Engagement of the Indigenous Security Strategies of the Nigerian People for SustainableDevelopment

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Abstract

This work focuses onengagement of the indigenous security strategies of the Nigerian people for sustainable development. Available data on the level and dimensions of insecurity in Nigeria reveal an increase over time, which constitutes serious threat to lives and properties, hinders business activities and discourages local and foreign investors, all which stifles and retards Nigeria's socio-economic development. The paper finds out that the rising wave of insecurity has not abated but has assumed a dangerous dimension which is threatening the corporate existence of the country as one geographical entity. In the light of the above the paper recommends that government must be proactive in dealing with security issues and threats, through modern mapping and stretegic methods of intelligence gathering, and sharing among security personnel, training, logistics, motivation, and deploying advanced technology in managing security challenges. Relying on secondary sources of data, this study further argues that, the real solution lies in government accelerating the pace of economic development through creating an economy with relevant social, economic and physical infrastructure to support business and industrial growth. This paper is historical; hence, it adopts a qualitative method of analysis. Useful piece of information were obtained from important relevant documents, reports and array of secondary sources.

Key Words: Engagement, Indeginous, Security, Strategies, Nigeria, Sustainable Development.

Introduction

Olukoyu el tel opins that, like it was before the attainment of political independence, security remains a major challenge in Nigeria. But unlike what obtained in the pre independence period, security problems have escalated partly due to the diverse nature of the country and its peoples and arising from issues and problems of nation-building. ¹They further argue that,

with the end of prolonged military rule in 1999 and the exercise of freedom associated with civil rule, bottled-up problems and repressions of past years were freely given expression resulting in several crises and conflicts ranging from ethnic, economic, political to religious. Whereas some of these crises and conflicts arose out of genuine desire for justice and change, some border on pure criminality. The effects of these problems are as numerous as the crises that gave birth to them and the country has been the worse for it, having been at the receiving end of these challenges.²

In 2014, President Goodluck Jonathan signed and launched Nigeria's first-ever National Security Strategy (NSS) to serve as the overarching national strategy document in framing the country's pursuit of its national security. The NSS was presented as a framework for a holistic and more coordinated approach and response to security challenges in the country. The development of the 2014 National Security Strategy, which aimed "to guide, organise, and harmonise national security policies and efforts," It identified key security issues and assigned approach, roles and responsibilities to government, civil society, private agencies and individuals in addressing them. The 2014 NSS rightfully acknowledged that "it has limitations of time and space", while emphasising that "the issues that are so important to the security and existence of Nigeria as a nation may invariably change within

the next few years. Therefore, there is the need to review any National Security Strategy document after a period of 5-10 years, so as to bring it up to date with the realities of the time."⁴

Since the adoption of the NSS 2014, the domestic and international security environment has evolved in number and complexity with new challenges such as terrorism and insurgency, flooding and other natural disasters, and outbreak of deadly diseases such as Lassa Fever and the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), among other real, existential and diverse security threats. This presented Nigeria with the opportunity to redefine the pursuit of its national security objectives. Thus, the need to review the NSS to reflect these emerging and complex security realities. In December 2019, the President Muhammadu Buhari Administration released a revised NSS for Nigeria. The 2019 NSS is designed to chart the way forward by outlining the threats confronting the country. It lays out the framework for the country to meet the basic needs and security concerns of citizens and address internal and external threats. Moreover, the revised NSS is part of the President Buhari regime's effort to reposition Nigeria along with three broad but fundamental sectoral policy thrusts, namely; security, economy and the fight against corruption.

As posited by President Buhari in his imprimatur on the NSS 2019, "the implementation of all the principles and ideas expressed in this document is crucial to our national security and general wellbeing. Concerted efforts will therefore be made to implement the National Security Strategy 2019" Like the 2014 edition, the revised NSS has its overarching vision "to make Nigeria a secure, safe, just, peaceful, prosperous and strong nation" and as its inherent mission "to apply all elements of national power to ensure physical and human security, a just society, peaceful co-existence, national unity, prosperity and sustainable development while promoting Nigeria's influence in regional, continental and global affairs." Therefore, ensuring effective implementation of the NSS is critically important if the vision of making Nigeria a secure, safe, just, peaceful, prosperous and strong nation is to be attained.

The paper is divided into six parts. The first part is introduction. This is followed by conceptual clarification. The third part examines the theoretical framework on which the work derives its analysis. The fourth discusses internal security problems in Nigeria since 1999. The penultimate section is an analysis ofthe Objectives of the National Security Policy of Nigeria and Implementation Strategies. This section highlights those issues that distort the socio-political and economic balance of the nation. The last part is the conclusion and recommendations. The argument tends to suggest that, inadequacies of both the state and the people have continued to retard meaningful socio-economic development in the contemporary Nigerian State. The paper argues that the strategies adopted to implement the national security policy objectives of Nigeria appear not to have addressed different types of security problems facing the country. This paper exposes the underlying factors to address Nigeria's plethora of internal security challenges,.

Conceptual Clarification

Security:What constitutes security in modern times is a question that has never been answered satisfactorily by scholars. Its perception even within one community varies in time. ⁷For instance, until recently, most of the mainstream writings on security studies literally defined it in terms of a state's capabilities to defend its territorial integrity from threats, actual and imagined, as well as acts of aggression from other potential enemies. ⁸To this end, states build and equip armed forces towards achieving this goal. The main assumption of this conception is that threat of violence, and the actual ability to commit violence by a state, against an enemy successfully deters threats and aggression. ⁹At the domestic level, the belief is that internal law-enforcement agencies and other instruments of domestic intelligence are all that is required for a state to be secured. ¹⁰

Strategy: In the simplest terms, strategy is a plan of action that organizes efforts to achieve objectives. The broad and complex modern context within which the strategist operates, however, means that simple definitions shed little light on the factors that make strategy the most fundamental and most difficult of all military arts. In the modern era, it is much more accurate and descriptive to consider strategy as a complex decisionmaking process that connects the ends sought (objectives) with the ways and means of achieving those ends.

Development

Development is a relative and mostly contested concept¹¹Nevertheless, it is possible to arrive at some specific indicators of development that are widely acceptable. For instance, it is easy to argue that every human society aspires for strong, efficient and dynamic economic and political institutions that anticipate the yearnings of their people and respond to them accordingly and promptly. 12 It is also possible to argue that in every society there are minimum expectations which all members share. These include access to functional health facilities, access to safe drinking water, universal qualitative education, and equal opportunity for all members in public affairs where competition based on merit is upheld over and above other considerations. All these are universal values that transcend cultural and political boundaries. Thus, if there is anything actually relative about our conception of development that may largely be because of perspectives from which one chooses to understand it. This is why students so often try to isolate the elements of national development and talk of them as individual topics. Thus, one hears about cultural, social, economic, political, and even religious development as if it is possible to provide a proper analysis of development without integrating these and considering development from a holistic perspective. For instance, Gopinath argues that development can only be measured in monetary terms, and consequently, a developing country is one in which "there is a significant potential to raise the per capita standard of living" of its people. ¹³ This, no doubt, is the hangover from the intellectual segregation that dominates developmental literature in the 1960s and 1970s when most models of development drew their theoretical sustenance from classical economics. In that conception, economic growth was equated withdevelopment and was generally considered as the fundamental objective of the decolonized states of Asia and Africa.¹⁴

Theoretical Framework

While there are several theories which might prove appropriate for a discourse of this nature, the natural state theory presents us with a heuristic tool for interrogating the central issues of this paper. The theory was propounded by Aristotle and was made popular by Jowett, 1885; Ross, 1937 and Copestone, 1946 as noted by Black. ¹⁵The theory holds that the state emerged in order to provide the needs of individuals, given that human beings cannot satisfactorily provide their basic needs. Aristotle argued that 'the state must exist for an end, and the end upon which the state exists is the highest good of man. 16 That is, having a platform that will ensure the satisfaction of the basic needs individual cannot provide for himself or herself. This highest good of man was captured as pursuit of happiness by Aristotle. He described happiness as central to human existence and a necessary goal to be pursued. The highest good of man is also described as 'a life of virtue and contemplation'. ¹⁷Aristotle equated the state to community and portends that all communities aim at some good in a greater degree than any other body. Nnoli while trying to define the concept of state noted that Aristotle defined state as a kind of community. Thus, he argued that a community is a union of unlike persons who are able to satisfy their needs by their exchange of goods services. ¹⁸To achieve the basic needs of life, Sabine and Thorson affirmed that man must understand the potentialities of growth that are available and the possible means for actualizing the required basic needs of man. ¹⁹

In the final analysis, the natural state theory according to Orhero, is based on its ability to justify how human security holds the key to an enduring nation security rather than building of arms and ammunitions that do not bring peace, security and political stability. Thus, Nigerian government should focus on addressing poverty and diseases rather than building arms and weapons of warfare to fight insurgency and terrorism in the country.

Internal Security Problems in Nigeria since 1999 to 2015

The Nigerian State is bedeviled with different problems. This ranges from problem of succession to power, one party rule, unreliability of the electoral process, economic crises, ethnic conflicts, political violence, poor infrastructural decay, high rate of poverty, high rate of illiteracy, corruption, to menace of HIV/AIDS. These problem have persistently posed serious threats to internal security of the country. In terms of the nature of security problems facing Nigeria, the country has its peculiar internal security problem, and this has been corroborated by some observers who argued that security threats to states in Africa differ from one another.²¹ In Nigeria, there are several security problems that

raise questions on the capacity of governments to guarantee adequate protection of lives and property of the citizens. This ranges from armed robbery, kidnapping, militancy, terrorism, rape, murder, ritual killings, ethnoreligious conflicts, communal conflicts, HIV/AIDS, among others.

However, a critical look at the above security threats shows that Nigeria faces more violent security threats than non-violent threats like HIV/AIDS, Ebola disease, cholera etc. Thus, the Nigeria's conventional security problems affect both the statehood and the national economy. ²²The security problems that may have impacted negatively on the statehood include kidnapping, militancy and terrorism/Boko Haram. Thus, these involve armed groups challenging the legal authority of the state with reference to protection of lives and property of the citizens. The primary duty of the state is to protect lives and property of the citizens. Thus, the mechanism for achieving this lofty objective by state is through effective and result-oriented internal security policy. Consequently, a state that is unable to guarantee the security and safety of its citizens often loses its legitimacy and most times attributed as a failed state.

In analyzing Nigeria's developmental challenges from the perspective of internal security problems, the former Military Head of States, General Abdusalami Abubakar argues that the first approach to address the country's perennial problems involves managing internal tendencies, especially security issues and problems that have adversely impacted on economic development.²³He further explains:

In addressing the challenge to the survival of democracy in Nigeria, it is pertinent to consider security issues and problems that have affected or capable of affecting the attitude, confidence and cooperation of all groups and segments that make up the Nigerian federation... Beyond the effects of security concerns on the economic fortunes of the country, the nature of security challenges facing the country also have implications for the country's political system...there is the challenge to rethink and improve on policy and institutional means of dealing with security concerns arising in the country...²⁴

The above observation underscores the need to find out the extent to which this problem has impacted negatively not only on the economy of the Nigerian state, but also on the political development of the country. As it is generally acknowledged, development cannot be achieved in an environment characterized by insecurity. Therefore, the attainment of meaningful standard of economic development in Nigeria is achievable through affective implementation of internal security policy which must integrate and recognize critical issues like unemployment, poverty, ²⁵ equitable distribution of resources and better mechanism for conflict prevention and management in Nigeria.

However, some security problems in Nigeria are rooted from the perceived inequality in the country's political space, high rate of poverty in the land, increasing spate of unemployment, inequitable distribution of national resources, corruption among top governmental officials, poor management of communal conflicts by appropriate governmental institutions, among others. These inadequacies of both the state and the people have continued to retard meaningful socio-economic development in the contemporary Nigerian State.²⁶

This pathetic scenario, however, explains why some observers of the country's helpless internal security challenges have continued to query rhetorically, what are the overall objectives of the Nigeria's national security policy which internal security policy is a sub-unit? What are the implementation strategies? What factors appear to militate both national and internal security programme implementation in Nigeria since 1999? Thus, a careful examination of the Nigeria's national security policy will undoubtedly provide useful insights and better understanding of this phenomenon under investigation.

Objectives of the National Security Policy of Nigeria and Implementation Strategies

National security is an interactive and integrative system consisting of the individual as the irreducible basic unit, who is connected both to the state and the international political system by way of civil society ... the state is the strongest entity for the enhancement of national security issues, but is increasingly being challenged by civil society which demands a larger role...²⁷

The central pillar of Nigeria's national security policy is the preservation of the safety of Nigerians at home and abroad and the protection of the sovereignty of the country as well as the integrity of her state. ²⁸Other subordinate goals include:

i. To safeguard the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Nigerian states; ii. To defend the African unity and independence; iii. Non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states; iv. Involvement in regional economic development and security cooperation and; v. Attainment of military self-sufficiency and regional leadership.

The achievement of the above policy objectives in Nigeria appears to pose serious challenges to government. These objectives not only require strong political commitment by the government but also the determination of the Nigerian citizens to ensure their success as several domestic factors often impinge on policy efficacy in most countries in the contemporary world. ²⁹ Thus, the achievement of the internal dimension of the Nigeria's national security objectives has remained elusive despite several strategies adopted by the government. However, Nigeria has persistently been faced with several threats to her internal security. As Bassey rightly noted, the internal threats are those issues that distort the socio-political and economic balance of the nation. ³⁰These include:

- a. Ethnic and religious militias that are well-armed and semi-trained to carryout raids, ambushes and even assault against law-abiding citizens.
- b. Inter-border and inter-communal conflicts; and
- c. Unemployment, especially among the youths with subversive and criminal behaviours leading to economic sabotage and threatening of civil economic installation, especially in the oil sector.

Consequently, while it is the traditional role of the military to check external aggression against the state, the army is implicitly relevant in monitoring the activities of various actors in the domestic sphere that manifestly pose danger to the society. In internal security management, such as the protection of lives and property of citizens in Nigeria, the role of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), is obviously relevant and indispensable. The NPE perform conventional police functions and is responsible for internal security generally. This includes supporting the prisons, immigration and customs; and performing military duties within or outside Nigeria as directed.

Thus, available evidence shows that the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) has been incapacitated in tackling the increasing rate of internal security problems in Nigerian, especially during the period under review. According to the Public Relation Department of the organization, the NPF experiences endemic problems with recruitment, training, inefficiency and indiscipline. Also, the Force according to Nwagboso, lacks expertise in specialized fields. Further, the Force is challenged with corruption and dishonesty among its rank and file. These engender low level public confidence on the institution. Thus, crime prevention, detention and investigation are compounded by failure of the Force to report crimes accurately. The strategies adopted to implement the national security policy objectives of Nigeria appear not to have addressed different types of security problems facing the country. The current conception of the Nigeria's internal security which is an integral part of the overall national security framework, is at best state-centric and society-centred. As some leaders have critically argued, the ultimate goal of addressing the security threats and challenges facing Nigeria is not just to safeguard the lives of the common man, but to protect the lives and the loots of the ruling class. The strategies are provided in the loots of the ruling class.

Thus, between 2001-2011, the Nigerian state witnessed several security challenges from the country's internal political environment. These challenges as some observers argued may be due largely to poor implementation strategies adopted by the government and her security appointees to tackle the

country's multifarious security problems. Hence, Akinterinwa puts the above problem in clear perspectives:

...security appointees have failed the President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. If we are to judge the current state of affairs in the country... Nigeria is in a state of lawlessness... it is a shame when the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice gets killed so easily. The aggressive posturing Odua People's Congress, robbery, drug trafficking, advanced free fraud (419), unemployment, high price of commodities ... are realities being faced in the country that require remedies...³⁴

The above observation underscores the relevance of affective policy strategy to implement the country's internal security policy. This observation reinforces the argument by Dye who argues that: "Implementation is the continuation of politics by other means. Policy making does not end with the making of a new law... and it's signing by the President. Implementation involves all the activities designed to carry out the policies enacted by the legislative branch. These activities include the creation of new organizations, departments, agencies, bureaus, and so on..." 35

The above argument by Dye further reinforced the assertion by some scholars and analysts that the internal security policy of Nigeria appears to have failed to take cognizance of the "unusual suspects" or what Nnoli comically referred to as the "real enemies of the people" (Nnoli, 2006). The "unusual suspects" or 'real enemies of the people' which revolve around the economic misfortune of Nigeria include poverty, inequality unemployment, low per capita income, among others. The "unusual suspects" encompasses politics, which is a reflection of aberrant behaviours such as nepotism, sectionalism, election-rigging, bad governance, corruption, thuggery, hooliganism, among others.

The implementation strategies to achieve the national security policy objectives of Nigeria seem to have neglected the role of domestic (internal) factors capable of affecting effective implementation. Also, the implementation strategies may have equally neglected the fact that domestic or internal factors could lead to conflicts in the state and unresolved conflicts can subsequently metamorphosed to security challenges in the country. The above assertion is true because as Bassey rightly explains: "...containment or management of conflict entails an understanding of its nature before we can deal effectively with it intellectually, emotionally, and behaviourally.... Structural analysis of conflict, violence and warfare focus on how the organization of society shape action..."³⁷

The inability of the implementation strategies of the national security policy to reduce the vulnerability of citizens in Nigeria obviously compounded the security situation in the country. Ultimately, these challenges require paradigm shift which some scholars have recommended to the government. This paradigm shift may be akin to the continuous call for adoption of integrative approach in the formulation and implementation of national security policy by African states. This appears to be the global trend in security management by modern states which appears to be elusive in some African states like Nigeria.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the internal security strategyproblems of Nigeria. However, specific emphasis was placed on some violent internal security problems that confronted the Nigerian State between 1999-2015. This work tailored internal security problems which have undoubtedly resulted to high rate of Internally Displaced persons (IDPs), in the Nigeria's political space.

The paper argued that the persistent re-occurrence of these internal security problems and their attendant consequences on the Nigeria's economy is due largely to the weakness of the country's National Security Policy. Thus, available evidence indicated that policy makers in Nigeria abysmally failed to design implementable policies and programmes capable of mitigating the scourge of insurgency in the country. Rather than formulating a robust internal security policies and programmes capable of confronting the generational causes of insurgency such as poverty, unemployment,

inequality, corruption, bad governance, weak institutional framework, among others, policy makers were only interested in the adoption of approaches. This supports our use of the natural state theory which is based on its ability to justify how human security holds the key to an enduring nation security rather than building of arms and ammunitions that do not bring peace, security and political stability

It is, therefore, argued that policy makers need a clear understanding of the nature, causes and implications of internal security problems in Nigeria. This will enable them in engaging indigenous security strategy to initiate, formulate and effectively implement people-oriented policies and programmes capable of addressing the country's high rate of internal security problems.

Recommendations

To address Nigeria's plethora of internal security challenges, the following implementable policy options are advocated:

- 1. Government should embark on aggressive rural development policies and programmes across the 774 Local Government Areas in Nigeria. This is pertinent because, the increasing spate of rural-urban drift occasioned by unemployment, dearth of critical social infrastructure and abject rural poverty, adversely impact on security governance and economic development in the country.
- 2. There is urgent need for adequate security at the rural areas in Nigeria. Hence, government should recruit more police personnel to effectively provide security at the grassroot. The recruitment of more police personnel will not only assist in adequate intelligence gathering at the rural areas, but also checkmate from the onset, certain neglected aberrant behaviours at the grassroot which often graduate from villages, communities/ Local Government levels, to become national problems.
- 3. The value system in Nigeria should be re-examined and reinvigorated. The Nigerian people through families, churches, mosque, the media and the National Orientation Agency (NOA), should aggressively embark on advocacy capable of rewarding honesty, hardwork and discipline among the people. Hence, less emphasis should be placed on wealth acquisition, flamboyant lifestyle, 'winner takes all politics', among others. This measure will ultimately reduce the alarming gap between the rich and the poor (inequality), which often results to envy and insecurity in the Nigerian society.
- **4.** Through credible electoral process, government should adopt fair and just policies and programmes capable of reducing the deliberate institutional framework which hitherto plays certain community, religion, individuals or groups against others. This step will undoubtedly reduce the skirmishes in the Niger Delta and Jos, as several studies have pointed on deliberate government's posture of 'playing one group against the other'.
- **5.** Government should resuscitate ramous agricultural policies and programmes in order to create employment opportunities for the youths in the country. This is imperative because, several studies have pointed the Nigeria's high unemployment rate as one of the cardinal factors responsible for security challenges in the country.

Endnotes

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