

ARMED VIGILANTE SERVICES AND INSECURITY: A LEGAL QUAGMIRE

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Abstract

The rise in terrorism, armed robbery, kidnapping, murders and other related crimes in recent years has led to security challenges which affect the daily lives of citizens often leading to loss of business and properties in Nigeria. The various law enforcement agencies tasked with providing security and maintaining law and order for Nigerians are often, overwhelmed, overworked and underpaid which leads to lack of zeal, passion and numeric strength to effectively secure lives and properties in addition to other duties. This study examines the roles of these agencies and the laws that empower them to carry out their duties. Employing the doctrinal research methodology, this article aims to explore the concept of vigilantism and the legality of armed vigilante services. It analyzed the trends which have led to a rising insecurity problem in Nigeria and the controversy surrounding some of the popular vigilante groups. This is with a view to appreciating the necessity which gave birth to the rise of armed vigilante groups and the effectiveness of these groups in some geo-political zones. This researcher opines that armed vigilante has become a necessary effort due to the rising insecurity in Nigeria despite the challenges involved. This researcher further opines that though armed vigilante services is a welcome development, it needs to be regulated properly monitored and supervised to ensure that the purpose for which they were set up is actualized to wit; to maintain law and order and to protect the lives and properties of Nigerians. This paper finds that there is need to prevent proliferation of armed groups across the nation as it poses a potent threat to national security.

Keywords: Vigilante, insecurity, armed vigilante services, community watch group, law enforcement, security

Introduction:

The ideology of vigilantism has been in existence even prior to the introduction of the word vigilante into the English language. The Holy Bible, through the teachings of the disciples and Jesus Christ preaches about vigilance in several instances.¹ It admonishes Christians to “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”²

The term *vigilante* is borrowed from the Spanish language and it means “sentinel” or “watcher”. According to a political scientist, vigilantism is “the extralegal prevention, investigation, or punishment of offenses.”³ In the western origins, stories about heroes and outlaws who have characteristics of vigilantism have often been told such as *Robin Hood*.⁴ Vigilantism has long existed in many parts of Nigeria even in pre-colonial times, where various ethnic groups had bodies charged with protecting their territories from invaders, maintaining order and enforcing edicts from the royal and traditional rulers. In the North, traditional hunters known as *yan baka* and palace guards known as *dogarai* were entrusted with the protection of the Hausa community.⁵ The Yorubas had the *ogboni*, a popular cultural group and the *egungun* masquerade group who encouraged public morality in the South-West while the Igbo people who are located in the South-East depended on *ndi nche* which basically means community guards who enforced law and order.⁶

In 1870, there was a rise in crimes which ranged from murder, rape, theft etc. among other vices. The local authorities came together and conceived the idea of establishing the Vigilante Group of Nigeria to fight against the rising insecurity and fight crimes. This is considered as a form of community policing.

The Nigeria Police Force was introduced in 1930 by the British colonial authorities who conquered the various territories that existed and then amalgamated the Southern and Northern protectorates to form what is now known as the country Nigeria. They abolished the indigenous authorities who were responsible for securing the various territories which they regarded as dangerous and established a single Police force charged with policing the entire

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¹ Ephesians 6: 10-18; Mark 13:33

² 1 Peter 5:8-10

³ Bateson Regina (2020). *The Politics of Vigilantism. Comparative Political Studies*. 54 (6): 923–955. doi:10.1177/0010414020957692. ISSN 0010-4140. S2CID 224924776

⁴ M.D. Meyerson, D. Thiery (2004-11-01) *A Great Effusion of Blood? Interpreting Medieval Violence*. University of Toronto Press. ISBN 9780802087744.

⁵ Crisis Group telephone interviews, Murtala Ahmed Rufa’i, history lecturer, Usmanu Danfodio University, Sokoto, 4 February 2022; Idris Mohammed, conflict researcher and mass communications lecturer, Usmanu Danfodio University, Sokoto, 28 February 2022.

⁶ Crisis Group interviews, lecturer in criminology, University of Abuja, Abuja, 2 August 2021; lecturer in history, University of Nigeria, Enugu, 30 August 2021.

country.⁷ The Vigilante Group of Nigeria was formed and established to work closely with the Nigeria Police Force in fighting crimes and protecting the country.⁸ It became registered officially on February 18, 1999 and has its headquarters in FCT, Abuja.

Vigilantism

Vigilantism has been defined as "the extralegal prevention, investigation, or punishment of offenses."⁹ Bateson further opines that vigilantism has three components viz:

1. Extralegal: Vigilantism which is done outside of the law (it may not necessarily be in violation of the law)
2. Prevention, investigation, or punishment
3. Offense: Vigilantism is a response to a perceived crime or violation of an authoritative norm

Vigilantism has also been defined as "the establishment of violence, consisting of acts or threats of coercion in violation of the formal boundaries of the socio-political order, even though its intentions might be toward preventing the subversion of that order." They acknowledge that the principal goal of vigilantism is deterrence, thus categorizing vigilantism into three broad typologies: crime control vigilantism, social group vigilantism, and regime control vigilantism.¹⁰

Vigilante groups generally differ because they have varying reasons for which they were set up.¹¹ In Nigeria, four different forms of vigilantism have been identified. They are:

- One is religious vigilantism, which refers to groups formed for the purpose of enforcing religious laws.¹² An example of this kind of vigilantism is the Hisbah, a vigilante organization created after the introduction of Sharia law in certain Northern states to enforce such law.¹³
- A second form is ethnic vigilantism, a form of informal security structure created to protect, promote and enforce the values and interests of a particular ethnic group.¹⁴ The O'odua People's Congress (OPC) is an example of this kind. The Amatekun group operating in all the South western states of Nigeria is another ethnic vigilante. This group have been pressing for recognition as a legitimate force by the Federal Government. Ebube Agu was set up by the South East Governors to tackle the security challenges of South Eastern Nigeria. OPC which agitates for the autonomy of the Yoruba tribe is very popular among the Yoruba people.¹⁵
- A third type of vigilantism is the "state sponsored vigilantism." These groups are typically created independently of state organs for the purpose of fighting crimes. They eventually become recognized by government institutions and have been known to be used by politicians to play partisan politics. Example is the Bakassi Boys.¹⁶
- The fourth type of vigilantism is the neighborhood or a community watch group, which consists of organized members of a local community or street who provide security. They are usually unarmed.¹⁷

3.0 Rise of Contemporary Vigilantism in Nigeria

The failures of the Nigeria Police Force and other security agencies to curb crime and insecurity, and the delays often experienced by citizens who seek legal redress with the judiciary has led to Nigerian citizens having little or no trust in the federal government's ability to protect all citizens equally irrespective of ethnicity and religion.¹⁸ There is a high rate of unemployment, rise in impunity and a general lack of security in the country. With terrorism and Boko Haram insurgency in the north, ethnic-religious conflicts in the North-Central, cattle herders and farmers

⁷ "Managing vigilantism in Nigeria: A near team-necessity" 2022 available at <https://www.crisisgroup.org> accessed 6/8/2024.

⁸ <https://vgn.ng.org> accessed 6/8/2024.

⁹ Bateson, Regina 2020 *op cit*. Bateson Regina is a political scientist

¹⁰ H. J Rosenbaum & P. C. Sederberg (1974). Vigilantism: An Analysis of Establishment Violence. *Comparative Politics*, 6(4), 541–570 available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/421337> accessed 6/8/2024.

¹¹ Human Rights Watch, 14 (5(A) Nigeria: The Bakassi Boys: The Legitimization of Murder and Torture 8 (2002), available at <https://www.hrw.org/Reports/2002/nigeria2/nigeria0502.Pdf> Accessed 6/8/2024.

¹² E. O Alemika & Innocent C. Chukwuma, Center for Law Enforcement Education, the poor and informal policing in Nigeria: a report on poor people's perceptions and priorities on safety, security and informal policing in a2j focal states in Nigeria 12 (originally produced in 2003, shortened in 2004), available on the governance and social development resource centre (gsdrc) available at <http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/ssaj126.pdf> accessed 6/8/2024.

¹³ Alemika & Chukwuma *supra* note 12: Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP), Sharia Implementation in Northern Nigeria over 15 Years: The Case of Hisbah (Policy Briefing No. 2, 2016), available at <http://www.nsrp-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Sharia-Implementation-in-Northern-Nigeria-Policy-BriefTwo.pdf> accessed 6/8/2024.

¹⁴ Alemika & Chukwuma, *supra* note 12.

¹⁵ Human rights Watch, the O'odua people's congress (OPC): fighting violence with violence 2003 available at <https://www.hrw.org/report/2003/02/28/oodua-peoples-congress-opc/fighting-violence-violence>, accessed 6/8/2024.

¹⁶ Alemika & Chukwuma, *supra* note 12; Human Rights Watch, *supra* note 15.

¹⁷ Alemika & Chukwuma, *supra* note 12.

¹⁸ Managing vigilantism in Nigeria *supra* note 7.

clash in the South-West and South-East, kidnappings for ransom, banditry and mass murders committed by unknown gun men etc. have led to the rise in vigilante groups throughout these regions and the country.¹⁹ These trends are forcing communities and ethnic groups to devise new means of defending their environment as the security challenges have overwhelmed the police force, which remains underfunded, understaffed and under-equipped to tackle these challenges.²⁰

4.0 Role of the Nigeria Police Force

The Nigeria constitution states,

“There shall be a Police Force for Nigeria, which shall be known as the Nigeria Police Force, and subject to the provision of this section no other Police Force shall be established for the federation or any part thereof.”²¹

The Constitution also gives the federal government exclusive legislative jurisdiction over matters relating to Police and other government security services established by law.²²

Section 4 of the Police Act talks about the duties of the Police Force which include prevention and detection of crimes, protection of the rights and freedom of every person in Nigeria, maintenance of public safety, law and order among others.²³

The current decline in the inefficacy of the Nigeria Police Force to tackle rising security challenges and crimes can be traced to the years when Nigeria was under military rule even though Nigeria has been democratically governed for decades now. Some retired police officers who were interviewed by Crisis Group stated that several factors can be attributed to this deterioration.²⁴ They are;

Firstly, most federal agencies and parastatals are located in the FCT, Abuja including the headquarters of the Nigeria Police Force. Even though the state governors are the chief security officers of their states and have the powers to make laws on security matters in their states, they still need to get the approval of the federal government before they can proceed. Furthermore, the Inspector General of Police is solely vested with the power to deploy or recall police officers in all parts of Nigeria thus all operations must be approved by him before state Police Commissioners can proceed or intervene on security matters. These often lead to delay in intervention in pressing security uprising.²⁵

Secondly, the Nigeria Police Force is underfunded and understaffed because the allocation due to the police annually is inadequate to address the needs of the officers from their uniform kits, modernized weapons, security training, communications gadgets, transportation and other logistics. These inadequacies affect the quality of service they provide and they often fall short of meeting the security needs of the average Nigerian citizen.²⁶ Over the years, the federal government has sought to solve these issues by creating more federal law enforcement agencies.²⁷ These have included the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency,²⁸ the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission,²⁹ the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps,³⁰ the National Agency for Trafficking in Persons,³¹ and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission.³² However, these federal agencies are said to have had little impact and private security remains inaccessible to most people in the country.³³ Note that the federal government has since permitted the licensing of private security firms since 1986.³⁴

The worsening situation has led citizens, communities and states to take matters into their hands through self-defense and reliance on vigilante groups. Some states have established their own vigilante groups through their State Houses of Assembly thereby giving it legal backing and protection. According to a 2016 report, out of the

¹⁹ *Supra*

²⁰ F.A. Paki & A. Rufus” The Proliferation of Armed Vigilante Groups in Nigeria: Tacit or Official Endorsement 2023 Journal of Global Science Volume 4 Number 15, 300-317” available at <https://journalsglobal.com> accessed 6/8/2024.

²¹ Section 214 of the 1999 constitution.

²² *Ibid* 2nd Schedule pt 1.

²³ Section 4 of the Nigeria Police Act, 2020.

²⁴ Managing vigilantism in Nigeria *supra*.

²⁵ *Ibid*

²⁶ Crisis Group interviews *supra* note 6

²⁷ J.D Inyang & U.E Abraham, Policing in Nigeria: A Case for Partnership between Formal and Informal Police Institutions, 1(4) merit. Res. J. Art soc. Sci. Human. 53, 54 2013, available at [https://issat.dcaf.ch/download/54869/887091/ Police services Nigeria.pdf](https://issat.dcaf.ch/download/54869/887091/Police%20services%20Nigeria.pdf) accessed 6/8/2024.

²⁸ National Drug Law Enforcement Agency Act of 1989.

²⁹ Corrupt Practices and Other Offences Act No. 6 of 2003.

³⁰ Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps Act No. 73 of 2003.

³¹ Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act No. 24 of 2003.

³² Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act No. 1 of 2004.

³³ 7 Inyang & Abraham, *supra* note 27.

³⁴ Private Guard Companies Act No. 23 of 1986.

thirty-six states in the country, seventeen states and FCT, Abuja, had enacted laws to recognize and regulate vigilante groups while six states have theirs pending.³⁵

5.0 Controversies on Armed Vigilante Services

Though the ideology behind vigilantism is a good one, it can become corrupted for other means. Sometimes, vigilantes have been known to serve their own selfish interest using questionable methods which can put citizens in danger thereby defeating the purpose for which they were set up. Chigozie and Ikechukwu in their study for the administration of vigilantes and the proliferation of firearms in Dunukofia Local Government Area in Anambra State have revealed that the emergence of vigilante groups led to the proliferation of arms and weapons, which in turn boosted gun related violence and crimes.³⁶ Vigilantes need money to operate and they mostly rely on benevolent donors and funders and sometimes, goodwill donations from the community. These monetary donations help them procure weapons, communications gadgets, uniforms and transportation logistics. The members of these groups are poorly compensated for their work and often times have to spend out of their pockets for medical needs that might arise. The harsh reality is that most times resort to solicitations from those they claim to protect and extortion from those they have arrested for committing crimes.³⁷

The public perception is that these groups are militias who enforce ethnic, religious and political divide often dancing to the tune of the politicians and private individuals who finance them. They are hardly seen as unbiased and professional in policing.³⁸ Example, is the Hisbah police in Northern Nigeria who are seen as enforcers of the Islamic culture and the Sharia law. The Supreme Council for Sharia in Nigeria has recognized their relevance thus, requested that the federal government should see the Hisbah as complimentary to police services and not as security rivals.³⁹

The Human Rights Watch has confirmed reports that Bakassi Boys have been used to settle personal scores, eliminate and intimidate political rivals. This is clearly a deviation from the crime fighting mission the Bakassi Boys was originally set up for.⁴⁰ A 2002 Human Rights report described as follows:

“Among the more notorious of these vigilante groups are the Bakassi Boys, active in several states in the south-east of Nigeria. Initially created by traders to fight rampant crime in the large market towns of Aba, in Abia State, then in Onitsha, in Anambra State, the Bakassi Boys have since extended their operations across other parts of Abia, Anambra, and Imo states, with the active support of state governments. In Anambra State, they have been legally recognized, through a special law adopted in August 2000. The methods the Bakassi Boys have used to carry out their “mission” have been extremely brutal, ruthless, and arbitrary. Scores of people have been extra judicially executed or mutilated in public by the Bakassi Boys; hundreds of others have been tortured and detained in their “cells.” Few people appear to question the legality of their actions; large sections of the public, the media and some politicians have applauded them on the basis that they have “succeeded” in bringing down crime levels in the areas where they operate.”⁴¹

Some early vigilante groups such as the Bakassi Boys in the Igbo-speaking South East states or the *yan sakai* in the North West committed human rights violations like extrajudicial killings, torture, violence, arbitrary arrest/detention and mutilation with use of machetes even in public with zero accountability and respect for human rights.⁴²

In a multicultural society like Nigeria, the rise of ethnic and religious vigilante groups can give rise to disunity and internal conflicts. Example is the formation of Amotekun in South West by the Yorubas and Ebubeagu in the South East by the Igbos. These groups were formed in response to the Fulani herdsmen and farmers clashes. Some

³⁵ E. Ogbosor, United States Institute of Peace, Understanding the Informal Security Sector in Nigeria 3 (Special Report 391, Sept. 2016) available at <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR391-Understanding-the-Informal-SecuritySector-in-Nigeria.pdf> accessed 6/8/2024.

³⁶ C. F Chigozie and O.I Ikechukwu 2019. Vigilante administration and firearms proliferation in Dunukofia LGA, of Anambra State from 1999-2016. *Social Facts: Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 1(1&2), 50-67

³⁷ Managing vigilantism in Nigeria *supra*.

³⁸ R. Abraham “Some thoughts in comparative study of vigilantism” in *global vigilantes: Perspectives on Justice and Violence*, edited by Pratten, D and Atreyee S., 407 Lonon Hurst and Company.

³⁹ U.A Jibril Director for Research and Planning, Kano Hisbah Board, Kano. Interview by C. Osakwe and B. N Audu 6 September 2016.

⁴⁰ Human Rights Watch, *supra* note 11.

⁴¹ *Ibid*

⁴² “The Bakassi Boys: The Legitimization of Murder and Torture”, Human Rights Watch, May 2002; and M.A. Rufa’i, “Vigilante Groups and Rural Banditry in Zamfara State: Excesses and Contradictions”, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, vol. 7, no. 6 (2018), pp. 65-73.

Northerners perceive these two vigilante groups as anti-grazing groups who have been set up to challenge their nomadic lifestyle and prevent them from taking their livestock across those states.⁴³ This perceived challenge has led to the development of “counter” groups like *Shege Ka Fasa* (which means I dare you in Hausa language)⁴⁴. Ethnic-religious vigilantism can lead to tribal clashes and internal conflict for a diverse country like Nigeria especially if the vigilante groups are allowed to operate outside their local areas.⁴⁵

6.0 Legality of Armed Vigilante Services

The primary state security agencies in Nigeria are the military (the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Air Force, and Nigerian Navy), paramilitary forces (Nigeria Police Force, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), and others), and intelligence community (Department of State Security (DSS), National Intelligence Agency (NIA), and others). The constitution requires these agencies to provide specific security services and carry weapons. Most of the arms bearing vigilante groups set up by the various state governments and privately sponsored ones carrying arms is illegal except authorized by the federal government’s relevant agency. The constitution allows the NPF to issue permit to civilians, and not groups and communities, to bear arms.⁴⁶

In January 2020, when the South West governors introduced *Amotekun*, the then Attorney General of the Federation, Malami said the initiative was “unconstitutional and illegal”, noting that the Constitution made no provisions for states to establish security outfits parallel to the Nigeria Police Force.⁴⁷ The governors invoked the constitutional right of citizens to self-defense, stating that the State Houses of Assembly had enacted laws creating the vigilante group to aid the police in tackling the rising insecurity in the region. In April 2021, the Federal Government was notably silent when the five Igbo South-East Governors established a similar security outfit called *Ebubeagu*. The lack of clarity about the legal status of these groups can create tension with constitutionally established security agencies.⁴⁸

The Nigerian Fire Arms Act states *inter alia* that no person may have in his (or her) possession or under his (or her) control any firearm or ammunition except with a license from the President or Inspector General of Police⁴⁹. Most vigilantes carry game hunting single-shot rifle. But some groups have expressed the desire for more firepower in order to measure up and fight bandits and insurgents who are armed with military-grade weapons (automatic rifles, machine guns and even rocket-propelled grenade launchers). In the North West, some vigilantes have obtained assault rifles in secret⁵⁰. Several state governors have urged the federal government to lift restrictions on the use of firearms so that citizens can better defend themselves⁵¹. In March 2021, the Niger state governor, expressed the desire of acquiring pump-action rifles for Niger state vigilante groups.⁵²

There is no federal law for vigilantes in Nigeria yet. This means that, Nigeria has not enacted a law on vigilantism, however but it is currently in the process of enacting one. In October 2017, the House of Representatives adopted the Vigilante Group of Nigeria (Establishment) Bill.⁵³ The Senate took up the Bill and passed it in December 2017.⁵⁴ If the president assents, it appears that the legislation would establish a federal body called the Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN) with state and local chapters.⁵⁵ This bill is yet to be assented to. There is now the urgent need for the president to assent to the bill and pass it into law so that the VGN can operate legally in Nigeria.

⁴³ “Proscribe Amotekun, northern youths tell FG”, *Leadership*, 1 November 2021.

⁴⁴ “Northern youths set to float Arewa Security Marshals”, *Leadership*, 12 February 2021.

⁴⁵ “Establishing a vigilante group by the Fulani in other people’s land is driving the country toward anarchy, and nobody has a monopoly of violence”. “We won’t allow Miyetti Allah take over Yorubaland – Gani Adams, YCE, others”, *The Sun*, 17 April 2021.

⁴⁶ F.A. Paki & A. Rufus” The Proliferation of Armed Vigilante Groups in Nigeria: Tacit or Official Endorsement supra note 20.

⁴⁷ “Malami explains why Amotekun is illegal”, *Vanguard*, 14 January 2020; “Amotekun is illegal, Malami insists”, *Premium Times*, 23 January 2020.

⁴⁸ Managing vigilantism in Nigeria supra.

⁴⁹ Section 3-4 of the Firearms Control Act No. 32, 1959.

⁵⁰ Crisis Group interview, vigilante group leader, Suleja, Niger State, 10 December 2021.

⁵¹ “Iganjan massacre won’t happen again, says Makinda: Asks FG to allow Amotekun use AK-47”, *Daily Sun*, 9 June 2021.

⁵² “Niger state to arm vigilante group with guns to combat bandits”, *The Guardian*, 10 March 2021.

⁵³ Edith Imoisili, Reps: Bill Seeking to Establish the Vigilante Group Passes Third Reading, THE NIGERIAN OBSERVER (Oct. 10, 2017) available at <http://nigerianobservernews.com/2017/10/reps-bill-seeking-to-establish-the-vigilantegroup-passed-third-reading/#.Wox11K6nFhE> accessed 6/8/2024.

⁵⁴ Ibrahim Abdulmumin, Senate Approves Establishment of Vigilante Group, DAILYBOOM (Dec. 22, 2017) available at <http://dailyboom.com.ng/2017/12/22/senate-approves-establishment-vigilante-group> accessed 6/8/2024.

⁵⁵ Vigilante Group of Nigeria (Establishment) Bill [HB 16.06.718], 2016, § 2 (2016), available at <http://nass.gov.ng/document/download/8449> accessed 6/8/2024.

Currently, the Vigilante Group of Nigeria which was registered in 1999 receives no official financial support from the federal government, however, it receives moral support from security agencies like the Nigeria Police Force, Department of State Services, Office of the National Security Adviser and the Federal Ministry of Interior. The headquarters of Vigilante Group of Nigeria sometimes receives income from the states where they have the support of the governors.⁵⁶

7.0 Conclusion

The rising insecurity in Nigeria and the West African region in recent years has been exacerbated by terrorism and regional clashes. The security agencies tasked with securing the lives and properties of Nigerians are often under staffed, ill-equipped, overwhelmed, under paid and lack the numeric strength to handle the threats on their own. Though the Governors are the chief security officers of their states, they still look up to the federal government on security issues thereby leading to fatal delays in tackling insecurity. It has become necessary to engage the services of vigilante groups who provide back up and support the work of security agencies. These vigilante groups when they are well set up would provide immediate relief and support to citizens in each state of the federation and prevent the miscarriage of justice often caused by red tapes and bureaucracy. There needs to be adequate checks and balances and accountability by these vigilante groups to ensure that they do not deviate from the aims and objectives to which they were set up which may lead to human rights abuses and violations.

8.0 Recommendation

The President needs to sign the Bill establishing the Vigilante Group of Nigeria into law expeditiously as this is a matter of national security. Once the law is in place, it will harmonize all the various vigilante groups existing in different geo-political zones and states. It will also guarantee the independence of the VGN as a separate entity free from political manipulations and machinations. This will go a long way in protecting the autonomy of these groups and strengthen the bond between different groups from all parts of the country.

It is also recommended that the arms and ammunition currently in the hands of some vigilante groups under the authority of the various state governments should be documented into a concrete national database through registration. The government of such states should ensure that such arms and weapons were obtained with the authority of the Nigerian Police as the body vested with the authority to issue gun permits by the constitution. This will ensure that there is no proliferation of arms and weapons throughout the country as such will lead to an increased gun violence, armed robberies and possibly mass shooting incidents in Nigeria. This registration of arms will ensure accountability of the officers who are issued the arms as they will take full responsibility for its usage. The security agencies need to synergize and work together to tackle the menace that is insecurity which includes terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, robberies, etc. to protect the lives and properties of Nigerians and maintain law and order at all times. There is need for the government to adequately train the security agencies and vigilante groups on gun use and safety. The government should tackle unemployment by employing more youths in to the security agencies and adequately funding all existing security outfits.

⁵⁶ U.A Jibril Director for Research and Planning, Kano Hisbah Board, Kano *supra* note 40.