubakar, 2016).

Some traders in the Kwari market and Singer market when asked about the activities of KAROTA complained that when KAROTA was first launched in the first two years, their clients complained that it was hard to get commercial drivers to come to the market to carry merchandise for them due to the harassment they received from agents of KAROTA (Inuwa, 2016: Mubarak, 2016). Because of the fear of KAROTA, several commercial drivers who come to Kano opt to drop their passengers at the gate of the city on the first fly-over bridge when approaching the city on the Kano–Zaria road rather than proceeding into the city. As a result of the fear created by the agents, louts and street thugs used the opportunity to make money out of commercial drivers. The drivers and some of these street louts evolved a system of ‘swap-driving;’ these louts believed that they can out-manoeuvre KAROTA patrol vans by avoiding arrest and attacking the agents when the need arises since they believe KAROTA agents are street thugs like them. What obtained then was a situation in which, from Coca Cola depot and the areas before the Kwankwasiya Housing Estates, one would find these young men waiting for commercial drivers coming into the city by the roadside where they take-over the steering, while the drivers disembark. These swapped drivers who are ready to drive recklessly to avoid the KAROTA are willing to take passengers and drop them in any part of the city.

At the same time, after dropping the passengers in designated spots in the city, they pick up new passengers along the road and at illegal parks across the city and drive them to the outskirts of the city where the original vehicle owners/drivers are waiting for them. Thus, it became common in Kano city to see KAROTA patrol vans chasing vehicles who have either dropped or picked a passenger at the wrong spots or who had committed one offence or the other, and those chased are usually the swap-drivers who believed that they have driving skills to avoid getting stopped by the KAROTA at the expense of the life of the passengers. Scenes from Hollywood flicks are almost recreated in the streets of Kano, with the KAROTA chasing these driving miscreants like in a James Bond movie (Paul, 2016). It is on record that KAROTA, in 2013, while chasing a golf car carrying eight passengers for violating a traffic rule caused the vehicle to somersault while trying to evade KAROTA, killing some of its occupants along the Kano–Maiduguri road near Mariri (Mudashir, 2014).

Because of the way and manner, the agents were handling the situation, some thugs and street louts began to take over the operation of illegal motor parks especially those that operate on the roadside along busy intersections in places like Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital roundabout and Gyadi-Gyadi. KAROTA officials have clashed with these thugs forcing them to embark on such patrols with the support of the mobile policemen. At a point, KAROTA agents could be seen carrying sticks and cudgels at some roundabouts and intersections because they have become targets of attack by angry motorists and their notorious touts in the illegal commercial motor parks across the city (Chiranchi, 2016).

### Conclusion

The challenge remains for the agency to evolve a strategy in addressing some of the pressing needs and challenges facing it. As much as the agency has achieved remarkable success in restoring some appreciable level of sanity in the roads within the city, the unprofessional conduct of its agents remains a thing of concern to the citizens. At a point, it was alleged that the agents were driven into a frenzy to excessively fine motorists and arrest them indiscriminately because they were not in the state government payroll and were only paid out of the total money the agency was able to generate at the end of the month. This was said to have driven them into corrupt practices of excessive charges and collecting bribes from defaulting motorists who may not want to be taken or charged to KAROTA’s office. Obviously dissatisfied by the abuses of KAROTA agents, the citizens have written a series of petitions to the state government and the Kano State Anti-Corruption Commission. This prompted the state governor, Abdullahi Ganduje, in July 2015 to direct the Commission to probe the activities of KAROTA under the Kwankwaso’s administration. It was discovered that massive corruption was going in KAROTA as fake receipts were issued to motorists, and huge sums of money were traced to the private accounts of the management staff who had acquired choice properties (Ahmad, 2015).

Agencies under a government that carry out policing functions need to be more civil in approach and operations, but excesses make them unwanted in public spaces. In a country like Nigeria, where there are huge challenges regarding the Nigeria Police and Human Rights abuses, it remains a huge task for non-state policing actors and their establishing components to ensure that civility and proper handling of the civilian population becomes a major policy. Overall, the benefits of non-state policing actors in assisting the conventional police forces and government in ensuring that citizens obey the law and respect its institution cannot be underemphasised.

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# Degrading Boko Haram Terrorism in the Muhammadu Buhari Era: Issues and Realities

## Rotimi Olajide OPEYEOLUWA

### Abstract

*The continuing haemorrhagic nature of Boko Haram calls for an exhaustive discourse on the veracity or otherwise claim of President Buhari’s government of “technically defeating” the terrorist group as quickly as possible once elected. This paper examines the evolving and sustained onslaught of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria against the backdrop of government insistence that the sect has been substantially degraded; the index to the contrary is worrying and alarming for the citizens to bear. This has thrown up a ferocious debate about the claim and counterclaim across the political divide and even the country in recent times. However, regardless of what opinion one holds, the sheer scale of the brutality of the sect after the government’s continuous claim that it has been degraded in the face of a sustained military offensive, both by ground forces and air interdiction operations imply that the sect is resilient and yet to be degraded. This paper, therefore, attempts to provide explanatory narratives on the prevalent realities and also opines that even though the counter-insurgency operation presaged the emergence of President Muhammadu Buhari; and having inherited the “war” more needs to be done in the immediate years of his presidency. That the Boko Haram sect continues to run rampage is simply unacceptable in the face of his campaign promise to defeat the sect within the shortest possible time of his ascendancy to the highest office in the land. The paper concludes that terrorism currently assailing the Nigerian state requires a critical examination with appropriate solutions rather than the government’s tepid claims that continues to be challenged by a sect that has evidently grown more audacious in the intervening years since it first evolved in 2009.*

**Keywords:** Degrading, Boko Haram, Terrorism, Counter-terrorism.

### Introduction

Nigeria was hailed at independence as a miracle project by both the departing colonialists and observers of emerging African states as the wave of independence swept through the continent with rapidity in 1960 in what Harold Smith styled the “decade of independence.” This promise of greatness was predicated on the abundance of human and mineral deposits which abound in Nigeria. Assessment of a potentially great country was pervasive and upbeat. The mood was captured by a scholar when he posited that “independence inspired genuine feelings of comradeship and optimism in the political leaders. An editorial in West Africa on 19 November stated, “Even if Nigeria sounds sometimes too good to be true, the Nigerian story is one of the most remarkable and creditable in the modern world.’”

In his inaugural address entitled, “Respect for Human Dignity,” Nnamdi Azikiwe appealed to the political elites to ensure that efforts be made at national reconstruction and, “this great adventure of restoring the dignity of man in the world.” He argued,

representative democracy has been tried in Nigeria and we have proved more than equal to the task…. When Britain transferred power to us on 1 October 1960, we were no longer an expression of geography but a reality of history. During all our years of political vassalage, we become socially and economically integrated. We have also developed an identity of interest and we have crystallised a common nationality.

His peroration quoted Frank Buchman, the apostle of moral rearmament when he intoned that: ‘let us heal the breaches of the past so that, in forging our nation, there shall emerge on this continent a hate-free, fear-free and greed-free people, who shall be in the vanguard of a world task force, whose assignment is not only to revive the stature of man in Africa but to restore the dignity of man in the world’.

Arguably, post-military governance in Nigeria emerged with new security challenges- amongst which are terrorism and insurgency. These twin complex security challenges were before now remotely thought about in Nigeria as occurrences far from its national frontier, given the almost near-monopoly of the instrument of violence by the security forces. During the military era which dominated its post-independence trajectory until 1999, the country’s national security concerns were mixed with regime survival and the thoughts of crushing any form of dissent with dispatch with marginal extra-national security threats. However, all that changed with the restoration of democracy and the emergence of ethnic militia groups and Boko Haram on the national scene between 1999 and beyond. The birth of the organiSation and campaigns of terror has changed the narrative and brought the issue of terrorism to the front burner of national discourse.

This paper focuses on how “the technically defeated Boko Haram” terrorist group continues threatening national peace and security in the face of the government’s insistence that the sect has been substantially degraded since 2015. The aim of the paper is to examine the prevalent reality, based on the electoral promise of the then candidate of the All Progressive Congress, Muhammadu Buhari that he would restore the country to the path of security within the shortest possible time.

The campaign of the presidency of Muhammadu Buhari was hinged on a three-fold promise of fighting insurgency/terrorism, corruption and revamping the economy, themes that resonated well with Nigerians given the perceived parlous state of the polity from several years of bad governance and maladministration. Famed as highly incorruptible and disciplined during his first political stint as Military Head of State, 1983-1985, many turned to him for redemption, placating him to give a shot of the presidency for a record fourth time since the country’s return to democracy in 1999. Allegations of his supervision of erosion of civil liberties were rife with the gagging of the press as the most heinous during his stint as military head of state but these allegations were dismissed by his admirers as divisionary but not lacking substance.

By 2015, the country was spiralling on a downward trajectory in all sectors with insecurity on the top of the list; evidenced with the poor ratings that the country was ascribed by both national and global rating agencies and the Army struggling to put down an insurgency which began in 2009 in the North East. He had run for the presidency and failed three times before 2015 and had even promised before then that it was going to be the last, but was persuaded to give it a shot again. The groundswell of opposition against his candidature was an admixture of variables including fear, correct assessments, myths and outlandish claims depending on what side of the spectrum the narrator stood.

In a spectacular and moving article, a former Ambassador of Nigeria to the United States, Ignatius Olisemeka (2015) made a daring pitch for candidate Buhari when he wrote of his encounter some two decades previously:

Buhari, in my view, belongs to the last and passing generation of this group of Nigerian leaders. It was a pity that fate thrust him into leadership limelight at a period in time when military revolution and coups d’états were in vogue and held sway. In a democratic setting, as we now have, I believe that the real worth and essence of this man, encapsulated in an exemplary and enigmatic personal life, will blaze through and shine forth. It will soon be clear that those of his followers of questionable and dubious pedigree who think they can latch on to the reputation of this rare Nigerian would be the first to be highly disappointed.

Olisemeka (2015) further holds that,

I also believe that what is badly needed at this stage of our national life is a leadership that will turn the country around, and rescue us from the depth of chronic indiscipline, disorder and decadence we have, over the years, gradually descended and slide into. What I believe we need is a strong hand at the helm, with the support of our people, who will instil in us a much-needed sense of order and discipline; inspire us into patriotic zeal and sacrifice; bring out the best in each one of us, and encourage in us the love of nation.

Muhammadu Buhari (2015) in a last-minute effort to convince Nigerians that his candidature holds enormous promise asserted:

At no other time in our history is Nigeria in such an urgent need for strong and competent leadership. Sadly, at no other time is this leadership so sorely absent in our country. We live in a time of great opportunities and great peril. It is only a leader that understands these in equal measure that can find the rightful place for Nigeria among the great Nations of the world. I have travelled extensively around Nigeria in the last three months. In the course, of my travels, I encountered directly; what I have always believed: that a Hausa man’s desire for security is not different from the Ijaw woman’s desire to feel secure in any part of the country.

With that, the issue of insurgency/terrorism and the need to stamp it out as quickly as possible became an integral campaign issue. The inability of the Jonathan led Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to quell the insurgency/terrorism did not help matters as the government was forced to pull back on the elections timetable on grounds that it needed some time to deal some decisive blows on the insurgents. This postponement did not do much good to the government as the opposition party cried that it was playing politics with a serious national security issue and pledged its readiness to crush the insurgents as the government lacks the clarity of policy and purpose on tackling the insurgents and other grave national security challenges. While terrorism and counter-insurgency operations were on-going before the emergence of Muhammadu Buhari in the political firmament of the country as President in 2015, its dominance as a campaign issue was defining and it is apparent lack of doing much in that regards even into the mid-way of his second term in office has not mitigated growing restiveness about the security challenges that have since grown more complex.

Nigeria has been grappling with diverse security concerns in recent times which includes banditry, electioneering conflicts, communal conflicts, socio-economic agitations, ethno-religious crises, ethnic militias, insurgency, boundary disputes, cultism and criminality (Okpe and Ukase, 2017). These security lapses have continued with its wave now encompassing terrorist activities on a daring scale with the North East as a hotbed of terrorism with its attendant repercussions in the displacement of persons from their ancestral homes, wanton destruction of lives and properties, disruptions of socio-economic activities and uncertainty. The toll has continued to rise with assurances from the government of its resolve to tackle and defeat the insurgents. It is therefore important to study the factors responsible for the intractability of Boko Haram terrorism to understand the appropriate responses to the security challenge. The ultimate research question is what has been the nature and character of government counter-terrorism strategy in the Muhammadu Buhari era.

Terrorism does not enjoy a singularity of definition. It has been variously defined but this lack of unanimity has not failed to liken it to tactics of threat or the actual use of physical coercion primarily against non-combatants, mainly innocent civilians, to create fear in order to achieve various political objectives (Jenkins, 1995). The controversial nature and ambiguity in definitions of terrorism have not shielded nation-states within the international political system from experiencing its devastating impact when unleashed. Since 9/11 coordinated terror attacks on the United States, terrorism has continued to reinvent itself in new and more dangerous forms. As one terror group is defeated or fizzles out of existence, another new, more radical and violent and more dangerous group announces itself with more ferocity to take the place of the former. The plurality of terror tactics and groups in the international system has changed the dynamic factor of when and how to fight the upsurge. Finkel argues that the true lesson is the need for a more flexible security doctrine that enables one to prepare for multiple options. No Army, not even the richest, can fully prepare for every eventuality.

The use of terror as a political cum military strategy is evident as far back as recorded history but has assumed a global and more devastating dimension, especially following the Al-Qaeda multiple bombings in the United States of America in 2001. Before now the massacre of the inhabitants of a captured city was a common feature of warfare until the last few centuries when rules of engagements during military campaigns were codified. A would-be conqueror could expedite conquest by proclaiming that cities that refused to yield immediately would be razed and their inhabitants killed in a scorched earth strategy. In battle, given the hand weapons and massed formations used, most casualties were inflicted only after one side broke and ran.

Boko Haram was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002 but the group launched an insurgency in 2009 in protest against the killing of its founder by security forces. The formation of the group is seen as the first phase and the insurgency is regarded as the second phase of the group by some commentators. The first phase was the period of seclusion, moving from the urban cities to the fringes and remote villages and occasional clashes with the Police and Military, which culminated in his capture by the military and subsequent killing by the police in 2009. The second phase coincided with the killing of Yusuf which was a tipping point for the group.

### Conceptual and Theoretical Clarification

Perhaps, partly because of the difficulty of a precise definition of what terrorism is or not, Chukudi, (2017), asserted that “defining terrorism goes beyond the theoretical framework, it involves operative concern as well.” However, before going into a discussion of issues of domestic terrorism in Nigeria, it is necessary to put the discourse in the contextual background, to provide a framework for analysis. While the definition of the term may be difficult to aggregate, there is no shortage of definitions on the subject. Terrorism is a fluid concept that has remained hotly debated and sharply contested around the world from time immemorial, more so, in recent times. In conformity with the above statement, the centre for non-proliferation studies (www.ict.org), argues that governments use it while describing their foes and avoid it when describing allies. Its complexity is best understood in the maxim that “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter.” A United States Army manual on countering terrorism defines terrorism as “the calculated use of violence to attain goals that are political, religious or ideological. This is done through intimidation, coercion or instilling fear.”

These pluralities of definitions include Shafritz (1988), who defined terrorism as “highly visible violence directed against randomly selected civilians to generate a pervasive sense of fear and thus affect government policies or violence against representatives (police, politicians or diplomats) of a state by those who wish to overthrow its government. This definition is similar to that of Friedlander (1992) who sees “terrorism as premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine state agents, usually, intended to influence an audience.”

In analysing the same concept, Norton (1995) views terrorism as “deliberate, unjustifiable and random use of violence for political ends against protected persons. He stated further that the perpetrators of this violence could be the state, agents of the states, or individuals acting independently. The fact that State and non-State actors engage in acts of terrorism inform the position of Falk in Kegley that:

It is futile and hypocritical self-deception to suppose that we can use the word terrorism to establish a double standard pertaining to the use of political violence…. Terrorism, then, is used here to designed any type of political violence that lacks an adequate moral and legal justification, regardless of whether the actor is a revolutionary group or a government.

Friedlander (1984) further sees terrorism as the threat or use of violence for political purpose by individuals or groups, whether acting for, or in opposition to, established governmental authority, when such actions are intended to influence a target group other than the immediate victim or victims. Hoffman (1998), expressed the view that terrorism is, “politically and emotionally charged, and this greatly compounds the difficulty of giving the exact definition.” However, Schmid and Jongman assert that studies have found over 100 definitions of terrorism. Furthermore, Angus states that “the international community has never succeeded in developing an accepted comprehensive definition of terrorism.”

Furthermore, Ismael sees terrorism as “a scourge that affects all of us as it threatens the very way of life we have come to cherish. It challenges the economic and political institutions we have erected. It undermines the principles of interaction among states. It negates one process. And worst of all, it fails to adhere to internationally accepted standards for conflict resolution.” According to Hoffman, the word terrorism is politically and emotionally charged, and this greatly compounds the difficulty of giving the exact definition. However, the United Nations defines the term as “criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular person for political purposes are in any circumstances unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them.” Daniyan (2009) posits that the term terrorism is not new even in Nigeria. According to him, terrorism is “both a tactic and a strategy; a crime and a holy duty; a justified reaction to oppression and an inexcusable abomination…Terrorism has often been an effective tactic for the weaker side in a conflict. As an asymmetric form of conflict, it confers coercive power with many of the advantages of military force at a fraction of the cost.” In 1992, the United Nations defines terrorism: “as anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby-in contrast to assassination- the direct targets of violence are not the main targets.” Putting it in a broader definitional perspective, Adeoye (2004), views terrorism as the use of any direct, illegal, irrational or random violence or the threat thereof against person or property, either by state or non-state actors for socio-political ends. According to him, state or government-sponsored terrorism may be difficult to trace because this is usually conducted through clandestine agents of states or other proxies.

These multiplicities of definitions have a shared commonality in the pattern of definition about terrorism- fear created by force and intimidation having a deliberately or purposefully harmful objective. More than anything else, terrorism is a technique for undermining confidence in a state’s ability to protect its citizens (Cook, 1989**).**

Terrorism along all levels of analysis is a strategy by which dissident or dissent groups unable to achieve power or to influence governmental policy (economic, social, political and even religious) through legitimate means, can coerce governments, overturn established regimes, and intimidate entire peoples. The motive is always psychological and its ends apocalyptic violence leaving in its trail evidence of destabilisation, panic, fear and demoralisation of the entire strata of society. Its modus operandi has always remained static with modifications to suit its purpose and objective(s).

Terrorism is not a new historical phenomenon but what distinguishes modern terrorism is the avalanche of opportunities, frequency and variety of options from which it could pick its targets and unparalleled publicity at its disposal (Magstadt and Schotten, 1993).

Despite the universality of terrorism, there appears some confusion about terrorism. Oftentimes, terror groups, because they hatch on legitimate national and even international grievances to legitimise their actions, have in the process recruited a sizable crop to its fold. Perhaps, related methods and tactics which terrorist groups employ to achieve objectives endear it to people across the world. Tactics employed by terrorists include kidnapping for ransom, hostage-taking, ambush and barricade, sabotage/vandalism, hijacking, threat, explosive, bombings, assassinations, mass murder, arson, scorched earth policy, taxation, landmines, extortion and suicide bombings, bio-chemical attacks, snipping, rail derailment (Friedlander, 1984; Adeoye, 2003; Adeoye, 2004). The entire tactics of the terrorist groups are to score and achieve a maximum point, however loosely or well defined. Ultimately, terrorist groups gain satisfaction from the profound public anxiety associated with what seems an act of random or wanton violence (Marquand, 1996). From the foregoing, it is obvious that terrorism is a form of psychological warfare and the ultimate aim of such group(s) is to spread fear in the target audience in order to achieve a specific end.

### Terrorism in Nigeria

Nigeria has experienced variants and mutations of municipal terrorism since the dawn of independence in 1960. As a matter of fact, both the state and non-state actors (mainly ethnic militias) in the annals of Nigeria’s trajectory have resorted to the use of terrorism in the advancement of their political interests at diverse periods in the annals of the country. The issue of domestic terrorism applies to opprobrious acts of violence perpetrated in furtherance of both state and non-state objectives, the latter resorting to actions such as publicising their grievances, settling scores, gaining and holding onto the lever of political power, while the state used it to tame the opposition during the march to democracy during the reins of General Sani Abacha.

Domestic terrorism is the broadest form of terrorism and it involves reckless use of terror as a tactic by dissident groups. Domestic terrorism is defined as “the unlawful use of force or violence, committed by a group(s) of two or more individuals, against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objective.” Ethnic hatred, social antagonism, political and religious fanaticism which borders on intolerance remains a festering sore which is a catalyst for terrorism in Nigeria. The emergence of Maitatsinism in the 1980s signposted the commencement of full-blown religious fanaticism in Nigeria as the series of premeditated violence shook the state, only second to the civil war. The Maitatsine uprisings were the most serious events that threatened the security of the state and engaged the material and human resources of the security forces to their utmost (Ekoko and Amadi, 1989).

As the group waxed strong from 1980 to 1985, it threatened the socio-political and religious stability of Nigeria until the full weight of a sustained military operation was launched to uproot it. When the military routed out the sect in December 1980 in Kano, it sprouted in Bullum Kuttu area of Borno state on 16 October 1982, and Riggas village, Kaduna state on 20 October, was perpetrated by escapee disciples from the Kano incidents of the previous two years. The Jimeta-Yola outbreak in Gongola state, 1984 were led by Musa Makaniki while the last of these occurred in Gombe in April 1985 (Ekoko and Amadi, 1989).

Another frightening dimension was opened with spates of bombings and assassinations from 1986 to 1998. The mystery letter bomb that killed Lagos journalist, Dele Giwa was a rude awakening that jolted the nation. By the time of the regime of General Sani Abacha, it was a free rein as killings marked a new normal. Opposition political leaders were targets. The killings of Alfred Rewane, a chieftain of the pro-democracy movement, Kudirat Abiola, the wife of the presumed winner of the 12 June 1993 elections, Dr. Sola Omoshola, the security officer of the Federal Airport Authority and two other occupants of his car. Nobel Laureate, Wole Soyinka and a few others fled for their lives.

At the height of the political agitation for the military to revert to its constitutional role of safeguarding the country, a group of Nigerians youths on October 23, 1993, hijacked an Airbus 310 and diverted it to Niamey in Niger Republic. The hijackers were styled the Movement for the Advancement of Democracy (MAD), in protest against continued military rule and the annulment of the June 12, 1993, general elections. This trend continued with the birth of constitutional democracy in Nigeria, with the proliferation of ethnic militia groups such as Odua Peoples Congress (OPC), Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MOSSOB). These groups openly confronted security forces. Rather than abate, it only grew worse in subsequent decades.

### Boko-Haram Insurgency

The Boko Haram sect is unarguably the most dreaded and violent terrorist group that has sprouted in Nigeria since 1960. The group emerged in 2002 and mutated into its present form in 2009 after the killing of its founder by the Nigerian Police. The Boko Haram insurgency began in 2009 when the Islamist [Jihadist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jihadist) [Group](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_active_rebel_groups#Groups_which_control_territory) [Boko-Haram](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boko_Haram) started an armed rebellion against the government of [Nigeria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigeria) under the pretence that the killing of its founder was a crime worth avenging. The conflict takes place within the context of long-standing issues of [religious violence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_violence_in_Nigeria) between Nigeria's Muslim and Christian communities, and the insurgent's ultimate aim is to establish an [Islamic state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_state) in the region. Boko Haram's initial uprising failed, and its leader [Mohammed Yusuf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammed_Yusuf_(Boko_Haram)) was killed by the Nigerian government. The movement consequently fractured into autonomous groups and started an insurgency, though rebel commander [Abubakar Shekau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abubakar_Shekau) managed to achieve a kind of primacy among the insurgents. Though challenged by internal rivals, such as Abu Usmatul al-Ansari's Salafist conservative faction and the [Ansaru](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ansaru) faction, Shekau became the insurgency's de-facto leader and mostly kept the different Boko Haram factions from fighting each other, instead of focusing on overthrowing the Nigerian government. Supported by other Jihadist organisations such as A[l-Qaeda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Qaeda) and [Al-Shabaab](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Shabaab_(militant_group)), Shekau's tactics were marked by extreme brutality and explicit targeting of civilians with unparalleled savagery.

After years of fighting, the insurgents became increasingly more aggressive and started to seize large areas in north-eastern Nigeria in its avowed determination to overrun the country. The violence escalated dramatically in 2014, with 10,849 deaths, while Boko Haram drastically expanded its territories. At the same time, the insurgency spread to neighbouring [Cameroon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cameroon), [Chad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chad), and [Niger](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niger), thus becoming a major regional conflict with disruptive tendencies. Meanwhile, Shekau attempted to improve his international standing among Jihadists by tacitly aligning with the [Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_State_of_Iraq_and_the_Levant) (ISIL) in March 2015, with Boko Haram becoming the "Islamic State of West Africa Province" (ISWAP). The insurgents were driven back during the [2015 West African offensive](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2015_West_African_offensive) by a Nigeria-led coalition of African and Western states, forcing the Islamists to retreat into [Sambisa Forest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sambisa_Forest) and bases at [Lake Chad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Chad). Discontent about various issues consequently grew within Boko Haram. Dissidents among the movement allied themselves with ISIL's central command and challenged Shekau's leadership, resulting in a violent split of the insurgents. Since then, Shekau and his loyalist group are generally referred to as "Boko Haram", whereas the dissidents continued to operate as ISWAP under [Abu Musab al-Barnawi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu_Musab_al-Barnawi). The two factions consequently fought against each other while waging insurgencies against the local governments. After a period of reversals, Boko Haram and ISWAP launched new offensives in 2018 and 2019, again growing in strength. Boko Haram has been called the world's deadliest terrorist group, in terms of the number of people it has killed.

Boko Haram conducted its operations mainly peacefully during the first seven years of its existence. That changed in 2009 when the Nigerian government launched an investigation into the group's activities following reports that its members were arming themselves. Before that, the government reportedly repeatedly ignored warnings about the increasingly militant character of the organisation. When the government came into action, several members of the group were arrested in [Bauchi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bauchi), sparking deadly clashes with Nigerian security forces which led to the deaths of an estimated 700 people. During the fighting with the security forces Boko Haram fighters reportedly "used fuel-laden motorcycles" and "bows with poison arrows" to attack a police station. The group's founder and then leader Mohammed Yusuf was also killed during this time while still in police custody. After Yusuf's killing, [Abubakar Shekau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abubakar_Shekau) became the leader and held this position till January 2015.

After the killing of Yusuf, the group carried out its first terrorist attack in [Borno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Borno_State) in January 2010. It resulted in the killing of four people. Since then, the violence has only escalated in terms of both frequency and intensity. In September 2010, a [Bauchi prison break](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bauchi_prison_break) freed more than 700 Boko Haram militants, replenishing their force. On 29 May 2011, a few hours after [Goodluck Jonathan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goodluck_Jonathan) was sworn in as president, [several bombings purportedly by Boko Haram](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May_2011_northern_Nigeria_bombings) killed 15 and injured 55. On 16 June 2011, Boko Haram claimed to have conducted the [Abuja police headquarters’ bombing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_Abuja_police_headquarters_bombing), the first known suicide attack in Nigeria. Two months later the [United Nations building in Abuja was bombed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_Abuja_United_Nations_bombing), signifying the first time that Boko Haram attacked an international organisation. In December 2011, it carried out [attacks in Damaturu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_Damaturu_attacks), killing over a hundred people, subsequently [clashing with security forces in December](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/December_2011_Nigeria_clashes), resulting in at least 68 deaths. Two days later on [Christmas Day, Boko Haram attacked](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/December_2011_Nigeria_bombings) several churches with bomb blasts and shootings. 15 June 2011 also marked the start of a Federal Government sanctioned military effort to counter the growing threat of Boko Haram's insurgency.

### The Inauguration of President Muhammadu Buhari and the Fight Against Boko Haram

With the defeat of Goodluck Jonathan in the 2015 presidential election, there was an initial calm before another round of disruptions by the Boko Haram insurgents with several missteps in government handling and reactions to the sect’s onslaught. In 2015, in the inaugural speech of President Buhari, he had restated his resolve to take on the insurgents until they either surrendered or were outrightly defeated. In the speech, the president stated:

The most immediate is Boko Haram’s insurgency. Progress has been made in recent weeks by our security forces but victory cannot be achieved by basing the Command and Control Centre in Abuja. The command centre will be relocated to Maiduguri and remain until Boko Haram is completely subdued. But we cannot claim to have defeated Boko Haram without rescuing the Chibok girls and all other innocent persons held hostage by insurgents. This government will do all it can to rescue them alive. Boko Haram is a typical example of small fires causing large fires. An eccentric and unorthodox preacher with a tiny following was given posthumous fame and following by his extra judicial murder at the hands of the police. Since then through official bungling, negligence, complacency or collusion Boko Haram became a terrifying force taking tens of thousands of lives and capturing several towns and villages covering swathes of Nigerian sovereign territory. Boko Haram is a mindless, godless group who are as far away from Islam as one can think of. At the end of the hostilities when the group is subdued the Government intends to commission a sociological study to determine its origins, remote and immediate causes of the movement, its sponsors, the international connexions to ensure that measures are taken to prevent a recurrence of this evil. For now, the Armed Forces will be fully charged with prosecuting the fight against Boko haram. We shall overhaul the rules of engagement to avoid human rights violations in operations. We shall improve operational and legal mechanisms so that disciplinary steps are taken against proven human rights violations by the Armed Forces. Boko Haram is not only the security issue bedevilling our country. The spate of kidnappings, armed robberies, herdsmen/farmers clashes, cattle rustlings all help to add to the general air of insecurity in our land. We are going to erect and maintain an efficient, disciplined people–friendly and well–compensated security forces within an overall security architecture.

Before the emergence of Muhammadu Buhari’s administration, the Boko Haram sect (together with its splinter faction known as Islamic State of West Africa Province- ISWAP) has come under sustained counter-insurgency measures to curtail, degrade and possibly defeat them by the Nigerian state to a variation of success and setbacks. The onslaught however defined and dominated the build-up of the 2015 general elections. Both presidential candidates, Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari made promises to stem the tide if elected. For the latter, it was a deal for re-election, while for the former, it was about his military background as suitable for the task at hand.

While is Nigeria is not the only country in Africa fighting terrorism, the response is diverse both at the continental and national levels. At the continental level, the commitment of African countries to counter-terrorism resulted in the adoption of the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism at the 35ft Summit of the defunct OAU in Algiers in July 1999. This commitment was further reiterated in the Dakar Declaration against Terrorism during the October 2001 Summit of the African Union (AU). Consequently, African leaders resolved to collaborate effectively to combat the phenomenon and this led to the adoption of the AU Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism.

Efforts to rail in the insurgents by previous administrations were met with an admixture of near successes, successes and missed opportunities. The “dispatching of state security agencies without any strategy to address the root cause of terrorism” did the expected magic and agitations continued to grow for a more robust strategy to meet the challenge which the terrorist group pose (Faluyi *et. al*., 2019). Some scholars dismissed as tepid and uncoordinated the response. Instead of heeding the criticisms for a re-evaluation, the government went further by launching “Operation Flush,” tasked with the mandate to decimate the group and contain several security lapses in the region in 2009 (Falode, 2016). This was salutary and counter-productive as it failed woefully in steaming the tide as characterised by arbitrary arrests, extra-judicial killings and wanton destruction of lives and properties and in the process provoking counter-attacks by the insurgents citing strong arm-tactics of the Nigerian security forces.

At the national level, various countries over the years, have introduced or amended national legislation to contain the scourge of terrorism to various degrees of success. Obene (2015) traced the evolution of how counter-terrorism in Nigeria, through Article 15 (1-3) of the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) Act of 2004, outlined activities that contradict the terrorism law. Some of the offences listed in the Act include the financing of terrorism and engagement in acts of terrorism. The Terrorism Prevention Act, 2011 evolved to tackle the growing menace of terrorism in Nigeria and saddled the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) with the mandate to ensure the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive counterterrorism (CT) strategy, build capacity for the effective discharge of the functions of relevant security, intelligence, law enforcement and military services under the act and do such other acts or things that are necessary for the effective performance of the relevant security and enforcement agencies under the act.

Pursuant to this mandate, ONSA established a Counter-Terrorism Centre (CTC) which houses the Joint Terrorism Analysis Branch (JTAB) and the Behavioural Analysis and Strategic Communication Unit (BASCU). These creations were in response to, as well as the development of, the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST), which is organised around five workstreams:

1. **Forestall**: To prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism;
2. **Secure**: Strengthen protection capacity against terrorist attacks;
3. **Identify**: Pre-emption through detection, early warming and ensuring that terrorist acts are properly investigated;
4. **Prepare**: To mitigate the impact of terrorist attacks by building resilience and redundancies to ensure continuity of business;
5. **Implement:** A framework for the mobilisation of coordinated cross-governmental efforts.

The Presidential Initiative in the North East (PINE), an accelerated intervention programme, focuses on an accelerated relief plan for affected communities, population and redevelopment of the areas affected socially and economically as well as Nigeria’s Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) Programme. Nigeria’s CVE Programme consists of three (3) major areas of action:

1. **Counter Radicalisation**- focuses on community engagement, economic and education-based projects;
2. **De-radicalisation**- aims to reintegrate extremists and their families back into society through prison intervention and vocational training;
3. **Strategic Communication**- seeks to produce a counter-narrative, presenting moderate Islamic views as a stark contrast to violent extremism and promoting core national values.

The soft approach and the hard approach which is the military approach to Counter-Insurgency has seen the Army take a lead role, alongside other security agencies. This account for the transmutation of the Joint Task Force in Op FLUSH OUT 1 and OP RESTORE ORDER 1 TO 7 Division, Op BOYANA and Op ZAMAN LAFIYA. With 21 Armoured Brigade (21 Bde) of the Nigerian Army as its nucleus, Joint Task Force Operation Restore Order (JTF ORO 1) marked the start of the Army's lengthy counter-insurgency (COIN) campaign against Boko Haram. The campaign has gone through several phases and has greatly escalated in scale, capacity, components and stakeholders, since that time. Results, however, have sometimes been mixed and the Army has been criticised for being too kinetic in its COIN. In January 2012, [Abubakar Shekau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abubakar_Shekau), a former deputy to Yusuf, appeared in a video posted on [YouTube](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/YouTube). According to [Reuters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reuters), Shekau took control of the group after Yusuf's death in 2009. Authorities had previously believed that Shekau died during the violence in 2009. By early 2012, the group was responsible for over 900 deaths.

On 7 March 2015, Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to the [Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_State_of_Iraq_and_the_Levant) (ISIL) via an audio message posted on the organisation’s Twitter account. Nigerian army spokesperson, Sami Usman Kukasheka said the pledge was a sign of weakness and that Shekau was like a "drowning man". That same day, [five suicide bomb blasts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2015_Maiduguri_suicide_bombing) left 54 dead and 143 wounded. On 12 March 2015, ISIL's spokesman [Abu Mohammad al-Adnani](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu_Mohammad_al-Adnani) released an audiotape in which he welcomed the pledge of allegiance, and described it as an expansion of the group's caliphate to [West Africa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Africa).

The Nigerian military has adopted various strategies and tactics to tackle the insurgency including the following:

1. **Command and Control**: Following President Muhammadu Buhari’s directive that the Military Command and Control be moved to the theatre of operation, in a terse statement, the military high command stated, “a forward command base for the chief of army staff and other service chiefs. The move would boost the campaign against Boko Haram- known as Operation Restore Peace- without creating another layer of command structure” the statement read.
2. **Raid on Terrorists Bases/Hideouts**: Air and land assaults of terrorist’s locations and camps have been routinely carried out based on intelligence provided by other stakeholders, including intel by security forces and locals with knowledge of the area.
3. **Stop and Search Operations**: The security forces in the frontline areas have resorted to the use of stop and search operations in fishing out terrorist elements. Such screenings of motorists and pedestrians in designated areas are conducted with the aid of bomb detectors and scanners. Similar operations are carried out in public and worship centres.
4. **Multi-National Joint Task Force:** The body evolved as a multilateral response to the danger posed by Boko Haram to neighbouring countries and has contingents from Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria. The task force is saddled with conducting military action against Boko Haram, curb banditry and facilitate the free and safe movement of people.

### Challenges Faced by the Military

In the discharge of the mandate to flush out the Boko Haram terrorists, the military is contending with some challenges in the discharge of its task. These include:

1. Insufficient Troops: Due to the massive land terrain and because of the nature of insurgency which is essentially hit and run, there is a massive need for more boots on the ground to spread out the entire area of operation. This lack of adequate troops has made it impossible for the Army to hold on the ground and rotate troops that are fatigued from the war. This is adversely affecting both the morale of the troops and the progress of the war.
2. Perceived Neglect of Welfare of Troops: incessant reports that troops are not well taken care of by news organisations both local and international has contributed to the slow pace of the war and general air of indiscipline of troops who resort to extortion and other forms of indiscipline.
3. Marginal use of technology and modern equipment: The decade long insurgency has shown clearly that because of the terrain and irregular nature of the war, the Nigerian security forces should rely more on technology than massive military strength in fishing out elements that are both hostile and which easily blend into the civil populace.
4. The Politicisation of the Counter-Insurgency Operation: The reckless utterances of some political leaders due to their vested interests have affected the pace of the war since the build-up to the 2015 general polls. These divisive statements continue to colour the disposition of the political elite to the insurgency operation in an adverse manner.
5. Hostile Media: The military has come under sustained bad press both from within and beyond Nigeria in its counter-insurgency operations. This is mainly fuelled by insinuations and innuendos that the Army is involved in large scale human rights violations in its determination to quickly end the insurgency.
6. Indiscipline: A fighting army is as good as its discipline, especially during an insurgency. The Nigerian Army has seen increased cases of desertion, acts of cowardice, mutiny and allegation of acting as fifth columnists bypassing national security/classified documents to insurgents and subsurface elements.
7. Infiltration of the Military by Insurgents: Former President, Goodluck Jonathan once alleged that the government is infiltrated by Boko Haram sympathisers and there is also an allegation that the rank and file of the security forces are compromised. This has caused a huge setback in the counter-insurgency operations especially as operational plans and strategies are leaked before major military offensives.

### Conclusion

The current on-going counter-insurgency operations by Nigerian Security Forces have not been able to degrade or defeat Boko Haram as claimed by the government. This is partly because the strategies adopted and implemented by the government have not borne the desired results since 2015 by President Muhammadu Buhari regime. The government has come under harsh rebuke as security of lives and properties is abysmally low. The much-known carrot and stick approach of government cannot be entirely faulted and dismissed but the implementation has some rough edges. Since the commencement of the counter-insurgency operation, there has been a widespread accusation of the arbitrariness of security forces in random arrest, extra-judicial killings and compromises. The goodwill that the security forces needs for a successful operation has since been vitiated and where there is no goodwill on the part of the civil populace, security forces waging counterinsurgency operations get bogged down and face needless difficulties. The Nigerian security forces must, as a matter of emergence, win the minds of the populace to win the war.

Evidently, the war on terrorism is not conventional warfare with defined objectives, space and time frame and as such requires deft strategic thinking and proactiveness. It has proven complex, fluid and unpredictable with a wave of unguided consequences which has threatened national and sub-regional security, displaced peoples both internally and beyond Nigeria’s national frontiers and disrupted socio-economic activities on an unprecedented scale. The wantonness in the destruction of lives and properties has proven the Boko Haram terrorist group as mindless and insistent on wreaking havoc at all possible costs. The hybrid nature of the war calls for collaboration, increased use of intelligence, sustained military onslaught and adequate de-radicalisation measures for insurgents that have renounced the set as well as retooling the economic derivatives of the zone.

The raging terrorism and counter-insurgency operations have revealed that it is time to divorce security and politics as quickly as possible to win the war. Government may do well by concentrating on measures to defeat or degrade the sect with a variety of policies and military onslaught; rather by declaring that the sect has been defeated or degraded when it is still holding on to territories or wreaking havoc in its trail with recklessness. Whilst the campaign in terror is still visible and occurring with rapidity; it is capable of demoralising the citizenry when all that government does is to give assurances and re-assurances in the face of unprecedented destruction without tangible reactions that strike at the heart of the terrorists.

The slippery nature of the war requires winning the minds of both the insurgents and allaying the anxieties of the worried citizenry who bear the brunt of the attacks and sufferings. The present political leadership, especially the president must provide leadership at this crucial moment in the annals of the country. Leadership is key to tackle, overcome and resolve knotty issues in which hybrid warfare ensues through empathy, direction and taking over the command and control of the security forces with the aim of a win, a total win and nothing else.

That the Boko Haram terrorist group has continued to pose security concerns, both within and far beyond Nigeria is a pointer that the threat analysis of the group is still potent and requires the collective will of the nation to defuse. This can only be done with credible intelligence. The use of intelligence to infiltrate the group is imperative. In some instances, they have taken the initiative of taking the fight to the security forces in a tit-for-tat manner, typical of hit and run tactics and that can only end if the grand strategy of Nigeria is quickly changed to accommodate this reality. Since the emergence of President Muhammadu Buhari, in consonance with his campaign promises, he has asked the military high command to relocate to the theatre of operation and has increased budgetary allocations but the possible outcome has not tilted the scale against the terrorists.

Given the above situation, the reality on the ground is that Boko Haram has remained resolute, determined and even daring. Beyond increased budgetary allocation, the military strategy should go hand-in-hand with a deliberate action to transform the demented acts of terrorism within the theatre of operation and ensure it contains the insurgent approximately.

To ensure a strict de-escalation of the threat posed by the Boko Haram insurgents, the Muhammadu Buhari administration must invest heavily in technology to combat the sect and other related security challenges. Another strategy that the government can adopt to prevent the continuing resilience of Boko Haram is, as a national urgency, to identify and cut off its sources of income and arms flow and tighten the loose on the national borders to stave off foreign collaborators. Another step in the right direction is for the government to evolve a department of home security with the task of providing intelligence, collating and sharing with relevant authorities on a real-time basis. Such should be used to disrupt their free rein.

It is recommended that the economy should be empowered to take care of the unemployed and the poverty-ridden populace. Terrorism is generally accepted in poor, vulnerable and unstable societies and as such governments across all levels should invest in critical sectors of the economy with a view to redistributing and making wealth accessible to the vast majority. By doing so, many of the adherents of the Boko Haram terrorists will desert the fold of the sect.

Finally, the imperative for the nation’s armed forces to be modernised cannot be overemphasised. This will better reposition the military to combat the threat it is fighting. The need for the national defence policy to reflect this reality is overdue.

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# Challenges of Clerical Sexual Abuse: Our Family Responsibilities and Collective Action

## Jonathan Chukwuemeka MADU

### Abstract

*Clerical sexual abuse is a contradiction of life of chastity, an evangelical virtue for Catholic priestly vocation, which one has to observe as a chosen way of life. Yet, in recent years, the Roman Catholic Church worldwide has faced a dramatic increase in allegations of sexual abuse by its clergy, which affects the peace, security, social development and constitutes an abuse of human rights. One long term response has been called to allow clergy to marry but there are reasons to believe that this may not bring about the desired outcome. This article focuses on and explores the challenges as well as argues for family responsibilities in addressing clerical sexual abuse, and after examining the experience of a number of countries, the article suggests collective actions which have the potential to bring about the desired change.*

**Keywords:** Catholic Church, clerical sexual abuse, family roles, restorative justice, collective action, peace.

### Introduction

Apart from the recent case of a global pandemic of coronavirus disease, no other issue has dominated international attention in modern times as the allegations of clerical sexual abuse and scandal (CSAS), suggesting that both the Church and priesthood are experiencing crises of different kinds. The media is awash with issues of crises and sexual abuses involving Catholic priests ([Guido](https://www.tandfonline.com/author/Guido%2C+Joseph+J), 2008; [Flamini](http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/document.php?id=cqrglobal2011010014), 2011; and Richardson, 2002); stress in the Roman Catholic priesthood (*The Economist*, 2017; Doyle, 2005); child sexual abuse by Catholic Clergy **(**[Dale](https://www.tandfonline.com/author/Dale%2C+Kathryn+A) *et*. *al*., 2007;  [Isely](https://www.tandfonline.com/author/Isely%2C+Paul+J) *et*. *al*., 2008); impact of the clergy sexual abuse on the victims and communities ([Wind](https://www.tandfonline.com/author/Wind%2C+Leslie+H) *et*. *al*., 2008; [McLaughlin, 2007);](https://www.tandfonline.com/author/McLaughlin%2C+Barbara+R) consequences of the crises and such abuses in the Catholic Church (Frawley-O'Dea, 2004; [Kline, *et*. *al*.,.](https://www.tandfonline.com/author/Kline%2C+Paul+M)2008). Other burning issues are allegations of bishops accused of involving in or covering sexual abuse and misconduct as well as actions taken against them ([BishopAccountability.org](http://www.bishop-accountability.org/)).It is not pushing bad news under the carpet, but this article is prompted by the need to see the other side of the problem, which is family failures; to reflect on the authentic response to the call to the Catholic priesthood,and to awaken our consciousness to assume our responsibilities that would, by ‘principled’ nonviolence, help to bring about positive and peaceful change.

Clergy sexual misconduct is not only in the Catholic Church as research suggests that even worse and shocking clergy sexual abuse happens in other denominations and other faiths - Protestant, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Buddhism and non-traditional religious movements in the West, etc. (Gerdes, Beck& Miller, 2002; Adam, 1998; Jacobs, 1984 and Oxenhandler, 2008 cited in Garland and Argueta, 2010). Talking of the disappointments experienced in handling sexual misconduct and other improprieties at the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, the Third-Term President of Missouri District, Raymond Mirly (2013:13), frankly noted that “too often, ministers hide their behaviour, become entrenched in it or addicted to it, and they are so filled with shame and guilt that they do not claim the courage of Christ to confess ….” McClintock (2004:2) confirms the present widespread cases of clergy sexual abuse: “We have an epidemic of sexual abuse in the church…. People of faith and goodwill have been aware of sexual abuse in congregations for years.” From the experience of married priests of other congregations, the age-long calls for married Catholic priests may not bring the envisioned panacea by that school of thought. The Catholic Church’s perennial teachings have always been reaffirmed from one papacy to another. As other observers and scholars opined, the marriage of priests may look like a solution, but that could raise a whole host of new problems.

If clergy sexual misconduct is widespread, why does that of the Catholic Church, which may be less in comparison to other denominations and even other faiths, draw much attention? Apart from the roles, the Catholic Church has played globally in history, chastity and clerical celibacy areenshrined and associated with Catholic priestly life**;** hence, associating sexual abuse with it could not but be very shocking in the ordinary sense. However, evil remains evil no matter who commits it and where it is committed. So, clergy sexual misconduct is really a sin that shames all of us and calls for collective action to address it. The evangelical virtues (chastity, poverty and obedience) are corollaries of the Roman Catholic priesthood which one has to observe as a voluntarily chosen way of life. But how these virtues relate to the lives of all of us is often not noted. Hence, this article explores the failures of families in their own roles as central institutions inpreventing sexual misconduct, educating and laying a good foundation for their children who become priests as well as the needed collective action to address the clerical sexual abuse.

### The Call to Catholic Priesthood

At the height of the priestly ordination, a Catholic priestly candidate is proclaimed by the officiating bishop (in words of great significance) “Called,” “Consecrated” and “Set Apart.” By priestly ordination, one is set apart from the people for an important function. And, no one takes this honour on himself but must have been called by God as Aaron was (Hebrews 5:4; Galatians 1:15). That means that no one chooses to be a priest by himself nor is one qualified by his own merit. As Ugwu (2018:11) puts it: “If there are any real qualifications for your being a priest, it is the fact that you have been chosen.” Ugwu stressed further the human aspect of any vocation– the free-response that is required for it to be authentic. To be a happy priest, therefore, one’s conviction of his call, free response and readiness to embrace all challenges of the priestly life is necessary. Response to this call is propelled by a quest for happiness which consummates all the good things attainable by human activity since the response is at man’s freedom of will and power of his choice bequeathed him by the benevolent God (Madu, 2018). But the way we choose depends on our sense of direction, which on the other hand, is not consciously acquired when we are unduly influenced by people or feel pressured into doing things (Madu 2015:7). A sense of value helps our sense of direction. Our aim is happiness and fulfilment as long as our goal is not contravening the laws of God and that of society. By and large, understanding oneself and authentic response to the call to the priesthood, like any other type of vocation, is a way of achieving happiness.

Discussing Aristotle, Anicius Boethius (quoted in Madu 2015b:78) sees happiness as completeness in itself; "a state made perfect by the aggregation of all good things”. The word 'happiness' is derived from the Greek word, eudaimonia (from "eu", meaning "good" or "wellbeing") and "daimōn", meaning "spirit"), a name applied to that kind of self-realisation theory that makes happiness the chief good for man. It refers to happiness, not as mere pleasure or emotion, but well-being or a pleasant state of mind (Thomas, 1973). Happiness is the end of all ends. Hence, Aristotle concludes that happiness is found to be something perfect and self-sufficient, being the end to which our actions are directed (Ross, 1995). For Plato, what is actually real is the universal and the supreme principle of good (happiness) is separated from the world of experience; it is to be arrived at by the mind's ascent from the visible world to the intelligible world (Madu, 2015b:79). Hence, our happiness on earth is only a shadow of the ideal and, by reasoning with Thomas Aquinas, possession of God is man's ultimate happiness. Aquinas categorises happiness into two; perfect and imperfect. The imperfect is attainable in this life through the operation of the senses, while the perfect is only possible in the life to come and attainable through the operation of the superlative intellect (Gilby, 1976).

These views show that to realise our life’s purpose, to actualise ourselves, and to attain perfect happiness, we must aim higher and go beyond the natural plane to the supernatural. Life has meaning and it goes beyond this present (earthly) concern. Saint Augustine believes that man does not seek happiness by accident, but as a consequence of his incompleteness, in other words, his finitude (Madu 2015b:81). A response to the call to priesthood is, therefore, in the quest for that happiness since it is a fundamental choice in one’s life. But, "experience teaches us that there is a danger of having a wrong motive of being a priest, and if not guided, purified, transformed and constantly renewed” (Mozia, 1987:19), even one’s good intentions can change. Responding properly gives peace of mind, which is inner harmony and stability as a result of contentment and happiness which leads to fulfilment or self-actualisation (Madu 2015:208).Inner peace is important because one cannot give what one does not have.

Evangelical virtues (chastity, poverty and obedience) are the corollaries of accepting an invitation to Catholic (Roman) priestly vocation.Clerical celibacy, of course, is one dimension of Christian holiness; and hence, “one of the unique ways of giving a full response to this invitation” (Mozia, 1987:5). Everybody: religious, cleric, or lay is obliged to observe chastity since chastity is an aspect of holiness that all are called to (Vatican Council Il. 2014, *Lumen Gentium,* Chp. V). But how different is the nature of chastity expected of a Catholic priest from the rest of us? The observance of chastity differs according to one’s vocation or state of life. The religious, in order to dedicate himself/herself in a special way to God, takes the voluntary vow of chastity as part of a public profession in a religious order (Madu 2015:114/115). What is then expected of a religious person is absolute perpetual continence, which is abstinence from all voluntary sex activity. The religious professing vow of chastity renounces marriage and avoids every external and internal act forbidden by both the sixth and ninth commandments of God (Exodus 20: 14, 17; Deuteronomy 5: 18; 1Corithians 3: 16-17, New Jerusalem Bible, NIV). Clerics (clergy), being all men of Holy Orders of the Roman (Western) Catholic Rite, are called to celibate life (priests and deacons of the Eastern Rite may marry). Simply put, they are to remain unmarried. They observe this to devote themselves completely to the service of God and the works of the apostolate without distraction. Unlike in the case of religious life, clerical celibacy does not require the profession of a vow and the clerics are only obliged by the legislature (the Church's Law) to remain unmarried.

For the married, they are to remain chaste. Chastity for the married means the right use of sex activity within the bond of legitimate marriage (Madu 2015:115). The couple must be faithful to each other. An extra-marital relationship is considered a grave sin. So, it is also scandalous when our children (of the married couples) and those who look up to us for exemplary lives see us involved in this sin. In all other respects, clerical celibacy is similar to what is required of a person who is single, except that a person who is single can marry at any time, while a cleric who is obedient to his vocation does not. It is sacrilegious for a religious to violate the vow of chastity and that may cause a serious scandal as the issue of this discussion. In fact, clergy sexual misconduct is scandalous no matter the faith or denomination where such occurs.

Essentially connected to chastity is the life of poverty and obedience. The poverty that is needed of a priest and, of course, all Christians really means wisdom in the use of the things of this world to attain the things of heaven. Life of poverty as a virtue is life completely stripped of avarice and does not mean destitution. It is being “poor in spirit and reality, industrious and sober in style, different and limited in the use of property” (Mozia 1987:25). This simplicity of life modelled after Christ’s life makes one exciting and attractive. That is the life that is really rich in meaning. Priests (of course, many Catholic priests) not only take up the spirit of poverty as a virtue but also stand against things and actions that plunge people into destitution.Poverty as destitution is a very serious situation that people should be saved from or helped to eradicate. In fact, it is the fundamental right of people to be freed from poverty (destitution) and any government that is not committed to this is failing.

Obedience and hierarchical authority are hallmarks of the Catholic Church. [Lessius](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09192a.htm) (2017) sees obedience as a man's allowing himself to be governed throughout his life by another for the sake of [God](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06608a.htm). The term ‘obedience’ is derived from the Latin word, *ob-audire*, which means “to listen intently.” Hence, the basic meaning of obedience is listening in order to comply, different from command and control of military force (which may be for what is not right). As the bishops and cardinals as well as all Catholic faithful are under the authority of the Pope (the Vicar of Christ), so are all the priests and religious under the authority of their bishops and superiors. The Catholic faithful at different ecclesiastical levels is also under their different levels of authority in the church. Definition of obedience, in a religious sense, touches every person and situation:

It is primarily an attentive listening: to self, to others, to the events and experiences of life that demands a response.  We are called to listen to the signs of our complex times and to respond with a new sense of mission. It requires that we should be attentive to the multiple ways in which God’s presence is revealed in the world around us. It always means fidelity to God... It is listening to God who speaks through our times, nature, various events, the Word of God, our conscience, etc. (Joaquim, 2017).

### Country Cases of Clerical Sexual Abuse and Punitive Measures

The sexual abuse among priests is surely bewildering as this has occurred across the globe, from Europe, North America, Asia, Africa, South America to Oceania. Few selected cases can help us make sense of the widespread nature of this shocking abuse and scandal.

#### United States

After [several allegations of sexual abuse](https://www.wsj.com/articles/sexual-abuse-allegation-against-cardinal-found-credible-1529506643?mod=article_inline&mod=article_inline), Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, a former Archbishop of Washington, was prohibited from public ministry starting from June 2018, when a church investigation found credible charges of sex abuse against him dating back nearly half a century ([Goodstein](http://www.nytimes.com/by/laurie-goodstein) and [Otterman](http://www.nytimes.com/by/sharon-otterman), 2018). However, still concerned by the confusion that the accusations brought against McCarrick were causing in the minds of the faithful and with further criticisms, the Holy See decided to make known the conclusions of the matter in due course, after a further thorough study of the entire documentation regarding the former Cardinal McCarrick (Holy See, 2018).

There have also been huge financial implications of clerical sexual abuse cases in the United States, such as the cases of Archdioceses of Los Angeles and Minnesota. Sexual abuse cases against the Catholic Archdiocese of Minnesota took$210,290,724, (that is €179 million) for settlement and involving about 450 victims of clergy abuse dating back to 1950 and implicating thousands of clerics (*The Journal.* ie. 2018). That of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles settled in 2007 took 660 million[paid to 508 victims](https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=12002281)  (Mozingo J. and Spano, J. 2007).

#### Nigeria

Richard Burke, a member of the St Patrick's Missionary Society based in CoWicklow, who served as a priest in Warri and later became the Archbishop of Benin City (all in Nigeria), resigned his position as the city's Archbishop in 2009 after an allegation of sexual abuse of a woman (Dolores Atwood) which began in 1983 (when Atwood claimed that she was 14 but Burk, a former Catholic priest at Warri, said she was an adult). The former bishop's reason for voluntary resignation was for his failure to observe his vow of celibacy. Admitting that he was deeply ashamed of his behaviour. Dr Burke expressed sorrow: "I have caused great pain, hurt and bewilderment to those around me" (Kennedy, 2010).

Making this report to Irish Journal by Ms Atwood for the first time while she was living in Canada with her husband and had continued her relationship with the priest raises several questions: why are there low reported cases of clergy sexual abuse in Nigeria? Could the reasons be due to the culture of patriarchy and subservience, lack of exposure? The later part of the relationship Ms Atwood voluntarily enjoyed with Burke was frequent amorous telephone conversations while she was far away in Canada with her husband of many years ( Kennedy, 2010), suggesting Ms Atwood's own roles and cooperation in that matter as that continued at a time no one would doubt her maturity or support her claims of manipulation. Yet, she presented her claim with a sense of self-exoneration

#### Kenya

An intriguing report of the murder of Fr. Eutychus Murangiri of Meru Catholic Diocese in Kenya was an example of bad eggs from seminary formation (Otieno, 2019). He was secretly involved in a relationship with a woman even while in formation. The relationship which continued after his ordination led to his being stabbed to death in June 2019.

#### England (Archdiocese of Birmingham)

Father Alexander Bede Walsh, who received several actions of sex abuse and computer indecency was sentenced to 22 years in prison in March 2012 for serious paedophile offences against boys (BBC, 2012). One young victim was driven to a [suicide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suicide) attempt. It was alleged that when an accusation of sexual abuse of young boys which began in the 1950s to 1980s was brought against Father James Robinson who worked in parishes in the English Midlands, he fled to the United States. Robinson remained in the United States for about 20 years when he was extradited to the UK to face charges and he received a 21-year prison sentence for multiple paedophile offences (*The Telegram*, 2010).

#### Chile

Not in all cases do the accused abusers accept, confess and apologise for their crimes. Some choose to deny, leading to prolonged investigations in search of truth which make some people believe that the Church is covering them. The case of Fr. [Fernando Karadima](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karadima_case) of Chile was one of those that witnessed long denial and claim of innocence till he was found guilty of sexually abusing minors and convicted by the Vatican on 18 February 2011 in a canonical process handled by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. It is to be noted that "Karadima himself has never stood trial for his alleged crimes because of the statute of limitations," the hierarchy of the Church in Chile was thus accused of systematically covering up his abuse, and of doing the same for other accused priests ([Barrionuevo](https://www.nytimes.com/by/alexei-barrionuevo) and Bonnefo, 2011).

On 27 September 2018, Pope Francis laicised Karadima, expelling him from the clerical state, an “exceptional measure” taken in response to the “exceptional damage” done by Karadima’s crimes, according to the Vatican.

### Overview of the Cases

The Catholic Church might have had a deep-seated culture that had not thrown open for easy detection, handling and accountability of clerical sexual abuses ([Pullella](https://www.reuters.com/journalists/philip-pullella), 2018), but that does not mean that the Church has supported any such misconduct of its members. The stern warning of Jesus as the consequences of such misconducts are still upheld by the Church. Besides, following the investigations of some allegations, the Church has given touching apologies for such errors (*L'Osservatore Romano, 2018)* and She (the Church) has also taken forceful actions against many of such abusers in recent times. Suchsteps include the establishment of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, the tribunal to investigate bishops accused of failing to protect children and vulnerable adults from sex abuse (*The Guardian*, 2018) and declaration of zero tolerance to sexual abuse in the Catholic Church (Holy See, 2016). The extreme criticisms like that of Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano against Pope Francisfor the misdeeds of some individual priests, such which the Pope had abhorred (as in the cited cases of former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick and Father Ferdinand Karidima) would, therefore, be very surprising. Priorly known for advocating a tough stance against abusers before his pontificate, Pope Benedict on his part surprised the world with what sounded like a collective “*mea culpa*” (deep apology) for the Vatican's past handling of the scandal over priests' sex abuse of children ( Flamini, 2018).

### Causes and Consequences of Clergy Sexual Abuse

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) has become a global and widespread disease perpetrated by many and it is an endemic problem even in UN peacekeeping missions (Karim, 2016). However, in our discussion here, we are concerned with the segment of the population that many would find it hard to associate this abuse with, considering their vocation and its corollaries. While there seems to be overwhelming evidence of sexual abuse scandal involving some Catholic priests, one cannot forget the heroic strides, unimaginable accomplishments and sacrifice of Catholic clergies? Be it as it may, the consequences of the failures of those involved in sexual abuse have been disturbing and considered atrocious by all and sundry, including the Church itself.

Though clergy sexual misconduct has more to do with power relations between priests and their flocks, making the vulnerable ones be taken advantage of by some bad or erring elements in the priesthood, the behaviour of some parishioners could expose them or lead more to the bad situation. Judging from African experience, the awe and respect paid to priests by people who once approached them in different communities are fading away and many things are being taken for granted by some priests and the laity. There is no doubt, too, that some who associate with priests do not always have genuine intentions and that they can even be agents for failures. But, as Stiger points out (referring to priests of every denomination), “it should be understood that in every pastoral relationship, whether parish ministry or specialised ministries (chaplaincy, clinical pastoral education, counselling, etc.), the clergy person holds the greater power because of his/her office” (Stiger 2013: 7). This means that the responsibility for misconduct in such relationships will fall to the pastor first.

While Shupe (2007) has described religious groups and institutions as “hierarchies of unequal power where leaders have powers of moral persuasion, and in some, the theological authority to deny others access to membership and even ‘heaven’), Capps sees religious leaders as having “the power that comes with not being under surveillance or supervision of others; but on other hand, the power of access and accessibility; and the power of knowledge about members of their congregation, often intimate knowledge” (Capps 1993:350-361). Hence, the imbalance of power in the pastor-parish­ioner relationship is the ground for beginning to address the loss of faith and sense of abandonment in a child who trusted someone as the mediator in his/her relationship with God. To have that person act in a harmful way toward a child and the vulnerable adult can cause virtually irredeemable faith damage (Stiger 2013).

Temptation, which could be identified as another cause, comes to every normal human being, but the Church preaches resisting them with firmness. Life of immorality (the concupiscence of the flesh) is very dangerous, and according to the Church’s teaching, we are taught to work against it through self-discipline and avoidance of violating others or taking advantage of them. The present world of much pleasure embraces less mortification and much of passion and concupiscence of the flesh. Mortification, the struggle against our evil inclinations, is life's long fight against the wrong pleasures of the flesh. The Christian Scripture sees it as to "chastise the body and subdue it," lest after preaching to others one may be disqualified (1Thessalonians 4:3-7, New Jerusalem Bible, NIV).

Most Catholic priests and, of course, all Christians, are expected to train themselves to forfeit freely the pleasures that are quite legitimate to have the strength to turn away from pleasures that would leave their souls soiled. Yes, “pollution of the natural world exists with pollution of ideas and morals which can lead to the destruction of man. The pollution is sin, from which lies are born" (Gomez 2018:9). Errors committed by few priests may seem to obscure the great sacrifices of other priests, especially in a frenzy world where many forget their responsibilities. Again, an ordinary human error should be differentiated from self-indulgence and sexual exploitation of the vulnerable, which is nothing else but the wickedness of those who perpetrate it. In the Church, it is carried out by the enemies fighting the Church from inside, and what a pain we all feel for the trauma of thevictims and the wound such atrocities leave at the heart of the Church.

Due to the rampant nature of the abuse and scandal, it is not easy to quantify their consequences to the Church, to the individuals and the communities but as events unfold in different countries across the world, the weight of the evil has continued to confront us. Several dioceses in the United States of American were reported bankrupted by the settlement of civil lawsuits from victims (Bruni and Burkett 2002). Apart from huge financial costs, the clergy sexual misconduct is a flagrant misuse of the ministerial office and a betrayal of trust that has other disastrous consequences. Pope Francis understood this and made deep and sincere apologies, recognising specific atrocities of such abuse in his August 2018 visit to Dublin- asking for forgiveness from the families of child sex abuse victims who had killed themselves as a result of their trauma.

The consequences of family failures as linked to clerical sex abuse are of no small measure but they are often not considered. The family remains the basic structure of the church and society. Are we not accountable for our actions too? Can a broken home or failed marriages bring up better children to become good priests, when such children are more exposed to drug addiction, rapes, pornography, radicalism and all sorts of crimes? What examples do children copy from families of indecent lives?Our lives are interconnected, and no such social problems can ever be completely solved without using the family approach.

### Three Ways Forward

#### Justice

For retributive justice, the law of the state should usually take its course. That means that the criminal justice system often works on a retributive foundation. An offender who allegedly commits a crime against another (a victim) is prosecuted by the state and, if found guilty, is subject to punishment. That punishment may or may not have compensations to the victim but the victim may only get assuaged with the feeling that the offender has consequentially suffered punishment. An important question here is: Can the church deal with criminal acts themselves or must they report them to the criminal justice system? What of setting up an infrastructure which investigates such cases and charts a way forward? In recent times, the Church has been doing this, but the widespread nature and the unfolding cases may make it difficult to appreciate the extent of efforts of the Church. Some of the several steps taken by the Church have already been mentioned.

Often restoring the dignity and healing of the victim is less considered in the criminal justice system. However, for restorative justice, healing the damaged relationships is the focus, maybe using victim-offender mediation but involving, as in traditional African conflict resolution, all affected parties. Hence, restorative justice concerns “building a sense of self-worth and personal responsibility among offenders, and often involves efforts to build or rebuild the relationship between offenders and their victims” (Moyo 2017:207). Attention to healing the victim of trauma and his/her dignity is considered. It has often been argued that many of the methods used by African communities to deal with anti-social behaviours involve strong elements of restorative justice. This article recommends using restorative justice, which has the potential of healing the damaged relationships, involving all affected parties to collectively (offenders, victims and community) identify and address the harms, needs, and obligations, to heal and put things as right as possible.

#### Prevention

With the confessions and voluntary resignations of some perpetrators of the sex abuse in the Church's hierarchy, it is no longer a mere allegation that some Catholic clergies have been involved in sexual abuse cases. Whether or not the figure of those involved is comparable to that of male clergies of other denominations or that of the general adult male population is not the issue here but emphasise the need to join in the collective plea for forgiveness and chart the way forward. We need healing of the wounds, dealing with the shame of failures, therapy and support services for the victims, upholding the decency of Christian faith and obligation as well as discipline. To acknowledge one wrong, repent for the wrong action and to apologise to the victims are the appropriate steps to begin the healing of such atrocities as sexual abuse and scandal. The needed critical family roles for prevention, education, and treatment interventions for the victims of clerical sexual abuse are therefore paramount.Preventive measures start with our roles in the family and society, how we educate children and how we conduct ourselves.

There is no doubt that the Catholic Church has an excellent pre-priesthood training system, but it is in the family that this training begins before the seminary takes over. During preparatory studies of the seminarians and further training programmes of the priests, the church should equip and encourage them to protect children and vulnerable adults from sexual harassment either by clergy or of the clergy. McClintock (2004) opines that raising awareness of the occupational and emotional risks inherent in pastoral ministry, the conditions in parishes and in the mental health of the individuals within them that lead to risky behaviours and communicate these ideas within the congregation would help children and vulnerable adults to be protected. There should be learning of both sound family values and congregational teaching and practices- humility, sobriety and continence. The strong moral teachings of the Catholic Church that shape the consciences of its members with a firm conviction of their accountability to God, who owns the human bodies and all things, remain important in strengthening character. The candidates for the priesthood should avail themselves of the openness and self-study that would help in making a conscious choice of what they want to be in life and the needed sacrifice to attain the goal. There is nothing short of the advice of Sun Tzu (2016): “Know yourself and you will win all battles.” Nothing good can ever be achieved without sacrifice.

Apart from protecting our children from abuse, other critical roles of the familyare treatment interventions of a child survivor of abuse. Providing proper support and counselling to a child who is a victim of sexual abuse and saving him/her from stigmatisation. There have been reported cases of suicide attempts and post-traumatic disorders, where the situation of a child is not well managed. Some have made mistakes of over criticising a victim of abuse in an atmosphere of poor judgment such that many victims get into self-guilt that is destructive. The imbalance of power in the priest-child relationship must be well understood; hence it leads to the loss of faith and a sense of abandonment in an abused child. It is important to note that the predicament befalling the child becomes worse when the home throws all the blame on the unfortunate child. Parents have the duty to bring their children close to themselves for the prevention and treatment of abuses. One of the disadvantages of divorce in marriages is the lack of adequate care and attention needed from both parents by their children. We all have to assume our responsibilities according to our callings and in giving proper foundation to our children to become good priests or good citizens in our society.

We have a high responsibility to protect our children from sexual abuse in our environment, church and schools through education and good parental attention. Things that are real transgressions of the natural law and the law of God are proposed these days as values and conquests of the human mind. Hardly would anyone who had been involved in child pornography or practised indecent sexual acts in the home become different when he has ordained a priest. Likewise, a homosexual child that was overlooked or undetected in a family has a high chance of being a homosexual or paedophile priest, if he schemes his way through to ordination. The moral teachings of the Church should be enshrined in the homes of its members and upheld by parents and teachers.

The true life of a Christian is that of the daily struggle for what is honourable and just. (Romans 6: 8, New Jerusalem Bible, NIV). It, therefore, needs constant revival so that one avoids slipping off or being overwhelmed along the journey. It is by resisting the concupiscence of the flesh that one realises how the body is truly the temple of the Holy Spirit, the assurances of the inner joy for resisting temptations. If a “man's entire existence on earth must be lived as a preparation for the realisation of perfect happiness in eternity and not fail in his destiny" (Madu 2015:82) then the human person is expected to lead a decent and responsible life and respect others’ rights to life of decency and happiness.

#### Taking Collective Responsibility

While we condemn clerical sexual abuse, it is important to also look inward, to see how one is directly or indirectly contributing to such evil. Again, though the unfortunate issue of clerical sex abuse and scandal is shocking and embarrassing, priests should be seen as the products of homes, families and, of course, the products of society. Some seem to allege that the Catholic Church has not done enough to stop clerical sexual abuse. It is an issue that needs to be addressed collectively by everybody and at all levels – by married and unmarried individuals. The renewed pressing invitation by Pope Francis should be embraced by all: "to unite forces to fight against the grave scourge of abuse within and beyond the Church, and to prevent such crimes from being committed in the future to the harm of the most innocent and most vulnerable in the society" (Holy See, 2018).

Instead of being discouraged by the unpleasant wave of clerical sex abuse, we should get awakened and challenged to address the problem. Understanding that the problem is not the Church but the human agents in the Church who are not quite good as they should be is key to achieving this. The exemplary lives of the good ones (priests and religious) should inspire us as Bill Hayden (the celebrated former Australian atheist Governor-General) was. As reported by [McLean](https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/celebrated-australian-atheist-political-leader-converts-to-christianity-at)(2018),Bill Hayden got converted and baptised in the Catholic Church at the time (2018) the rampant sex scandal was rocking the Church. Haydon was able to be inspired by the lives of some good religious in the Church, which made him see beyond the human element in the Church that is the cause of the current crisis and scandalous news. While we collectively join in the Papal plea for forgiveness, we strongly welcome the declaration of 'zero tolerance' for sexual abuse in the Catholic Church and also observe such in our homes, offices and all aspects of our lives.

Sexual abuse is violence that needs to be addressed by all.The only approach to avoid this violence is principled nonviolence and sensitivity to our responsibilities. To see the dawn of a new culture, we need a new value system and worldview, and these can only come from the nonviolent culture that is based on active, self-sacrificing love. "Looking ahead to the future," Pope Francis requests, "no effort must be spared to create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening, but also to prevent the possibility of their being covered up and perpetuated" (Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, 2018). It is a culture that values and respects the right and dignity of other persons. This is a great restraint to exploiting or abusing anyone, including their bodies. Principled nonviolence (concrete actions that build a nonviolent consciousness) calls for mature judgement and keen inward assessment or search for a solution rather than unconcerned criticisms. The greatest enemy fighting the Church is the one from within. Just as we cannot win the war for the peace of the world by violence or in the quest for the selfish interest of any group, so it is difficult to achieve religious peace and overcome this common evil and its entrenched harm without the needed solidarity.

### Conclusion

Clergy sexual misconduct cuts across denominations and people of other faiths. The dignified office of the Catholic priesthood has also been dented by the same shocking sexual abuse involving some priests in many countries. This article has been prompted by the need to see the other side of the disgusting problem- our individual and family negligence that have contributed directly or indirectly to it, and to awaken our consciousness to such responsibilities. While contributing to address the problem, the authors have given a layman view of what an authentic response to the call to Catholic priesthood should be. The life of celibacy, poverty and obedience are the embodiments of Catholic priestly life, a share in holiness to which we are all called, and which moulds one into total self-abandonment for the service of others.

We do not live isolated from one another. Our life is lived in common and this is one of the most inescapable elements of our existence. Man cannot exist without his fellows. Realising our responsibilities and living up to them would significantly reduce most of the ills we have in our societies, including the moral laxities in our children who become priests. As we support holding those found culpable in clergy sexual abuse accountable and disciplined for deterrence, we should also remember that we receive from the society what we give to it. Priests are the products of our homes, families and our societies. Family is central in providing the needed healing and reconciliation as well as in building safer communities and laying a good foundation for children who become future priests. Our lives are interconnected and we need collective actions to address this malaise; for there is no better appeal than that of Pope Francis: "The only way that we have to respond to this evil that has darkened so many lives are to experience it as a task regarding all of us as the people of God. This awareness of being part of a people and a shared history will enable us to acknowledge our past sins and mistakes with a penitential openness that can allow us to be renewed from within” (Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, 2018).

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# National Security and the Threat of Arms Proliferation: A Case Study of Nigeria’s Niger Delta

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### Abstract

*The implications of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) on Nigeria’s national security are mammoth posing an existential threat to the state. The crisis that engulfed the Niger Delta, especially from the 1990s onward was exacerbated by the copious availability of SALWs in the region. Adopting a historical approach, this paper examines the strategic implications of the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) in the delta region for Nigeria’s national security. The Social Conflict Theory and Human Needs Theory are adopted as theoretical frameworks for the study. Based on its findings, the paper concludes that the Nigerian governments have not been entirely sincere to the process of curbing the scourge of arms proliferation in the country. It recommends effective regulations and border control as an efficient measure to address the illicit trade in SALWs and its proliferation and asserts that if the problems of proliferation in the Niger Delta region and other parts of Nigeria are not addressed frontally, the non-state armed and warlords operating in the regions will undermine the state and plunge it into a dangerous conflict zone where the gangs will rule at the expense of legitimate authority, development, security and progress of all.*

**Keywords:** National Security, Arms Control, Arms Proliferation, SALW, Militancy, DDR, Amnesty, Niger Delta, MEND

### Background and Overview of implications of Arms Proliferation

National security is the security and defence of a state including its citizens, economy and institutions. It is one of the highest duties of government not negotiable on any term. It encompasses the range of measures aimed at the protection of vital interests of the state, its citizens, economy and institutions for the sustainable development of society and timely detection, prevention and neutralization of real and potential threats to national interests. Today, every sovereign state of the world will employ all means necessary to protect its territorial integrity against external aggressions and internal security menaces. A state will do whatever it takes to suppress threats to its existence, whether within or without. Hence, the national security of a state takes high priority in the affairs of government. Accordingly, a lot of resources is committed to maintaining the security and defence systems of a state.

However, despite the evident aversion for insecurity and the concomitant huge investment in maintaining defence and security systems, most states of the world, especially African countries, are yet faced with security challenges that threaten their continued existence today. A major phenomenon contributing significantly to internal security threats in many African countries has been the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs), a scourge that has seemingly eluded all international, regional and national control measures. In fact, the proliferation of SALWs has been contributory, in no small way, to the rising rate of crime and criminality, outbreaks of violent conflict, rebellion movement, uprisings, insurgencies and terrorism, among others. Hence, the proliferation of small arms has remained a major threat to national security in Africa, with gruesome examples of outbreaks of civil wars in many countries and the development of militant groups that threaten internal security in others (Annan, 2014, p. 3).

Nigeria’s grisly civil war experience is an indelible incident that brings to mind the tragic implications of the proliferation of SALWs to national security. The availability of SALWs to the seceding Biafran rebels culminated in a fratricidal war that claimed millions of lives and the destruction of a lot of properties. While the war lasted, Nigeria was precariously placed on the verge of breaking apart until victory changed her fate in favour of indivisibility. Lamentably, however, since the end of the civil war little has been done to curb the proliferation of SALWs in any part of the country seeing its disastrous impact in the outbreak of the war. Rather, attention was turned to politics of intolerance and corruption that further placed the country at national security risk, as socio-political events in the country continued to encourage and contribute to increased proliferation of SALWs across the federation, a phenomenon that in turn exacerbated the security situation in many parts of the country.

The proliferation of SALWs in the country and the attendant security challenges it engendered, especially in the delta region and north of the country has remained a massive testament to the ruinous implications of the availability of SALWs in the hands of unauthorized persons to national security and the overall wellbeing of the society. Particularly, the development of armed splinter groups or militant organisations with unimpeded access to SALWs in the Niger Delta became a threat to national security from the late 1990s. The armed groups developed partly as a response to perceived government injustice and neglect of the region, which produces the crude oil that sustains the nation’s economy, and as part of the wider network of illegal bunkering activities in the region, among other reasons (Ojakorotu, 2009, p. 1; Ojakorotu & Okeke-Uzodike, 2006, pp. 92-93).

Essentially, the Ijaw had been the most involved in arms proliferation in the Niger Delta, as evident by the number of militant groups that developed among them. Between the late 1990s and 2013, Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers States became the hotbeds of militant activities in the Niger Delta; particularly, the Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa, Warri area of Delta and Port Harcourt in Rivers were the prominent militant hotspot. The militant groups became villainously radical organisations that violently challenged the authority of the Nigerian government in the delta region over evident marginalization of the people in oil wealth distribution and environmental degradation resulting from the activities of oil multinationals. The adverse economic and security implications of the activities of these militant groups not only threatened national security but also affect the wellbeing of the region as the area became hugely militarized (Okumagba, 2009, p. 315).

Since safeguarding the sovereign, independence and territorial integrity of the state has been the central pillar of Nigerian national security policy, the protection of the country from attack or subversion from internal threats posed by the increasing proliferation of SALWs and the disrupting activities of armed groups in the Niger Delta became the priority of successive Nigerian government from the late 1990s (photius.com, 2020). As a matter of national security, the Nigerian government then resorted to the use of military action as part of measures for the protection of resources and rights considered critical to the functioning of the nation (Microsoft Corporation, 2008). It is against this background that this paper examines from a historical and strategic perspective the implications of the proliferation of SALWs on Nigeria’s national security using developments in the Niger Delta as a case study. Among other things, it examines the sources and causes of arms proliferation in the delta, the consequent emergent of militant groups in the delta, the government’s response to the state of insecurity in the region and assessed government’s Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) effort to curb the proliferation of SALWs in the Niger Delta region.

All over the world, controlling the proliferation of SALWs has been a daunting task. Nonetheless, government has the responsibility to ensure the safety and security of lives and properties of its citizens; these rights are fundamental and are captured in the national security policy of a nation. Hence, there is a need to study how the Nigerian government’s preference for economic gains in the Niger Delta over development and poverty alleviation contributed to the proliferation of SALWs and to what extent has the availability of arms in the hands of unauthorised persons threaten the rights and resources of the people of the region. What is Nigeria’s conception of national security? Does it include the protection of lives and properties of her citizen or it is narrowly restricted to the protection of the country from attack or subversion from within or without and the protection of resources and rights considered critical to the functioning of the state?

More so, following the catastrophic effect of the civil war on the country, it is expected that the Nigerian government would take stricter measures in controlling arms proliferation within the country to avoid a reoccurrence of such calamitous incidents that could threaten national security. Instead, SALWs had been almost freely proliferated in the country. Indeed, it appears successive Nigerian governments have rather reacted to the effects of arms proliferation rather than address the causes and sources of the widespread proliferation with genuine intentions to curb it. In the delta region, governments have, at various times, employed military actions to suppress the activity of criminalities that threatens national security and immediately go to sleep once it seems victory had been achieved without further effort to trace the sources of arms proliferation to tighten up security. Hence, there is a need to examine what measures did the government put in place to control the proliferation of arms in the country as well as measures adopted to mop up SALWs in conflict areas. Put simply, is government, by its lack of appropriate action, in any way deliberately encouraging the proliferation of SALWs in the country. Enquiring into the highlighted problems would bring to fore the implications of the proliferation of SALWs on national security in Nigeria.

### Theoretical Framework

Theories are useful guidelines for effectively understanding social contradictions and other developments in human society. Whereas many theories provide theoretical groundings for understanding social conflict and threat to national security, two relevant theories –Social Conflict Theory and Human Needs Theory – are adopted as a theoretical framework for this study.

#### Social Conflict Theory (SCT)

The social conflict theory is a Marxist-based theory that presupposes that the lower class is competing for resources against an upper class that controls the government, courts and industry. It thus envisaged a social revolution that would be occasioned by class struggle. Social conflict is defined by socially unequal groups, such as the rich and the poor, the have and the have-not, competing for money and material goods, until becoming outright rebellion against the wealthy by the numerically superior poor. The social conflict theory provides a theoretical explanation for understanding the inexorable competition that exists among social classes in human society in the pursuit of their selfish interests. The four schools of social conflict theory are *radical criminology*, which based their explanation on class warfare, the *radical feminism* that focuses on discrimination against women, the *left realism* which believes that all most crimes are acts against individuals and not the state, and the *peace-making criminology* who believes that protests against war become worse than war itself (Briggs, 2020). The social conflict theory has its root in the classical work of Karl Marx and Fredric Engel. Both had claimed in the *Communist Manifesto* that “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild -master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes (Marx & Engels, 1998).

Another version of the social conflict theory states that social structures, such as political institutions, economic organs, legal institutions and traditional authorities etc. are created in every society through conflicts between groups with conflicting ideological interests and diverse means of control over state resources. Individuals and resources, in turn, are influenced by these structures and by the ‟unequal distribution of power and resources in the society” (Knapp, 1994, p. 232). Both versions of the social conflict theory perceive threats to security as motivated by the struggle among rival social classes or groups in their quest for groups economic interests, relevance and political dominance. In summary, the import of the two strands of social conflict theory is that in a society where exploitation of one class or group by a dominant class or group exists, if the dysfunctional relations is not redressed, it results in armed struggle and full-scale warfare. Social conflict theorists see socialism as a way to end class struggles by eliminating the economic advantages enjoyed by the upper class.

#### The Human Needs Theory (HNT)

John Burton is the leading human need theorist. He adapted Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs to conflict theory postulating that needs are an emergent collection of human development essentials. The main assumption of the human needs theory is that all humans have basic human needs, which they seek to fulfil, and that the denial and frustration of these needs by other groups or individuals could affect them immediately or later, thereby leading to conflict (Faleti, 2006). Basic human needs in this sense can be categorized under physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs. Deprivation of one or all of these needs could lead to conflict, in some instances violent armed conflict. Human need theorists identified a link between frustration, which forces humans into acts of aggression, and the need on the part of such individuals to satisfy their basic needs (Faleti, 2006). They also recognise the existence of negotiable and non-negotiable issues and conclude that needs, unlike interests, cannot be traded, suppressed or bargained for (Coate & Rosati, 1988, p. 1; Caroll, Rosati, & Coate, 1988, p. 257).

In most societies in Nigeria, the culture and traditions of the people are tied to their various traditional occupations, since the most common types of traditional occupations are farming and fishing we find out that the livelihoods, culture and identity of most Nigerian traditional communities are tied to the land or rivers within these communities. According to John Burton, individuals cannot be taught to accept practices that destroy their identity and other goals that are attached to their needs and because of this, they are forced to react against the factors, groups and institutions that they see as being responsible for threatening such needs (Burton, 1990, pp. 3-4).

It is clear from both theories adopted for examining the implications of the proliferation of SALWs on national security that the poor socio-economic situation in the Niger Delta provided the platform for continued widespread proliferation of arms in the region to fight for their needs, security and recognition. The Human need theory is perhaps the more apt of the two theories in describing the central theme of this research. Unlike the social conflict theory that emphasises class struggle, the need theory emphasises core issues that are identifiable in the Niger Delta crisis and provide an insight into the factors that encouraged the proliferation of SALWs in the region. However, while the theories may not be perfect based on their general assumptions and presuppositions, they have provided clear insight into the conditions that encouraged the proliferation of SALWs and the resultant implications for national security.

### Arms Proliferation and the Threat to National Security in the Niger Delta

The attitude of successive Nigerian governments to the growing state of insecurity in parts of the country since 1999 has raised questions in some quarters about the capacity of government to protect the state and its people against internal threats, especially in the Niger Delta, where a widespread proliferation of SALWs raised the level of insecurity to high priority. A state’s readiness to protect itself and its citizens or its security plans against internal and external threats is advanced through a framework called national security policy. The national security policy defines what constitutes a threat to the survival of a state and how the state intends to respond. Hence, a state’s response to threats indicates the thrust of its national security policy. In the case of Nigeria, it appears the protection of resources considered critical to the survival of the state is prioritised over and above human security in the pursuit of national security matters. This approach to national security has incensed the people of the delta region, who have consequently adopted militancy as a strategy to pursue their cause against perceived state injustice.

### The Thrust of Nigeria’s National Security

The Niger Delta region is highly endowed with abundant resources and activities that are very critical to the nation’s survival and development. For instance, the Nigerian oil industry, which is, today, the backbone of the nation’s economy operates in this region. Consequently, any form of threat to economic activities in the delta region is deemed a threat to national security and would be resisted with all means necessary, including the use of force. Hence, securing and protecting Nigeria’s economic interests in the delta is a matter of national security. The emergence of armed groups to challenge the Nigerian government and oil companies operating in the region, therefore, were deemed a threat to the nation’s survival and, thus, a threat to national security.

This perception of national security is statist and emphasises more on the coercive elements of security in the pursuit of national interest. It interprets security from the standpoint of adequate preparedness for military action against threats to the state. This perception of national security evidently stems from the main realist paradigm that views the world as anarchical in nature and that the use of force remains the valid means of guaranteeing security. Essentially, the realist sticks to the classical postulation, which places a lot of emphasis on threats to survival and concentrates on the various form of military response on the management of such threats. Security perception from the emergence of the concept of nation-state in 1648 and sovereignty in 1713 up until the Cold War era sustained this militaristic perception.

A close look at national security perception in Nigeria reveals that security is conceived within a statist perspective. This perception of security reflects a realist paradigm of projecting power within a state-centric system. In the contemporary world, however, this perception is increasingly becoming problematic, because a state-centric perception in a democratic rule is not only an anachronism but also a contradiction. After all, democracy emphasizes the individual as the centre of governance. In Nigeria, according to Thomas Imobighe, state and dominant class interests eclipse national security (Imobighe, 2003, p. 2). The security thrust is directed towards the interest of the ruling classes and their propertied allies, while most Nigerians are alienated from the security processes that ironically turn on them from time to time (Imobighe, 2003, pp. 2-3). The consequence of this is that national security planners tend to strengthen the coercive apparatus of the government any time the nation is faced with internal security challenges neglecting non-coercive and social welfare approaches. The development in Nigeria’s Niger Delta region since the 1990s lends credence to this conclusion.

During the long years of military rule, Nigeria’s national security was conceived and defined in military terms. Hence, this perception and operation of national security necessarily created a volatile atmosphere that threatens peace and security in the country. According to Nwolise, Nigeria’s conception of security in its military-strategic dimensions, particularly in terms of defending political independence and sovereignty, and by extension the government, has pushed the country towards paying less attention to development issues. Hence, the country’s failure to resolve social, economic and political problems has continued to remain the bedrock of her security dilemma.

In 1999, Nigeria transited to democracy, but the official paradigm of national security did not change, rather it has retained its statist posture, reflecting the skewed power relations between the ruling class and the ruled. Thus, it appears that successive Nigerian governments tacitly consent to the military conception of national security. This is obvious from the overrating of security and defence over other vital sectors of the economy, i.e. public health, education, agriculture, etc. This is evident from the wide-ranging difference in the budgetary allocation to security and defence when compared with allocations to other sectors. But, fundamentally, the actual security threat in Nigeria has not been external; it has been largely internally generated. Internal security threats have been fuelled largely by problems of underdevelopment, poverty, political instability, and social injustices, to mention but a few. These threats cannot be reasonably confronted by military preparedness.

Instructively, Dwight D. Eisenhower, the 34th president of the United States, once remarked that “no matter how much we spend for arms, there is no safety in arms alone. Our security is the total product of our economic, intellectual, moral and military strength” (Hammel, 2009, p. 134). This presupposes that overemphasis on military hardware does not necessarily translate to or guarantee national security. The social, economic and political wellbeing of the people must be included in the government’s definition of national security in Nigeria. It is against this background that the Niger Delta youths have become hardened and militant in their response to the government’s improper definition of national security and response to the delta crisis with respect to the activities of oil multinationals in the region.

### Arms Proliferation in the Niger Delta

The widespread proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) are nightmares that had not received commensurate attention from Nigerian governments and policymakers at all levels since the end of the civil war. The widespread proliferation of SALWs and its attendant consequences in the Niger Delta is a testament to this costly policy neglect. In the Niger Delta, SALWs and groups misusing them are dangerously out of control. Incidentally, the Niger Delta is the hub of oil and gas production in the country. Crude oil from the region accounts for the largest chunk of revenue accruable to the government. However, despite the oil wealth, the Niger Delta is riddled with abject poverty, a high unemployment rate, social deprivation and injustice, human rights violation, pollution and under-development. Hence, this paradoxical reality inevitably created a breeding ground for armed groups, organized crimes and arms proliferation in the region.

Significantly, the circulation of illegal arms within and across the delta has not only resulted in continued arms confrontation with the government but also increased the proclivity for crime and conflict in the delta communities with attendant retarding effects on development and economic investment (Agbiboa, 2013, p. 2; Naagbanton, 2020; Ero & Ndinga-Muvumba, 2004, pp. 23-24). There is no doubt that Nigeria’s internal security environment has continued to deteriorate deplorably since the outbreak of the civil war in 1967, when the country became vulnerably opened to the influx of arms and ammunition, especially in the delta region, for the prosecution of the war by secessionist Biafra. Since then not much had been done to mop up arms or control its trafficking in the delta region. From the late 1990s onward, the security situation in the Niger Delta assumed a more worrisome dimension, as the government of Nigeria and the oil multinationals operating in the region continued to appear unwilling to accede to the agitations of the people. With almost unhindered access to SALWs, youth in the region turned to militancy, kidnapping, illegal oil bunkering, communal violence and armed confrontations with the government and one another.

While a number of reasons, including poverty, unemployment, lack of development, environmental degradation, communal conflict, criminal government neglect and the impunity of oil multinationals, understandably, has been advanced, as the most probable causes for militancy and armed violence in the Niger Delta, there is also the need to identify the sources of arms proliferation in the region. Research has shown that weapons in circulation in the delta region come from multiple sources, which include local fabrication, the residue of guns used during the civil war, thefts from government armouries, smuggling, dishonest government-accredited importers, ethnic militias, insurgents from neighbouring countries and some multinational oil corporations operating in the Niger Delta (Igijeh, 2006, p. 18).

Nigeria now features prominently in the three-spot continuum of transnational organized trafficking of SALWs in West Africa, as origin, transit route and destination, especially from the late 1990s. According to Wellington (2007), “the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, home to large oil and gas operations, is awash with dangerous Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)” (p. 18). Thus, giving the magnitude of SALWs proliferation in the Niger Delta region, there is no doubt that violent conflict would be inevitable. Regrettably, however, when and where SALWs are deployed, human security has been the main victim. The carnage that characterized the civil war underpins this assertion.

The Nigeria Civil War contributed to the massive proliferation of SALWs in the Niger Delta. Though the war was a national war, the delta region was a major theatre and its people constituted some of the combat forces. During the war, Britain and the Soviet Union supplied the federal government with arms, while the French and Portuguese governments also armed secessionist Biafra with dangerous guns. Mercenaries from mostly European countries also engaged in the war and proliferated SALWs. The war ended, but no proper and comprehensive disarmament was done (Naagbanton, 2020, p. 5).

In the region, available land space or fishing grounds are becoming scarce owing to the large-scale environmental damage caused by the activities of oil companies. Often, communities, while trying to lay claims to land or forests, or sometimes claim the location of oil wells in case of compensation, etc. engage one another in armed violence and bloodletting. This is particularly the situation in Bayelsa, Delta and the River States. In fact, community members are levied a certain amount of money, and the money realized is used to procure arms that are used by the community defence groups. Likewise, in some communities where the crime rate is high, the rural village communities set up vigilante groups to provide security services for the area. Most of the vigilante groups in the delta communities are well-armed, especially with AK47 riffles.

From the various police and military raids of armed groups’ armouries and hideouts in Bayelsa State, and the state government-initiated disarmament and cash-for-arms programmes in 2007, assorted and sophisticated weapons were recovered in droves. Weapons recovered from the militant groups included AK-47s, Czech SAs, Light Machine guns, Czech model 26s, stem MK 2s, Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG), MAT-49s, MG 36s, Berettas, HK G3s, FN-FALs, home-made guns, pump-action, shotguns and other sophisticated European-made assault rifles and explosives (Wellington, 2007, p. 23). These weapons were brought into the delta from various locations. Most of the assault rifles, such as the Russian AK-47, the German G3, the Belgian FN-FAL, the Czech machine guns and the Serbian RPGs are supplied by illegal dealers and sellers. Some of the illegal gun dealers are, however, Nigerians (Wellington, 2007, pp. 23-25). For instance, in October 2006, the Rivers State Police Command arrested Chris Ndudi Njoku, an arms dealer who specializes in importing prohibited firearms into Nigeria and supplied arms to militants in the delta (Human Rights News, 2006, p. 5). Henry Okah was another arms dealer that supplies SALWs to militants in the delta.

European dealers are also involved in trafficking SALWs into the Niger Delta. Nigeria has very porous borders on both its land and sea edges, which make such illegal importations of weapons into the country easier. The smugglers use speedboats to connect with ships on the high seas and then ferry the arms back to shore. Asari Dokubo, leader of the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDPVF) confirmed this method in 2005, when he claimed, “we are very close to international waters, and it’s easy to get weapons from ships” (IRIN News, 2020). Essentially, most of the illegal smuggling of weapons into the delta region is done through the sea. According to IANSA and Oxfam (2006), the international trade in SALWs in the Niger Delta is believed to be dominated by ruthless Ukrainian and Russian dealers who swapped thousands of automatic weapons for illegal bunkered oil. It is also believed that weapons from Turkey, Indonesia and South Africa play a crucial role in arms flow into the Niger Delta (pp. 57-58).

Additionally, Nigerian soldiers who served in peacekeeping missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone have also been implicated in arms trafficking. Some of them sold their weapons to militants or gun dealers in the delta (Florquin & Berman, 2005, p. 143). Hence, security operatives are also complicit in the proliferation of SALWs in the region. For instance, on 9 July 2007, a Delta State police team arrested a Warrant Officer (WO2) serving with the Nigerian Air Force 33 Logistic section in Makurdi, Benue State, while transferring arms to a location in the Niger Delta. He was found with 5 assault rifles, 449 rounds of AK47 live ammunition, 4 brand new live jackets and 5 empty magazines, which he claimed were owned by a senator and that the arms were from the Republic of Chad (Human Rights News, 2007, pp. 4-5). Similarly, 15 army officers were court-martialled in Kaduna in 2008 over the disappearance of arms and ammunition from the armoury. The weapons were allegedly removed from the Nigerian Army Central Ordnance Depot in Kaduna and were later traced to militants in the Niger Delta. The weapons include AK-47 riffles, General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMGs) and boxes of ammunition and grenades (Omonobi, 2008, p. 3). One of the affected soldiers eventually confessed to having supplied arms to Henry Okah, a South Africa-based arms dealer and one of the leaders of the Movement for the Emancipations of the Niger Delta (MEND).

Aside from deliberate sabotage by security officers, militants also acquired some of the weapons in their stockpiles through organized attacks on police and military outposts. During such attacks, the militant groups broke into police or military armouries and cart away arms. Some of the armed groups operating in Bayelsa, Rivers and Delta States conduct well-coordinated attacks on security outposts and killed security officials in many incidents (The Punch, 2006). For instance, in July 2006, MEND combatants killed four naval personnel and injured three soldiers who were escorting a Chevron Oil tanker along Chonomi Creeks in the Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta State and confiscated their weapons (Wellington, 2007, p. 25). In Bayelsa State, heavily gunmen who were carrying out illegal oil bunkering killed two of the police officers at a duty post and carted away their weapons on 11 May 2008 (Human Rights News, 2008).

Apart from the sophisticated European weapons, militant groups sometimes source weapons locally. Militants in the delta, especially those with limited funds or connections to acquire sophisticated weapons rely on locally fabricated guns called “Akwa” in local parlance as a starting point (J. Dianabassi, personal communication, August 5, 2014).[[1]](#endnote-1) Florquin and Berman’s (2005) findings lend credence to this. They indicated in their work that the local crafting and manufacturing of small arms is done mostly in Akwa, the capital of Anambra State, Southeastern Nigeria, hence the code-name. Thus, those who find it difficult to obtain weapons from external sources resort to the locally made ones called “Akwa-made” (Florquin & Berman, 2005, p. 147). According to Augustine Ikelegbe, while the role of gun-smiths or local gun manufacturers has been acknowledged as a major outlet in the manufacture and distribution of SALWs across the region, there has been little attempts at engaging them in dialogue with the aim of monitoring and regulating their activities (Augustine Ikelegbe, Personal communication, July 14, 2014).[[2]](#endnote-2)

More so, individuals, communities and armed groups also import or purchase small arms because of the failure of the security forces to provide security. The law enforcement officials in the Niger Delta are overwhelmed by the security situation in the region. The militants fomenting trouble in the region are better armed and with more sophisticated weapons than the police. Hence, individuals and communities resorted to self-help to ensure their security and that of their communities. However, some individuals and groups purchase arms to perpetrate criminalities due to the lure of rich profits obtainable from the use of small arms in illegal activities, such as kidnapping and oil theft (Prince Igodo, Personal communication, August 5, 2014).[[3]](#endnote-3)

Also, the do-or-die attitude of politicians in the region is contributory to arms proliferation in the region. Some of the politicians during election years arm idle youths with dangerous weapons, including SALWs, and convert them to political thugs who are used to wreak havoc on opponents and oppositions. According to IANSA and Oxfam, the proliferation of SALWs in the delta has been driven by political ambitions combining with a cross-cutting illegal economy fed by oil bunkering, creating both direct and indirect drivers of violence in the Niger Delta region (IANSA & Oxfam, 2006, p. 58). Thus, the availability of SALWs on an unregulated international market has enabled militant groups, criminal groups and politicians to destabilize the fragile region further (IANSA & Oxfam, 2006, p. 58).

Overall, the proliferation of SALWs has dramatically escalated violence in the Niger Delta, a development that, in turn, has undermined all political, social and economic incentives for economic and social development and medium-term investment in the region. This has had devastating impacts on communities and small businesses in the region, as well as on the nation’s economy at large. In the opinion of security experts, these dramatic social and economic impact have created a vast number of idle youth, “ready to take up arms for a deadly cross-cutting mix of short-term ideology, status and wealth” (IANSA & Oxfam, 2006, p. 58).

It must, however, be clearly emphasised here that the widespread proliferation of SALWs is not the factor that led to the emergence of armed groups in the delta region, although it encouraged the development in no small way. Rather, the deplorable socio-economic condition, lack of development, limited economic opportunity and environmental degradation in the delta had been the chief reasons for the emergence of armed groups. Although some of the groups emerged, subsequently, to perpetrate illegal activities to profit from the abundant oil deposit in the region and relied heavily on SALWs.

What is clear is that either for criminal or a just cause, the availability of SALWs gives impetus to the activities of militant groups in the delta, seeing that the non-violent campaign and the pen and paper method of Ken Saro Wiwa and the Ogoni failed to compel the federal government and oil companies to concede to their demand. Nevertheless, it is rather unfortunate the extent to which small arms have become a symbol of power, dominance and worth among the youth in the region. Regrettably, youth in the region have grown up to believe that violence, especially through the use of small arms, is the only way of “gaining power, obtaining goods and services, and establishing respect, thus perpetuating the culture of violence” (Amoa, 2020). Thus, the widespread proliferation of SALWs in the delta makes it a high-security risk environment and one that presents a constant threat to national security because the mainstay of the nation’s economy is derived there.

### Overview of the Effect of the Proliferation of SALW in the Delta

There are multitudes of militia youth as well as regular government and private security personnel who take part in organised crime in the Niger Delta using small arms. The dynamics of the interface between the struggle for power and the struggle for wealth tend to condition the nature, dimensions and magnitude of the proliferation of SALWs (Ebo, 2005, p. 2). While the option of violent confrontation may represent one of how the people have chosen to express their disgust for the unhealthy development, hardship and misery which oil production has brought upon the delta, the Nigerian government’s resort to the use of violence under the bogey of “national security” for the absolute protection of multinational oil companies only worsened the conditions for internal violence, leading to the widespread proliferation of small arms and security concerns (Garuba, 2007).

Among other things, the proliferation of small arms heightened the level of insecurity in the Niger Delta. There is also the question of the human development cost of small arms, especially as they do damage to infrastructure, displace people and cause a decline in economic activity. A notable effect of the proliferation of small arms in the Delta region is its close linkage to high levels of crime and violence. From banditry, armed robbery, hostage-taking and pipeline vandalism to illegal oil bunkering, the Delta region has had more than its fair share of turbulent times. Several unarmed persons have been killed or displaced while abduction or hostage-taking of foreign and local oil workers and attacks on oil platforms have become a recurring phenomenon in the region. Ordinary civilians are caught between a predatory state and ruthless militants, as the perverse culture of gunrunning, killing, maiming, burning and looting become a permanent feature of life in the delta, in what makes the region more-or-less a Hobbesian state where life is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short (Human Rights Watch, 2005).

Giving the deadly destructive effects of the proliferation of SALWs and the threat it poses to national security, the question that comes to mind is what control measures the Nigerian state put in place to curb the scourge. The Illicit trafficking in SALWs into the country, especially the delta region, is extensive. Firearms of varied categories are illicitly imported into the country by unscrupulous elements almost unhindered because the legal and institutional measures against such illicit activities seemed weak. Nigeria only firearm law is out-of-date and contains weak provisions for regulating the proliferation of SALW. Consequently, the deliberate failure of the successive Nigerian government to review and realign existing laws and institutions with current realities is responsible for the violent conflict that has engulfed different parts of the country, especially the Niger Delta since independence. Indeed, the copious amount of SALW in the Niger Delta alone quarries the attitude of the government towards SALWs control and the effectiveness of existing laws and conventions as well as institutions enacted to control arms and ammunition in the country.

### Arms Control Measures and Disarmament Efforts in the Niger Delta

There is no doubt that security is a major prerequisite for sustainable peace and development. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) is however a threat to security, sustainable peace and development. Consequently, the control of SALWs has become a burning issue of global discourse. Nations, governments and peoples across the globe have not only acknowledged this but also making effort to combat it. The predatory effects of SALWs are devastating to the economy, development and growth of nations. The Niger Delta crisis and other pockets of violent conflicts across Nigeria are direct fallouts of SALWs proliferation and misuse.

Significantly, a major reason for the protraction of the crisis in the Niger Delta is largely the copious availability of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) to both authorized and unauthorized persons in the delta. The alarming volume of proliferated SALWs and the puzzling rate of its misuse in the Niger Delta are indeed calamitous. This is so because the Federal Government of Nigeria has continuously failed in its arms control effort. The failure is not mainly because of weak arms control laws and policies but largely because of government’s lack of political will to tackle the proliferation of SALWs in the country. The fact is that the Nigerian government is preoccupied with other things it prioritised more important than curbing the proliferation of SALWs in the country since the end of the civil war in 1970. The half-hearted Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-integration (DDR) exercise after the civil war was not followed up with a comprehensive plan and laws to mop up arms from various parts of the country and, particularly, the Niger Delta and the rest of the Eastern region that served as the theatre of war during the three-year-long civil war. Rather, military action and militarization policies have been preferred over proactive arms control measures. This costly oversight and wrong attitude to arms control provide the ground for the almost unhindered proliferation of SALWs in the country and create a veritable breeding condition for insecurity, militancy, insurgency and terrorism, among others.

Nigeria political and security challenges, manifested by political violence, terrorist attacks, urban criminality, oil bunkering, ethnic conflicts, community conflicts and religious conflicts, underpins an excessive demand for SALWs by various individuals and groups. This situation, combined with considerable logistical and capacity constraints as well as weaknesses in existing legal and institutional mechanisms, are hampering Nigeria’s fight against illicit trade in SALWs. In Nigeria, the 1959 Firearms Act is the main legal instrument for combating illicit production, import and export of SALWs. The law was reviewed in 2001 and later in 2004, partly because out of the 12,000 people arrested in relation to arms trafficking or illegal possession of weapons between 1990 and 1999, fewer than 50 were successfully prosecuted. The law regulates the possession and dealings in firearms and ammunition including muzzle-loading firearms and matters ancillary thereto. It further prohibits the possession and use of any firearms by any person in Nigeria (except members of the armed forces or police) unless such persons are granted licenses to possess and use the firearm (LFN, 2004, p. Sections 3 and 9 ). It also prohibits importation, exportation, and dealing in firearms in Nigeria except with a license granted by appropriate authorities (Section 10). The Act criminalizes the manufacture or repair of firearms without prior authorization from the appropriate state agency (Section 17 and 18).

Additionally, Nigeria is also a signatory to the ECOWAS Convention on SALWs ratified in 2006, and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Ammunition, supplementary to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Nigeria is also a signatory to the 2000 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition; the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Financing; and the African Convention against Terrorism. In 2011, the Nigerian National Assembly enacted the Terrorism (Prevention) Act, which provides for the effective implementation of the 1999 Convention as well as the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism.

The weak link in the enforcement of the laws and conventions is that the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) is the primary state institution responsible for overseeing the implementation of measures against the illicit trade in SALWs. The NPF also issues various categories of licenses authorized under the Firearms Act and prosecutes its violators. The National Commission on SLW (NATCOM) or any other special committee set up on arms control only plays secondary roles in controlling illicit trafficking and proliferation of SALWs. The fact that the NPF has virtually failed in its primary responsibility of protecting lives and properties makes it clear from the point of enactment that the war on SALWs trafficking will never be won with the NPF as the primary enforcer.

That notwithstanding, the Nigerian government, both at federal and state levels, has set up a committee to work on arms control and attempted a number of disarmament exercises in the country over the past several decades. Many of these have taken place in the Delta region, but their implementation was never fully documented. To date, there are no reliable figures on the numbers of weapons collected during any of the disarmament programmes nor accurate data on the amounts paid for weapons submitted to the process. Many claims that the proliferation of small arms in Nigeria began following the end of the civil war due to the lack of an effective disarmament programme at the time (Obasi, 2002, p. 69). This trend has continued, as the impact of these unsuccessful disarmament programmes continues to be felt through the prevalence of armed robbery across the country and the growing role of armed groups.

Between 1997 and 1999 the Delta state government initiated a disarmament programme calling on warring ethnic factions from the Ijaw, Urhobo, and Itsekiri ethnic groups to hand in their weapons. The call went unheeded (Lewis & Davis, 2006, p. 64). Shortly thereafter, the Governor of Delta State offered cash, short-term training and employment to militant youths who gave up their weapons. This call was met with scepticism, and ultimately little success (Lewis & Davis, 2006). These initiatives failed to reduce significantly the number of arms in circulation.

In July 2000, the federal government set up a twelve-member National Committee on the Proliferation and Illicit Trafficking in Small and Light Weapons (NCPTAW) aimed at gathering information on the proliferation of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and recommending appropriate measures to deal with this challenge. However, like previous committees on arms control, NCPTAW had limited impact. It never published its findings, although it did publicly destroy 428 rifles, 494 imported pistols, 287 locally made pistols and 48 Dane guns seized by security agencies in July 2001. The exercise was repeated in July 2002 and late 2004, there were particular efforts to reclaim and destroy weapons in the Niger Delta (Dokubo, 2003, pp. 216-217).

Piqued by the activities of various associations and groups, President Obasanjo sought parliamentary approval on 10 April 2002 to outlaw certain armed groups and associations in Nigeria. Among other things, the Bill sought to prohibit any group of persons, an association of individuals or a quasi-military group to retain, organize, train, or equip any person or group of persons for the purpose of enabling the group of persons or association of individuals to use or display physical force or coercion in order to promote any political objective or interest; ethnic or cultural interest; social, occupational or religious interest (Adeyemi, 2005, p. 48). In 2004, President Obasanjo set up another Special Committee on Disarmament but the committee never succeeded. In July the same year, the governor of Rivers State initiated a disarmament programme. The programme provided financial benefits and amnesty to those who turned in their weapons (NDPEHRD, 2005, p. 5). Although some weapons were handed in, the programme failed to deliver sustainable peace. An estimated 324 weapons were submitted during this disarmament programme, but no details are publicly available as to how much the programme cost or how much individuals received for their weapons (NDPEHRD, 2005).

Renewed fighting between the Asari Dokubo-led Niger Delta People’s Volunteer Force (NDPVF) and Tom Ateke-led Niger Delta Vigilante Services (NDVS), as well as a declaration of all-out war by Asari, led to the intervention by the federal government. In September 2004, President Obasanjo invited the leaders of the NDPVF and NDVS, Asari and Tom, to meet with him in Abuja. This initiative for peace negotiations to end the rising violence in Rivers State in the delta was successful, and a peace agreement was signed on 1st October 2004 (Best & Kemedi, 2005, pp. 27-29). This agreement, which provided payments for weapons turned in to authorities, a general amnesty, and promises of employment paved the way for another disarmament programme to take place. The disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programme were established, but it failed to live up to the expectations of the militants. Government had promised 4,000 jobs. Although the training was provided through the reintegration phase for nearly 2,000 youths, the inability of those youths to obtain jobs following the training programme resulted in growing disenchantment with the process (Human Rights Watch, 2005, p. 21; Bekoe, 2005).

Although the disarmament programme collected nearly 3,000 weapons,[[4]](#endnote-4)observers claim that this was only a small fraction of what was circulating in the Delta, that the weapons turned in were old or unserviceable, and that the process encouraged the purchase of additional weapons to benefit from the high prices being paid for weapons submitted to the disarmament process (NDPEHRD, 2005, pp. 5-8; Amnesty International, 2005, p. 36; Bekoe, 2005; NDPEHRD, 2004). An inventory of weapons destroyed in early November 2004 supports the claim that the weapons were old. Of the 848 recorded weapons, more than one-third of them were AK-47 assault rifles from the late 1960s according to Data provided by SaferAfrica, which oversaw the arms destruction process in November 2004.

The disarmament process failed to secure a sustainable peace. Disputes over levels of disarmament and cash payments received for submitted weapons increased tensions within and between groups. Disagreements overpayments and accusations of leaders keeping the money for themselves led to a split within the NDPVF, while smaller groups threatened the government with violence unless they were paid (NDPEHRD, 2005, pp. 7-8). By early November 2004, armed groups had broken the ceasefire in a series of clashes and attacks. The peace process continued despite these attacks, but leaders of the groups remained suspicious of the process (Asuni, 2006, p. 82). The Rivers State Governor held a meeting of all factions on 19th November at the end of which another peace agreement was signed, which set the stage for a Peace Ambassadors Camp to be held in January 2005 with more than 700 representatives from armed factions and youth groups attending (Asuni, 2006, pp. 82-83). The camp took place but failed to resolve the remaining contentious issues.

The 2004 disarmament process not only failed to disarm the factions but also reduced confidence in the government, thereby making future disarmament measures more difficult. The key element preventing real progress on the 2004 disarmament process was the lack of attention to reintegration efforts and opportunities for former militants to earn gainful employment. Although over 4,000 jobs were promised, the posts that materialized were temporary, low paying, and oddly located in areas not directly affected by the conflict (Asuni, 2006, p. 83). As a result, the militants felt short-changed by the process. The failure of this disarmament process left armed groups distrustful of the government and its motives, and apprehensive about any future disarmament initiatives. This shadow continued to hang over subsequent government efforts to resolve the crisis in the Delta.

After the failure of the 2004 disarmament efforts, the federal government simply adopted a counter military approach to demobilizing the militants. However, the militarization policy only increased the level of violence and the quantum of SALWs in the delta. The federal government officially drafted a Joint Task Force (JTF) made up of the three arms of the military and security services, under a military campaign code-named “Operation Restore Hope” to curb the restiveness in the oil-rich Niger Delta region. Its mandate among others was to secure oil installations, curb oil community agitation and neutralize any threat to the oil industry. By implication, government was tired of trying out alternative ways of non-violent resolution of the crisis. This shortcut policy of militarization of the delta, however, resorted to the emergence of the meanest of the militant movement, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) in 2006. MEND served as an umbrella body for the militant groups operating in the delta. MEND challenged the Nigerian military and almost brought the oil industry to its knee in its outrage.

While the federal government militarised disarmament and demobilization was doomed to fail or tilt the country towards another civil war, state governments in the delta were stuck to the monetized disarmament process that had not worked from the 1990s. For instance, Bayelsa state was able to buy herself some measure of peace throughout the long-drawn battle between the military and MEND by paying the militants in order to encourage them not to steal or attack pipelines in Bayelsa. According to Dimieari Von Kemedi, “It's not a very neat solution, but what are the options?” (Kemedi, 2008).[[5]](#endnote-5) This exercise rather provided funding for the militants and increased the proliferation of SALWs in the delta, as previous exercises by the delta states have.

As has been shown, the resort to the military option not only aggravated the problem but also made the military part of the problem. The Federal Government consequently inaugurated a Technical Committee, with broad terms of reference in March 2009. Amongst others, the committee recommended amnesty for militant leaders within a context of comprehensive demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) programme (International Crisis Group, 2009). The amnesty programme for the Niger Delta militants was to be administered through the Presidential Panel on Amnesty and Disarmament of Militants set up on 5th May 2009 (Courson, 2009, pp. 30-31). Under the amnesty scheme announced on Thursday, 25th June 2009, the President of Nigeria would officially pardon ‘militants’ who surrender their weapons and sign up for a reintegration programme (Reuters Africa, 2009). The federal government estimated as many as 20,000 militants could participate in the programme. Under the plan, the screening of gunmen and collecting of weapons was scheduled to begin on August 6 at 15 amnesty camps located in Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers and other southern states in the Niger Delta.

The declaration of the Presidential Amnesty offer was succeeded by a 60-Day window period, requesting all militants who choose to embrace the amnesty programme to surrender their arms and ammunition on or before 4th October 2009. To achieve the policy objectives, an initial sum of 50 billion Naira was released to execute the programme. The cost of the programme was spread among the federal government, state governments in the Niger Delta, oil companies and international organisations. Like previous DDR programmes, it was not clear how much money was required for the entire exercise (Reuters Africa, 2009). Although the Yar’Adua Amnesty programme succeeded in dousing the tension for a while, it has gradually drifted towards failure.

The Amnesty initiative saw over 15,000 militants surrender arms at the expiration of the DD phase of the Amnesty. Weapons recovered during the disarmament process included 2,760 assorted guns, 287,445 ammunition of different calibre, 18 gunboats, 763 dynamite sticks, 1,090 dynamite caps, 3,155 magazines and several other military accessories, such as dynamite cables, bulletproof jackets and jack-knives. The quantity and sophistication of arms surrendered during the disarmament and demobilization (DD) phase of the Amnesty Programme for the Niger Delta militants in 2009 gave an idea of the quantum of SALWs proliferation in the country. Despite the huge quantity, it was widely believed that militants only surrendered a small fraction of their arms, as most of them doubted the government’s genuine commitment to the amnesty (Egungbemi, 2013, p. 48). Only a few of the militants embraced the programme. It was even alleged that the arms and ammunitions surrendered by the militants were bought for submission by some top government officials of the delta states simply to demonstrate the acceptance of amnesty in those States. Bayelsa and Delta States were particularly implicated in this misconduct.

The question has been raised if there was any logic to the federal government’s offer of amnesty to armed insurgents in the oil-rich Delta region. It was clear that the hastily put together programme had no concrete post-amnesty plan. Government’s amorphous amnesty menu, which offers tripartite rehabilitation jobs, skills acquisition (including education), and private business does not suit all the targeted beneficiaries (Agbo, 2009). As with the previous DDR programme, those trained by the scheme, home and abroad, returned to the delta with no employment. Government continued to pay a monthly stipend to a host of former militants who was not gainfully employed in any sector of the economy. The law of labour requires that wages be paid as a reward of labour, but the federal government flouted this rule and continued to dole out money to able-bodied unemployed youth in the delta. The Amnesty programme is gradually becoming only a stopgap as the militants threaten from time to time to return the country to the years of 2006 – 2009 when the battle was fiercest.

Overall, it is clear from the foregoing that the Nigerian governments have not been entirely sincere to the process of curbing the scourge of SALWs proliferation in the country, especially in the Niger Delta. The failure of the state to address the socio-economic and development challenges of the people of Nigeria has been largely contributory to the widespread proliferation of SALWs. It is clear from the foregoing, that the federal and state governments in Nigeria had shown only little political will to solve the root of the problems in the delta. Rather, a cosmetic approach that provides room for corruption and sharp practices has always been encouraged. More disturbingly, the prioritization of security of oil multinationals over and above the wellbeing of her citizen demonstrates the wickedness and selfishness of the political elites in Nigeria. The success and failures of the half-hearted DDR programmes have contributed immensely to the increasing proliferation of SALWs in the country, especially in the Niger Delta where it is used to carry out bunkering and other criminalities against the state and the people.

### Conclusion

The implications of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) on Nigeria’s national security are extensive. The crisis that engulfed the Niger Delta, especially from the 1990s onward was exacerbated by the copious availability of SALWs in the Niger Delta. The proliferation of small arms has heightened the level of insecurity in the Niger Delta. It has raised the question of the human development cost of small arms, especially as they do damage to infrastructure, displace people and cause a decline in economic activity. Its close linkage to high levels of crime and violence is particularly destructive and dwarfing. From banditry, armed robbery, hostage-taking and pipeline vandalism to illegal oil bunkering, the Delta region has been treated to the wrath of the ‘god of war’ – SALWs. Several unarmed persons have been killed or displaced while abduction or hostage-taking of foreign and local oil workers and attacks on oil platforms have become a recurring phenomenon in the region. Ruthless militants and unbridled soldiers have entrenched a perverse culture of gunrunning, killing, maiming, burning and looting become a permanent feature of life in the delta.

Significantly, the proliferation of SALWs in the Niger Delta threatens and continues to threaten the economic survival of the Nigerian state. This is because the Nigerian economy is heavily dependent on crude oil from the Niger Delta. The emergence of armed groups in the delta to fight for the liberation of the region from the cold grip of the capitalist multinational oil companies who have systematically and deliberately destroyed the delta environment pose a big threat to the economic survival of the Nigerian state.

The failure of government to evolve sustainable disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme to mop up small arms from the polity has continued to be the bane of Nigeria’s development and sustainable peace. The Nigerian government has continued to adopt a similar pattern of DDR, a monetized programme devoid of a concrete post-DDR scheme. This failure of government and the resort to the military option as an alternative to a non-violent DDR programme rather plunged the country further deep into the crisis than solve the delta crisis. It was clear the Nigerian government always pursue a quick fix rather than embarking on a long-term solution to the Delta crisis. Once, there is respite government abandon the resolution process. This has led to the question of what constitutes Nigeria’s national security. Does it include the wellbeing and development of the people of the delta region or is it purely the protection of the oil and the oil companies?

In this regard, as the people of the Niger Delta fight for relevance, adequate attention, security and development, the copious availability of SALWs dramatically escalated the crisis in the Niger Delta. The availability of these weapons on an unregulated international market enabled militant groups, criminal groups and political aspirants to further destabilize the fragile region. The proliferation of SALWs has been driven by political ambition combining with a cross-cutting illegal economy, fed by oil bunkering, creating both direct and indirect drivers of violence in the Niger Delta region.

The international trade in SALWs in the Niger Delta trade is dominated by ruthless Ukrainian and Russian dealers and other merchants of terror who, over the past years, have swapped thousands of automatic weapons for illegal bunkered oil. Also, weapons from Turkey, Indonesia and South Africa have played crucial roles in arms flow into the Niger Delta. The domination of violence both as political and economic drivers undermines the incentives for economic diversification and medium-term investment into the region. There are devastating impacts on communities and small businesses, as well as losses at the federal level of revenue in excess of US$25m a day. In the region, these dramatic social and economic impact, in turn, create a vast number of idle youths, ready to take up arms for a deadly cross-cutting mix of short-term ideology, status and wealth.

The illicit trade in SALWs and their proliferation can only be addressed through effective regulation. So far, the international community has failed to take the necessary measures to control the international arms trade. At the regional level, the ECOWAS Convention on SALWs has laid a standard but beyond the implementation capacity of member states and at the international level, government must agree on a new international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Domestically, there is the need for the Nigerian government to pursue a true and genuine agenda of democratization, justice, stabilize its economy and create opportunities for its citizens in order to divert the attention of its population from gangsterism and violence. The 1959 Firm Arms Act is evidently too weak to address current realities even though it has been reviewed twice in 2001 and 2004. The peculiarity of the Nigerian situation should be well studied to fashion out a befitting law and programmes that would reduce the proliferation of SALWs and spare the country of its devastating consequences. Aside from the laws, it is clear the institutional frameworks to implement the laws and enforce them have been very weak too and have been responsible for the almost unhindered access to SALWs across the country.

If the problems of proliferation in the Niger Delta region and other parts of Nigeria are not addressed, the non-state armed and warlords operating in the region will undermine the region and plunge it into a dangerous conflict zone where the gangs will rule at the expense of legitimate authority, development, security and progress of all. The situation is, however, not hopeless.

### Recommendations

Resources are a major factor in the conflicts and threats of war in any society. Limited access and inequitable distribution often create patterns and feelings of marginalisation. For a society that is used to settling even the minor dispute with small arms, it should be expected that natural resources would spawn and sustain major conflicts. This is obvious in the case of the Niger Delta region where the legal but unjust exploitation of crude oil has generated a problem made worse by unregulated use and easy access to small arms. Sometimes, it makes no sense to call them “small” arms given the scale of devastation the evil they perpetrate.

The following are recommendations aimed at eliminating the implications of the proliferation of SALWs to Nigeria’s national security.

1. The government should demonstrate genuine commitment to stop the flow of small arms in the Niger Delta. For instance, while it is true that Nigeria has established a national committee on the implementation of the ECOWAS Convention on SALWs, indications are that the efforts made so far lack strategic coordination and consistent implementation. Thus, beyond the mere signing of the ECOWAS principle not to allow importation, exportation and manufacturing of small arms, the government should strengthen its control over arms and work out necessary measures that would guarantee border security with its neighbours.
2. As a matter of urgency, there is a need for job creation to guarantee the socio-economic security of the vast army of jobless youth in the Niger Delta. This step, apart from helping to give the desired sense of belonging and partnership to the Nigerian project, would also help to anchor the Niger Delta policy in a political process that stresses human capital development and security rather than the one that attempts to foist dubious law and order upon the population. As the country talks about local content in the oil sector, the principle should be taken to a level that provides training in oil industry-related skills and enables these youth to find relevance in the fight against the proliferation and use of small arms and that finally allows the Niger Delta region to achieve its full potential.
3. The government need to build the capacity of security and law enforcement agencies to effectively patrol the land and maritime border posts and detect the smuggling of SALWs across borders. To achieve this, effort must be redoubled to secure effectively all her land, air and maritime borders.
4. The government need to develop short-, medium- and long-term strategies for tackling conflicts and criminal activities that drive the demand for SALWs in the country, such as political and inter-communal violence, militant activities, urban criminality, rebel activities, kidnapping, drug trafficking, religious conflicts, land conflicts, smuggling, etc.
5. In Nigeria, weapons procurement and illicit oil bunkering seem tied to domestic politics. Fundamental political reform, therefore, is key to rid the country of the proliferation of SALWs, rather than dealing simply with the weapons supply chain.
6. The Interior Ministry should immediately develop a border security strategy that will complement the country’s domestic and national security objectives. To better secure the borders, there are three main components to be employed: technology, infrastructure, and personnel. For our borders to be effectively secured, the federal government must wake up from its slumber and sincerely treat the ‘national cancer’ of corruption. Government must provide the relevant security agencies, especially the Customs and Immigration, with sophisticated communications gadgets, patrol vehicles and other equipment needed to do their job. Nigerian border security agencies should also collaborate with their counterparts in neighbouring countries.

**References**

# An Assessment of the Niger Delta Amnesty Programme in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Nigeria

## Oluwatosin Bethel ADEDEJI

### Abstract

*The Niger Delta region of Nigeria generates 95% of export earnings and about 40% of the Nigerian government revenue (IMF). This region was known for its calmness and peacefulness until the discovery of oil in the Oloibiri community, Ogbia Local Government Area of present-day Bayelsa State in 1956. The discovery and exploration of oil in the Niger Delta region gave birth to the destruction of the environment, livelihood and agitation for resource control and the development of the region. The continued neglect of the environment by the government and the oil companies coupled with the rise in unemployment and youth restiveness gave birth to militant groups that killed, kidnapped and vandalised oil installations. The Nigerian government in response to the plight of the Niger Delta people introduced the amnesty programme in 2009. This research work, therefore, assesses the Niger Delta amnesty programme in the Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. It further assesses the extent to which the amnesty programme has addressed the root causes of the Niger Delta crisis. The study adopted a descriptive research design (qualitative method), using both primary and secondary data collection. The theory of change and utilization-focused evaluation is used for the study. The findings of this research established that the amnesty programme has not fully addressed the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict. Given this, for the amnesty programme to be effective, the government should make provisions for employment and social amenities in the Niger Delta region.*

**Keywords:** Amnesty, Niger Delta, Nigeria, Bayelsa, Southern Ijaw

### Introduction

Since the democratic experience of Nigeria, the country has witnessed several conflicts ranging from inter-ethnic clashes, religious violence, assassination, murder and other related conflicts. Many of these conflicts arise as a result of injustice and marginalization from one group or the state itself. The recent crises staged in the Niger Delta over marginalization led to the loss of both public and private properties, this resulted in the introduction of amnesty in the region (Olawole, 2016:116).

For several decades, the Niger Delta region of Nigeria has been a hotbed of conflict in Nigeria. The conflict is between the combatant youths of the region (Militants) on one part and the government and the multinational oil companies on the other part. The core issue of the conflict is the ecological destruction of the degraded environment and resource control. This is as a result of oil exploration and exploitation activities that have destroyed the land, forest, farm and contamination of the rivers and waterways; as the only means of livelihood of the people, who are mostly farmers, fishermen, hunters and timber dealers. Reports are made to the effect that the Niger Delta region is one of the most polluted areas, in the face of the earth (Walsh, Urban Wastelands: The World’s 10 Most Polluted Places, 2013). The adverse effect of the pollution on the region is poverty, destructive diseases, and in some cases lack of shelter as a result of displacement by oil extraction on the original settlement. The tragedy of the Niger Delta region is that it is one of the poorest regions in Nigeria today. According to Mark and Alabo (2006), despite the vast oil resources of the Niger Delta, the region remains poor.

The Government of Nigeria used several measures to contain the Niger Delta crisis but proved abortive. Such measures include the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in the year 2000 to regulate the use of sums received from the allocation of the federation account for tackling ecological problems which arise from the exploration of oil minerals in the Niger Delta region and for connected purposes (NDDC Establishment Act, 2000). Also, the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs was established on September 10, 2008, by late President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua to coordinate and handle policies for the development and security of the Niger Delta region (MNDA website, 2018). The continued degradation of the region by the Multinational Oil Companies and constant human rights violations in form of brutality, arrest, extrajudicial killing by security agents, and rape, in line with the indifferent attitude of the Nigerian Government, to adhere to the agitations of the region, which made the people reverse the nonviolent social movement to become violent on the face of the repressive approach by the Nigeria Government. That was the emergence of militancy in the Niger Delta region.

The Niger Delta is made up of nine states Bayelsa, Rivers, Delta, Cross River, Edo, Akwa-Ibom Ondo, Imo and, Abia States. Bayelsa, Rivers, and Delta are known as the three core Niger Delta states. According to Ama-Ogbari (2009), the Ijaw tribe is the dominant tribe in the Niger Delta region.

Amnesty is a pardon extended by the government to a group of persons. It is a general pardon for offences, especially political offences against a government, often granted before any trial or conviction. Amnesty is carried out all over the world for different purposes. In the 1970s, amnesty was granted in the wake of the Vietnam War to those who refused to perform military service and those that refused to comply with military doctrines by President Carter, to heal war wounds. Amnesty was also granted in the United States in 1868 after the American civil war (1861-1868), as well as the French amnesty of 1905. Those granted amnesties were able to recover their rights to vote and be voted, pardoning past violations without changing the laws violated. In Africa, such as South Africa, Amnesty was granted to prisoners who were given the death penalty (Fuller, 2014).

In Nigeria, Amnesty was introduced by late President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua as an effort to subdue agitations from the oil-rich Niger Delta. One of the major events that led to the amnesty proclamation was the Willink Commission of 1957 to answer the complaints and requests of minority groups in the country (Mark & Alabo, 2007). As a resource-rich region in Nigeria, the request of the Niger Delta people was the development of the Niger Delta region and to alleviate the poverty of the people. According to Odey (2013), the recommendations of the Commission gave birth to the setting up of the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB) in the 1960s. The NDDB was charged with the responsibility of bringing about the rapid development of the Niger Delta region.

The amnesty extended to different ethnic militant groups in the Niger Delta such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Egbesu, Niger Delta Volunteer Force and Niger Delta Vigilante etc. These militant groups emerged in the Niger Delta region and were known for their violent attacks on oil infrastructures and kidnap of foreign oil workers for ransom. The continuous violent attacks of the militant groups on oil infrastructures and workers caused a drastic fall in the production and export of crude oil in the region. The Amnesty Programme was therefore set up to end such violent attacks, with the main objective to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate/rehabilitate the militants and return them to the communities from the creeks to start normal lives as civilians as well as the infrastructural development of the Niger Delta region. The programme provided benefits such as educational opportunities, monetary benefits and skill acquisition to those militants who gave up their weapons. The programme resulted in a sharp reduction of violent attacks on oil companies and workers, thereby leading to an increase in oil production (Marclint, 2017). This study, therefore, assesses the effectiveness of the amnesty programme in the Southern Ijaw Local government area of Bayelsa State Nigeria. The study also determines the success of the Niger Delta Amnesty Programme with the objectives of the amnesty programme in the Southern Ijaw Local Government area. The study further determines the challenges confronting the implementation of the Niger Delta amnesty programme in the Southern Ijaw Local Government Area. Also, the study determines the extent to which the Niger Delta amnesty programme has been able to address the causes of the conflict in the Southern Ijaw Local Government Area.

### Study Area and Scope of the study

The study assesses the Niger Delta amnesty programme in the Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The study focused on the rehabilitating aspect of the amnesty programme from 2009 to 2013 since the period under review was the peak of the amnesty programme

Bayelsa State is one of the cores Niger Delta states. It was created out of old Rivers State on 1st October 1996. The name Bayelsa State is an acronym of the former local government areas, Brass, Yenagoa and Sagbama (BALGA, YELGA, SALGA- BA+YEL+SA) in the then Rivers state which now constitute the area Bayelsa state. Bayelsa state covers 21,100 Square Kilometres of land. It shares boundaries with Delta State on the North, Rivers State on the East and the Atlantic Ocean on the West and South (NigeriaGalleria, 2017). Bayelsa is made up of eight (8) local government areas- Yenagoa, Brass, Sagbama, Ekeremor, Nembe, Ogbia, Kolokuma/Opokuma, and Southern Ijaw Local Government Areas, with Yenagoa as its capital city and Southern Ijaw as the largest local government area. According to the National Bureau of Statistics 2012 annual statistics, Bayelsa state has a total population of 1.9 million people (2010 estimate). Bayelsa State has one of the largest crude oil and natural gas deposits in Nigeria, which makes petroleum production extensive in the state (Clever, 2009). The preoccupations of the people were fishing, farming, palm oil and kernel production, hunting etc.

Southern Ijaw Local Government Area is the largest local government area in Bayelsa State. Its headquarters is at Oporoma. It shares a boundary on the west with Brass LGA, Sagbama on the north and East and Yenagoa on the south. The people of Southern Ijaw LGA are known as the Izon people. The Southern Ijaw people are mainly farmers, fishermen, hunters etc. According to the 2006 census, the total population of the area is 319,413, (Clever, 2009). The Niger Delta amnesty programme was also carried out in the Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State where militancy was very prominent.

### Literature review and theoretical framework

The term “Amnesty” is derived from the Greek word *amnestia* meaning “forgetfulness or passing over.” According to the black’s law dictionary, (2009), amnesty is a pardon by the government to a group or class of persons, usually, for a political offence, the act of a sovereign power officially forgiving certain classes of persons who are subject to trial but have not yet been convicted. It is also a period during which people can admit to the crime and give up weapons without being punished. Nada (2017) explains amnesty as a law brought by an act of parliament, which grants to an undefined number of persons released from being persecuted, full or partial release for the execution of the penalty and replacing the penalty with a more favourable one or annulations of the legal consequences from the verdict. To the Federation for America Immigration Reform (FAIR, 2014), Granting amnesty erases crime committed by the person the amnesty is being granted to, and also, the punishment associated with the crime is forgotten.

The concept is politically used for compromise and reunion following the war. Amnesty is, therefore, a blanket abolition of political offence by the government with the legal result that the group charged with convicted have the charge or conviction wiped out, amnesty may be granted afterwards and it, in general, is given to a whole class of criminals, either before judgment or charge with a political offence against the state to restore tranquillity in the state (Igeiwari, 2014).

In Nigeria, the government declared a state of amnesty in the Niger Delta region to militants who were operating in the region and the nation at large. Amnesty promotes reconciliation and social cohesion (Olawole & Omadia, 2016). It is a reminder that without peace, there can be no development. To bring peace to the region, therefore, the Nigerian government used amnesty and rehabilitation programmes to help the people recover from the past.

### Overview of Rehabilitation

From the word rehabilitate, rehabilitation is derived from the Latin prefix *re,* meaning “again” and *habitare* meaning “make fit.” It is defined as an act of bringing someone or something back to a good condition. According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2011), “Rehabilitation is a process aimed at enabling disabled persons to reach and maintain their optimal physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological and social functional levels”.

Rehabilitation is a process of adaptation or recovery through which an individual suffering from disabling or functionally limiting conditions, whether temporary or irreversible, participates to gain maximal function, independence, and restoration. Kristen, 2011 describes rehabilitation as activities or programmes designed to assist individuals who have experienced a trauma that results in damage or hurt and as a result, creates a loss of function (physical, psychological, social or vocational).

Vaughan, (1961) refers to rehabilitation as the fullest possible restoration to normal life and working efficiency of a person incapacitated by disease or injury. Rehabilitation is aimed at restoring something to its original state through achieving compensation of lost functions, maintenance of current functions and improvement or restoration of functions. Thus, the aim of rehabilitation has traditionally been seen as facilitating the normalization of human functioning after injury, disease or defect.

### Historical Analysis of the Niger Delta Conflict

The Niger Delta is the homeland of interrelated people with a closely knitted historical background. According to Alabo & Mark (2008), the Niger Delta problem is not just one, but a complex of many interrelated problems. However, violence in the Niger Delta could be traced back to the discovery of crude oil at Oloibiri town in present-day Bayelsa state in 1956 and the beginning of oil exploration in the region in 1958. To Francis & Akpan (2003), the Niger Delta crisis is caused by land alienation, political marginalisation, socio-economic inequalities and dishonest leadership.

The Niger Delta region is an area endowed with natural resources; crude oil in particular. The discovery of crude oil by the Royal Dutch Shell Company at Oloibiri in present-day Bayelsa state attracted other multi-national companies such as Total, Fina, Elf, ExxonMobil, and Texaco amongst others to the region (Simon, Bassey, Odika, 2013). Oil exploration activities grew sharply with the production rising from 1million barrels per day to 2.4million barrels per day within 4 years (Alabo & Mark, 2008). According to Simon, Bassey & Odika (2013), since then, production has increased tremendously, generating huge revenue for the government, yet the communities from which the oil was extracted continued to live in abject poverty coupled with the divested socio-economic environment. This situation led to the emergence of agitations and contentions in the region in the 1990s.

Francis & Akpan (2013:4) opines that the people of the Niger Delta are socio-economically neglected, they do not sufficiently benefit from the oil proceeds, because oil is extracted from the region. Instead, the people’s sources of livelihood have been paralyzed due to environmental degradation caused by the activities of oil exploration. “The peoples’ consciousness of the fact of degradation, exploitation, and pollution of their environment without due compensation from the oil companies, or the federal government responsible for the company’s operation in the region, compels them to resort violent conflicts and militancy, as ways of getting their essential problems resolved.” The people of the Niger Delta region experienced serious environmental hazards such as; lack of access to clean water and sanitation, indoor air pollution from business stores, deforestation and severe soil degradation. The Niger Delta is also opened to the spread of infectious diseases. A major impact of the oil industry on the Niger Delta environment is oil spillages. Oil spillage is, therefore, a natural by-product of petroleum exploration, exploitation, refining, and marketing.

The 1990s marked the emergence of agitations in the Niger Delta in form of non-violent protests by ethnic militant groups such as the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Bakasi, Ijaw Youth Council etc. Most prominent among them was the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), led by Ken Saro-Wiwa, protesting against environmental degradation on the lands and waters of Ogoni people, Rivers state. Their protests succeeded in kicking out Shell from Ogoni land. However, Ken Saro-Wiwa, along with four Ogoni agitators were tried and killed by the Nigerian government. In Bayelsa State, the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) carried out a procession in the state capital parallel with the Kiama Declaration of 1998 for oil companies to cease operation and withdraw from Ijaw territory, but the government responded with violence. Ekumaoko (2013) argue that activities of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) gave much leeway to the conflict in the Niger Delta. He argues further that the arrest and death of Ken Saro-Wiwa gave the Niger Delta struggle an international status and instead of deterring others, several militant groups started emerging. Most prominent among these ethnic militant groups are Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Movement for the Reparation to Ogbia (MORETO), The Chicoco Movement, Movement for the Survival of Ijaw Ethnic Nationality (MOSIEN), The Supreme Egbesu Assembly (SEA), The Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV), Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), Egbesu Boys of Africa (EBA). Chukwuka & Oben (2010) categorized the Niger Delta militants into different groups:

1. Resource agitators’ militant category (General Tompolo, Alex Preye, Asari Dokubo, Henry Okah, etc).
2. Cult groups militant category (Ateke Tom, Soboma George, etc); and
3. The political thug’s militant category (General Africa, Commander Joshua, etc).

According to Francis & Akpan (2013), increased militancy and agitations in the Niger Delta can be blamed on the attitude of oil companies, the attitude, and policies of the government and the greedy behaviour of some militants. First, it has been argued repeatedly that oil companies operating in the Niger Delta are not carrying out their social and environmental responsibilities appropriately. The pollution of water, land, and vegetation from the oil well, and the devastation of crops and trees by the intense heat resulting from gas flaring are serious issues. These exploitative activities are viewed as frustrating the welfare of the oil-producing communities. Because of the negative impacts of the activities of the oil companies on the peoples’ environment, their major occupations of farming and fishing declined severely. With these hazards and without appropriate compensation, some indigenes of the Niger Delta region seriously aggrieved resorted to violence as the last resort (since peaceful agitations were ignored) aimed at attracting the attention of the oil companies and the federal government to their problems. Sufficient enough to say that the selfish motive of the oil companies in their oil exploration and undue disregard to the dangers their activities posed to the oil-producing communities, contributed in no small measure to the violence experienced in the Niger Delta.

Second, the federal government had failed to bring out an equitable sharing formula in the distribution of oil proceeds, thus placing the oil-producing communities in a disadvantaged position. Furthermore, the federal government neglected its legislative responsibilities that would have regulated the activities of the oil companies and reduced damages to the oil communities.

Finally, greed has been identified as a contributing factor to the crisis in the Niger Delta. This factor is manifested in kidnapping and hostage-taking. Apart from the militants engaged in kidnapping in the creeks, youths in the cities and villages have bought into the business, which has come to be viewed as the quickest and most handy means of poverty alleviation. From agitation for resource control and compensation for environmental hazards, the militants diversified into kidnapping adults and children for financial gains.

It can also be argued that militancy in the Niger Delta region is a result of the Nigerian government’s application of force in quelling non-violent protests for development and resource control as identified in the time of Ken Saro-Wiwa. Also, militancy in terms of kidnapping, hostage-taking, pipeline vandalization is a result of frustration due to unemployment, poverty, idleness and lack of education of youths in the region.

### The granting of Amnesty

Amnesty has been used by many African nations as a tool for building reconciliation and peace after conflict. Amnesty as a tool of conflict resolution has been adopted by many nations, South Africa and Angola for instance. South Africa had to reach out to violence perpetrators after attaining its democracy in 1994, and this was from all parties involved and hence, amnesty was granted based on the condition that the perpetrator had to fully disclose their politically motivated crimes, (Kituri, 2016). Amnesty promise for all offences, acts, and omissions related to political objectives as well as committed in the conflicts past course was considered to be an integral deal part. The granting of amnesty promised protection from civil claims as well as from criminal prosecution but based on full public (or private) admission of their guilt and offences, (Fred, 1999).

In the case of Nigeria, the federal government employed several strategies to contain the insurgency in the Niger Delta to no avail. The late President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua in May 2007 introduced the Niger Delta Technical Committee (NDTC). The committee recommended amnesty with incorporated disarmament, demobilization, and rehabilitation of the militants among others. The Federal government of Nigeria acknowledges that the challenges of the Niger Delta arose as a result of inadequacies of the previous attempt to meet the needs, yearnings, and aspirations of the people, and therefore set in motion machinery for sustainable development of the Niger Delta states. The government, therefore, desires that those who had engaged in militancy directly or indirectly in the Niger Delta should return to respect constituted authority and desire to apply for amnesty and pardon on such persons”

The amnesty Programme proclamation did not compel any of the militants to accept the offer of amnesty. The government rather signed a contract with only those who voluntarily accepted the offer, and they were taken through a proper and non-forceful DDR process. The militants were given 60 days to accept the amnesty offer which was between August 6 and October 4, 2009, and anyone caught in the act of militancy thereafter will be prosecuted. They were to be trained home and abroad which was a mechanism to bring relative peace to the region. The amnesty programme is made up of four components, which include environmental, petroleum, infrastructural and DDR, (Ajibola, 2015).

### The Niger Delta Amnesty Programme

The terms of the amnesty included willingness and readiness of the militants to surrender their weapons, unconditionally renounce militancy and sign an undertaking to the effect. The government in return pledged its part to institute rehabilitation programmes for repentant ex-militants. The key objectives of the Nigerian amnesty programme are to stabilize, consolidate and sustain security conditions in the Niger Delta as a prerequisite for promoting economic development in the area and the country. According to Paul Oghenero (2014), Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Rehabilitation (DDRR) are one of the most important strategies for the resolution of conflict and management of post-conflict situations in the world today. He explains further that there are three majors' Phases to the Niger Delta amnesty programme, namely the disarmament and demobilization of militants: the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-militants and, the post-amnesty package of huge infrastructural development. Below is the agenda of the Federal Government of Nigeria on the Niger Delta amnesty programme.

### Table 1: Federal Government’s Agenda on the Niger Delta Amnesty Programme (Target: 30, 000 Ex-militants)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Duration: August 6 – Oct 4, 2009  **Disarmament** | Duration: 6 to 12 Months  **Demobilization** | Duration: Up to 5 Years  **Reintegration /Rehabilitation** |
| **Key activities** | **Key activities** | **Key activities** |
| Collection of arms and ammunition, explosives etc. | Ex-militants report to camp, Verification, documentation, Transformational training, Peacebuilding & Conflict Resolution Counselling, Career guidance, Wellness assessment, Reintegration, Clarification, Educational & Vocational placement, Graduation & demobilization | Knowledge & skill acquisition, Financial empowerment placement programme, Microcredit education, Recommendation with local community conflict resolution Framework/mechanism, Monitoring & evaluation, The exit of amnesty. |
| **Key enablers** | **Key enablers** | **Key enablers** |
| Disarmament camps massive campaigns | Transformational training centres Rehabilitation camps | Partnering government agencies, NGOs, and private organizations Tracking & support framework. |

**Source:** Office of the Special Adviser on the Niger Delta Amnesty Programme (OSAPND) Index: The Niger Delta Amnesty Programme

**Table 2:** Total targets of participants in the Niger Delta amnesty programme (Participant Demography)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **State** | **Male** | **Female** | **Total** |
| 1 | Abia | 155 | 8 | 163 |
| 2 | Akwa-Ibom | 571 | 29 | 600 |
| 3 | Bayelsa | 8,900 | 117 | 9,017 |
| 4 | Cross River | 159 | 1 | 160 |
| 5 | Delta | 4,396 | 20 | 4,416 |
| 6 | Edo | 450 | 0 | 450 |
| 7 | Imo | 297 | 3 | 300 |
| 8 | Ondo | 2,198 | 2 | 2,200 |
| 9 | Rivers | 8,963 | 89 | 9,052 |
| **Total** |  | **26,089** | **272** | **26,361** |

**Source:** Asua 2013: Niger Delta Crises and National Security in Nigeria: Appraisal of the Amnesty Programme.

At the commencement of the programme, the government of Nigeria demonstrated commitment to the programme through the financial allocation of N127billion to cover the programme through 2009 and 2011. From the N127 billion, N3 billion was used as take-off in 2009. This covered training in various skills within and outside the country, payment of stipends, payment of the leaders of various militant groups and a few were given contracts to protect the oil pipelines from vandalization. In 2012, N74 billion was allocated for the amnesty programme which covered feedings, payment and rehabilitation of ex-militants. In 2013, N66 billion was allocated for the same purpose. At the end of the amnesty, when the amnesty offer was closed, over 8000 militants surrendered their arms and ammunition and pledged allegiance to the federal government (Simon, et al, 2013).

The first programme been disarmament commenced June 25, 2009, to October 4. This involved the voluntary surrendering of arms by ex-militants. Between June 25 and 4 October 2009, about 20, 192 militant agitators had accepted the offer of amnesty and handed in their firearms and ammunition which were more than 20,000 items. At the end of the cessation, over 20,000 militants were disarmed and registered. The highest numbers of the ex-militants registered during the first phase of the disarmament exercise came from Rivers State, with 6,997, closely followed by those of Bayelsa State origins, with 6,961, and those from Delta with 3,361. The others came from the other Niger Delta six states. This number included 133 women, but no record of child soldiers. At the end of the exercise 18 gunboats, 299,032 rounds of ammunition, 3,831 weapons, 2,072 explosives, and several rocket launchers were reported to have been surrendered by the militants to the Government security agencies. In November 2010, the second phase of 6,166 came from several militant groups that claimed to be disarmed after the period of grace had elapsed. Consequently, the number rose to 30,000 in December 2012, when another 3,642 were included in the programme as the third phase (Goodnews & Amakihe, 2014).

**Table 3:** Descriptions of Key Militants that Accepted Amnesty in 2009

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Names** | **Date of Acceptance** | **Estimated Arms and Ammunitions Surrendered** |
| 1 | Solomon Ndigbara alias Osama bin Laden | 26 June 2009 | Gave up 11 arms and 1,000 ammunition |
| 2 | Henry Okah | 13 July 2009 | Though the supposed leader of MEND, Okah did not surrender any arms because he had been arrested in Angola and extradited to Nigeria since February 2008; where he was detained and was facing a closed trial on 62 count charges. |
| 3 | Victor Ben Ebikabowei alias General Boyloaf and 31 other militants; including African Owei, Joshua Macaiver, and Ezizi Ogunboss | 7 August 2009 | Surrendered an assortment of arms totalling 520, ammunitions valued at 95,970 rounds and 16 gunboats. |
| 4 | Soboma George of Outlaws cult group. | 13 August 2009 | Surrendered 36 assorted weapons |
| 5 | KileSilkeyTorughedi (Young Shall Grow) | 5 September 2009 | Gave up an assortment of arms totalling 100 weapons, ammunitions worth 100,00 rounds and 3 gunboats |
| 6 | Ateke Tom of NDV | 3 October 2009 | The exact number is unknown but it included: anti-aircraft launchers, GPMG, Ak-47 rifles, Mark 4 rifles, pistols and loads of ammunition |
| 7 | Manfimisebi Othello and the Gwama Boys of Ilaje | 3 October 2009 | Surrendered different weapons, such as submachine guns, AK-47 rifles, hundreds of live ammunition and arrows |

**Source:** Chukwuka & Oben, 2010: An Assessment of the Niger Delta Amnesty Programme Implementation in the Niger Delta of Nigeria

The second phase being demobilization of the disarmed militants commenced in May 2010. Participants were moved to the demobilization camp by the Amnesty Implementation Committee. The reason for this phase was to adequately carry out intensive non-violence transformational training and reorientation programme per batch of about 1,000 to 1,500 ex-militants. A centre at Obrubra in Cross River State was chosen as a single processing camp. The camp was officially opened on June 28, 2010. Militants who were disarmed in the first phase were admitted to camp in a total of 17 batches (Goodnews & Amikihe, 2014).

The disarming phase was followed by comprehensive programs such as workshops and incentives aimed at positively transforming the ex-militants. Rehabilitation is the third phase of the Niger Delta amnesty programme. This phase involves the inclusion of ex-combatants/ex-militants into civil society through gainful training and empowerment. It addresses the specific needs of ex-militants by offering them support in terms of skill development, education, professional training and any assistance to peaceful and sustainable livelihoods. It is broader in scope than disarmament and demobilization cutting across the economic, psychological and social life of the demobilized persons. It aims at rehabilitating not only the ex-militants but also the families and communities of ex-combatants. An amnesty agreement was reached and it made allowances for the delegates to be given a monthly stipend, the opportunity to live as free citizens, and contest (political participation) and freedom to travel out of the country if they so wished. They also have the opportunity to undergo educational or vocational training, depending on their preference, and these were either within or outside the country (Ajibola, 2015).

In implementing the rehabilitation aspect of the amnesty, Kingsley Kuku stated that about 30,000 persons enlisted and registered for the amnesty programme and more than 12,000 persons had undergone vocational training within and outside Nigeria. 5315 are in the universities in the US, UK, South Africa, Canada, Malaysia etc, as well as private universities in Nigeria (Olawole & Omadia, 2016:126). In rehabilitation camps, ex-militants were paid N15, 000 per day feeding allowance and N20, 000 per month for a maximum of three months for the period of rehabilitation. Stipends were increased to N65, 000 and also N15billion contract was awarded to Global Vessel Specialist Limited (GWVSL), a firm believed to be owned by Tompolo, one of the militant leaders, to supply vessels for the use of national military authority to secure the waterways (Augustine & Andrew, 2016).

By April 2013, it was reported that 5,067 persons had already graduated in fields such as entrepreneurship, welding, plumbing, fabrication, electrical installation, oil drilling and Information Communication Technology (ICT). In parallel with the amnesty programme, the budget of key Niger Delta development institutions like the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs (MNDA) and Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) was increased from 2009, along with the state allocation for development (Kathryn, 2014). According to Osah & Amakihe (2014), so far, about 200 Nigerians from the Niger Delta have either been trained or are in training under the presidential amnesty aviation programmes.

### Theory of Change (TOC)

Theory of Change (ToC) was developed in the United States in the 1990s and it was popularized by Carol Weiss as an approach to improve evaluation theory and practice in the field of a community initiative. Weiss described the Theory of Change as a theory of how and why an initiative works (Stein & Valters, 2012). Stein and Valters explain further that the ability to formulate the connection rests on the idea that social programmes are based on how and why they work. According to Vikram Patel et al (2014), the Theory of Change is a theory of how and why an initiative works, which can be empirically tested by measuring indicators for every expected step on a pathway to impact. Vogel (2012) described the Theory of Change as a description of the sequence of events that is expected to lead to a particular desired outcome and an on-going process of reflection to explore change and how it happens. Change is thus the result of a plan.

A theory of change explains how an intervention is expected to produce results. The theory typically starts with a sequence of events and results (outputs, immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes and ultimate outcomes) that are expected to occur owing to the intervention. This is commonly referred to as the “program logic” or “logic model.” However, the theory of change goes further by outlining the mechanisms of change, as well as the assumptions, risks, and context that support or hinder the theory from being manifested as observed outcomes. This opens the black box of change and allows evaluators to better examine the causal link between the intervention outputs and the observed outcomes (Canada.ca, 2012).

The theory of change forces stakeholders in the process to be explicit about how resources will be used to achieve the desired goal. It also helps a group develop a realistic picture of the difficulty of the change process required to produce their desired long-term results. It also helps program stakeholders develop a shared understanding of what they are trying to accomplish, by making everything clear to everyone involved. It is critical that the plans for an initiative are sound and that the results to be achieved are defined clearly beforehand so that everyone will know the success when they see it, (Vikram et al, 2014).

Theory of change, therefore explains the intervention of the Federal government of Nigeria in the long-protracted conflict of the Niger Delta with the amnesty programme. The grievances of the people have been with the government for perceived marginalization and the multi-national oil companies for environmental degradation, poverty, unemployment, lack of education of the Niger Delta region. The intention of the government through the intervention is for the amnesty programme to produce a positive result in form of bringing relative peace to the Niger Delta region and the nation at large. The federal government has been specific about the change it wants to achieve through the amnesty intervention, which is to bring relative peace to the Niger Delta region. Consequently, change is expected of the beneficiaries of the amnesty programme to embrace the amnesty offer and live like civilians in civilian society. The federal government has so far been explicit with both human and financial resources to achieve the desired goal of amnesty. It is important for the government to clearly define the goal to be achieved beforehand so that everyone will know the success of the programme when they see it. According to Omokhoa (2015), the current state of security is attributed to the amnesty programme particularly the DDR package. The amnesty package has been able to bring youth restiveness under control. The amnesty involved surrender, demobilization, disarmament, and subsequent training of ex-militants. It has also been successful in bringing about a very significant reduction in the disruption of oil production and damage to facilities.

### Methodology

A descriptive research design (qualitative method) was adopted for this study. The target population of the study involves communities in the Southern Ijaw Local government area of Bayelsa and it covers both direct and indirect beneficiaries of the Niger Delta amnesty programme as well as the development agencies in the Niger Delta. The primary source of data was gathered from direct and indirect beneficiaries of the amnesty programme as well as other relevant Niger Delta development agencies with the use of the semi-structured open-ended interview was also used to gather data. Fifty (50) people were interviewed. The secondary source is from journals, textbooks, the internet, newspaper articles, policy briefs, edited books and reports, as these seemed the most appropriate tools for gathering data.

### Findings of the study

The research work seeks to know if the amnesty has been able to address the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict, as well as the challenges confronting the implementation of the amnesty programme.

**Table 4:** Percentage Analysis of Respondents

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| S/N | Objectives | Percentage of Respondent (%) |
| 1 | The success of the amnesty programme in relation to the amnesty objectives. | Out of 50 respondents, 70% believes the amnesty programme has been successful in achieving its objectives. 30% believes the amnesty programme is a failure. |
| 2 | Challenges confronting the implementation of the amnesty programme. | 80% of the respondents believe that the amnesty programme is all about favouritism. 10% believes that the amnesty programme causes criminality. 10% opines that the government did not fulfil its promise. |
| 3 | The extent to which the amnesty programme has addressed the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict. | 90% 0f the respondents believe the amnesty programme has not addressed the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict (employment, environmental degradation, development). 10% believes the programme has addressed the causes of the Niger Delta conflict. |

**Table 5:** Thematic Chart

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Theme1** | **Theme2** | **Theme3** |
| The success of the amnesty programme in relation to the objectives. | Peace and tranquillity | Reduction in oil-related crime |  |
| Challenges confronting the implementation of the amnesty programme. | Favouritism and nepotism | Causes criminality in the region | Disappointment |
| The extent to which the amnesty programme has addressed the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict. | Employment | Environmental Degradation |  |

### The Success of the Amnesty Programme to the Objectives

The Niger Delta region has been agitating for years, demand for resource control, development, and poverty alleviation; employment and education opportunities. Their agitations and demands soon became a threat to peace and security in the Niger Delta region and the nation at large. Amnesty was granted to the militants in the region by the federal government of Nigeria. The amnesty programme was expected to eliminate conditions that motivated and sustained militancy in the Niger Delta region. The intention of the government through the amnesty deal was to restore the broken peace in the Niger Delta region.

The objectives of the amnesty programme are to address the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict (demands of the people), to see to the reduction of oil-related conflict in the Niger Delta and to restore peace and security to the Niger Delta and Nigeria at large through Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation (DDR), making DDR the main objective of the programme. That is to say that the amnesty relied heavily on disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation to achieve its objectives. The amnesty programme is still ongoing and 70% of the respondents believe so far, the programme has been successful to some extent because of the tremendous increase in oil production and relative peace being restored in the region. 30% believes the amnesty programme is a total failure because the programme has not addressed the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict and just a handful of persons are benefitting from it.

#### Peace and Tranquillity in the region

40% of the respondents believe that before the granting of amnesty in the Niger Delta region, criminal activities of militants such as kidnapping and hostage-taking had become an embarrassment to the Nigerian state. People were afraid to live or establish a business in the Niger Delta region because they did not feel safe in the region. With the introduction of the amnesty programme, international organisations, bodies and companies now freely interact with the people which in turn has led to increased employment opportunities for the people.

#### Reduction in Oil-Related Crime and Illegal Bunkering

To call the attention of the government to address their demands, the people of the region (youths particularly) resort to oil-related crimes such as pipeline vandalization, the kidnapping of foreign oil company workers for ransom as well as chasing oil companies out of their communities. Some started illegal bunkering businesses as the only source of livelihood. During this period, Nigeria suffered a major loss and decline in oil production and export in the international market, (Alabo & Mark, 2007). 30% of the respondents believe that following the granting of amnesty, there has been a tremendous reduction in such activities. As such, there is an increase in oil production in the country. He said further that the reduction in this oil-related crime and bunkering is because the youths that were carrying out these illegal activities, who have voluntarily dropped the gun has been trained by the federal government and are well to do in society.

### Challenges Confronting the Implementation of the Amnesty Programme

As stated earlier, the amnesty programme to some extent has been successful, but no doubt, challenges are confronting the implementation of the Niger Delta amnesty programme. According to respondents, the amnesty programme was aimed at eradicating militancy and oil-related conflicts in the Niger Delta region. However, some of the challenges confronting the implementation of the Niger Delta amnesty programme are as follows:

#### Favouritism and Nepotism

80% of the respondents believe that the actual youths on the creeks have been neglected; it is only propelled by some top politicians and other members of the Presidential Amnesty committee to enrich themselves and their families. The Niger Delta region still feels marginalized by the federal government and feels the government is not playing its role as promised in the amnesty deal. If this factor is not addressed, the ones that are not benefitting are likely to take up arms again.

#### The Programme Causes Criminality in the region

10% of the respondents believe that the amnesty programme causes criminality in the Niger Delta region. The amnesty deal is for the whole Niger Delta region but only a few persons are benefitting from the programme. The government only identified weapon bearers (militants). Since the Government only recognized weapon bearers, kidnappers, and youths in the communities that were not recognized in the region will also resort to criminal activities and possess harmful weapons and form groups to kidnap, vandalise pipeline to attract Government recognition. Years after the granting of amnesty, there have still been incidences of kidnapping, pipeline vandalization, and hostage-taking by youths of the Niger Delta. These are people who want to have a taste of the economic benefits of the amnesty programme since they have been left out by the government. The criminal activities seem to be the only resort to call the attention of the government to their plight.

#### Disappointment

Another challenge of the amnesty programme, according to respondents, is disappointment. 10% of the respondents believe the government did not fulfil its part of the amnesty deal because of this; beneficiaries have been disappointed by the government. He went further to say that the agreement with the government was that they will take you to school or vocational training, but even “if they don’t take you to school, they will be paying you your N65K each month and they will pay you till you die. But if they take you to train, after the training, they will empower you.” Findings further showed that some students that have been sent abroad for educational training were sent back because the government failed to pay their fees and, as such, the schools could no longer accommodate them.

### The Extent to which the Amnesty Programme has **Addressed the Niger Delta Conflict**

Violence and militancy in the Niger Delta started following the discovery of oil and oil exploration by oil companies. Conflicts in the Niger Delta are caused by environmental factors. Activities of international oil companies were not favourable to the host communities. The major source of livelihood for the average Niger Delta person is farming, fishing, and trading. The source of their livelihood became extremely difficult on the account of oil exploration and its consequences, being environmental degradation, water, land and air pollution, thereby subjecting the people to abject poverty and unemployment. Despite the exploration activities in the oil-rich Niger Delta, the region remains underdeveloped and poor. People from the region lack education and low political representation. The federal government showed little or no interest in the people’s plight and the host communities were not compensated by the government.

After several attempts in addressing the Niger Delta conflict, instead of solving the problem, it aggravated. Amnesty was granted in the Niger Delta with a post-amnesty package of economic opportunities as a measure of the federal government to address the Niger Delta conflict. 90% of the respondents believe the amnesty programme has not fully addressed the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict. Some of the problems identified are explained below:

#### Employment

90% of the respondents believe that the amnesty programme has not addressed the causes of the Niger Delta conflict in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State because employment opportunities are not provided. The amnesty programme has been successful in sending people of the Niger Delta to schools and vocational training within and outside Nigeria. Some of the trainees have graduated and are still unemployed. Because of unemployment after the training, some have the thought of returning to the creeks and continue the illegal bunkering business.

The reason for this is the government’s fear of further agitation and violence in the region. The finding showed that the government feels that after undergoing vocational and educational training, and if employed, their agitations for development will become more severe in both violent and non-violent ways because they would have fully been exposed to know their rights (Ekumaoko, 2013).

#### Environmental Degradation

20% of the respondents opined that the amnesty programme is aggravating the Niger Delta conflict in the Southern Ijaw Area of Bayelsa State. Findings showed that the demands of the Niger Delta people being environmental, infrastructural development and community rehabilitation remain. The water is still polluted and the area is still underdeveloped. For instance, in the Agricultural sector, the people in the communities have been deprived of their source of livelihood because the water is polluted and the soil is destroyed. The farmers in the localities are left out in the amnesty programme. With the amnesty deal, the government is only concerned about the peace and security of Nigeria. Through the amnesty deal, government has awarded the contract to top militants leaving out the larger population in the communities. It can, therefore, be deduced that the government is bribing militants for peace (Ekumaoko, 2013).

### Conclusion

The study was successful in assessing the Niger Delta amnesty programme. The amnesty programme has been successful to some extent. It has helped in restoring peace to the Niger Delta region. However, the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict have not yet been fully addressed. The inability of the government and the various stakeholders in addressing these root causes has led to continuous agitation despite the robust amnesty offer. To bring durable peace to the region is to address the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict which is the origin of the amnesty programme.

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# Nigeria’s Amalgamation, Social (In)Justice and Security Implications

## Temidayo David OLADIPO & David Oluwafemi BODUNDE

### Abstract

*Nigeria emerged in 1914 after the colonialists amalgamated the southern and northern protectorates for administrative purposes without negotiation of the conditions of amity between peoples of both sides. However, with independence from British rule on 1st October 1960, come some challenges arising from glueing together peoples with divergent cultures, languages, historical antecedents and religions. Some of these problems have metamorphosed over time to generate serious security issues. Taking into consideration Nigeria’s political history, this paper examines the implications of the welding of diverse peoples with different orientations for Nigeria’s unity, peace and security. The core position of the paper is that amalgamation was accompanied by some inevitable social injustice that arose as a result of coercing unequals together; the consequence is that social injustice in the Nigerian state-bred insecurity. This is so because Nigeria, as a result of the amalgamation, was made to become a deeply divided society. This is responsible for entrenching deep fault lines which have engendered violence and thus threatened security in Nigeria. The methodology employed for the study is qualitative in nature and involves critical content analysis of texts, library and archival materials.*

**Keywords**: Amalgamation, Social Justice, Social Injustice, Security.

### Introduction

Nigeria is a nation comprising multi-ethnic groups with diverse cultures, languages and religions amid other differentiating factors. This reality is a product of the 1914 amalgamation of the southern and northern protectorates by Lord Fredrick Lugard,1 which, in itself, is an outcome of the subjugation of erstwhile independent communities through colonial conquest by Britain. The consequence is a country with over 250 languages. However, with independence from British usurpation, Nigeria, the most populous black state in the world, apart from struggling to secure a place in global politics, has had to battle with various issues confronting the state from within its borders. These problems include the crisis of harmonious coexistence of her plural citizens, the issue of ensuring unity in diversity, election crises, military *coup d’etat*, religious conflicts, crises regarding resource control and bad leadership. Nigeria, in trying to survive and thrive, has also had to grapple with the interference of globalisation, porous borders, insurgency and terrorism, which ensure that millions of dollars that would have gone into infrastructural development end up in securing the state, accumulation of debt from the International Monetary Fund and other financial institutions and countries, and neo-colonialism, which ensures some meddlesomeness in Nigeria’s politics. All these challenges have, in some ways, contributed to why Nigeria lags among the comity of nations, even though it is considered as the giant of Africa. Although, the perception that Nigeria is the giant of Africa is not misplaced, because it is the most populous Black country with vast natural and human resources, yet, while these should have been of advantage, the mismanagement of resources by poor leadership and centrifugal forces of ethnic and religious tensions have hindered the state from taking its rightful place among developed states in our world today thereby undermining its claim to being a giant.

The amalgamation of 1914 has serious implications for Nigeria. A major implication of the amalgamation is that it ignored the deep divisions within the soon-to-be Nigerian state for administrative purposes. The amalgamation was not mindful of the implication of post-colonial politics, given the differences among the tribes and religious groups. What we now have is a Nigeria “permanently poised on an ethnic and religious powder keg” (Siollun, 2009:2), which is easily set off by mistrust, fuelled by politics, played by elites. Thus, established is a state in which justice, good governance, and a lot of values that guarantee a good state are jettisoned in favour of ethnic and religious affiliations. This has resulted in the inability to develop shared values and this lack of shared values has continually led to security threats.

### What is Security?

Simplistically, security is the state of being protected against threat, uncertainty or danger. It is a “stable, relatively predictable environment in which an individual or group may pursue its ends without disruption or harm and fear of such disturbance or injury (Green 2004:21 cited in Brook 2011). The need for security is both at the individual level and the group level. Thus, Craigwell (2003; cited in Brooks 2009) considers security as “the provision of private services in the protection of people, information and assets for individual safety and community wellbeing.” At the individual level, a person wants to enjoy his/her human rights, with the right to life is the most primal and assurance for the fulfilment of all other conditions that enhance the quality of life, which find protection in the other documented human rights. But as is the case that there is no “I” without “we” so is there no “we” without “I.” At the group level, the group wants an assurance that its rights will not be abused, ignored and that it will not be threatened into extinction by unfavourable conditions in the society it belongs to. To feel secured, the group ensures that those conditions required to satisfy individual and group needs are provided, and at the same time fortifies itself against external threats. When the group in question is a state, security is guarding against threats to the state’s sovereignty. Whether conceived in terms of the individual or thought of at the group level, security is about human well-being and prosperity. Of course, while it makes sense to apply the concept of security to animal life, the biosphere, the environment, or the economy, yet it is because (in)security of these affect human well-being, in the short- or long run.

“Security” is a highly contested concept. This is so because, as Brooks (2009:1) puts it, “security is multidimensional in nature and diverse in practice.” The contribution to its conceptualisation or definition from multiple fields is responsible for the contentious nature of the definition of security. According to Brooks (2009:1), “the multidimensional nature of security results in both society and industry that has no clear understanding of a definition of the concept of security. Moreover, the current concept of security is so broad as to be impracticable.” In our view, the way out of this is to consider many attempts at defining security as identifying just some types of security and seeking that the notion of security by the state and other stakeholders in the security community consider them too. Scholars who have championed the course of environmental security, food security, among other forms of security have done so to invite focus to these types of security. Moreover, the attempt at the redefinition of security is aimed at demilitarisation of the concept of security, so that states, stakeholders, policy-makers can pay attention and invest in other areas which if neglected may spur violence and thus insecurity, or may even lead to some catastrophe, as is the case in negligence of care for the environment. The argument mainly is that security at the state level need not be “the defence of a nation, through armed force or the use of force to control a state’s citizens” (Brooks 2009:2). Security is diversified into many areas such that we may identify economic security, environmental security, health security, human security, food security, national security, personal security, among other forms of security. However, irrespective of the type of security being clarified, an important point to note is that security must centre on human beings; thus, it is the notion of human security that makes the idea of security to be meaningful. In the view of Ogaba (2010:35-36), security

has to do with freedom from danger or threats to a nation’s ability to protect and develop itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interest and enhance the well-being of its people. Thus, internal security could be seen as the freedom from or the absence of those tendencies, which could undermine internal cohesion, and the corporate existence of a country and its ability to maintain its vital institution for the promotion of its core values and socio-political and economic objectives as well as meeting the legitimate aspirations of the people.

Brooks (2011:18) defines security as “assured freedom from poverty or want, precautions taken to ensure against theft, espionage, or a person or thing that secures or guarantee.” Security is the absence of those tendencies which might undermine the internal cohesion and corporate existence of a country. In the opinion of Galtung (1975:25), in an attempt to argue against the militaristic notion of security, security is “found not in terms of nation’s might but in terms of holistic understanding that moves beyond the currency of military power with the state as a key actor.” Security goes beyond political realism established on the belief in military might. Rather, a country can only boast of having security if it can maintain vital institutions and conditions that secure certain core values which society should stand for. Thus, good leadership, environmental protection, respect for human rights and others are important parameters for determining security. For instance, the absence of good leadership contributes to insecurity. Proof of this can be found in the justification given for the Arab Spring, insurgency and terrorism in Nigeria, as well as insecurity in various underdeveloped countries of the world.

### Social Justice and Security: Conceptual Linkages

There is a debate about whether it makes sense to speak of “social justice,” for if it is merely about adding “social” to “justice” then it does not make sense, for justice is a social phenomenon. Antagonists of the concept, thus, attack it of redundancy for “justice is necessarily a social or interpersonal concern” (McLean and McMillan 2009:494). Offor (2014) points out that, justice is a social phenomenon that has to do with human beings, systems and processes in society. Nevertheless, just like many concepts that suffered from the crisis of acceptance into social science discourse at the start, it has come to stay. As it is used in contemporary discourse, social justice refers to justice in relation to the distribution of wealth, privileges, and opportunities within society.

Every society is a blend of different groups of people, consisting of divergent ethnicities, clans, and sometimes races. Just as individuals can be subjects of injustice, so can groups. This is made possible when political systems are constructed in such a way that some groups are permanently disadvantaged. Likewise, institutions and structures of society may be in the hands of a few groups that estrange other groups and their members from enjoying fair access to common goods, such as institutions and structures produce. At the core of the discourse about social justice is the “issue of how people are treated within a social arrangement in a way that they will not feel cheated” (Offor, 2014:95). The term, when used, is intended to refer to “the requirements of justice applied to the benefits and burdens of a common existence…” (Mclean and McMillan 2009:494). Social justice takes the concept of justice beyond its discourse and application to civil and criminal justice, economics, or moral framework. Moreover, social justice rather than focusing on the requirements of justice between individuals shift the focus to just relations between groups within a society. It emphasises that all people should have access to privileges, opportunities, wellbeing, justice and wealth of the society. The aim is to guard against discrimination and deprivation of people from benefiting and enjoying common goods and, thus, guard against doing harm to the social fabrics through the generation of grievances.

Necessitating the need for social justice are two things: scarcity of resources available in society and the conflict of interests arising from different quarters aimed at harnessing such resources. Addressing these two issues requires finding ways through which the burdens and benefits of society can be allocated (Offor, 2014). When some members of society enjoy the benefits and others feel more of the burden, the balance of social order is affected in such a country, and there will be complaints about social injustice, which if not addressed may lead to the employment of violent means for seeking redress.

If you want peace, prepare for war. Inherent in this saying is the underlying suggestion that lasting peace comes by being fought for through the contestation of those issues of injustice that one disagrees with. Injustice breeds social disorder. People on the receiving end of injustice seek through diverse means- peaceful and violent- to redress injustice. In a country where seeking redress has been impossible, over the years, through peaceful means, there has been recourse to violence, which has led to insecurity. The Niger Delta Conflict is a case in point here. Poverty, inability to meet basic needs, environmental degradation, economic neglect, unemployment and hindrance to local economic activities, minimal educational opportunities faulty fiscal federalism, the fact that the resources tapped in the region have not been instrumental in galvanising the region economically, lack of basic socio-economic and developmental infrastructure that is at par with what is obtainable in other parts of the country, issues about compensation, the frustration arising from the inability to use legitimate means to get attention to the deplorable conditions of people in the region are manifestations of social injustice which have heightened insecurity coming from the area (Oladipo, 2017). The annoyance about social injustice in the region has been the basis of the justification for kidnapping for ransom, assassination of political opponents, various acts of brigandage and piracy in the creeks and territorial waters, and different acts aiding insecurity by rebels. A lesson that is obvious from conflicts like that of the Niger Delta is that social injustice leads to a situation in which some restive youths go into crime and people readily support criminal and rebel groups against the state in the name of seeking redress for injustice. However, while it may be possible to have situations like that of the Niger Delta without violence and insecurity arising from it, yet it is incontrovertible that “genuine grievances should be redressed whether or not they provoke rebellion...” (Collier 2007:24).

### Nigeria’s Amalgamation and the Question of Social (In)Justice

Nigeria, today, consists of over 250 ethnic groups. Before amalgamation, what obtained in pre-colonial Nigerian societies were empires, a caliphate, kingdoms, chiefdoms, city-states and villages. The North was already used to their rulers’ exercise of absolute authority,2 made possible by the spread of Islam. However, the southern part, which consists of the West and the East, had forms of indigenous government that were checkmated by constituted authorities; the east even boasts of a liberal form of governance that was republican or egalitarian (Oluwatobi, 2018). These various nationalities were, for amalgamation, subsumed into two groups- the northern protectorate and the southern protectorate. However, both have fundamental differences anchored on ethnicity and religion. While those in the northern part of the country had a lot in common in terms of Islamic religion, the southern part of the country is largely Christian. Religion can however be a divisive factor, and in fact, in the case of Nigeria has been one. It is a major consideration, for instance, in determining those that will be the president and the vice-president. Both cannot be of the same religion, no matter the competence they seek to bring to governance. The 2015 general election still had this influence with Bola Ahmed Tinubu being denied the vice president’s3 slot as a result of the need to appeal to Christian electorates in the country. Other than this, appointments into political posts are expected to seek a balance between both religions, otherwise complaints of “lopsided appointment” will rent the air from the side of the religious body that feels marginalised. The same goes for ethnicity.

These two sides of the protectorates have some fundamental differences, anchored on religion- The northern being largely Muslim, the southern mainly Christian. This had further implications. The north, with the firm belief in its religious heritage, believes that the south is inferior in some ways. The belief is that the amalgamation is “between an ordered and cultured [northern] society on one hand and, on the other hand, between an impetus, aggressive and savage [southern] group” (Obi Ani, Obi-Ani & Isiani 2016:27). The consequence of this belief is further evident in the firm belief of the north to the right to rule the country, so much that Sokoto State, which is the seat of the caliphate in Nigeria, adopted as its slogan- Born to Rule.4 A slogan that drew the ire of people from other states of the federation.

The amalgamation made Nigeria become a plural society and a deeply divided society. A plural society is one in which, according to Lijphart (1977:3-4), there exist segmental cleavages. Segmental cleavages may be religious, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural, racial, or ethnic. However, beyond the existence of these segments, “political parties, interest groups, media of communication, schools, and voluntary associations tend to be organised along the lines of segmental cleavages” (Lijphart, 1977:4). Thus, segmental cleavages in a country make divisions in it problematic through making citizens organise themselves and some salient issues based on the divisions rather than identifying those things that unite.

Apart from being plural, Nigeria is also a deeply divided society. While describing Nigeria, Osaghae (2002:ix) holds that Nigeria is “arguably one of the most complex countries in the world and belongs to the genre of the most troubled complex societies called deeply divided societies.” This is so because there are sharp divisions among Nigerians with the division being rooted in religion and ethnicity. According to Guelke (2012:vi), “deeply divided societies are a special category of cases, in which a fault line that runs through the society causes political polarisation and establishes a force field. This divide makes establishing and sustaining democratic rule a huge challenge.” A deeply divided society is one in which fault lines created by ethnicity, religion and other divisions often lead to violence and create some challenges for the administration of the political system. In a deeply divided society, “conflict exists along a well-entrenched fault line that is recurrent and endemic and that contains the potential for violence between the segments” (Guelke 2012:30). In a deeply divided society, there is antagonistic segmentation of society, sustained division along fault lines for a long period, and attachment to the fault lines have overriding importance and influence over a wide range of issues facing a deeply divided society. The implication is the prevention of the formation of political coalitions on issues that cut across the main societal divides (Guelke 2012: 28-29). In other words, the various segments have issues with arriving at a consensus on important matters and often challenge outcomes of political processes. The unfortunate outcome of all these is the recurrence of violence, especially in settling some political issues.

The amalgamation resulted in the lumping together of diverse (linguistically, culturally, and religiously) heterogeneous nationals, “around the Benue valley, the Gulf of Guinea and the Western Sudan” (Obi Ani, Obi-Ani & Isiani 2016:27) that are suspicious of, and distrust, each other. Eventually, at independence, a major consequence of the amalgamation is that it brought the question of social (in)justice to the fore in Nigeria. This was made worse by the policies of the colonialists which made “justice, equality, fair play and transparent governance assume secondary importance” (Oluwatobi, 2018:41). While courting the colonialists during colonialism and at the eve of independence, the different ethnic and religious groups tried to lay hold of vital organs of the state in order to dominate them, while estranging other social groups. This bred contempt and aggression towards state institutions on the part of estranged groups.

The various ethnicities were at different stages of political, economic and cultural development when they were merged. In contradistinction to their northern counterpart, the south was majorly ahead in education, commerce and knowledge of western-styled administration as well as in imbibing western skills. While the southern part embraced western education, the north, given mainly to Arabic education was, up till the eve of independence, lagging in terms of western education and influence. Lacking in the north also were other influences of western civilisation in terms of communication, sanitation facilities, hospitals, public works, and housing (Obi Ani, Obi-Ani & Isiani 2016). However, the ability to welcome and imbibe western education had further implications on the level of development of both protectorates. This has eventually led to some form of perceived social injustice. First, “the Southern political sophistication and Northern traditionalism inevitably emerged as a major centrifugal force in Nigeria’s political geography” (Osuola and Muoh, 2015). In addition, the belief is that there are different recruitment standards for both sides into the civil service and educational institutions. There is also the fear of domination, expressed by the North about the post-colonial era. The fear is that those who had imbibed more western knowledge would indeed be at the helms of affairs of the country. Thus, while the south had expressed readiness for independence in 1953, through a motion moved by Anthony Enahoro, the North staged a walkout in protest against the motion in the Parliament, mainly because in terms of its capability for handling the new state they were not ready.

A major evil of amalgamation is that the peoples joined together in unholy wedlock never accented to the union. What we have is a country that was “artificially created by a colonial power without the consent of its citizens. Over 250 ethnic groups were arbitrarily herded together into an unwieldy and non-consensus union by the UK.” What this resulted in is a situation in which “Nigeria continues to grope along without Nigerians” (Ikime, 1985:21 cited in Osuala and Muoh, 2015). Unfortunately, “in such circumstances, there was no room for dialogue or public discussion on fundamental issues that would have addressed a number of problems that today border on the question of justice” (Offor, 2014:93). The beauty of such negotiation, if it had taken place, is that it would have enabled every group to negotiate the fundamentals of cooperative coexistence and imbued the system with predetermined fairness. On the contrary, if a society fails to achieve this, “whatever principles, structures and institutions that would evolve afterwards would be otiose and subject to unjust manipulation” (Offor, 2014:101), as is witnessed in Nigeria today. Moreover, some form of injustice is perpetrated in denying people the opportunity to negotiate the kind of society they want, the nature of government that should direct their affairs, and the laws that they believe will best deliver these.

This accounts for why various political leaders expressed doubt about amalgamation being successful to the extent that the various ethnic groups will be able to cement themselves into one Nigeria. In expressing such scepticism, Obafemi Awolowo in 1947 holds that Nigeria is a mere geographical expression such that when one says “Nigerian” one is merely employing the term to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of the country and those who live without. Echoing this position of Awolowo is Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa’s view of 1948 that “Since 1914 the British government has been trying to make Nigeria into one country but the Nigerian people themselves are historically different in their backgrounds, in their religious beliefs and customs and do not show themselves any sign of willingness to unite… Nigeria’s unity is only a British invention” (Meredith, 2005:8). Thus, a major criticism against the amalgamation is that it was fundamentally the amalgamation of the administration of the North and South rather than being the amalgamation of the peoples of the North and South (Oluwatobi, 2018:36).

The mistake made during the creation of the Nigerian state, and in many African states, is that the consents of the federating units were not sought. As the force theory of the origin of the state postulates, the creation of most African states happened through the use of force. The problem with amalgamation is that it “did not convey the voluntary disposition of the people to co-commune. Thus, these societies had no common agreement on coexistence” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2012:8). The faulty foundation, on which Nigeria rests, has posed some challenges, one of which is that the allegiance that should come from a wilful entry into a social contract is lacking on the part of the people. This is partly the reason why people give allegiance to their ethnic groups over and above the state. Although, there was a political amalgamation in which the northern and the southern parts of Nigeria were merged in 1914, yet the country has not experienced the amalgamation of minds, which refers to the development of sensibilities about the Nigerian state on the part of every individual and group. The individuals in the various groups making up the Nigerian state have been merged physically or geographically but their minds, orientations, beliefs, and views about the Nigerian state are still worlds apart. Missing in the formation of the Nigerian state is the voluntary basis of association. And this is so because peoples of both Northern and Southern Protectorates, at the point of amalgamation, did not have the opportunity to sit together and determine the conditions under which they will cohabit.

Further exacerbating the perceived notion of social injustice in various parts of the country is the belief that the south is the beast of burden that financially funds the north since the north “has remained an economic parasite on the naturally endowed Southern Protectorate of Nigeria” (Obi Ani, Obi-Ani & Isiani 2016:27). For instance, there is the belief that a higher share of the oil revenue generated from the Niger Delta is allocated to states that are non-oil-producing. It is believed that the amalgamation was necessitated because the wealth of the southern protectorate was needed to relieve the cost of administering the northern part. This pattern has continued “with the mainly Christian inhabitants of the oil-producing southern areas bitterly resenting that the revenue from the oil drilled from their land is used to develop non-oil producing areas” (Siollun, 2009:2). Unfortunately, in addition to being regarded as the financial beast of burden, it is a general sentiment in the southern part of Nigeria that the north is the problem facing Nigeria- underaged marriage, the largest number of out of school children, insecurity in terms of insurgency and terrorism arising from religious fanaticism, in spite of the humongous investment that has been made on the north to improve it and even though the affairs of this country have been presided over by more northerners than southerners.

A major consequence of the social injustice arising from the amalgamation is the emergence of separatist groups seeking independence from the state that sometimes employ violent means to pursue their aims. Social injustice in the system led to agitation for resource control, insurgency, terrorism, banditry, agitation for secession, armed struggles against the state, ethno-religious crises, formation of ethnic and religious militias like Arewa Peoples Congress (APC), Odua Peoples Congress (OPC), Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), and Niger Delta Avenger (NDA), among others. These groups were formed as responses to frustrations, marginalisation, social and political alienation that some ethnic groups have had to endure for years.

The amalgamation was an amalgamation of unequals in terms of population size. The north consists of about three-quarters of Nigeria’s territory and contains more than half of the population (Obi Ani, Obi-Ani & Isiani 2016). This has continually posed a challenge to Nigeria’s democracy. The north, as a result of its overbearing population, occupies “a commanding position, with a potential stranglehold over the political process, capable of dominating the combined weight of the other two regions.” This situation has the potential of permanently placing some groups of persons consistently in the position of minority (Wiredu, 1996), unable to secure sufficient votes for their candidates to win in elections while the north can call the bluff of the others in having the majority of the votes.5 The problem in relation to the issue of unfavourable and uneven population is however not limited to the north. It is replicated throughout the federation as many minority groups groan under the overlording influence of major groups they share space with. In a lot of situations, for instance, members of the dominant ethnic group in an area usually control the spending by a state or a local government council. This, oftentimes, puts other ethnic minorities in that area at a disadvantage in terms of access to allocation (Frynas 2001).

While colonialism lasted, the 1914 amalgamation gave some challenges to the colonialists in the governance of the Nigerian state. This necessitated the enactment of at least five constitutions— 1914, 1922, 1946, 1951 and 1954. A vast number of the constitution-making efforts were directed at addressing issues arising from the management of actual and perceived crises arising from having people of diverse backgrounds sharing a state. A few years to independence, in the process of making the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, two conferences were held to address issues with governance structures of the country in London between 30th July and August 22, 1953, and Lagos in January 1954. Whereas these efforts of the colonial government were directed at addressing issues hindering the unity of Nigerians, yet, unfortunately, the policies of the colonial government were instrumental in further deepening the divisions among those they hope will find common grounds to live together. Supporting this is the view of Osuola and Muoh that:

The British administrative policies and other subsequent legislation were intended to perpetuate the individuality and separateness of the north and by extension national disintegration. The policies from the onset were contradictions in the British efforts at Nigeria’s amalgamation. The separation in administration was *ab initio* a conventional ‘divide and rule’ system of the British which only buttressed and stressed the differences in the ethnic groups. To this end, they succeeded and initiated the stagnation in the true unification of the country. The anomalies in the administrative policies of the British were apparent in the contraption and contradictions of constitutional developments in Nigeria as handed down by colonialism (Osuola and Muoh, 2015:81).

A major failure of most of the constitutions under the colonialist is the incapacitation of the north from active participation in politics and politicking with the southern protectorates. This itself became a source of tension between the south and the north (Osuola and Muoh, 2015). The social injustice inherent in this act of the colonial lord is evident in the lamentation of Sir Ahmadu Bello that “the Nigerian Legislative Council was first set up in 1922 and since that time, the South has been gaining the art of democratic government … thus … the South had twenty-five years start over the North in the application of parliamentary procedure” (Cited in Osuola and Muoh, 2015).

In the final analysis, amalgamation has bred a lot of insecurity. In the first place, the British administered the north and the south not as partners in state-building but rather as contenders. And independence from colonial rule has changed nothing about the north-south divide. This mentality got carried into post-colonial politics, with both sides seeing themselves as rivals, with attendant implications for security and peace in the country. An area where this was evident in the immediate post-colonial day is the military. Coup and counter-coups were fuelled by consideration for ethnic and religious differences. Second, given the condition of social injustice in the system, which the Nigerian state has done little or nothing to address, the wound keeps festering with the further consequence of hatred and aggression displayed towards the state, and on the other against members of other ethnic and religious groups. A consequence of this is the promotion of ethnic politics and primordial affiliations, with people finding refuge with their religious and ethnic groups rather than with the state. Likewise, the contest for the control of state institutions has resulted in violence especially when it comes to elections, which is a means of determining who presides over the affairs of the state. For instance, electoral violence surrounding the manipulation of the 1964 election contributed to the crash of the First Republic. Likewise,

electoral rigging in 1983 elections instigated by do-or-die winning attitude between the ruling party National Party of Nigeria (NPN) on one hand and the other parties notably Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) and Nigeria People’s Party (NPP) on the other hand caused another military uprising in December 1983. Electoral rigging in opposition states of Ondo, Oyo, Kwara, Imo and Anambra states by the ruling party (NPN) were met with armed confrontation with resultant killings, arson and destruction to property (Ajayi, 2007:327).

### Conclusion

In this paper, the attempt has been directed at evaluating how the amalgamation of the southern and northern protectorates of 1914 resulted in fault lines that introduced systemic social injustice into the Nigerian system that has resulted in security challenges as the amalgamation failed to lay a solid foundation for harmonious coexistence. The way forward is to return to the negotiation table. Oluwatobi (2018:35) makes a call for “a resolution among the federating units which must entail a renegotiation of the polity along with democratic principles.” This has to do with taking into consideration the various interests in Nigeria, with the aim of building a consensus of interests and opinions about the kind of state Nigerians want. What such negotiation will achieve is that it will help harvest the input of every group on the kind of state that they envision. Such inputs have the advantage that people help support what they believe that they have been instrumental in creating. A sense of having a stake in the polity is developed through this. Such renegotiation will ensure that “all parties are able to feel that an adequate account has been taken of their point of view in any proposed scheme of future actions or coexistence” (Wiredu, 1996:183). Indeed, this process has the capacity to addressing some of the pertinent problems of injustice that threaten the survival of the nation (Offor, 2014).

**Notes and References**

1. The process of amalgamation started in 1906 with the fusion of the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos and the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria which then became the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria.
2. This made the policy of indirect rule acceptable in the north, while the southern part contested it.
3. Muhamadu Buhari who was contesting as a presidential candidate on the platform of the All Progressives Congress is from the North and a Muslim and thus Bola Ahmed Tinubu, a southerner was considered unsuitable for the post of a vice president because he is a Muslim.
4. This slogan no doubt had implications beyond Sokoto to suggest that the north is the one vested with the right to rule.
5. The constitutional arrangement has mitigated this by requesting that candidates satisfy certain conditions of votes having national spread before they can be declared as the winner, yet the dominance of the north in terms of population and influence it bears on elections is still manifest.

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# Scourge of Ages: African Union’s Peace and Security Council (PSC) Interventions in Somalia and the Free Reign of Violence in Africa

## Oluwaseun BAMIDELE & Olusegun Oladele IDOWU

### Abstract

*For the draftsmen and composers of the African Union (AU), the organ of Peace and Security Council (PSC) is not only a clone of the Security Council of the United Nations; it is intended to give aggregate security and early-cautioning course of action against Africa's unlimited clashes and to encourage auspicious and proficient reaction. Also, the Constitutive Act and the Protocol on the PSC accommodate more vigorous engagement and significantly more noteworthy extension in examples of both between and intra-state clashes. Be that as it may, the intercessions of the PSC in some of Africa's auditoriums of contention have brought up central issues on how the organ plays out its triangular parts of contention anticipation, administration, and determination. With a unique spotlight on the Horn of Africa - the most unstable and seemingly a standout amongst the most hazardous districts on the planet, the paper expects to evaluate the difficulties confronting PSC mediation instruments, particularly the parts of the African Standby Force and its activities. The paper contends that the PSC must move past negligible talk of plan setting to more 'powerful or aggressive' engagement by fortifying its tasks. It at last backers’ proactive strategy choices on how its parts could be upgraded in the district.*

**Keywords:** Security, Peace, Conflict Resolution, Conflict Interventions.

### Introduction

The birth Africa Union (AU) was a noteworthy historic point in the landmass' mission for solidarity and advancement. In the meantime, it was considered a striking endeavour by African pioneers to truly redraw the guide of the mainland's security design. Comparably, Murithi sees the change of the previous Organization of African Unity (OAU) to AU as visionary and auspicious remembering the failure of the previous to defeat a portion of the emergencies of advancement and security (Vines, 2013).

While there is no disclaiming that three decades into freedom, Africa's emergency of improvement seems unending, and to summarize Ayittey in "tumult"(Warner, 2015). Surely, the episodes of unending outfitted clashes had artistically changed the mainland to a battlefield with complex philanthropic and formative emergencies. The commonness and complex nature of these contentions were not without colossal security and formative weight which may have educated the choice of African pioneers to diagram another guide for the landmass' socio-political and financial recharging. This acceptance is, however, not without a few verbal confrontations, while one can fight that the foundation of AU was because of the disappointment of the OAU, in actuality, another position expresses that OAU has supported its raison d'être on the decolonization plan and disassembling of politically-sanctioned racial segregation administration in South Africa. However, it neglected to gain significant ground in the zones of compromise and financial advancement. This is not detached from the sacredness of the provision of "state sway, non-obstruction in interior issues of individuals' states and regional honesty" embedded into its Charter under which numerous abominations were submitted (Marshall, 2014). These statements were extraordinarily observed as obstructions in the interventionist part of the association and to a great extent added to the association's inability to give a typical stage or system went for tending to the difficulties of contention and improvement.

The thought and birth of the AU was, to a great extent, educate by post-frosty war complex security emergency, globalization waves and the major worldwide change in the idea of contention intercession which has grasped the standard of appropriate to ensure evaded by the non-impedance statement (African Union, 2017). Along these lines, the landmass' paradigmatic move was not exclusively to react to the disappointment of OAU, yet to likewise fit in with the worldwide clash intercession component that would address the difficulties of the mainland's contemporary complex crises particularly in the territories of a new security emergency. As such, AU was shaped to react to Africa's different emergencies of contentions and improvement and worldwide patterns in peaceful settlements.

The position hence is that has the rise of AU changed the substance of contention mediations and improvement process in Africa? The inquiry is key to the body of this paper. Even though some would fight that the atmosphere of war and weakness seemed unabated in spite of the foundation of AU, this might be genuine particularly when one considers the contention reports in the landmass. For instance, it is accounted for that around thirty-eight for each penny of the world's equipped clashes are being battled in Africa, and in 2006, half of all high-force clashes were in Africa. Also, as indicated by Fabricius, the struggle is one of four 'traps' that keep the world's poorest nations poor and limit the world's 'last billion' individuals to the existence of neediness (Fabricius, 2007). The report of the African Union additionally bolsters this position; it uncovers that of the 59 noteworthy furnished clashes on the planet in the vicinity of 1990 and 2003, 18 were in Africa, the most astounding number for any area. What's more, this figure does exclude minor clashes in which under 1000 lives were lost (African Union, 2017).

To some degree, the report of the condition of contentions in Africa showed up startlingly right, however, to presume that the substance of contention intercession has not changed is only rather a mistake of judgment. As this study may demonstrate later, there have been some noteworthy changes in the contention’s mediation instrument since the rise of AU. Indeed, the African Union opines that AU has shown another feeling of reason and heading west for the advancement of peace, security and improvement (African Union, 2015). However, clashes in the Mano River district of West African nations of Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Cote d'Ivoire; the Great Lake area of Central African nations of Congo-Kinshasa, Congo-Brazzaville, Central African Republic, Rwanda and the Horn of African nations of Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda. Other minor clashes coming about because of (a constituent) popularity-based process had happened in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Madagascar and Nigeria have all in a way tested the advancement motivation of the mainland, extended to limit the ability and limit of AU establishments and scrutinized its administration component and reaction systems.

Nonetheless, of the considerable number of pockets of contentions in Africa, none has ever tested AU's ability other than the present clash in the Horn of Africa. The locale is unarguably the darkest spot in Africa's contentions, particularly the Somalia clashes which unexpectedly is the real thrust of this paper.

### AU and PSC: A Background

The obscuration of OAU was not sudden; it was evident and predicated on the groundbreaking reality of worldwide pattern and the want of the African pioneers to change the setback of contention and underdevelopment. This reality wound up glaring in the disappointment of OAU to oversee and react to clashes in Rwanda, Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Great Lake area, and all the more critically cause advancement. The implosion of assets clashes dug in neediness, HIV pandemic, immense obligation, compassionate emergency and vote based insecurities have effectively affected Africa pioneers minds to the degree that the requirement for perspective change for the landmass' advancement renaissance was basic. It was not astonishing accordingly when African pioneers met in Sirte, Libya in 1999, they consent to change OAU to AU for more prominent African solidarity and improvement. This was later merged in Lome, Togo in 2000 where AU constitutive act was drafted and marked (African Union,2008).

By the year 2002, in Durban, South Africa, AU was initiated. Abdullahi watches that two years after the fact, part states had moved from the printed material and sanction procedure to the dispatch of two key organs: The Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) (Abdullahi, 2009). While the two creators recognized that it took more time to go into constrain, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights setting up an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights was endorsed by numerous nations with the end goal for judges to be named and to start their work. The statutes for the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) was later endorsed by the Executive Council's and have subsequently started to work inside the system of the AU Commission (African Union. 2002).

Specifically, compelling in the AU constitutive act was the astuteness of the lawful crafters of AU to give intends to various systems to change the substance of contention mediations, which was drastically novel. Not at all like OAU that do not have the political self-discipline of intercession, the AU set up the organ of Peace and Security Council (PSC) displayed in accordance with the UN Security Council and enabled to go about as the standing basic leadership vehicle for the anticipation, administration and determination of contentions. Incorporated into its powers, the PSC, in conjunction with the executive of the Commission, may:

1. authorize the mounting and organization of peace bolster missions;
2. recommend to the Assembly mediation in a part state in regard of grave conditions, to be specific atrocities, genocide and wrongdoings against humankind;
3. institute sanctions at whatever point an unlawful difference in government happens;
4. implement the normal safeguard approach of the AU;
5. follow-up the advance towards the advancement of majority rule rehearses, great administration, the lead of law, assurance of human rights and crucial opportunities, regard for the sacredness of human life and worldwide compassionate law by part states;
6. support and encourage helpful activity in circumstances of furnished clashes or significant cataclysmic events (African Union, 2003).

Different structures of the PSC incorporate a board of five famous African identities (the Panel of the Wise) to take part in struggle aversion strategy; a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) to the caution of looming dangers to state security; and an African Standby Force (ASF)of peacekeepers to intercede when intervention comes up short. It is additionally expressed that both the Panel of the Wise and CEWS were intended to encourage and advance preventive discretion just couple with the AU Non-Aggression and Common Defense Pact affirms in Article 15 that states:

Gatherings associated with any question should first look for an answer by transaction, request, intercession, placation, discretion, legal settlement, or depend on provincial and mainland systems or game plans, or other serene means. As indicated by African Union in case of the disappointment of preventive tact, the PSC can approve or send ASF under a command of the UN, as peacekeepers in accordance with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. In particular terms, Article 13(1) of the PSC Protocol expresses that “the ASF 'might be made out of standby multidisciplinary contingents with regular citizen and military segments in their nations of beginning and prepared for quick arrangement at proper notice” (Cilliers, 2005).

The standby game plan is to be accomplished based on vows from part states and arrangements by Regional Economic Communities (RECs)/Regional Mechanisms (RMs) (Dersso, 2010).

To this end, part states recognize and reserve military, police and regular citizen workforce and forward their names and subtle elements to the REC or RM. Based on these promises each REC/RM raises and readies the provincial detachment and builds up the standby program.

Be that as it may, while on standby they do take an interest in different pre-organization exercises, including preparing and joint activities, which are sorted out all the time by each REC/RM to keep them arranged for sending. Another point spilling out of Article 13(1) is that the ASF is a multidimensional power (African Union. 2011b). They are set up for a multifaceted approach and expect capacities to address security and military perspectives, as well as the political, helpful, formative and legitimate/institutional measurements of the contentions. As needs be, as far as the Policy Framework, and in addition the guide for the operationalization of the ASF, it is made out of three parts, to be specific a military, police and non-military personnel segment. The ASF is sorted out into five local units:

1. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) detachment (SADCBRIG)
2. The East African Peace and Security Mechanism (EAPSM) 23 detachment, which is known as the Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG)
3. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) detachment (ECOBRIG)
4. The North African Regional Capability (NARC) detachment, which is known as the North African Standby Brigade (NASBRIG)
5. The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) detachment (ECCASBRIG), or Multinational Force of Central Africa (FOMAC) (Ettang, 2011).

As indicated by the first arrangement set out in Roadmap I, each REC/RM ought to set up a little full-time arranging component, a detachment central station, and swore detachment units (International Colloquium Report, 2012). The arranging component is in charge of raising and keeping up the vowed units, building up the police and non-military personnel lists and making the fundamental courses of action for the organization. It is additionally imagined that each REC/RM should get ready, by 2010, a capacity comprising of military, police and regular citizen components of around 5 000 workforces. This implies the general size of the ASF will have an ability of between 25 000 and 30 000 (Ndiho, 2010).

The AU's PSC, ASF, CEWS and Panel of the Wise denoted a radical flight in the mainland's contention anticipation, administration and determination instrument. Also, inside five years into its foundation, the PSC has made a few mediations in African clashes, some of these intercessions incorporate; the AU's 2003 peace task in Burundi (AMIB), the AU's main goal in Sudan (AMIS) and the AU's central goal in Somalia (AMISON). Of these intercessions, the contention in Somalia is the significant focal point of this study. It is the enthusiasm of this paper to fundamentally inspect the PSC parts in Somalia with the point of pointing out the lacuna in the PSC's methodologies and pushing a more down to earth and aggressive interventionist way to deal with the contention.

### The Horn of Africa Conflict

The contentions in the Horn of Africa emerge. Seemingly, viewed as the most hazardous and uncertain district in Africa. It contends positively with Iraq and Afghanistan on the decoration table of the world's hazardous districts. The district includes nations of Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda and Djibouti and the histories of these nations are not without viciousness and clashes. Starting with Djibouti which appreciates relative peace, the February 2000 Paris peace assertion came to between the administration and a radical AFAR FRUD group finished the seven years of guerrilla battling and put the Djibouti country on the way of peace (Nhara, 1996).

For different nations in the locale, the struggle has been a repeating decimal. From low force to high power clashes, Kenya had delighted in four many years of relative peace' damaged by pockets of sporadic ancestral conflicts, arrive question, and so on yet insufficient to toss the country into real calamity. Be that as it may, the 2007 general decision remained the darkest piece of the Kenyan countryside. The result of the race came about to monstrous between ethnic clash with over a thousand people passing and 250,000 individuals inside uprooted (Ngwane, 2010). Peace was however facilitated by Kofi Annan drove aggregate bringing about power-sharing course of action which has been tested by rehashed emergency. In any case, Kenya had all the earmarks of being headed straight toward peace however more should be done particularly on the current constitution survey that would advance the procedure of country building.

Uganda on the other had pursued a 21 year of common war between the legislature of President Museveni and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Shockingly, not even the marking of the August 2006 peace ceasefire between the legislature and LRA offer seek after peace. The peace talks held in Juba have brought about a stalemate making trust in perpetual peace in Uganda a deception than a reality (Pavšic, 2013). For Ethiopia and Eritrea, once in the past one country and now most outstanding foe, these states have been in the never-ending fringe struggle since Eritrea was conceded freedom from Ethiopia in 1991. They have battled two wicked wars, the first amid the season of Eritrea's autonomy and in 1998 after Eritrea's claim to Badme arrive, and the second in the year 2002, around the season of the depiction of the fringe between the two nations by the United Nations Commission (Rupesinghe and Kuroda 1992). One would have anticipated that the two nations would sheath their sword yet their animosity is additionally extended with supposedly bolster given to various sides of the Somalia struggle. The connection between the two nations stays best case scenario suspicious tens. They are additionally deliberately connected to perpetual peace in the Horn of Africa.

The circumstance in Sudan is an additional standard instance of a country in the ceaseless clash. Having battled a common clash for a considerable length of time, the on-going clash in Darfur ought to be, best case scenario a subject of another enormous level headed discussion which this study may not centre. The additional common instance of Somalia strife is quite compelling and as expressed before, this paper will particularly centre around the contention with the point of looking at the PSC intercession and to propose approach alternatives that could reinforce the activities (Sene, 2011).

### Somalia’s Complex Web of Conflict: Background

Somalia's contention is grave and the security report is startling. Similarly, as Sene opines, Somalia is on street to damnation (Sene, 2011). To be sure, since the removing of Siad Barre administration of malice, Somalia stays in contemporary Africa a fallen and fizzled state. Against the foundation that Somalia country ought to be a model of African solidarity in view of its homogeneity and solid society, with one ethnic gathering of overwhelming Muslim confidence, the circumstance is totally switching. Somalia is strongly partitioned and spellbound along with family legislative issues. Be that as it may, where did Somalia miss the point? Sene gives a memorable foundation into how the Somalia calamity starts, he opines: The flow basic the crumple of the Somali state can be followed to the procedure of autonomy, ensuing social, monetary and political improvements, and Somalia association with the two superpowers, the USSR and the USA, amid the frosty war time… preceding colonialization, the Somali land did not share a solitary political substance (Sene, 2011). Social association depended on migrant pastoralism with a decentralized majority rules system because of complex connections between groups, sub-tribes and families. Toward the finish of the nineteenth century, the provincial forces separated the Somalia individuals into five particular units: cote Francaise des Somalis (now the Republic of Djibouti); the Ogaden region of Ethiopia; Somalia Italia; British Somaliland; and the Northern Frontier of District of Kenya (Sturman and Hayatou 2010).

From the above, it is glaring that the pioneer history of Somalia contributed enormously to the governmental issues of faction polarization. The self-assertive and shameful outskirt outline which bolted numerous Somalis outside the fringes of the Somali Republic was the main thrust for strife. Appropriately, this to a specific degree laid the rearing ground for irredentist developments which started to show as far back as the 1969 overthrow that conveyed Said Barre to control (Dersso, 2010). To confuse the issue was Barre's icy war legislative issues of affiliation and animosity. His plan to receive communist changes combined with its nearby relationship with the socialist USSR and its desire to add the Ogaden area in 1977 was considered as the 'weaponisation and conflictisation' procedure of the Horn of Africa. Its disappointment subsequently places Somalia in a ceaseless showdown with Ethiopia (Engel and Gomes, 2009). Barre was later to cast off the USSR and court the US which brought about inner dissatisfaction. This was later to prompt an endeavoured overthrow of 1978 which later show in guerilla development. The development of the Somalia Salvation Front (SSF), which, in 1984, turned into the Somalia Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) was the start of irredentist and close-knit developments. The ensuing rise of the Somali National Movement (SNM), the Somali Patriotic Front (SPF) and the United Somali Congress (USC) was later to put Somalia country on the way to insurgency (Badmus, 2015). These guerilla developments as indicated by Koko were based on the iron law of faction legacy as these gatherings depended intensely on one noteworthy group or a coalition of a few minor tribes for help and enlistment.

In 1991, the Somali country at long last buckled under to its irredentist developments, Said Barre was expelled by these warring gatherings. It prompted gigantic turmoil and the circumstance has since worsened to a significant global clash with more than one hundred and fifty thousand passing’s and one million, four hundred thousand individuals confronting a philanthropic crisis and more than one million dislodged (Badmus, 2014). Not even the mediation of the US in the early piece of 1992-94 could put Somalia on the way of peace. In any case, Djibouti's Guelleh activity of 2000 was to give the system a serene answer for the Somalia issue. Occurring inside the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) structure, with help from OAU/AU and UN, it thought of transitional get-together and Transitional National Government (TNG) (Aning and Atuobi, 2011). Resistance from some piece of Somaliland and Puntland debilitated this procedure. By October 2002, Aning and Atuobi (2011) opine that 21 warring groups had consented to a truce arrangement with TNG to the end of threats. In January 2004, another peace exertion at Nairobi (Kenya) brought forth a 91member Transitional Federal Government (TFG) which included distinctive groups, warlords, and factions’ masters (Adebajo, 2011). These endeavours might not have created the genuinely necessary peace for Somalia country however they were a sure reaction to a setup rebellion.

Late developments of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) in the mid-year of 2006, the Al-Shabaab radical Islamic gathering, and the consequent intercession of outer powers have additionally captivated and extended the contention in Somalia. With UIC and Al-Shabaab asserting association to al-Qaeda arrange, the Islamisation and developing system of Islamism and Muslim fundamentalism has added another measurement to the contention. Combined with restored and more advanced theft on the Somalia water of Gulf of Aden an immediate result of the crumple of honest to goodness government, the rebellion in Somalia has encouraged been internationalized.

Correspondingly, the mediation of Ethiopia's military in December 2006 with help of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), has likewise evoked responses from other universal performers in the contention, especially Eritrea (Adebajo, 2011). The TFG with the assistance of the Ethiopian powers supported by the US has since driven UIC out of Mogadishu, of which they had taken control in June 2006 (Adebajo, 2011). Subsequently, the TFG has possessed the capacity to begin reasserting its power. In any case, the circumstance in Somalia stays unpredictable. Strains stay high between the TFG and Al-Shabaab, a more radical gathering that has not shrouded its alliance to al-Qaeda fear-based oppressor gathering, remainders of the UIC and between various Somali tribes (Aning and Atuobi, 2011). This keeps on debilitating and potentially blocks the accomplishment of long-haul solidness in the nation and, in addition, the locale as an entirety.

### AU’s PSC Intervention

The intense takeoff from the OAU struggle intercession component has been depicted before as visionary and auspicious. It is likewise exemplary. In any case, the possible redrawing of African security design and the part of PSC has not come without its traps. To completely fathom this, it is basic to inspect the PSC intercession component in its present shape in Somalia.

### The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM): Challenges and Prospects

Following a few peace endeavours and rehashed upheaval of contention in Somalia, in January 2007, Africa pioneers in the new soul of obligation to ensure and in agreement to the Article 4 of the PSC Constitutive Act embraced the demand of part conditions of the IGAD to convey an African mission to Somalia. The order was initially given a half year which has now been recharged for a time of a year, starting from 17 January 2010 which is yet to be approved by the UN Security Council. The goal of the mission was to offer help for TFG in their exertion towards adjustment of contention and promotion of exchange and compromise, to encourage the arrangement of philanthropic help and to make conditions helpful for long haul adjustment, remaking and advancement in Somalia. The mission was likewise commanded the accompanying errands:

1. support exchange and compromise, working with all partners;
2. provide, as proper to TFG and their key framework to empower them to complete their capacities;
3. assist in actualizing the National Security and adjustment Plan (NSSP), especially the restoration and preparing of Somalia security powers;
4. gives, inside limits and as suitable, specialized and other help to the demobilization and adjustment endeavours;
5. Monitor, in zones of organization the security circumstance;
6. Facilitate, as might be required and inside the repatriation and reintegration of evacuees and the resettlement of IDPs and;
7. Protect its workforce, establishments and hardware, including the privilege to self-protection (African Union, 2015).

The command, as per Batware showed up aggressive as well as lacking as it was noiseless on the security of regular citizens (Batware, 2011). These authors set that the inadequacy of the command influenced the tasks of AMISON in managing human rights to manhandle executed by soldiers.

Accordingly, it is related to ask how AMISOM has fared in Somalia. On display, the circumstance is intricate however under control. The arrangement of AMISIOM that supplanted the Ethiopian powers has as there is expected that there are excessively numerous clashing interests and minimal political will among warring gatherings and outside on-screen characters to apply adequate impact to balance out Somalia. This is strengthened by some contention that there is no peace to keep but instead peace to be authorized. Nonetheless, since the organization of troops, the mission has accomplished one of its goals, in any event, in terms of the assurance of TFG. All things considered; the mission has likewise been tormented with numerous issues which have kept it from accomplishing its full order.

### The Challenge of Troop and Funding:

One of the significant difficulties of peace bolster activities in Africa is the issues of troops and subsidizing. The AU mission in Somalia is not protected from this issue. To begin with, there is an issue of raising troops to date. AMISOM was to comprise of both military and regular citizen segments adding up to 8 000 peacekeepers. Shockingly, Uganda contributed around 1 600 troops, Burundi offered 1 600 additionally, Nigeria conferred 850 troops and Ghana 350 troops (Cunnings, 2016). South Africa reneged on its responsibility regarding troops. Such duties, be that as it may, miss the mark concerning the 8000 troops required (Englebert, Dunn, and Kevin, 2013). Be that as it may, how PSC could beat the issue of troops for its tranquillity activities due to the repeating situation. This leads us to the possibility of ASF which seemed great yet requires overhauling and optimizing. ASF is imagined to give standby power to future peace activities. The issue of five provincial units that constitute ASF shows up exceptionally vainglorious and may likely hamper its productivity (African Union, 2004). As is presently just a single of the units seemed to have been formalized, others are yet to come to fruition.

Numerous authors have recognized to issues of subsidizing as a noteworthy issue in peacekeeping over the globe. For the AU mission in Somalia, Cunnings (2016) opines that the most recalcitrant test has been the financing of the mission and associated with this is how to raise support for the activities. There is presumably that the achievement and disappointment of peace mediations depend generally on numerous variables in which financing can't be consigned. Raising troops might be an issue yet subsidizing the one raised could be riskier. While numerous trust the possibility of PSC, ASF and Panel of the Wise is novel and admirable, the issue of subsidizing stays extremely overwhelming to the accomplishment of any peace mediation. The African Union Peace and Security Council appraise that an anticipated mission of 8 000 troops in Somalia would cost 160 million US dollars for a half year sending (Englebert, Dunn, and Kevin, 2013). In light of figuring made when the PSC was set up, just six for every penny of the AU spending plan (some US$3 million) can be normal as ASF coordinate money related duties from commitments by AU part states. The rest, as per Kent and Malan is liable to raising support and source from Peace Fund. Incomparable way, the agent leader of the US European Command, General 'Kip' Ward, noticed that; ASF as far as subsidizing is excessively yearning and should have been reasonably pruned to earn bolster from untouchables.

Likewise, Englebert, Dunn, and Kevin, (2013) offer a near examination into the cost ramifications of peacekeeping powers. He expresses that 17 000 or more powers in the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC) cost a normal of almost US$750 million every year to keep up. At the point when parts of police and non-military personnel counsellors are included, that mission requires a little finished a billion US dollars a year (Warner, 2015). At the point when seen against AU's financial plan raised from memberships paid by part expresses, the aggregate being simply finished US$50 million every year, in which not all individuals pay their responsibilities, at that point, AU cannot finance peace task without coming about to outside help (Vines, 2013). A noteworthy segment of the AU peacekeeping assets is in this manner raised under the sponsorship of the Peace Fund, created from gifts by very much arranged nations.

### The Challenge of Regionalization and Internationalization of the Conflict:

There are two measurements to the contention in both Somalia. One measurement is the local association of neighbouring African conditions of Ethiopia and Eritrea both individuals from the AU, whose mediations have spellbound instead of settling the contention, the second is the contribution of Al Qaeda psychological oppressor amass spoke to by the Union of Islamic Council (UIC), Al Shabaab, and the US. While the mediations of the initial two states ought not to be improved to a want to wage an intermediary war or for a mission for local mastery, there are authentic associations and duty to secure (R2P) (Batware, 2011). Ethiopia, which was extremely reluctant to mediate militarily in Somalia, however, did as such as a result of a few reasons that incorporate; delays in the arrangement of an African peacekeeping power in Somalia caused by an absence of assets and the late lifting of the arms ban; the danger postured by UIC and of late Al Shabaab radical Islamic gathering which had collected at the edges of Baidoa to the TFG structure; and what's more, the circumstance in Somalia represented an undeniable inside security hazard to Ethiopia. The UIC had in reality welcomed the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), a gathering that undermines Ethiopia's solidarity and steadiness, to battle with them against the TFG. By doing this, the OLF wanted to later have the capacity to utilize Somalia as a springboard for its battle against the administration in Addis (Abdullahi, 2009). The UIC had additionally put forth different open expressions declaring its help for the OLF. The Ethiopian government in this manner had each motivation to expect that an antagonistic government in Mogadishu would likewise bolster the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the Union Western Somalia Liberation Front (UWSLF) that get asylum and support from Somalia. It was hence basic that Ethiopia has each privilege to avert hostility from these gatherings.

The regionalization measurement of the contention is no uncertainty associated with the self-assertive outline of the frontier region that put the Ogaden Somalia in Ethiopia. Ethiopia justifiably has each motivation to advocate the TFG, which does not support the forceful arrangement. Furthermore, the UIC has at different circumstances made proclamations such that, as a fundamentalist religious gathering, they were occupied with additionally extending their impact in the area past their fringes to incorporate parts of Kenya and Ethiopia. The other two extra factors ought to be considered when endeavouring to comprehend the territorial measurements of the contention. To start with, following Eritrea's freedom, Ethiopia turned into a landlocked nation. As of now, it depends for the most part on Djibouti as its outlet to the ocean while in the meantime attempting to investigate different alternatives, including Somalia and Kenya. Control of Somalia by the UIC in this manner represents an extra danger to Ethiopia, as it won't have the capacity to utilize Somalia's coastline, winding up significantly more powerless and subject to Djibouti.

### The Threat of Terrorism and Piracy: The US and European Union (EU) Involvements

The other measurement of the internationalization of the contention is the war against fear-based oppression which the US has kept on pursuing past its shore and the need to battle theft which the EU have demonstrated intrigue. The psychological militant risk radiating from Somalia and Sudan cannot be thought little of. In 1998, there was a planned and almost concurrent psychological militant bombarding of the United States international safe havens in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, slaughtering around 250 individuals and injuring over 5500 others (African Report, 2014). The US reacted with airstrikes focusing on a synthetic production line in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, which the US guaranteed was connected to an al-Qaeda gathering (Harmon, 2014). As of late, there have been suicides bombings of AMISON headquarter in Somalia, a death endeavour on President Yusuf's life on eighteenth September 2006, endeavours on the lives of individuals from the TFG Parliament, the death of an Italian Catholic Nun in September 2006, and the death outside a mosque of Somalia Minister Abdallah Deerow Isaq July 2006. Also, were remote jihadists selected into Somalia, as well as Osama receptacle Laden's Deputy, Ayman al-Zawahari, approached Islamists worldwide to participate in a battle against the Somali government and its Ethiopian partners (Freedom House, 2013).

The exercises of the privateer in the Gulf of Aden have added an outer measurement to the contention. The Gulf of Aden water is deliberately situated as a noteworthy portal for a business ship to Europe and Asia. Be that as it may, the crumple of genuine government, invasion of little arms, destitution and general fall of peace in Somalia has influenced the Gulf of Aden to water the most hazardous on the planet. This has advanced the way of life of robbery and ransom expense. The force of the theft has pulled in the considerations of the EU nations that have been influenced significantly and have been strategically drawn into the shred of remote performing artists in Somalia strife (Harmon, 2014). Although their intercessions have been constrained to maritime watch of the ocean and offering strategic help to the TFG and AU mission in Somalia, they have been attempting to put a legislature that could ensure peace and lessen theft in the district.

The other measurement of the contention in Somalia is apparent against Muslim feeling that radiates from Ethiopian and US joint effort contribution. For the Muslim people group and Al Shabaab gathering, the association of these countries was viewed as a master Christian war against Islamic confidence. This position is no uncertainty half-baked and insignificant publicity. The legislature of Ethiopia supports its contribution in ensuring its national security and for the dread of been landlocked with threatening neighbours. For America, its inclusion was predicated on three strategic objectives: to evacuate the fear-based oppressor danger existent in Somalia and guarantee against Somalia's cannot fill in as a base; to keep improvements in Somalia from undermining local peace and strength; and, to conquer the long-haul administration challenges that psychological oppressors and privateer adventure to make Somalia their base (Walker, 2016). In reality, if the Al-Shabaab radical Islamic gathering was to be considered important, their open statement of individuals from Al Qaeda organize can't be taken with a half quart of salt. The dread of the gathering over running TFG along these lines requires universal coordinated exertion or else Somalia could too be a reproducing ground for psychological militants which likewise forecast peril for the landmass (Harmon, 2014).

### Eritrea, Ethiopia and Kenyan Connection

In light of every one of these components, Eritrea is probably going to be the one exploiting the circumstance in Somalia, which in actuality represents no immediate danger to its national security, trying to debilitate its long-term adversary, Ethiopia. The administration of Eritrea has made a minimal mystery of its help to the UIC and potentially Al Shabaab radical Islamic gathering. As indicated by a 2006 UN Report, discretionary powers assess 6,000 to 8,000 Ethiopian and 2,000 Eritrea troops in Somalia that back and bolster their particular partners (Batware, 2011). The nearness of such troops is probably going to bring more arms into a nation that is as of now weaponized. Additionally, the inflow and surge of arms will heighten the security circumstance of the area which is now showing in the robbery exercises.

While the slowed down Ethiopia-Eritrea peace process could have made some positive commitment to security and strength in the area as the two countries are dynamic in the contention, the peace procedure should be revised to make an essential condition for peace in the locale. A change in relations between the two nations would have prompted expanded coordinated effort inside the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which thusly would have aided the adjustment of the area. Lamentably, the peace procedure is interwoven with agitated political change and developing dictatorship in the two nations. The present improvements have suggestions for the Greater Horn of Africa and represent a danger to worldwide peace and security.

Be that as it may, late appropriation by the United Nations Security Council, of determination 1907(2009), which forces endorses on Eritrea, in particular arms ban and travel limitations on and a stop on the advantages of its political and military pioneers for, among others, giving political, money related and calculated help to furnished gatherings occupied with undermining peace and compromise in Somalia and provincial steadiness is much welcome (Ndiho, 2010). There is a requirement for PSC to centre around Kenya point of contention. Late disclosure that Kenya is currently a noteworthy base for the Al-Shabaab enlistment and subsidizing ought not to be disapproved. The report expresses that Kenya's permeable outskirts, careless security and degenerate officialdom keep on making it an intermediary theatre for the perplexing clashes in neighbouring stateless Somalia. The report additionally expresses; the nation is a noteworthy base for Islamist bunches doing combating Somalia's TFG and around 2 500 youth have been prepared or enrolled from inside Somalia and Kenya’s Dadaab displaced person camp.

### Lack of Commitment of AU Member states:

One of the significant issues of contention intercessions in Africa is the absence of responsibility and partitioned enthusiasm of AU part states. Ndiho, (2010) in his examination of AMISON parts catches this when he opines; African pioneers have not possessed the capacity to respect their dedication by activity. This he repeats that the TFG's is the main lifesaver for peace in Somalia and the best way to secure philanthropic mediations however the mission has been tormented by the absence of responsibility from part states for financing and troops (Marshall, 2014). Specifically, he states that AMISOM over the most recent three years of its reality been overpowered by strategic, money related and security challenges. Thusly, he sets that the requirement for part states to coordinate their pledge with activity is basic to make the mission a win. Thus, the PSC report draws the consideration of all partners in Somalia, including the worldwide group, to the importance of 2010 in the transitional procedure of Somalia (Dersso, 2010). In such manner, the PSC approaches the Member States and the universal group to exhibit an expanded level of responsibility regarding the general peace process, by supporting the usage of alternate segments of the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC), specifically the arrangement and lead of free and reasonable general decisions (Badmus, 2015). The committee additionally approaches the TFG to indicate more noteworthy inclusion in guaranteeing a more secured condition that will encourage the full usage of the transitional course of action.

### Conclusion

As the Somalia struggle keeps on producing weight, the PSC in its dispatch issues as of late prescribed that; bolsters must be given to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia and its endeavors towards the execution of the Djibouti Peace Process, including the means taken to contact every single Somali partner willing to repudiate viciousness and seek after the way of exchange and compromise; Council repeats the requirement for upgraded coordination between the AU, IGAD and the United Nations for more viable help to the TFG and the peace and compromise process in Somalia; Council emphasizes its call to the United Nations Security Council to make the important strides for the UN to assume a part equivalent with the gravity and unpredictability of the circumstance on the ground, including through the change of AMISOM into an UN peacekeeping task and the setting up of all other legitimate, budgetary, strategic and operational game plans that could unequivocally improve the adequacy of the activity by the worldwide group in Somalia.

The focal issue in this manner is how has the AU's PSC intercession tolls in Somalia and how might be moved forward? The response to this inquiry doesn't involve guess. What is clear is that AU's PSC has formulated another component to struggle intercession. Five years into its exercises have seen its foundations and structures developing and managing. For instance, the thoughts of African standby power (ASF), Panel of the shrewd and Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) were intended to graph another course in African peaceful settlements, these ideas are late advancement in African security design. In any case, one needs to offer a proposal here, especially on ASF. As prior stated, the idea of ASF is excellent, novel and convenient. Its objective was to give a power order to the AU peace mission in any piece of Africa where there are clashes. Be that as it may, the repeating question is the reason five local units when one can't be completely settled? This hazardous is additionally showed in the disappointment of the provincial units to take off. Maybe, of the five provincial detachments proposed just the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) unit (ECOBRIG) has been formalized. The fact of the matter being made here is the ASF has it is outlined has far to go, its procedure of activity as far as coordination of commitments, enrollment, dialect and equipping are still extremely dangerous. It is the sentiment of this essayist that instead of having five local units, the possibility of a solid brought together order ought to be received to be situated in one vital nation to diminish the issues of co-appointment and different coordination’s. This is driven by the rationale of solidarity that is simply the ideological base of AU. While these authors perceive the irreconcilable circumstance among states in Africa concerning who summons and controls the order it is essential the general enthusiasm of the landmass ought to be vital. The possibility of turn summons structure can be embraced to relieve the dread of strength by one major rich state.

The second piece of the inquiry is by what method would Somalia be able to be safeguarded from the way of demolition? Is AMISOM the appropriate response? Actually, the intercession of PSC might not have put a conclusion to the contention in Somalia yet it has surely realized 'hot peace' and adjustment of TFG. Regardless of rehashed dangers and conceivable invade of the TFG government by UIC and Al Shabaab radical Islamic gathering, AMISOM has possessed the capacity to manage TFG. Yet, more should be possible particularly in embracing a coordinated approach that would include a worldwide group.

If AMISOM is given the required devices regarding strategic and troop surging it could go far to put a conclusion to the contention. The way that the mission has kept up relative dependability in Somalia is admirable. AMISON needs subsidizing and troops. It likewise needs coordinated effort with remote accomplices as PSC emphasizes in its dispatch that calls the United Nations Security Council to make the important strides for the UN to assume a part similar with the gravity and multifaceted nature of the circumstance on the ground, including through the change of AMISOM into a UN peacekeeping activity and the setting up of all other legitimate, budgetary, strategic and operational plans that could conclusively upgrade the viability of the activity by the universal group in Somalia. The UN-AU half and half power can be reached out to the outskirts of Somalia state. While numerous have campaigned to haul out of outer powers in Somalia, the AU powers appreciate relative worthiness and authenticity. In the last investigation, a tranquil Somalia will go far to reestablish the steadiness of the Horn of Africa.

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# United States Withdrawal from Iran’s Nuclear Deal: Implications for Global Peace and Security in the 21st Century

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### Abstract

*The United States withdrawal from the Iranian nuclear deal better known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2018 was one of the biggest and most controversial foreign policy decisions made by the Donald Trump Presidency. Since America withdrew from the JCPOA, tensions between the United States and Iran have risen steadily and reached a boiling point in recent months, sparking fears of war. It is within this context that this paper examines the implications of America withdrawal from the nuclear deal for global peace and security in the 21st century. The study adopted a qualitative research method that is descriptive and explanatory. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews while secondary data were obtained from books and other sources. The study leveraged the liberalist and realist theories to explain America withdrawal from the nuclear deal and the Iranian response. Findings revealed that the United States withdrawal from the nuclear deal has worsened relations between Washington and Tehran given the escalating tension between the two countries especially with the killing of a top Iranian General by the United States in January 2020. The paper, therefore, recommends a renewed round of talks among parties to the JCPOA to address the contentious issues in the deal.*

**Keywords:** Nuclear Deal, Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Foreign Policy, International Atomic Energy Agency, United Nations Security Council, Rogue State.

### Introduction

The United States has had relations with Iran ever since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. However, American Christian missionaries have been in Iran even longer than that. But the United States significant engagement with Iran dates back to World War II. The relationship was generally cordial before then but was first punctured by the involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in the coup d’état of 1953 which overthrew popular Prime Minister Mohammed Mosaddegh, and later by the Islamic Revolution of 1979 which brought in the Ayatollah theocratic leadership. These events led to the demise of cordial relations between the two countries so much more that Iran labelled the United States as the “Great Satan” and the Bush administration labelling Iran a member of an “Axis of Evil” (Bush, 2002).

As Saul Bakhash noted, the United States-Iranian relationship was similar to the United States-Saudi Arabia relationship in which the United States related to one ruling family. In Iran, the United States established relations with Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi who ascended the throne in 1941 and ruled for almost four decades. From the American side, the interest in Iran was due in large part to the country’s strategic location between the Arabian Gulf and the Soviet Union. Iran was also important because of its oil wealth. The United States considered Iran during the Cold War as a potential ally against the Soviet Union. As Bakhash argued, as Iran grew wealthier from oil revenues, it increasingly became a market for USA goods, arms, industrial equipment, technology and investments. During the oil boom years of the early 1970s, Iran hired the services of American technicians, advisers, specialists to handle critical sectors of the country’s economy. (Bakhash, 2009).

In 1953, acting under the orders of President Eisenhower the CIA organized a military coup that overthrew Iran’s democratically elected Prime Minister, Mohammed Mosaddegh. The coup was described as “a crucial turning point both in Iran’s modern history and in US-Iran relations” Bakhash (2009:25). As of the time of writing this paper, there are no formal diplomatic relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America. Iranian citizens have been banned from entering the United States due to the implementation of President Donald Trump’s executive order titled “Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States.” In addition, the United States issued additional sanctions against Iran, “the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism” on February 3, 2017. Grobe (2017).

As Iran advances its nuclear programme and trains proxy forces throughout the Middle East, the potential for conflict continues to increase*.* Iran has pursued a nuclear programme since 1957, with varying degrees of success. By the late 1980s during the brutal war with Iraq, Iran decided to develop nuclear weapons to ensure its security. Consequently, Iran pursued nuclear agreements with China and Russia throughout the 1990s to support its ongoing research into the development of nuclear weapons. Under growing scrutiny and international pressure between 2003-2004, Iran agreed to terminate its nuclear weapons programme insisting only that it maintains its nuclear centrifuges for nuclear energy. However, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) discovered and exposed that Iran had plans to manufacture nuclear weapons.

Later in 2003, a coalition of countries known as the P5+1 (The United States, China, France, Germany, Russia, and the United Kingdom) began a series of negotiations to contain Iran’s nuclear programme and prevent the development of nuclear weapons. To encourage Iran to cease uranium enrichment and come to the negotiating table, the United Nations Security Council imposed economic sanctions on Iran in 2006. The sanctions resulted in twenty per cent domestic unemployment and a severe contraction of Iran’s gross domestic product, which in part enabled Hassan Rouhani to win Iran’s presidential election in 2013 because he campaigned on promises to lift sanctions and restore the economy.

Over the next two years, the United States convened several rounds of bilateral talks and led the P5+1 in negotiations with Iran, which resulted in an official agreement on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2015. Once the key parties had signed the agreement, the United Nations Security Council approved resolution 2231, which paved the way for sanctions relief. The JCPOA requires Iran to reduce its stockpile of enriched uranium by 98% for fifteen years, cut the number of operating centrifuges by two-thirds for ten years, and provide International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors access to enrichment facilities within twenty-four days if the IAEA suspects violations. Moreover, if the IAEA confirms violations, the JCPOA allows for the immediate reinstatement of sanctions. After the JCPOA entered into force on January 16, 2016, Iran received sanctions relief that totalled nearly $100 billion (Takeyh, 2019).

Though Iran’s nuclear ambitions were restricted by JCPOA, Iran has continued to develop ballistic missiles which according to the United States violates United Nations resolution 2231. In response, the United States continues to impose sanctions on Iran’s ballistic missile program because it considers Iran to be a foremost state sponsor of terrorism spending more than one billion dollars on terrorist financing annually. Because the JCPOA only addressed Iran’s nuclear programme and not its revisionism or ballistic missile programs, the Trump administration asserted that the agreement was a stopgap. Thus, in May 2018, President Trump withdrew the United States from the JCPOA, pledging to seek a more comprehensive deal. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo subsequently issued twelve requirements for a new agreement, which Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei responded to by proposing seven conditions for remaining in the JCPOA. Since May 2018, America has re-imposed and raised new sanctions against Iran and demanded that European countries withdraw from the JCPOA as part of the new containment strategy. France, Germany, and the United Kingdom refused to do so, and have since attempted to devise a backchannel for trade with Iran; America responded by threatening European allies and European companies with consequences should they continue to do, business with Iran. Iran’s oil exports have since decreased by more than half. United States sanctions have sparked the worst economic crisis Iran has faced in forty years and emboldened Iranian hardliners (Gordon, 2020, p.40).

Since the United States withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in May 2018, tensions have risen between the United States and Iran. While America pursues a strategy of maximum pressure to bring Iran to the negotiating table, Iran has begun to contravene the JCPOA’s restrictions on its nuclear programme. In April 2019, the United States designated Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) a terrorist organisation which happens to be the first time the United States classified part of another government as such. In May 2019, after intelligence suggested that Iran and its militias were preparing to attack U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria, the United States deployed B-52 nuclear-capable bombers, an aircraft carrier strike group, and additional patriot missile batteries to the Middle East to deter Iran. The same week, Iran announced a sixty-day deadline for sanctions relief before exceeding the JCPOA’s cap on uranium enrichment levels and later threatened to exceed uranium stockpile limits. Also, in May 2019, following a rocket attack on Baghdad’s Green Zone in Iraq which U.S. defence officials blamed on Iran, nonemergency U.S. government employees were evacuated from Iraq. Over the next month, six oil tankers in or near the Strait of Hormuz were attacked, which U.S. government officials have also blamed on Iran, and the United States deployed an additional 2,500 troops to the Middle East. Escalating military tension has been matched by increasingly bellicose rhetoric from government officials. In June, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif warned that the United States “cannot expect to stay safe”, and President Trump cautioned that there’s “always a chance” of war with Iran. Gordon (2020).

Tensions peaked in late June 2019 after Iran downed a U.S. Global Hawk drone in the Strait of Hormuz. In response President Trump approved and quickly cancelled a retaliatory strike, instead, he ordered a cyber-attack on the IRGC and Iran’s missile systems and imposing new sanctions on Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and top Iranian military commanders. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and other U.S. government officials briefed Congress on Iran’s ties with al-Qaeda, raising concerns from Congressional leadership that President Trump would approve war with Iran by citing the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force, which grants the president authority to target al-Qaeda and countries supporting the group. On July 1, 2019, Iran exceeded the JCPOA’s cap on uranium stockpiles. Later in July, the United States downed an Iranian drone in the Strait of Hormuz after the drone approached a U.S. Navy ship. United States withdrawal from the nuclear deal will allow Iran to leave the deal and revitalize its nuclear programme, thus unleashing a nuclear arms race in the Middle East with unpredictable and dangerous consequences. The crisis over Iran’s nuclear programme could re-emerge, opening the possibility of military confrontation over it. Besides, a collapse of the deal, which emboldens Iran’s hardliners, could result in more unfettered regional policies which they command over. Also, Iran could within days’ breach part of its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, a move that could eventually culminate in the return of all international sanctions on the country. Iran could also exceed a cap on low enriched uranium. The limit was agreed as part of the nuclear deal that lifted most international sanctions on Iran in return for curbs on its atomic activities. Indyk (2020).

Against this background, the paper examines the implications of America’s withdrawal from the Iranian nuclear deal for global peace and security in seven sections: introduction, Iranian nuclear deal: an overview, Understanding United States withdrawal from the nuclear deal, theoretical analysis, implications of United States withdrawal for global peace and security; recommendation and conclusion.

### Iranian Nuclear Deal: An Overview

On July 14, 2015, Iran and the six powers that have negotiated with Iran over its nuclear program (United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, China and Germany collectively known as the P5+1) finalized a “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action”, (JCOPA) that claims to limit Iran’s nuclear program to peaceful purposes, in exchange for broad relief from the United States, European Union (EU) and United Nations Sections. The agreement is sweeping: reversing decades of bipartisan U.S policy and endorsing Iran as a nuclear threshold state able to quickly produce nuclear weapons on an industrial scale in the near future.

Former United States President Barack Obama vigorously defended the international accord to restrain Iran’s nuclear program by saying it cuts off all of Iran’s pathways to a bomb. It is a very good deal, Obama said in a nearly hour-long address at American University in Washington. He said if the pact is implemented, it would be good for Iran. It would be good for the United States. It would be good for a region that, has known, too much conflict. It would be good for the world. Pande, (2015).

Obama stressed that the accord builds on an American tradition of strong, principled diplomacy with adversaries. Drawing a comparison to another controversial presidential speech at American University a half-century ago, Obama argued the nation is on the blink of another momentous choice. He recalled how President John F. Kennedy called for diplomatic negotiations with the former Soviet Union to curb nuclear tests, in the face of fierce opposition from those who wanted U.S. military action. Obama said the approach the United States took – keeping its military strong, but taking no aggressive action, in favour of patient diplomacy- eventually resulted in several international treaties to limit nuclear activity. The deal would bar Tehran from building a nuclear weapon in exchange for lifting United Nations and Western sanctions that have hobbled Iran’s economy. Opponents say the provision to verify that Iran is complying with the accord is too weak. Obama rebuffed such criticism, saying, this is the strongest no proliferation ever negotiated. Pande, (2015).

Robert Loftis agreed that the deal is good because the outlines of the agreement are simple: in return for a six-month halt to certain construction and enrichment activities, conversion and diluted of an existing 20 per cent of enriched uranium stocks, and intrusive inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United States and other powers will offer limited relief from crippling sanctions on Iran’s economy. In essence, it deprives Iran of the opportunity to readily further enriched uranium to levels of purity necessary for nuclear weapons. Over the course of this six-month agreement, the sides will explore the possibility of a comprehensive pact that will ensure Iran’s nuclear program is limited to civilian purposes and that treats Iran as any other signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. If during the next six months, it becomes clear that the Iranians are cheating or trying to hide a military program, then the sanctions can be re-imposed immediately and further steps considered. Loftis (2013).

It is worth highlighting that the Iranians made this agreement not just with the United States and its European allies, but also with Russians and the Chinese. The Iranians would have to weigh the costs of crossing its most sympathetic global powers by failing to live up to the agreement. Far from being the historic mistake that most people think, the accord is the first step toward a goal that we all claim to share which is an Iran that does not pose a nuclear threat to our friends and allies. There are those, including in the US congress, who argue that harsh sanctions have brought Iran to the bargaining table and that ratcheting up the pressure even further will bring Tehran to its knees. And therein lies the problem: if Iran concludes that the real aim of sanctions is not the nuclear program, but the destruction of the Iranian regime itself, then the incentives to develop the bomb regardless of the costs are quite compelling. Loftis (2013).

The same arguments apply to the military option, with even more force. Those who argue for surgical strikes ignore the old military adage that the enemy has a vote in the outcome. They assume that the Iranians will play by the rules. Nothing in recent history suggests that will be the case, and the last 10 years should have taught us something about the costs and dangers of asymmetrical warfare. Unless military action destroys the Iranian nuclear infrastructure and wipes out its riling class and scientists, the Iranians will come to one logical conclusion available which is getting the bomb is their only defence against, future military action Loftis (2013). We cannot be blind to the nature of the Iranian regime. We have many issues with them besides the potential of nuclear weapons. But this is not about trusting or liking the Iranians. It is about seeing if we can negotiate a verifiable agreement to move Iran away from acquiring nuclear weapons. It is time to have trust in our abilities and to remember the words of President Kennedy: We will never negotiate from fear, but we will never fear to negotiate. Loftis (2013).

### Understanding United States withdrawal from the Iranian Nuclear Deal

Findings reveal that President Trump decided to withdraw the United States from the nuclear deal and to re-impose the economic sanctions on Iran that had been lifted under it. Trump had long criticized the nuclear deal as “the worst deal ever”. He cited as his reasons for leaving the agreement the fact that the deal did not address Iran’s ballistic missile program or its regional behaviour, and that most of Iran’s commitments under the deal are limited to a 10-15-year period, after which Iran could resume its enrichment and other covered activities that are nuclear-related.

What is peculiar about Trump’s decision is that he presented no evidence that Iran wasn’t complying with its obligations. Neither the president nor the foreign countries that support his decision, chiefly Israel and Saudi Arabia, have presented any evidence that Iran is technically in violation of the deal. Instead, the president’s case revolved around perceived defects in the deal itself. The first one is that the deal isn’t entirely permanent; the restrictions on Iran’s nuclear program start to relax about 10 years after the deal was signed. The second is that the deal didn’t cover other problematic things Iran was doing, including ballistic missile development and its support for violent militias around the Middle East. Beauchamp (2018).

In responding to if the reason(s) Trump gave for withdrawing the United States from the deal were justifiable, a respondent noted that the reason(s) President Donald Trump gave for withdrawing from the deal is Justifiable as he is only keeping faith in the promise he made before coming into the office which is to re-evaluate every deal that has been made by previous presidents;

If we look at President Trump's tactics, one thing is overriding which is the fact that he rolled into office on the premise of America first and that every deal that the previous presidents especially Obama have gone into will be re-evaluated. So, if we look at it from that angle, the man is keeping faith in his promise. So, his reason is justifiable against the backdrop that he can get a better deal. Now whether he will get the better deal is what we are yet to see because he has been able to muscle his way in the international scene so, he may in the final analysis get a better deal. I agree that his reason is justifiable because Obama gave too much to Iran which is a nation known for sponsoring terrorism in the Middle East and on that note, Iran shouldn’t have a nuclear weapon at all.

However, other respondents believed that President Trump should have given room for re-negotiation before removing the United States totally from the deal and so, the reason he gave for that singular action is not justifiable.

We have seen Donald Trump playing those cards not only with Iran. He plays it and sometimes he gets away with it but not in all the instances. What happened in North Korea might not be what should be expected in the case of Iran. To me, bluff works in some instances even with the trade war between the United States and China. Trump calls the bluff and then there will be a meeting to give room for better negotiations. So, I don’t think his reasons for pulling the United States out of the nuclear deal is justifiable.

Furthermore, the respondents stated that President Trump wants to isolate Iran and put it under the limelight as a threat to international peace and security to deprive Tehran of the benefits it sought from the JCPOA. But he is playing his cards in the worst way possible. By withdrawing and reinstating sanctions, he has already thrown much of his leverage against Iran away. Therefore, the reason the United States gave for withdrawing is not justifiable. President Trump’s decision to withdraw from the JCPOA and openly violate the provisions of the agreement may not quite be a gift to Tehran, but it is at least as damaging to the United States as it is to Iran. It isolates the United States and positions it as the wrecker of the deal.

Trump’s justification for abandoning the deal rests on a series of flawed assertions and a disregard for the value of the agreement, known as the Joint comprehensive plan of action (JCPOA). The deal is not built on lies nor will expire in seven years as Trump claims. Rather it puts in place a wide array of restrictions and prohibitions on the most sensitive nuclear activities and it requires permanent, robust international monitoring to detect and deter any future effort by Iran to reconstitute the nuclear weapons effort it had pursued before. Davenport (2018).

### Theoretical Analysis

#### Liberalist Theory

Liberalism is based on the moral argument that ensuring the right of a person to life, liberty and property is the highest goal of government. Consequently, liberals’ emphasis on the wellbeing of the individual as the fundamental building block of a just political system characterized by unchecked power, such as a monarchy or a dictatorship, cannot protect the life and liberty of its citizens. Therefore, the main concern of liberalism is to construct institutions that protect individual freedom by limiting and checking political power. While these are issues of domestic politics, the realm of International relations is also important to liberals because a state’s activities abroad can have a strong influence on liberty at home. Talmaza (2020)

In examining how the Iran nuclear deal fits into the ideals and optimism laid out in liberalism, the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) lends itself to the best observation. The IAEA’s role is primarily to execute the stipulations organized in the deal; that is, to monitor the centrifuges still in use (Iran will go from having 20,000 active centrifuges to 6,104 under the Iran Nuclear Deal) and to oversee the importation of uranium into the country for energy use. With the lens of liberalism, the IAEA would be examined to be an international regime responsible for facilitating the actions of states in an anarchic international system. In this case, the IAEA is being used to keep the actions of Iran in line with the specifications of the deal and, to an extent, check the international cooperation and international peace between Iran and the rest of the International system. Liberals believe that international relations will hopefully lead to peaceful cooperation among all the actors. In this light, the IAEA’s role is directly related to the perpetuation of this peaceful cooperation. Talmaza, (2020)

The United States involvement in the Iran nuclear deal, while drastically different from that of the IAEA, fits into a similar box for cause and outcome. Perhaps one of the most important actors in the Iran nuclear deal, the United States’ rationale was based, like the IAEA, on the goal of a nonviolent liaison. In liberal terms, their participation is a chief example of hegemonic dominance in the international system and how this propagates the successful interaction between states. Liberals believe that the international system is supported by economic interdependence, and it is oftentimes hegemons, like the United States, that facilitate Interstate communications. In the Iran nuclear deal, the United States acted both as a catalyst and an inhibitor in their role of bringing many key players to the proverbial table, but then upheld the pacific interactions that were sought after in this deal. Talmaza, (2020)

The Iran nuclear deal lands in the realm of the liberal theory given the actors working together to ensure the sustenance of global security and interactions. The International Atomic Energy Agency, the United States, and Iran all gathered to negotiate a deal that, to the liberal thinker, had its roots in the purpose of cooperation and peaceful international communications. From the international regime that the IAEA maintains, and the security that the United States sought, to the many stipulations that Iran agreed to, the Iran Nuclear deal sets a Precedent for International dealings.

#### Realist Theory

Realism is a school of thought that emphasizes the competitive and conflictual side of international relations. The first assumption of realism is that the nation-state is the principal actor in international relations. Other bodies exist such as individuals and organizations but their power is limited. Second, the state is a unitary actor. National interest, especially in times of war lead the state to speak and act with one voice. Third, decision-makers are rational actors in the sense that rational decision-making leads to the pursuit of national interest. Here, taking actions that would make your state vulnerable would not be rational. Realism suggests that all leaders, no matter what their political persuasion, recognize this as they attempt to manage their state’s affairs to survive in a competitive environment. Finally, states live in a context of anarchy that is, in the absence of anyone being in charge internationally.

Realism claims that international relations are driven by the momentum that anarchy creates. As there is no central agency enforcing order in international affairs states are exposed to the security dilemma. Driven by concerns about their autonomy vis-à-vis other states aim to acquire military power, which in turn provokes other states to counter this power. When applying this dynamic mechanism to the present case, it would appear to be normal behaviour if Iran were to attempt to acquire nuclear weapons. Although Israel refrained from officially declaring itself a nuclear power, it is a widely accepted fact that it became one in the late 1960s. Thus, according to the Realist balance-of-power logic, what is puzzling is not so, much Iran’s alleged attempt to go militarily nuclear, but rather the fact that there has been a nuclear monopoly for so, long in the Middle. Haltiwanger (2020).

From a realist perspective, the bipolar nuclear Middle East would be more stable than the present one with Israel’s nuclear monopoly. In the current situation, Israel has an incentive to maintain its monopoly by attacking Iran. The scenario of balanced nuclear power between Israel and Iran is much less threatening for regional peace because in this case the logic of mutual deterrence would come to bear and the incentives of both actors to wage war against each other would be diminished. Moreover, if Iran acquired nuclear weaponry, Realists would expect the regime in Tehran to de-radicalize rather than to provide terrorist organizations with nuclear weapons. The reason is that nuclear states are aware of the destructive potential of nuclear weapons and are, therefore, reluctant to share them with actors that are not fully under their control.

The realist theory also explains the withdrawal of the United States from the Iran nuclear deal. Been a major power, the United States leveraged on that and have employed the tenets of hard power to force Iran as well as other signatories to the deal to a round table in other to review the deal and revamp it. The United States has imposed stricter sanctions on Iran in other to force them out of nuclear weapon production completely rather than a specific period as stipulated in the deal. Haltiwanger (2020).

### United States withdrawal from the Iranian Nuclear Deal: Implications for Global Peace and Security

Findings reveal that the withdrawal of the United States from the nuclear deal will have implications for global peace and security as there is bound to be some level of tension between the two countries and in international politics. In April 2019, the United States designated Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) a terrorist organization which is the first time the United States classified part of another government as such. In May 2019, after intelligence suggested Iran and its militias were preparing to attack U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria, the United States deployed B-52 nuclear-capable bombers, an aircraft carrier strike group, and additional Patriot missile batteries to the Middle East to deter Iran. The same week, Iran announced a sixty-day deadline for sanction relief before exceeding the JCPOA’s cap on uranium enrichment levels and later threatened to exceed uranium stockpile limits. Also, in May 2019, following a rocket attack on Baghdad’s Green zone in Iraq which U.S. defence officials blamed on Iran and the release of images of missiles on IRGC boats in the Persian Gulf that U.S. intelligence officials cited as signs of growing Iranian threats, nonemergency U.S. government employees were evacuated from Iraq. Over the next six-month, six oil tankers in or near the Strait of Hormuz were attacked, which U.S. government officials have also blamed on Iran and the United States deployed an additional 2,500 troops to the middle east. Escalating military tension has been matched by increasingly bellicose rhetoric from government officials. Gordon (2020).

In June 2019, Iran foreign minister warned that the United States cannot expect to stay safe and President Trump cautioned that there is always a chance of war with Iran. Tensions peaked in late June 2019 after Iran downed a U.S. global hawk drone in the Strait of Hormuz. In response, President Trump approved and quickly cancelled a retaliatory strike, instead of ordering a cyber-attack on the IRGC and Iran’s missile systems and imposing new sanctions on Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and top Iranian military commanders. On July 1, 2019, Iran exceeded the JCPOA’s cap on uranium stockpiles. Later in July, the United States downed an Iranian drone in the Strait of Hormuz after the drone approached a U.S. Navy ship (Gordon, 2020).

On December 27th, 2019, a rocket attack on the Iraqi military base in Kirkuk killed a US contractor and wounded several US service members and Iraqi personnel. In its statement confirming the attack, the US-led coalition against the ISIL did not specify who might be responsible, but US officials later blamed Kataeb Hezbollah, an Iran-backed militia, for the attack. Two days later, the US military carried out defensive strikes on sites in Iraq and Syria belonging to Kataib Hezbollah that Washington said was in retaliation for the killing of the US contractor. Iraqi security and militia sources said at least 25 fighters were killed and 55 others wounded following the air attacks in Iraq. At least four Kataib Hezbollah commanders were among the dead, the sources said, adding that one of the raids had hit the Iran-backed group’s headquarters near the western al-Qaim district on the border with Syria. Iran strongly condemned the attacks with a government spokesman saying “America has shown its firm support for terrorism and its neglect for the independence and sovereignty of countries and it must accept consequences for its illegal act”. On December 31st, enraged members and supporters of pro-Iranian paramilitary groups in Iraq, broke into the heavily fortified US embassy compound in Baghdad, smashing the main door and setting parts of the perimeter on fire. Trump blamed Iran for killing the US contractor and ensuing tensions around the embassy. US troops and Iraqi security forces fired tear gas and stun grenades at the protesters who had encircled the embassy compound.

The tension between the United States and Iran escalated dramatically after a top military commander Qassem Soleimani was killed on Friday 3rd January 2020 in a US airstrike at Baghdad International Airport. According to the Pentagon, U.S President Donald Trump ordered Soleimani’s killing after a group of Iraqi militia members and supporters attempted to storm the US embassy in Iraq breaking through the perimeter and setting a number of fires. The killing of General Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran’s elite Quds force, marks a major escalation in the standoff between Washington and Iran, which has careened from one crisis to another since President Donald Trump withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal and imposed crippling sanctions. The United States said it was sending nearly 3,000 more army troops to the Middle East and urged American citizens to leave Iraq immediately following the early morning airstrike at Baghdad’s international airport that Iran’s state TV said killed Soleimani and nine others. The US state department said the embassy in Baghdad, which was attacked by Iran-backed militiamen and their supporters earlier this week, is closed and all consular services have been suspended. US embassies also issued a security alert for Americans in Lebanon, Bahrain, Kuwait and Nigeria.

Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei warned that harsh retaliation is waiting for the U.S after the airstrike, calling Soleimani the international face of resistance. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani called the killing a heinous crime and vowed his country would take revenge. The targeted strike and any retaliation by Iran could ignite a conflict that engulfs the whole region, endangering US troops in Iraq, Syria and beyond. However, the potential for a spiralling escalation alarmed US allies and rivals alike. France deputy minister for foreign affairs Amelie de Montchalin noted that we are waking up to a more dangerous world. The European Union warned against a generalised flare-up of violence. Russia condemned the killing and fellow Security Council member China said it was highly concerned. Britain and Germany noted that Iran also bore some responsibility for escalating tensions, while Saudi Arabia urged restraint. Israeli defence minister Naftali Bennett held a meeting with top security officials but the Israeli military said it was not taking any extraordinary action on its northern front, other than closing a ski resort in the Golan Heights near Lebanon and Syria as a precaution. In the UAE, a key U.S. ally in the Gulf, minister of state for foreign affairs Anwar Gargash, called for rational engagement and a calm approach. Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi condemned the strike as aggression against Iraq. An emergency session of parliament was called for which the deputy speaker, Hassan al-Kaabi, said would take decisions to put an end to the US presence in Iraq (Abdul-Zahra, 2020).

President Trump on 4th January 2020 warned Iran that if it retaliates for the killing of one of its top leaders, General Qassem Soleimani, it will face U.S. attacks on 52 targets, a number he said was symbolic. The president tweeted that the number of targets matched the number of hostages held by Iran in 1979 when 52 American diplomats and citizens were held for 444 days (Talmaza, 2020).

On the 8th of January, 2020 Iran launched more than a dozen ballistic missiles against U.S. military and coalition forces, targeting at least two military bases in Iraq. The strikes on military and coalition personnel at the Ain al-Assad airbase in Anbar province and Irbil at the centre of Iraq’s Kurdistan region began at approximately 5:30 pm ET according to reports. Iran’s foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif defended the strike, saying it was an act of self-defence. The attack came less than a week after a U.S drone strike killed the top Iranian military commander, Qassem Soleimani in Iraq (Romo, 2020).

A respondent believed that United States withdrawal will not lead to war. Respondents further noted that United States withdrawal will have some implications on global peace and security but the situation is likely to change when Trump leaves office.

The United States withdrawal will have some implications on global peace and security. The implication is that America will rally its allies to muscle Iran in other to get a better deal. It will cause tension on a global scale but in the long run, America will have their way because they have all the might both economic and military. Furthermore, it will just heat the international system but it will not escalate to the state of war. It is important to note here that on a global scale, nothing will happen because we should put in mind that the position of a nation on a matter is the position of the leader. Trump will leave office one day and the next president after him might decide to honour the deal again.

The fallout from Trump’s decision is not just confined to Iran. There are serious non-proliferation consequences beyond Iran’s borders. If the deal collapses and Tehran resumes troublesome nuclear activities, it could precipitate a regional crisis. Prospects for a regional arms race were significantly diminished when Iran’s nuclear program was limited and under a microscope, but any loss of restrictions and inspectors may spur states like Saudi Arabia to match Iran’s capabilities to produce nuclear material. If Tehran takes steps to resume nuclear activities, it could quickly get back to where it was in 2013 capable of producing enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon in 2-3 months. This time, however, the United States will not have the international community behind it, supporting sanctions and a negotiated agreement. Davenport, (2018)

### Conclusion/Recommendation

The study has established that the Iranian nuclear deal was put together to prevent Iran from possessing nuclear arsenals. Consequently, the United States withdrawal from the deal would have implications for global peace and security if measures are not put in place to get parties back to the negotiation table. Against this background, the original signatories to the deal must come together and find ways to salvage the situation diplomatically.

In light of the above, the following recommendations are made.

1. There is a need for the United States to return as a signatory to the nuclear deal it originally and already signed and propose for an amendment of the deal to suit the policy of the present administration.
2. Iran should still keep to its end of the nuclear deal since it still has the support of the remaining signatories to the deal.
3. The remaining signatories of the nuclear deal should see if there is a way to reconcile the demand of the present administration with the original agreement of the nuclear deal without the use of force or threats.

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# Human Rights Violation in Africa: A Critical Assessment of Rule of Law in Nigeria

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### Abstract

*The discourse about human rights violations has been a recurrence among scholars in Africa. This is because the lives of the African citizens particularly the Nigerians are been decimated and harassed on daily basis through nefarious acts. A bid to find out the magnitude of violation of human rights in Nigeria necessitated this study. Its central focus is to critically assess how rule of law in Nigeria has addressed human rights violations among the citizens. The study further ascertained the nature and level of violation of human rights amongst the citizens of Nigeria. The paper was anchored on both historical and analytical, as facts and figures were gathered from secondary sources using the content analysis method. Judging from the theoretical underpinning of this study, the Social Contract Theory of State stipulates that the rule of law is very important to human existence as it helps to regulate citizens’ actions and make them live harmoniously with each other as without the presence of law, it will be impossible if not difficult for the citizens to get access to basic amenities of life. It was observed that the failure to strictly adhere to the principles of rule of law has resulted in human rights violations which are evident in violation of the right to life, freedom of expression among others. It was therefore concluded that the principle of rule of law if imbibed and practised irrespective of social status, religion or ethnic grouping will engender a peaceful and harmonious nation.*

**Keywords:** Constitution,Human rights, Human rights violation, Nigeria, and Rule of Law.

### Introduction

Human rights are the foundation of a functioning and functional democracy which gives hope to citizens in any given society irrespective of their class, status, religion and ethnic groupings. According to Ikejiani-Clark (2004), human rights represent the legal expression of life. It is therefore evident that without human life; there can be no human rights. However, since life itself connotes free and dignified existence in the framework of the legal order, the purpose of recognizing and safeguarding human rights is to ensure the possibility of living fully and completely in dignified freedom. In the same vein, Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, provides for fundamental rights of citizens, including the right to life, right to dignity of the human person, right to personal liberty, right to a fair hearing, right to private and family life, right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, right to freedom of movement, right to freedom from discrimination, and the right to acquire and own property anywhere in Nigeria.

The Nigerian constitution has been devoted to laying emphasizes on human rights. The need for constitutional provisions for human rights cannot be over-emphasized because, it is the state, with its various institutions which are primarily responsible for guaranteeing the implementation and enforcement of these rights in respect of its citizens and all those coming under its jurisdiction. Concerns for human rights are as well expected to be granted and guaranteed by institutions and constituents of the state. This finds a lucid expression in the present intensifications and universalization of liberal values, which places a high premium on human rights as a critical element in governance and constitution-making process of the modern state. The United Nations since its inception has retained compliance with international treaties as the basis of its relations with member states. Human rights discourse has not only become a huge concern in Africa but a remarkable interest aimed at protecting and promoting universal respect for, and observance of, human rights.

Over the years, Africans has witnessed sustained assaults on the lives of innocent citizens, valuables, properties, and government institutions. Despite more than a decade of democratic governance and endorsement of the universal declaration of human rights charter, Nigerians in particular and Africans in general still face a lot of human rights violations. Human right violation is the acts that contravene human rights. According to McCulley (2013), cases of human rights violations such as extra-judicial killings, illegal detention, destruction of property by security forces etc. have become a culture of impunity in the country. Adetoro and Omiyefa (2014) are of the view that respect for human rights is sacrosanct because it is also a fundamental, constitutional and international legal obligation. The concern of human rights in the world today stems from the perception widely shared by J.J. Rousseau that man though born free is everywhere in chains. Vance (2011) noted that increasing awareness coupled with the preoccupation on how best to safeguard them from rampant violation has made the term human rights a song on almost everyone’s lips, yet the contradiction, inconsistency, confusion, misinterpretation and absurdity that pervade the motion is quite alarming.

In other words, it is no longer strange to say that the world in this contemporary age including Africa has witnessed cases of violations of the right of its citizens. Unfortunately, the government of Nigeria in most cases operates with total disregard for the rule of law and respect for human rights. Impunity remains a widespread phenomenon within the government circle while countering insurgency. For instance, the government has only brought a few individuals to justice for violation of human rights. Mohammed (2015) went further to assert that the Nigerian government is a party to the major sources of International Humanitarian Laws (IHL), i.e. the Geneva conventions, their protocol and other customary international law. Yet the government and its security agencies abuse these against the provisions of the international human rights law such as prolonged pretrial detention, denial for fair public trial, infringements on citizens privacy rights; denial of freedoms of speech, denial of freedoms of press, assembly, religion, and movement; child abuse, violence against women; sexual exploitation of children; trafficking in persons, forced and child labour, and a host of others.

The basic fundamental right and freedom that belongs to a particular person, irrespective of his/her background, how he/she chooses to live, religious affiliation from childhood till death is known as human rights. Hence, it cannot be taken away but can be restricted sometimes. These rights are based on shared values like respect, dignity, equity, fairness, equality and independence. Based on the international protocol on human rights, no human person should be subjected to an extreme human rights violation in an extreme situation. But when the lives of the African citizens particularly in Nigeria are been decimated and harassed on daily basis either through suicide bombing, violent attacks, rape, gruesome murder, kidnap, denial of necessities of life, such as food, shelter and happiness; and other nameless acts of aggression, one cannot say that life is worth enjoying under such circumstances. It is however not out of place to state that the violations of human rights have become a norm in Africa as a result of the daily experiences witnessed so far. Thus, if the principles of rule of law in Nigeria must meet up with Western Democratic standards, then it must carefully address the current problem of gross violations of human rights. It is based on these precarious situations witnessed in the country that the paper tends to critically assess how the principles of rule of law in Nigeria have addressed human rights violations among the citizens.

### Theoretical Framework

#### Social Contract Theory of the State

This study hinged on the social contract theory of the state. The theory of the social contract presents the State as a product of the mutual agreement of men, created with a definite purpose to sever certain social needs. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704) and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) are regarded as the main exponents of the social contract theory of the origin of State. The social contract theory of the origin of the State implies that men, at a time in history, lived or would have lived without any recognized civil law (i.e. without the State). This stage or life pattern of men (when they lived without any form of organized civil law) is described as the “state of nature”. The state of nature denotes how men lived or would have lived without the authority of civil law, State or political control. At this stage, there is no industry and no systemic production. Men lived not only close to nature but they had to depend on the bounty of nature for their survival. However, the social contract theorists themselves have not agreed on how the State came to be from their different analysis of life in the state of nature and what they differently perceived was the state of nature. They commonly agreed that the State was a social contract after an unsatisfactory experience in the state of nature.

For instance, Thomas Hobbes viewed the contract as being between the people and the constituted authority (State) while Locke says such a contract is “of all with all” but not a contract with government or state. Rousseau supported Locke in this way and emphasized that the contract is designed to provide “collective security”. Life in the “state of nature‟, to Hobbes, is a general disposition to war “of every man against every man”, leading to perpetual fear and strife which consequently makes life in Hobbesian “state of nature” be “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short”. On the other hand, Lockean “state of nature” is moral and social in character, in it; men have rights and acknowledge duties. For Locke, life in the state of nature is not satisfactory as peace is constantly upset by the corruption and viciousness of degenerate men, which Locke says plagues the “state of nature” by lack of an established settled down the law, lack of known and indifferent judge, and the lack of an executive power to enforce just decisions. These, Locke argued, necessitated the formation of civil society (the State) devoid of the evils and hence the social contract.

For Rousseau too, the State is the result of a contract entered by men who originally lived in a “state of nature”. However, Rousseau emphasizes that there was only one contract called the “social pact” to which the government or the State itself was not a party. Individuals surrendered all their rights to the community and therefore, after making the contract, may have only such rights as are allowed to them by the General Will (i.e. Law). Nevertheless, the arguments of the social contract origin of the State have been criticized for being historical by not taking cognizance of history and chronology of events in human lives. The social contract theorists‟ arguments of life in the state of nature are therefore criticized of being too idealistic, Utopia and hence unrealistic as history do not tell us when such a social contract itself took place in human existence as well as the epoch of the state of nature. Though the theory of the social contract origin of State tries to demonstrate that the State is the product of the will of all individuals comprising it (the State) and as an instrument of harmonizing the interests of all individuals and all sections of society, it is unfortunately not so in many societies, particularly in modern capitalist societies where some dominant sections or a chosen few are so well-organized and vocal that they become “self-styled representatives of the will of society, and seek to justify their authority on this ground. Some criticisms levelled against the theory of social contract stated that it lacks logical explanations as to the origin of the State. It has also been described as “bad history, bad logic and bad philosophy.

In relating the social contract theory of the state to the violation of human rights, it can be said that the rule of law is very important to human existence as it helps to regulate citizens’ actions and make them live harmoniously with each other as, without the presence of law, it will be impossible if not difficult for the citizens to get access to basic amenities of life. However, in a situation whereby these laws are not followed accordingly, the resultant effect becomes human rights violation which leads to violation of the right to life, freedom of expression, freedom of movement, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, freedom of education and freedom to standard of living.

### Literature

#### Human Rights

There is no generally accepted definition of human rights. This is perhaps because scholars have different opinions about the concept. It is something which is owing to every human being simply because he is human. Human rights are the freedoms and benefits enjoyed by individuals in the society in which they live. Nwosu (2016) opined that human rights are considered the constitutional and absolute rights of the people in a given country. Human rights are freedoms, immunities and benefits that, according to modern values, all human beings should be able to claim as a matter of rights in the society in which they live. In the same vein, human rights are something of which no one may be deprived, without great affront to justice. There are certain deeds, which should never be done, certain freedoms, which should never be invaded; and some supremely sacred things.

Human rights can be seen as all those rights that every citizen of a state ought to have without any deprivation. They are those inalienable rights of every individual, whether old or young, poor or rich, male or female. They are not given to human beings as gifts. This explains why Arinze (2008) argues that human rights are not gifts from men to women or other men that are open to withdrawal or cancellation at the whims and caprices of the giver. Human rights are not subject to withdrawal or to be held at the pleasure of anybody or granted when it pleases the giver. Gasiokwu (2003) sees human rights as that which represents the demands or claims, which individuals or groups make on society, some of which are protected by law and have become part of Lex Lata while others remain aspirations to be attained in the future. Fundamental human rights may be seen as such freedoms, which are expressed in or guaranteed by basic or pre-eminent laws.

### Human Rights Violation

Human rights violation is an infringement of one’s fundamental human rights. It also means denying humans their fundamental human rights as it involves treating a person in a cruel, unfair and violent way or less human. In the recent past, according to Nnochiri (2013), human rights violations and abuses in Nigeria had held people down and devalued the nation’s cherished values. Nwabueze (1993) asserted that human rights violation in most developing nations has become an issue of utmost concern. Human rights law has been developing in an unprecedented way and has become part of international law as a whole. International human rights law serves as a standard against which to measure national behaviour. This is found in the human rights protection system of states, international institutions, transnational professional associations, corporations, trade unions, churches, non-governmental organizations and other bodies, who respond to distress signals from abroad on the basis of these instruments. However, with the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993, efforts are being made to develop a rationalized framework within which human rights should be promoted and protected.

### Rule of Law

The notion of rule of law varies from place to place and is considered as old as man. Aristotle sees the “rule of law as preferable to that of any individual”, while Bracton, during the 13th century adopted the theory generally held in the middle ages that the world was governed by laws, human or divine and that the king himself ought not to be subject to man, but subject to God and the law, because the law makes him king. Anthony (1988:219) summarized the doctrine of the rule of law as “that law touching on the basic rights of citizens shall be narrowly and precisely drafted so as to constitute a clear guide to official actions and citizens’ conduct”. The rule of law simply means that law rules or reigns. Nwabueze (2007) contended that the rule of law presupposes a situation where everything is done in accordance with law thereby excluding any form of arbitrariness.

In developed societies where democracy has long been a way of life of the people and where despotism or dictatorship is no longer the other of the day. Rule of law according to Haruna and Yusuf (2017) is a substantive legal principle that refers to the prevailing of regular power rather than arbitrary power; the principle is that all citizens are subject to the judicial decision in their states and that such decisions are the result of constitutional principles. The rule of law implies that government authority may only be exercised in accordance with written laws, which were adopted through an established procedure. The principle is intended to safeguard against arbitrary rulings in individual cases. In a political system that adheres to the paramount principles of the rule of law, the law is supreme over the acts of the government and the people. Rule of law implies and equally connotes that the citizens in the relationship amongst themselves *inter se* and with the government bodies and their agencies shall be beholden unto the law which shall not be ignored by anyone except at his peril and if by the government, this will promote anarchy and executive indiscipline capable of wrecking the organic framework of the society.

### Nature of Violations of Human Rights among Nigerians

Nigeria is among the countries in Africa where human rights violations are recorded daily and virtually in all human endeavours. Nigerian citizens had their political rights violated through intimidation, the undemocratic imposition of candidates for political offices, assassination and the huge finances in the prebendal political environment. Below are some of the routinely violated human rights in Nigeria irrespective of the presence of the constitution:

* + - 1. **Violation of Right to Life:** This human rights violation is mostly found in torture and extra-judicial killings by government security operatives. Ero (2009) reported that over 20,000 civilians were massacred with other 50,000 displaced from their homes as a result of the brutal handling of the Niger – Delta crises by the Joint Military Task Force (JTF). Earlier, the death of about 50 persons on 25th February 2008 was caused by the Nigerian police in Ogaminana outskirt of Okene in Kogi State. Akhaine and Chizea (2011) reported that 17 people were shot dead by security forces during a protest in Kaduna state on 17th April and another 118 killed on 27th April in the same state with several houses burnt. Abbah (2013) further observed that over 300 people were killed in the Fulani/Farmers clashes that lasted for 5 months in Nigeria. Reuters (2012) noted the brutal killing of more than 700 lives in Bauchi, Maiduguri and Damaturu as a result of the Boko Haram rootless attack on the civilians. Furthermore, in the latest report on Boko Haram activities, Osun Defender (2014) submitted that civilians in Nigeria are paying heavy prices as the cycle of human rights violations and reprisals gather momentum because according to the 2014 Amnesty International report, “more than 1,500 deaths in three months indicate an alarming deterioration in the face of extrajudicial executions, attacks on civilians and other crimes committed on a mass scale. Even though, the Amnesty report observed the rising number of Boko Haram attacks as “truly shocking” but it also noted the reaction of Nigerian security forces as “brutal” with both serving as acts that may constitute “war crimes and crimes against humanity” calling for immediate investigation and prosecutions (Amnesty, 2014).
      2. **Violation of Right to Freedom of Expression:** It has already been shown that the right to freedom of expression is not absolute. The recently passed bill on Hate Speech is a clear cut example of a harsh bill relating to freedom of expression online, including one which proposes the death penalty for ‘hate speech.’ These bills, supported by the Nigerian government, represent an alarming escalation in the authorities’ attempts to censor and punish social media users for freely expressing their opinions. This bill in all its totality is an infringement on human rights and it is, therefore, not concomitant to the Nigerian Constitution.
      3. **Violation of Right to Freedom of Movement:** This human rights violation is found in kidnapping and disappearance which has been on the increase in Nigeria. The situation is worst in places like the oil-producing community due to cases of all forms of kidnapping: including the kidnapping of children, women and other civilians. Oyewale (2010) acknowledged the daily occurrence of domestic terrorism (brutal kidnapping) in the Niger Delta between 2006 and 2009, Azania (2013) equally reported how Edo varsity lecturers lamented the daily affairs kidnapping of their colleagues. This worrisome physical human rights abuse is even preponderant all over Nigeria today.
      4. **Violation of Right to Freedom of Religion:** Contrary to the provision of secularity in Nigeria’s constitution, Adeniji (2008) reported frequent human rights abuses among cleric fundamentalists. According to Adeniji (2008), over 1,000 reported cases of clashes between the Christian and the Muslim adherents were recorded in Nigeria between 2001 and 2008. Musa and Adeniji (2010) equally acknowledged the destruction of lives and properties by frequent clashes in Abeokuta South Local Government in Ogun State between 1980 and 2007.
      5. **Violation of Right to Freedom of Assembly:** The Nigerian government is known to oppose anti-government protests and demonstrations. For instance, on 3rd January 2009, police in Okeagbe, Ondo State allegedly killed and wounded some youths who demonstrated against local police extortion. Equally, political killings were reported by Ariyibi (2013) in Ekiti following clashes between rival political parties. Indeed, Akhaine and Chizea (2011) reported that some politicians in Nigeria maintain a retinue of thugs that often perpetrate acts of violence against their opponents. On February 18, 2012, *Sahara News* reported that activists condemned the police disruption of political memorial procession for the last year’s martyrs on the fuel price increase. Indeed, Aremu (2012) reported that over 20 tear–gas canisters were used to disperse the protesters and several leaders of the protesters were whisked away and detained for several hours in Alausa police station. It is regrettable to note that the Nigerian government has continually failed to address this kind of human rights abuse and punish the offenders.
      6. **Violation of Right to Education:** Although education is an instrument per excellence for effecting national development, it is regrettable to note that corruption, bribery and nepotism are ill vices in the Nigerian educational system. Equally, some state-owned universities do not give equal admission opportunities to all Nigerians while the university council considered some states in Nigeria as education less privileged. Indeed, Nigerian citizens are supposed to have free education as contained in the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, but in practice, in some states and federal schools where this has been implemented students still pay fees. As a fallout of denial of the right to education, Olubodun (2008) noted that 41 per cent of the Nigerian children totalling 7.5 million were out of school in 1997 and by 2005. Consequently, the figure of children that are out of school had risen to 19.8 million children in 2010. Although, it appears the figure had dropped to about 8 million in 2011 but the situation is that a sizeable number of eligible Nigerian children are still out of Basic Education amounting to the existence of denial of education rights.
      7. **Violations of Right to Standard of Living:** It is regrettable to note that this violation is been caused by the quantum of corruption in public services. Corruption has generally eaten deep into the fabric of Nigerian society. It is an abuse of the citizens’ rights to have corrupt leaders in public services. According to Adetoro (2012), Nigeria as a “cesspool of corruption” still suffers denial to cheaper availability of fuel products arising from the fuel subsidy scandal that led to over-invoicing of imported petroleum products. This happened in a country where over 70 per cent of the populace lives below 1 dollar per day (UNDP, 2011). This represents a flagrant violation of peoples’ right to an improved standard of living.

### **Assessment of Rule of Law in Addressing Human Rights** Violation in Nigeria

Rule of law is a way of preventing the abuse of discretionary power. It accords with the dictates of reason that the court should use its awesome power to make the government of the day rule by principles recognized in civilized societies and bound by the pronouncements of the courts. The rule of law according to Igwe (2002:387) relates to the supremacy of the laws and their equal application to every person and institution of society, regardless of status, class or circumstance, and to the extent that such laws are fair, just and promotion of personal liberties, which are fundamental requirements for a truly democratic and civilized, life and formidable check upon tyranny and arbitrary rule. According to Dicey, the rule of law means the absolute supremacy of regular law as opposed to the influence of arbitrary power and excludes the existence of arbitrariness, or prerogative or even of wide discretionary authority on the part of the government. This conception perceives the rule of law as a principle that seeks to curb governmental powers by insisting that governance should be in accordance with the laws of the land and not according to the arbitrary whims and caprices of those in authority. It also implies that no man can be punished except for a proven breach of the law. Nwosu (2016:67-68) highlighted that the method of protecting individual rights by rule of law which includes amongst:

1. That the rule of law gives all citizens equal protection before the law. The law is supreme and does not offer special protection to anybody;
2. That the rule of law ensures that no one is punished or made to suffer a breach of law unless established by a court of law. This provision helps to protect individual rights;
3. That the rule of law ensures equality of every citizen before the law and that judges should dispense justice without fear or favour; and
4. That the rule of law ensures democratic principles, separation of powers and checks and balances. All these contributed to the protection of individual liberty in a society.

The rule of law presupposes the supremacy of law in the state. This means that law, and nothing else, counts in society, as everything, everybody is subject to the same law. Both the ruler and the ruled, or the ruler and the subjects, are not only subject to the rule of law but are also equal before the law. Acknowledging this fact, Nwosu (2016) opined that under the rule of law, all men are subject to the same law. In this sense, nobody or the citizen is either fully or partially free from any offence he or she may commit. The rule of law promotes and protects the liberty, freedom and the gamut of the fundamental human rights of the citizens. Writing on individual freedom, Rousseau notes that though the social contract gives the body politic absolute power over all its citizens, the sovereign cannot impose on its subjects any fetters that are useless to the community. According to Nwosu (2016), the term rule of law is a negation of arbitrary power and the whims and caprices of those in power. Rule of law is an ideology that emphasizes not only that every citizen shall be equally bound by known fair laws enforced by known and impartial judges, thus protecting each individual’s rights against those of other individuals, but also that government herself shall equally be bound by these laws so that the relationship between the government and every individual shall be controlled in the same manner as those of individuals with each other. It is only in such a medium that the rights of the individual citizen can be protected and ascertained against tyranny on the part of the ruler (government).

It is auspicious to acknowledge the fact the gross violations of this freedom became rife in Nigeria during Obasanjo’s government as the civilian President after the military dictatorship of several years by the Sanni Ahmed led Zamfara State government in October 1999 signing into law the introduction of the Sharia effective January 2000. This was promptly emulated by some northern states. The forceful applications of the Sharia law on ‘non-faithful’ generated disaffection, suspicion, hostility, frustration and outright conflict and violence. This had resulted in wanton destruction of lives and properties as well as pose a potential threat to the continued unity and stability of Nigeria. Such truly speaking is symptomatic of non-adherence to rule of law. It has to be said that the abuse of the Nigerian people and the gross violations of their fundamental and essential rights under the despotic Obasanjo presidency can be meaningfully examined if some form of historical excursion is undertaken. This would bring to the fore the fact that all the post-colonial regimes in Nigeria have always violated the basic rights of the Nigerian people. The importance of history in social analysis cannot be overemphasized. Toyo (2007) lucidly highlighted the significance of history in social discourses when he reminded Nigerian that ahistorical student of society is easily fooled by the ‘commonsense’ of surreptitious vested interests, and that “any student of society whose epistemology is fundamentally ahistorical is myopic. This assertion reinforces the contention that; the disadvantage of men not knowing the past is that they do not know the present. History is a hill or high point of vantage, from which alone men see the town in which they live or the age in which they are living (Garba, 2003).

Violation of human rights in Nigeria often results in extreme poverty which is so prevalent due to massive abuse of public funds. This is a result of a high rate of unemployment which has resulted in youths’ restiveness orchestrated by armed robbery, internet scams and kidnapping for the sake of survival. Human rights violation has obvious hindrance to national development. It also breeds a high insecurity rate as a state of anarchy had given room to a lack of protection of lives and properties as witnessed under conflicts in the Niger Delta region and the various ethno-religious violence. Equally, the poor health care facilities and diseases are a result of government nonchalant attitude to the well-being of the citizens. Human rights violation has created unlawful detention and lawlessness with gross violation of the rule of law. Furthermore, human rights abuse makes people unpatriotic as most Nigerians are not proud of calling Nigeria their fatherland. Today, the resultant effect is the migration of citizens to other countries in search of safety and prosperity.

It is impossible to speak of fundamental human rights – the right to human dignity, right to education, right to decent living, right to contest for public offices, etc in an environment where the people are daily contending with several asphyxiating challenges like crippling poverty and immiserization engendered by inept and bad governance, and fuelled by pyramidal corruption. The point has been made that beyond the direct human casualties of the institutional evil represented by bad and autocratic rulers, comparable numbers of people, if not more, have died in Nigeria due to the actions and inactions of the consolidated incompetence that has imposed itself on us in the guise of leadership since independence. Adebanwi (2009), contended that it is not so much the evil that has produced and reproduced the Nigerian rulers and the dominant elite that can account for the indirect mass murder that has been unrecorded in our history; rather it is a basic incapacity of the rulers Nigerians have had to run modern administrative machinery that transforms the social conditions of life.

### Conclusion

Human rights violation has become a recurring decimal in Nigeria. This is because individuals, groups and state actors are complicit in this vicious circle. Over time, human rights violations have held the Nigerians down, devaluing their cherished values and constituting blight on the country’s diplomatic relations with the rest of the world. Therefore, Nigerians must come together to combat these ills by impressing upon their democratically elected government that the principles of democracy and human rights must be sacrosanct. The challenges facing Nigeria are not limited to North or South, Christian or Muslim, Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa – Fulani. Rule of law as identified earlier is characterized by definite principles. These include respect for fundamental human rights and the protection of lives and properties. For a peaceful and harmonious nation to be realized, the true principles of the rule must be imbibed and practicable irrespective of social status, religion or ethnic grouping.

### Suggestions

The following suggestions were made based on the results of the study:

* + - 1. **Total Eradication of Corrupt Practices:** The Nigerian government should take a more proactive campaign against corruption and strengthen the country’s anti-corruption institutions. This is because corruption serves to promote criminal and extremist activity by creating barriers to legitimate socio-political and economic endeavours. By attacking corruption, Nigeria will send a clear signal that the country is indeed committed to good governance, to the security of its citizens and its rightful place as a significant actor on the global stage.
      2. **Reorientation of Security Agencies:** The Nigerian law enforcement agencies most importantly the Nigerian police needs reorientation because they need to understand their duties as they have to learn that respecting the rights of the citizens are part of their duties.
      3. **Zero Tolerance to Military Rule:** Military rule/coup should not be allowed or tolerated. The military has been known to be the worst in abusing the human rights of citizens. Efforts must be put in place to checkmate their encroachment into politics. Their duty is to protect the integrity and sovereignty of the nation not to rule.
      4. **Organizing Public Awareness/Sensitization Programme:** Government at all levels with the active support of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), to embark on intensive programmes aimed at enlightening the citizens, not only on their fundamental rights, which include the right to freedom of expression but also on their right to the protection of reputation. An enlightened society where people know their rights and respect the rights of others would certainly be more conducive for social, political and economic development.

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# Coronavirus Disease-2019: A Threat to Global Peace and Security

## Tinashe RUKUNI, Noel KANSIIME, Asani COLLIN & O.B.A. OYINLOYE

### Abstract

*The outbreak of the “Coronavirus disease 2019” on a worldwide basis has brought about an unprecedented threat to the already fragile global peace and security position. The epidemic has had catastrophic social, economic, and political consequences on a global scale. The global pandemic which originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan in December 2019 has become a source of serious international debate, a humanitarian crisis of fearsome proportions, and sparked conflict among the world's major powers. It is against this background and perturbing development that this paper interrogates the implications of Coronavirus disease 2019 as a threat to global peace and security. Thus, the fulcrum of the ensuing discourse is anchored on the examination of the post-Covid-19 outbreak humanitarian crisis, surge in domestic violence in lockdown periods the world over, the imminent world economic recession, food insecurity, revival of xenophobia related violence and the ignition of geopolitical conflict mainly among the world's major economic and political powers. The paper was based on the qualitative research paradigm, as it sought to probe deep into contemporary issues around the novel Covid-19 pandemic. The paper found out that Covid-19 is a serious threat to global peace and security and has also perpetuated a global humanitarian crisis, gender-based, economic recession violence, and xenophobia. Based on the salient findings and major conclusions reached the paper ends by proffering recommendations tailored to promote global peace and security in the aftermath of the Covid-19 outbreak*.

**Key Words**: Coronavirus, peace, security and geopolitics

### Introduction

This paper focuses on how “Coronavirus Disease 2019” (Covid-19) is threatening global peace and security. Coronavirus disease -2019 is a pneumonia-like respiratory illness that has spread like wildfire from the time it appeared in the Chinese region of Hubei, in the city of Wuhan in the latter days of December 2019. Currently, as we write this article, there are more than one hundred and ninety-five million confirmed cases worldwide, with a death toll of more than one and half million while more forty-two million have recovered from lethal Covid-19 (Worldometer, 2020 and WHO Dashboard, 2020). These numbers do increase every minute and it is anticipated that the death toll will rapidly increase into millions before the vaccine to cure the ailment is discovered and made available by scientists.

It is worth noting that Covid-19 was declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020, by the World Health Organization (WHO) having been declared a public health emergency of international concern on January 30. Since then, many countries have swung into action to stop the spread of this deadly virus. These actions include mass quarantines and nationwide lockdowns, closing of schools, suspending of public transport, ban on international and local movements among many other efforts (Ishveena, 2020). Johns Hopkins University highlights that not until the vaccine for Covid-19 or prophylactic treatment is available, the management of this pandemic will solely rely on traditional public health methods like case identification and contact tracing (Johns Hopkins, 2020).

One of the immediate consequences of the pandemic has been the economic well-being of the poor segments of society especially as employment shrinks due to the result of lockdowns. United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres highlighted that “the pandemic also poses a significant threat to the maintenance of international peace and security potentially leading to an increase in social unrest and violence that would greatly undermine our ability to fight the disease". He further noted that in areas where conflicts have been rife. Covid-19 has created further room for actors to promote further crisis. Consequently, this will lead to further escalation of violence and conceivably much damage. This eventually could imbed ongoing wars and exacerbate efforts to fight the pandemic (UN, 2020).

Similarly, Special Advisor to UN Secretary-General Karen Smith also observed that “While it is natural to look inward in times like these, it is equally important that we do not lose sight of the plight of millions of people around the world who remain extremely vulnerable to atrocities being committed against them, and to remind governments that they remain responsible for not only protecting their populations against pandemics but also against atrocity crimes” (UN, 2020). Marczak (2020) posits that racism is creeping in at a terrible speed into Covid-19 narratives, ultimately combining with violation of human rights. It is anticipated that there is a likelihood of intensified crimes and atrocities such as ethnic cleansing and perhaps genocide in countries where underlying causes of conflicts and violence have been experienced, especially the vulnerable communities which have been persecuted (Webinar 2020).

As for terrorism and bioterrorism fears, it was reported that while most governments are engrossed in the fight against the pandemic, terrorist groups will take advantage and strike. "The weaknesses and lack of preparedness exposed by this pandemic provide a window onto how a bioterrorist attack might unfold – and may increase its risks. Non-state groups could gain access to virulent strains that could pose similar devastation to societies around the globe"(UN, 2020).

Covid-19 has derailed efforts to control the proliferation of arms and the entire arms control processes. As a result of this pandemic, there has been cancellation and postponement of various events including the Review Conference of the treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear weapons (NPT) which was scheduled to take place at the end of April 2020 in New York. Besides, the risk of nuclear war is more imminent and higher than during the cold war, this is because the arms control framework is slowly being bulldozed since the US withdrew from Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Ultimately, this leads to a riotous arms race (Finaud, 2020). There is a lot of uncertainty and fear all over the world. This has its parallels at the local level, Marczak (2020) noted that in North Carolina, gun shops are overwhelmed with long queues of customers who have been busy stocking firearms, and one of the owners was quoted saying “…financial meltdown, pandemic, crime, politics…you throw it all into the pot, and you have one hell of a mess”.

It is likely that as a result of the disastrous Covid-19, violence will be inevitable especially in countries with weak state systems, where there is no transparency and history of gross human rights abuse. Even in countries with strong systems there, there are embers ready to ignite violence, for instance, the interesting emerging trends particularly the 5G conspiracy and destruction of 5G towers and boosters in some countries; the wrangle between China and the American president Donald Trump who intentionally and repeatedly coined the term ‘Chinese Virus’ and also threatened to withdraw American funding to the World Health Organization; the ill-treatment of Africans in China; the controversies surrounding vaccine testing in Africa; the allegation that China created the virus intending to weaken other countries' economies; conspiracy theory that Jews created the virus intending to reap money from selling the vaccine; and unavoidable increase in food insecurity worldwide due to lockdown all show that world peace and security is in jeopardy. All these wars of words and counter-accusations are legitimizing violence and unmistakably indicate that wrong choices are being made towards combating the lethal Covid-19 pandemic. The aim of this study, therefore, is to explore how the deadly Covid-19 pandemic is threatening global peace and security.

Kofi Annan, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations in 2005 highlighted that threats to peace and security in the 21st century include not just armed conflict, civil violence, organized crime, terrorism, arms race, racism, ideological differences and weapons of mass destruction (McInnis 2009). They encompass poverty, deadly infectious diseases, and environmental degradation. The above assertion succinctly captures the thrust of this paper by underpinning the worldwide outbreak of Covid-19, in the context of its implications on global peace and security. As we were writing this paper, the World Health Organisation (WHO) global statistics on the fatalities of Covid-19 stood at more than sixty-seven million confirmed cases and more than one and a half million deaths (WHO Dashboard, 2020). The social, economic, and political repercussions of Covid-19, at an international level, have distressed the already fragile balance of global peace and security, with major powers being at the epicentre of unresolved controversies, accusations and counter-accusations, trade wars and diplomatic confrontations. If the current trends go unchecked, they have the potential to slide the world into a major military fallout, with dire consequences for humanity.

### Covid-19 and the Exacerbation of the Global Humanitarian Crisis

Due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, disruptions in the local and international world food supply chains will likely occur and result in people not affording to buy food. The notion is premised on the fact that big importers will lose confidence in the reliable flow of basic food commodities resultantly panic buying will ensure driving prices up creating an unbearable food crisis for the people across the globe. For low-income countries from Central America and Africa, the consequences could be gruesome with long term repercussions. It is therefore worth noting that Africa constitutes the majority of almost 212 million people in the world who are chronically food insecure and the 95 million who live amidst acute food insecurity largely as a result of climate change (Sango and Nhamo 2015). With the prevalence of this Covid-19, it, therefore, means that the supply of food aid has been halted and hunger and poverty never seen before are likely to bedevil the African continent, and levels of food insecurity are likely to skyrocket in the coming days.

The Crisis Group (2020) postulates that Covid-19 emergency could exacerbate the humanitarian crisis in Central America concerning the Trump administration's immigration policies as well as the region's already high levels of violent crime. Having announced the closure of its Southern border to all non-essential traffic from 21 March 2020 the United States of America may seek to strengthen efforts to halt the arrival of migrants and refugees from central and resultantly this is likely to create a serious humanitarian crisis in the region exposing people to more health hazards amidst this coronavirus pandemic.

It has also been observed that the outbreak of Covid-19 can cause havoc in weak states and trigger widespread unrest. Its implications are especially serious for those caught amid conflict and the diseases are likely to disrupt humanitarian aid flows exposing ordinary people to serious food shortages. As highlighted by Kofi Annan former Secretary-General of the UN in 2005 that threats to peace and security in the 21st century include not just international war and conflict but civil violence, organized crime, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction. They include poverty, deadly infectious diseases, and environmental degradation and these have equally catastrophic consequences. In light of the above statement, the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic should, therefore, be treated as a serious threat to global peace and security.

### Surge in Gender-Based Violence in Times of Lockdown and the Impending Global Recession

Activities that involve the gathering of people, meetings, and awareness sessions on gender-based violence have been suspended due to the outbreak of coronavirus. As such the creation of such curfews and lockdowns will make women more vulnerable to gender-based violence and domestic abuse. Anderlini (2020) posits that "As the coronavirus engulfs us across continents forcing stagnation not only the cancellation of activities but also prioritization of humanitarian efforts”. Interestingly, this pandemic with its multifaceted security dimensions is demonstrating the centrality and prescience of women’s agendas to contemporary global peace and security challenges. It has to be anticipated and assumed that in another crisis context the risks of men perpetrating violence against women increase with the stresses of unemployment and cramped living conditions. In China for instance, at the height of quarantine, there was a threefold increase in calls to women's shelters regarding violence at home and for those already in abusive relationships, the situation is even worse and dire. Due to various government's policies of lockdown across the globe, people became confined to one place with nothing to do, and obviously, tensions developed amongst families leading to unprecedented levels of gender-based violence which ultimately is a threat to peace and security.

The crisis group (2020) notes that the disease's catastrophic economic impact could as well sow the seeds of future disorder in a way that threatens global peace and security. It is important to highlight that the world in contemporary times has become a global village in which states rely on each other for survival. However, with the mushrooming of the Covid-19 pandemic international flights were suspended, businesses were halted so is trade. In other words, interdependency has been suspended and this is likely to culminate into a serious global recession with dire consequences to social security. Most international companies are likely to close or downsize their staff leading to a surge in unemployment. A global recession of unknown scope lies ahead, pandemic related transport restrictions will disrupt trade and food supplies for instance in Southern Africa it is a fact that South Africa is the economic giant of the region on which all countries in the region rely for survival. It is saddening to note that with the outbreak of the Covid-19 all borders were closed and restrictions have been imposed no meaningful trade is taking place in the region and the same applies to the international community. Poverty levels never seen before is likely to skyrocket as a result of this imminent economic recession. As the Crisis Group noted at the start of 2020, the raucous protests of 2019 stemmed from a pervasive sense of economic injustice that could set more cities ablaze this year. Anger over the effects of Covid-19 and perceptions that the governments are mismanaging them could eventually trigger more demonstrations and such demonstrations will threaten peace and security.

### Covid-19 and Xenophobic Sentiments, Disease Outbreak and Geopolitical Friction

One further reason is Covid-19 clear potential to unleash racial and xenophobic sentiment especially in countries with large immigrant communities. Early in the crisis, Chinese labourers in Kenya faced harassment linked to the suspicion that Chinese southern airline flights are bringing the coronavirus into the country. The current reckless statements by the United States President Trump attributing the virus as the ‘Chinese virus’ ignites racial sentiments amongst its citizens who then will develop hatred toward the Chinese residing and operating in the United States of America. Similarly, and closer home South Africa is one of the countries in the continent that houses a multiplicity of nationalities from across the globe and given its history of xenophobic attacks there is a real likelihood that there will be a re-ignition of xenophobic sentiments with the increase in the number of new cases of Covid-19 infections in South Africa. South Africans are likely to accuse foreigners of bringing the disease and further spreading it and the result will be xenophobic attacks. Such attacks cause the death of innocent people creating more problems for human security and also for fear of losing their lives people will be obliged to disperse exposing themselves to the menace of the Covid-19.

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic culminated in a trade war between China and the United States of America. The extreme example of this was the notorious statement by U.S Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross suggesting that the outbreak in China represents an economic opportunity for the United States (Hindustan Times, 2020). It is worth noting that the Covid-19 has fuelled geopolitical tensions with the U.S blaming china for the disease while Beijing tries to make friends by offering aid to affected countries thereby exacerbating existing great power tensions that complicate cooperation in crisis management. Taking the issue of Covid-19 on one hand and China and U.S on the other it can be observed the outbreak of the pandemic is premised on the economic fight between the great powers but with far-reaching consequences for the countries with poor health systems. It seems in the opinion of the writers to be biological warfare gone wrong as it has turned to be hard-hitting the superpowers particularly America more than other countries. The fallout between China and the USA is exacerbated by the proclamations by China that she is prepared to assist North Korea in fighting the coronavirus pandemic. Global peace and security are extremely threatened when one notes the insistence by the American president Donald Trump that if China is found to be responsible for manufacturing the coronavirus, which he described as a “worse attack than the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbour or the 9/11 attack” she will be severely punished (obviously through military penal procedures) (BBC, 2020).

### Conclusion

The Covid-19 outbreak made a compelling revisitation of the concept of international peace and security by scholars. It became abundantly apparent that the threats to peace and security are not confined to armed conflict, violence, organized crime, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction but cascades to poverty, an outbreak of infectious diseases, and environmental degradation. The current world attention on the deadly coronavirus disease has engineered a shift of attention from the plight of millions of people chronically exposed to atrocities, human rights abuses, violence, racism, political disenfranchisement, and terrorism. The covid-19 pandemic, as observed in this study has triggered a major humanitarian crisis by scuttling food production and food supply chains thus fuelling frightening levels of global poverty. The study also concludes that most countries were likely to experience economic recession which will have far-reaching consequences on the international political landscape, peace, and security. The study finally concludes that the current international social, economic, and political dynamics are a solemn threat to global peace and security.

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# Partnering for Security: The Role and Imperatives of Local Non-State Actors in Nigeria

## William E. ODION, Patrick I. CHUKE, & Patrick N. UHUNMWANGHO

### Abstract

*Nigeria is a country blessed with natural potentials that can be harnessed for development. Ironically, she is currently confronted by myriads of security challenges that have impeded the march to development. With the challenges overwhelming the state's capacity to provide adequate security for lives, properties and threats to the statehood at large, partnering in the process has, therefore, become a ready alternative. Unfortunately, even with the plethora of legal security agencies, the security challenges have assumed a demographic dimension in the country with peculiarity found in the various regions. In the attempt to discuss succinctly the Local Non-State Actors (LNSAs) as partners in the security management of the country, this paper identified the forms of LNSAs, the propelling reasons that necessitated LNSAs in the Nigerian context, their operational challenges, the emerging security challenges and demographic spread. It concluded that security challenge is widespread in the country with recorded deaths and loss of properties. Therefore, the idea behind LNSAs is a welcome development that deserved encouragement, particularly now that the federal government has risen to the challenge of recognizing community policing in the country. But, more importantly, they should be closely monitored to avoid misuse and abuse.*

**Keywords:** bandits, demography, insurgency, security, vigilante, violence.

### Introduction

Emerging security challenges appears to have overwhelmed the law enforcement agencies in Nigeria. Mere police, paramilitary and military presence has not deterred groups from crossing the red line in Nigeria. Security challenges have become fierce than before with the attendant use of sophisticated weapons. It needs not be emphasized that this had threatened the foundation of the Nigerian state. More importantly, a major responsibility of a responsible government is the provision of security for the lives and properties of its citizens to avoid chaos and create an atmosphere for development to occur. The state occupies and plays a dominant role in society since it monopolizes the legitimate use of physical force. Unfortunately, as the Nigerian experience had shown, trending security challenges such as abduction, armed robbery, banditry, ritual killings, ethnic militias, herdsmen-farmers crisis and Boko Haram insurgency, is at the centre stage. Combating the menace had been difficult for the law enforcement agents due to many reasons, which included inadequate equipment and security personnel, the sophistication of criminal activities, difficult terrain, insider collaboration, corruption, beneficiaries of crisis, loss of confidence in the state by security personnel etc. Consequently, citizens and their properties have been left vulnerable while life had become meaningless. Hence, citizens had to devise ways and means of providing security for themselves, their properties and the community at large. Thus, questions concerning the capacity of the state-designed and led security architecture to deal with the above had been raised. The import of the expose is the fragility of the Nigerian state and a possible state failure.

In the light of the above, this paper seeks to find answers to the forms of LNSA, the propelling reasons for LNSA and the operational challenges, emerging security challenges and their demographic spread as well as the imperatives for LNSA. To achieve the above objectives the following research questions were asked: What are the forms of LNSA? What are the propelling reasons that necessitated LNSA? What are the operational challenges? What are the emerging security challenges and demographic spread?

### Methodology

The descriptive method was adopted in this paper and data gathered were generated from secondary sources. These sources included textbooks, journals, newspapers, and internet materials. Specifically, the data sourced were mostly on issues of insecurity in Nigeria. Some of the newspapers sampled because of their wide coverage and availability included The Nation and Punch. However, personal observation also played a fundamental role in strengthening the analysis.

### Theoretical Framework

In this paper, the role theory is adopted as the theoretical framework for analysing the contributions of non-state actors as partners in the response to security challenges. It is a theoretical framework that is devoted to the study of behaviour, with emphasis on the role. Through the works of scholars like Mead (1934), Banton (1965), Biddle (1979), and Benes (2011), the theory was popularized. It posits that each social role is a set of rights, duties, expectations, norms and behaviours that a person has to face or fulfil (http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index). Highlights of the propositions of the role theory about social behaviour are as follows: (i) the division of labour in society take the form of the interaction among heterogeneous specialized positions that are called roles. (ii) social roles include appropriate and permitted forms of behaviour, guided by social norms, which are commonly known and hence determine expectations. (iii) roles are occupied by individuals, who are called “actors”. (iv) change conditions can render a social role outdated or illegitimate, in which case social pressures are likely to lead to role change (<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index>).

The role theory argues that we can draw an analogy between individuals (in society and the state (Ezeani, 2015). This implies that the roles ascribed to individuals in the society are applied in the explanation of the behaviour of the state (Benes, 2011). Furthermore, Chafetz (1997) argued that actors usually have multiple roles that vary in overall importance (centrality) and according to the situation (context or salience). In lending support to the above, it is argued that an individual or group may play multiple roles simultaneously depending on the situation (Sekhri, 2009). It is however important to note that humans and groups usually maintain a repertoire of roles and identities, so long each provides roles of appropriate behaviour in situations for which they are relevant (March and Olsen, 2004). It is obvious from the analysis above that the roles theory is very relevant in examining the contributions of non-state actors as partners in the response to security challenges in Nigeria.

### Conceptual Clarification

Protection of lives and properties of citizens remains a major responsibility of government. Therefore, the establishment of several state security outfits is to achieve the objective of providing internal and external security for the country. Thus, combating (in) security challenges in Nigeria has led to the establishment of a number of institutions of state defence and apparatus for combating criminal activities. In the context of this paper, state security actors refer to the plethora of security agencies put in place by the government to provide security. They are the Armed Forces (Army, Navy and Air Force), Police, Directorate of State Services (DSS), National Intelligence Agency (NIA), Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Paramilitary agencies e.g. Immigration, Customs and Prisons. The non-state actors, on the other hand, are different from the state apparatus since they are not put in place by the government. They are often recognized by government security agencies as they provide complementary services in an attempt to provide a secured environment for citizens to go about their business. Among the non-state actors are local non-state actors who are domicile in their respective communities.

Security is a multi-dimensional concept. It has various meanings such as environmental, human, national, social, food, military and homeland security. This paper, however, focuses on environmental and human security. Environmental security refers to the protection of the environment and ecosystem, while human security refers to the protection of lives and properties. Counterinsurgency refers to actions, measures designed and implemented to curtail insurgency.

### Forms and Operational Challenges of Local Non-State Actors

#### Forms

The following local groups have emerged and served as partners in policing the neighbourhood to help curb criminal activities.

***Vigilante:*** This is a form of community-based policing method. In Spanish and Portuguese, vigilante means watchman. It is self-appointed civilians or organizations acting in a law enforcement capacity often without legal authority (Wiki, 2019a). It is not a recent idea as it predates colonialism in Nigeria. In local communities, an arrangement is put in place whereby a group of persons were chosen to guard or police the communities/villages both day and night. They undertake law enforcement in their respective communities and have since acted in collaboration with the Police. They use local intelligence operations in collaboration with security agencies.

***Anti-cult Group:*** This group is often made up of renounced cultists who work in conjunction with the Police to apprehend known cultists and curb cult-related activities in areas where they are prevalent. They are mostly found in the university environment because this is where a high number of the youth population, who are mostly prone to becoming members are domiciled.

***Hunters group:*** These are mostly made up of farmers and hunters. They help to comb forests and are very familiar with their respective terrain. They have served in some cases as night guards who sometimes helped in tracking down kidnappers mostly in the bush. Common to this group is that members of the respective groups were recruited from local communities who could also fortify themselves with charms.

***Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF):*** This is a kind of community policing that encourage partnership between the Joint Task Force and the local communities in providing security. It emerged as a community effort and later as a joint effort with security forces to provide security. CJTF is a loose group formed in Maiduguri Nigeria in the heat of the Boko Haram insurgency. It played a collaborative role with security agencies to help oust Boko Haram Islamist fighters from the city (Wiki, 2019b). Civilians incorporated into the force are locally selected, made to possess guns and they reside in the communities. The advantage is that members of the various guards were well known in the communities and could volunteer information that can lead to crack down on acts of criminality mostly in the North East region. Amotekun, which is a security arrangement put in place by the South West Governors as part of the Development Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN), may well fall into this category. It incorporates local vigilantes, hunters, Agbekoyas, and Oodua People’s Congress (OPC). The essence is to gather intelligence and partner/collaborate with state actors in securing the region.

***Oodua People’s Congress (OPC):*** This group was formed in 1994 as a militant arm of Afenifere – a pan Yoruba group. Initially, the group was at the forefront of protesting the annulment of the June 12, 1993, Presidential election. Its goal was basically the protection of Yoruba interests. Membership was opened to everybody that was Yoruba by origin. Though the OPC was formed to primarily protect, champion and defend the right of every Yoruba person, it has since acted and existed as a vigilante group (Akpan, 2006; Agweda, 2007) to secure the lives and properties of persons in the Yoruba enclaves.

Finally, ***Neighbourhood Watch*** is a way of reducing crime by organizing people who live in an area to watch each other and properties and tell the police about possible crimes and criminals. They are mostly devoted to crime and vandalism reportage and prevention within the neighbourhood. Besides, the fact that they complement the security agencies effort in combating crimes, it also aims at bringing people together to make their environment and community safe (Wiki, 2019c). The Lagos State Neighbourhood Watch, Rivers State Neighbourhood Watch and Zamfara State Volunteer Groups Association put together by the respective state governments are major examples.

It should be noted that the above represents self-help attempts by communities to respond to their safety threats occasioned by the overwhelming prevalence of crimes and criminal activities in Nigeria, coupled with the inability and inadequacies of the legal agencies in combating security challenges.

#### Operational Challenges

There are known operational challenges in allowing these outfits to exist side by side with the legal security agencies. For example, politics have affected the operational performance of LNSA. Through government policies and programmes, their activities are regulated. Their independence from the existing political structure is, therefore, not guaranteed. Thus, they are compromised in the discharge of their duties. There is no gainsaying the fact that sitting governments usually recruit members of the outfits mostly from among loyal party members. In certain cases, these outfits have been hijacked by politicians or the power elites and used as an instrument of political vendetta. In a bid to regulate their activities, they were deployed to advance the cause of their paymasters, used to intimidate and oppress political opponents as well as silence opposition in democracies. The implication is the compromise of the original intention.

Secondly, there is the unintended consequence of empowerment against the state. This means taking up arms against the same state that they were expected to protect. This perhaps lends credence to the emergence of Boko Haram in the North East and militants in the South-South as groups that started small but later transformed into a terrorist and militant group, respectively against the state, thus defeating the original intention.

It has also served as a shield for criminal elements in society. Certain members of these groups have used the platform as cover for their nefarious activities. Identifying with the platform saved them from prosecution, more so when those recruited were not subjected to the rigorous policing recruitment process. Where they exist, some have deviated from their objectives and were used for settlement of disputes, guards to criminal elements and corrupt politicians in the society, available to those that can pay their bills during ceremonies etc. With endemic corruption in society, LNSAs are not spared. Societal influence has made them abandon and deviate from set targets, carry out illegal activities, perpetrate acts of criminality, and escort dubious economic saboteurs and elites.

Overzealousness of some members of these groups is another major challenge. There have been reported cases of violations as some members deployed excessive use of intimidation, violence and extrajudicial killings of innocent citizens under the flimsiest excuse. Suspects have been severally manhandled with severe injuries left behind. In this circumstance, citizens’ rights are violated.

Moreover, the vulnerability of group members is yet another challenge for LNSAs. They are endangered and become immediate unwilling victims of the process without insurance cover. Some members have been attacked while others have lost their lives in a crossfire with criminal elements. This vulnerability is often coupled with inadequate security infrastructure. For example, weapons of the criminal elements oftentimes were more sophisticated than that of group members, thus exposing them to higher and superior firepower.

Inter-agency rivalries are also part of the operational challenge of the LNSAs. The argument regarding whose responsibility it is to provide security has jettisoned the gains of cooperation and collaboration. Arguments of insufficient training and non-identification with members have made it difficult to form a synergy with other security agencies in providing security. The reluctance of the regular government security actors to be incorporated in the Amotekun project finds an explanation in the above.

Shortage of funds, personnel and other logistics, such as vehicles, communication gadgets, insurance, arms and ammunitions have also created a problem for the effective discharge of their responsibility. The synergy between LNSAs and the security organization requires a lot of funds. The absence of the above has frustrated and incapacitated the exercise.

Finally, the over-centralization of security architecture is such that poses a great challenge. The organizational problem is perhaps one of the greatest obstacles as approvals to carry out certain actions are regulated from the centre and so the bureaucracy can stall legitimate and genuine purposes. The frustration is such that LNSAs must submit to the regular legal security agencies for the final determination or disposal of cases particularly in a situation, where there is a conflict of interest. Considering that in Nigeria, the Police Force renders reactive and not proactive service, where the emphasis is mostly on crime-fighting which mostly involve apprehension and prosecution of criminals, the measurement of their effectiveness is based on the number of arrests and prosecutions that are handled over a given period (Ugwuoke, 2006). In the light of the above, the police system is bound to be isolated from the causes of crimes, from the stakeholders, who could address such problems and from the information required to manage such situations (Conradie, 1999).

### The Propelling Reasons for the Emergence of LNSA

Failure of state security apparatus to provide adequate security for citizens (failure of state capacity) is a major propelling factor that has led to the emergence of LNSAs. A major responsibility of the state is the protection of the lives and properties of its citizens. It is no longer in doubt that the Nigerian state security institutions are overwhelmed by the myriad of criminality in the country. The latest attempt is for the citizens to organize for the preservation of their peace and security through local outfits. The administration of ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo recognized this threat and approved community policing since 1999 and was again echoed, by President Muhammadu Buhari in 2019.

Increase in security challenges such as those posed by Boko Haram insurgency, herdsmen-farmers clashes, kidnapping and abduction, armed banditry, rituals killings, ethnic agitations, militancy in the Niger Delta, vandalism etc have threatened and challenged the state capacity to provide adequate security for the citizens and the country at large.

Again, combating criminal activities requires good knowledge and understanding of the respective terrain. Terrains, such as the very vast Sambisa forest in the North-Eastern Nigeria and the swampy and riverine nature of the Niger Delta in South-South Nigeria respectively are peculiar terrains that demand local network to achieve success. Major successes are recorded with the incorporation of LNSAs in the security architecture. This is further affirmed by the fact that there is strength in joint action and collaboration, particularly with the transnational dimension that many criminal activities have assumed.

The successes recorded in previous attempts by existing LNSAs in other climes have motivated the proliferation of LNSAs in Nigeria. Citizens have discovered that there is a gain in working together for the safety of lives and properties, hence the establishment of new ones.

Over-centralization of security architecture has led to the inability of the state agencies to provide adequate security. This state failure occasioned by the over-centralization of authority is mostly evident in the command structure of the security agencies. Security agencies compromise at certain stages has created room for the escalation of crisis across the country.

It should be recognized at this juncture, however, that the major contributions of the LNSAs were that they have been able to complement the official security system effort in combating crime. In the era of massive youth unemployment, it has served as avenues for the empowerment of youth as many of them that would have been a source of pressure on the state were recruited.

### Emerging Security Challenges, Methods, Demographic Spread and Consequences

Without too much emphasis, it is already a known fact that there are serious security challenges in Nigeria. There is Boko Haram terrorism/insurgency in the North East. Their targets are mostly security agencies, Christians and the civilian populace. Their demands are the abolition of western education and the Islamisation of the country. Poverty, extreme indoctrination, failed governance, political intrigues and contradiction are the propelling factors. Though their identities are unknown, there are strong indications that they enjoy local and international sponsorship. Their instruments of operation are mostly sophisticated guns, bombs, explosives and grenades. Killings, bombings, massive use of explosives, hit and run remain their strategy. Government response has been confrontational through the use of the military (Agbebaku, Odion, and Edokpa, 2014). Outfits, such as Operation Lafia Dole, Joint Task Force (JTF) and Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), have been used variously to combat the menace of terrorism in the region.

The herdsmen/farmers clash mostly exist in the North-Central. These clashes are engaged in by farmers and herders whom both struggle for survival. While the herders struggle for grazing land, farmers and communities struggle for farmland. Their instruments of operation are mostly guns, grenades and burnings. The strategy is to attack and counter-attack on cattle herders and communities. The response of government and affected communities has been to use the police, military, hunter groups, youth vanguard, Joint Task Force (JTF) and Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF). To further address this issue, Ekiti and Benue States have passed laws banning open grazing and empowered outfits, such as the Benue State Livestock Guards to arrest herders, who continued with open grazing in defiance of the law.

Armed bandits/gangsterism are mostly found in the North-West. Villages and communities are the targets of attack. In recent times, the presence of gold (a natural resource) in commercial quantity and its illegal mining in Zamfara State is linked to the crisis in the North-West. Poverty and extreme indoctrination, as well as control of the illegal mining sites, are propelling factors. The operational units are decentralized. Their identities are known and sponsorship is both by local and international elites. The instrument of operation are guns, cudgels, explosives, knives while they mostly use massive killings, extortion, harassment, intimidation, acts of violence, hit and run, and fear to control their territory. The response of government towards combating the menace has been military confrontation through such outfit codenamed Operation Puff Adder, Operation Hadarin Daji, and Operation Harbin Kunama 3. In Zamfara State, for example, outfits, such as Joint Task Force (JTF) and Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) have been put together. Also, all forms of mining activities in the state have been suspended by the federal government until further notice.

In the South-South region and, in particular, the Niger Delta, militancy is prevalent. The targets of attack are mostly pipelines, oil installations and security agencies. The demand of the militants is amongst others resource control. Massive underdevelopment, pollution, poverty, exploitation, poor quality of life and degradation of the ecosystem are amongst other reasons that propel militancy. The leadership and operational bases of the militants are decentralized while they enjoy local and international sponsorship. Their instrument of operation is mostly sophisticated guns, bombs, explosives and grenades. Massive killings, vandalisation and blowing up of oil pipelines, installations and destruction/disruption of flow stations have been their strategy. Besides the granting of Amnesty by the government, a military confrontation with the militants through outfits, such as Joint Task Force (JTF) and Operation Python Dance, had also been adopted by the government. In the case of abduction, the instrument of operation is sophisticated guns and the strategy employed is coercion, intimidation, killings and ransom payment. Youth and herders are mostly culpable in this act.

In the South-West, ritual killings, rape and armed robberies are endemic. Children, girls and women are most vulnerable. Vital human parts are required of this vulnerable target to perform rituals. The group operates as a syndicate and the driving force is the quest for riches. Victims are often blindfolded, charmed and intimidated. The identities of the perpetrators, who are mostly youth, are unknown until they are arrested. Individual risk is taken by members of the organized syndicate. The police in collaboration with the youth vanguard, neighbourhood watch and ethnic militias like Odua Peoples Congress (OPC) have helped in combating this menace.

Finally, in the South-East region, there are myriad security challenges. Ethnic agitations, vandalism, abduction and communal clashes are identified as major security challenges in the region. Ethnic agitation is brought about by the inequity in the operations of the federal structure and the grievance is directed at the federal government. Abduction, vandalisation of pipeline and cable is also prevalent. Attacks are often directed at the elites, security agencies and oil installations. Poverty and the quest for riches remains the motivating factor for the menace of abduction and vandalism in this region and the youth are mostly involved. They operate as a syndicate, often hiding their identities until they are arrested. Guns, explosives and bombs are mostly used in their operation. While abducted victims are required to pay a ransom, intimidation and killings are used in other cases. In the same vein, communal clashes are notable features of this region. Such clashes may be over land ownership, boundary adjustment or presence of natural resources. Influential local politicians and businessmen are sponsors. Government response has been through the use of the military, such as Operation Python Dance and Joint Task Force (JTF).

However, the consequences of the aforementioned security challenges are multi-faceted. The destructive nature of violence anywhere constitutes a severe threat to socio-economic and sustainable development. The impact includes loss of lives and properties, battered international image, loss of revenue, the proliferation of arms and deadly weapons, fresh challenges for security operatives, increased security budgets, the problem of integration, and discourages investments/ investors. It can severely constrain development endeavours by destroying infrastructures, interrupting production processes and diverting resources from productive uses (Agbebaku, Odion and Edokpa, 2014). Generally, the legacy of prolonged security challenges in Nigeria has partly accounted for the crisis of underdevelopment in the country through disarticulation of the development process. It has been devastating and consequential to the emergence of a truly stable polity and society. Violence, conflicts and instability do not only destroy the very foundation of development, it is difficult to mobilize structures and resources in support of development under the aforementioned condition as evidenced by Bhagwati (1995). It has also encouraged the recruitment of child soldiers, severe violence against children and women and the dislocation of family units. Furthermore, the educational development of the child, which has the potentials of impacting future development, is hampered.

### The Imperatives of LNSAs in Nigeria Security Architecture

Apart from the propelling factors for the emergence of LNSAs and the operational challenges, strong advocacy is required for their sustenance and effectiveness. In a democratic environment, such as practised in Nigeria, a decentralized system that allows the citizens to participate in combating security challenges is necessary. The advantage of involving the citizens in a collaborative arrangement with the legal security agencies for the provision of security cannot be overemphasized. Leaving this vital aspect of security management for government institutions alone leaves the citizens endangered as experience has shown in Nigeria. Thus, in an environment, where there are spontaneous attacks by invaders, citizens must necessarily be involved in arranging for the protection and safety of the environment through the formation of synergy. Besides the above, there is strength in joint action and collaboration in providing homeland security and securing government installations. There is strength in unity and a gain in working together, as shared information, responsibility and collaboration stands to yield more results. Increased interdependence of this nature is brought about by the enormity of the security challenge and disparity in resources available to deal with a common problem.

The complementary role played by these LNSAs makes it imperative and is worth emulating. The Harmonized Vigilante Groups, such as hunters group, the Agbekoyas and OPC in Yoruba land are combing South West forests in a bid to help the formal security arrangement curb the nefarious activities of militia Fulani herders and kidnappers. Barely 24 hours after Dayo, the son of a former Minister of Health, was kidnapped at his farm located at Iroko near Fiditi in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State, the workers raised alarm which alerted the villagers. The local hunters immediately mobilized and went after the kidnappers and succeeded in recovering the car used, though Dayo and the kidnappers were not immediately found. A similar incident occurred in Ikpeshi, Akoko Edo in Edo State, where a Catholic Reverend Father Agabi was kidnapped along Auchi-Igarra Road. Immediately the information got to the villagers, the local hunters mobilized to comb the bush. Fortunately, an encounter that led to the exchange of firearms between the duo created an avenue for the abducted priest to escape. A family of five returning from a burial ceremony and abducted at Egoro-Naoka road by suspected Fulani herders were rescued by local vigilante/hunters in Ekpoma, Edo State who immediately formed a synergy among various groups at Uhiele, Urohi, Egor-Naoka and moved into the forest. In the ensuing gun battle, one of the abductors was shot dead while others fled leaving behind the abductees. In Oyo State, OPC helped in smashing a gang of four that constantly terrorized the Ile-Ife-Ibadan road and residents of Ikire (Bamigbola, 2019).

The argument here is that, even with the plethora of legal security agencies, it is obvious that adequate security is still elusive in the country. This conclusion is occasioned by the myriad of security challenges and its demographic spread that daily confronts the country. Deduced from the above is the possibility of the inadequacy of competent security personnel and equipment to combat the enormous threat, which has led to the failure of state capacity. Therefore, partnership with LNSAs is required to complement the efforts of the established institutions. Also, to effectively combat security challenges in the various regions, it would require knowledge and understanding of the local terrain. This is where the LNSAs are handy as they are mostly domiciled in the communities and are familiar with the terrains, and topography. In this direction, the Northern Governors Forum (NGF) had set up a committee to engage local vigilantes and community watch groups on intelligence gathering, rapid response and sustained surveillance in the region (Hassan, 2020).

Furthermore, the need to decentralize the operation of a formal security network lends credence to this advocacy. Earlier recognized is that the organizational arrangement of the regular security agencies is problematic and cumbersome. A system where command flows from the top to bottom is both time-wasting and susceptible to corruption. Thus, it slows down the rate of success. LNSAs are domiciled in local communities and are available for quick response in terms of crime prevention, control and combat.

### Conclusion

Conclusively, Nigeria is at a crossroad in terms of effectively dealing with security challenges. Apart from the trend of a rising crime wave which often includes the killing of innocent citizens, more worrisome is the new scenes of public disorder which has increasingly necessitated the use of armed response, especially around the North-West region, where there is the prevalence of armed bandits.

With the seeming decline in the public support for the state structured security system occasioned by corruption, ineffectiveness and loss of confidence, it is obvious that citizens have relied more on ad hoc community packaged arrangements as identified above for the safety of lives, properties and their communities. Therefore, this arrangement should be sustained and recognized by the government, particularly at the local level, more so when citizens have confidence in them and they are domiciled in the communities. Regular training that dwells on civility is also recommended as it will help address the twin problems of arrogance and overzealousness.

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1. Interview with Jonathan Dianabassi (Indigene of Bayelsa State from Ogbia LGA), Yenagoa, 5 August 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Interview with Augustine Ikelegbe (Professor of Comparative Politics and Public Policy, University of Benin), Victoria Island, Lagos, 14 July 2014). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Interview with Prince Igodo (Indigene of Okigbene Community, Southern Ijaw LGA), Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 5 August 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. The numbers of weapons collected, and from which group they were collected, remains highly disputed. There are no official public numbers of what was turned in, by whom, and for what payment. The Niger Delta Project for Environment, Human Rights, and Development and Amnesty International also reported that roughly 3,000 weapons were submitted during the process. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Dimieari von Kemedi was a member of government in Bayelsa.

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