



REVIEW OF NATIONAL INSECURITY AND THE NIGERIA ECONOMY

DIBIA, GODWIN CHUKWUEDO; & EGBULE, VENATUS

Department of Arts & Humanities, Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku, Delta State.

Abstract

National insecurity and the Nigeria economy was reviewed in order to bring to bare the high level effect these “security threats” can cause on the development of the Nigerian Economy. The review pointed to the fact that insecurity will not only jeopardize the growth of the economy but every aspect of Nigeria’s socio political development. Many factors were posited to be the main causes of these threats ranging from corruption, political thurgery to lack of concern of the Government towards the Nigerian Citizenry. The researcher therefore suggested some recommendations to alleviate if not totally eradicate the presence of these threats; these include care for the citizenry by way of employment, education etc, accepting the contribution of every reasonable sect in planning security strategies to eradicate these threats.

INTRODUCTION

It is no longer new to the average Nigerian the state of insecurity in Nigeria. In the world today, matters of National security are of utmost importance to the progress and development of any nation. As a result, no nation can afford to treat with levity any issue that threatens its national security. National security in any nation can be likened to the brain in the human body. If anything goes wrong with it, every other aspect of the nation will be adversely affected, whether directly or indirectly. The importance of national security to any nation cannot be over-emphasized.

Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa, a nation with a population of 170,123,740 (2012 est) and also a nation with over 250 ethnic groups. Due to divergent background e.g. ethnically, religious and cultural, at the level of interaction between individuals from different background there is bound to be

misunderstanding, as one may not be used to the practices of the other. Bringing this to the national outlook, when over 250 groups of people are brought together, there is bound to be misunderstanding. Therefore, this paper highlights the insecurity in Nigeria and suggest possible solutions.

Rapid economic development and social well-being constitute the development imperative of developing countries of the world and indeed, remain the normative goal of the international community. This involves the attainment of sufficient levels of economic growth to allow for a progressive improvement in the material standard of living of the populace.

However, for Nigerian and most African Countries the economies are in an abysmal state. The worsening economic conditions have generated a mix of domestic social and political tension. Normally, citizens expect their governments to provide them with political stability and socio-economic security; including employment, healthcare and shelter, the non-fulfillment of which breeds discontent and social unrest or even serious political challenge.

Unfortunately, Nigeria is, today plagued with social disorder, insecurity, poverty, illiteracy, balance of payment deficit, poor health statistics, ethnic and religious conflicts, crime and criminality and political crises and all these mean that we are very insecure in terms of human well-being. In this state of things development is elusive like a mirage!

Conceptual Issues

Types of Insecurity In Nigeria

According to Chukwu (2013), the security challenges facing the Country are:

- ✓ Political Unrest
- ✓ Ethno-Religious crisis
- ✓ Communal violence
- ✓ Poverty, illiteracy and unemployment

Political Unrest

Political unrest occurs when the public protests against the government, or where an uprising might take place in form of a revolution, coup, rigged elections, police brutality, oppression of the poor, majority by the rich minority etc. it is a situation when the masses are being denied their constitutional rights. This practice can be likened to the adage where an oppressor expels urine on the face of the oppressed and gives the flimsy excuse that it is raining. It is commonly

joked among the masses that after an election, then, the selection begins. Also, the fact that holding public offices is regarded as an avenue to enrich one's self instead of serving the populace has done nothing to improve the situation.

What other alternative does the mass have?

Effects of Political Unrest

Unrest is the loss of faith in the government and the electoral process. One of the effects of political unrest is that it is also the absence of popular sovereignty as the government in power is not the choice of the people.

Possible Solutions

2

A change in political ideology is desperately needed:

Personally, I suggest that the salaries of public office holders be reduced considerably to make such positions less attractive. Recent findings show that Nigerian lawmakers are the highest paid in the world, and how far has that taken us? If such salaries were reduced, such positions will only appeal to those who actually have the flare to serve the people.

Political education of the general public:

Members of the general public should be educated on the importance of their votes, opinions and peaceful ways to go about expressing dissatisfaction as regards governmental policies.

Public opinion:

This is the aggregate of individual attitudes or beliefs held by the adult population. If the media through which public opinion can be expressed are well set up, everyone in the country will be carried along in the governing process and as a result no one will feel left behind. This can reduce the occurrence of political unrest.

Ethno-Religious Crisis

If the definition of a Nation is given as "A large aggregate of people united by common descent, history, culture or language, inhabiting a particular country or territory" then the question arise; is Nigeria a nation? Are we in practice united? Does an individual from the eastern part of the country see himself as an Igbo man or a Nigerian? Will we ever be united?

These questions and many more come to mind when one observes closely the current situation in the Country.

The Nigerian-Biafra-War, the Niger Delta militancy, Banditry, Armed Herdsmen, IPOB and the Boko Haram menace all these uprisings have one thing in common, that is the fear of domination of one ethnic group by the other. From time immemorial, the leadership of the Country has had a regional instead of a national outlook, therefore it is no longer news that in recent times, the nation has been seriously bugged down with challenging security issues. The violent protests in the Niger-Delta over perceived injustice in resource distribution; the Itsekiri-Ijaw violence in the Delta; the resumption of the Ife-Modakeke communal violence; the menace of Odu's Peoples' Congress (OPC) and the accompanying violence in Lagos and Shagamu areas; the formation of the Arewa People's Congress (APC) and the Igbo Peoples' Congress (IPC); the MASSOB and IPOB feeble attempt to resuscitate Biafra; the Sharia crisis and the demands for a confederation; the South-South demand for the control of its resources; and all the recent inter ethnic/religious conflicts in various states across the country are all part of the bubbles of the Nigerian federation.

They are based on the historical structures of mutual fears and suspicions among Nigeria groups in a competitive process. They reflect dissatisfaction of Nigerian groups with the State of the federation.

Effects of Ethno-Religious Crisis

- Hampers the development of the country.
- Threatens the already weakened unity of the Federation.

Possible Solutions

A universal solution to all our problems? Impossible. A magic formula to build trust overnight and quell the ethno-religious crisis stalling the development of our country Nigeria? Unlikely. It is difficult to find a solution, but what is the solution? Easy; FEDERALISM. Federalism, as an approach to national unity, has resulted to anarchy in the country. Lamenting on this, a former military Head of State and later civilian President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, was said to have highlighted some of the shortcomings of this type of approach when he says: In the work of Chukwu (2013) 'Fear, suspicion, intolerance and greed' have been constant in every crisis confrontation in Nigeria... it is the psychological fear of discrimination and domination. It is fear of deprivation or not getting one's fair

share... It is variously described, at the political level as constitutional imbalance; at economic level as uneven distribution of national cake; and at the educational development level as inequality of opportunity. (Daily Times, 1984).

The obvious solution would be either to scrap federalism or create an avenue where representatives from the different federating units will have a discussion and decide on the way forward for our country Nigeria. Only when such a forum or a consensus ad idem is created will our country move forward, as the Bible says in Amos.3:3 "Can two walk together, except they be agreed? Certainly not.

Communal Violence

Communal violence (sometimes inter-communal violence) refers to a situation where violence is perpetrated across ethnic lines and victims are chosen based upon ethnic group membership.

- 2002 February Some 100 people are killed in Lagos in Clashes between Hausa from mainly – Islamic north and ethnic Yoruba's from predominantly Christians Southwest.
- 2002 November more than 200 people died in four days of rioting stocked by Muslim fury over the planned miss World beauty pageant in Kaduna in December. The event was relocated to Britain.
- 2003 August Inter-Communal violence in the Niger Delta town of Warri kills about 100 people, injures 1000+.
- 2004 May State of emergency is declared in the central Plateau State after more than 200 Muslims are killed in Yelwa in attacks by Christian militia; revenge attacks are launched by Muslim youths in Kano.
- 2006 February more than 100 people are killed when religious violence flares in some towns in the North and in the southern city of Onitsha.
- 2008 November at least 200 people are killed during clashes between

Christians and Muslims in the central Nigerian town of Jos.

The list would seem endless, but the question remains: WHY? Why does the trend keep repeating itself? Will there ever be an end to communal violence in Nigeria? Before going further to suggest possible solutions to the problem of violence in Nigeria, it would be necessary to first highlight the causes of communal violence in Nigeria.

Causes of Communal Violence in Nigeria

Low level of understanding and subsequently intolerance among the different ethnic groups. Fear of domination of one ethnic group by another. Lack of trust, fear and suspicion. These and many others are part of the causes of communal violence in Nigeria.

Effects of Communal Violence

Continuous communal violence further weakens the already strained unity of the federation, which brings about distrust and disharmony between conflicting communities. And also leads to destruction of life and properties.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION

Since the problem of communal violence is an outgrowth of misunderstanding, the simplest way to curb this problem would be to facilitate understanding, peaceful cohabitation and coexistence among communities. This can be done by educating the Nigeria populace at large, about different Nigerian cultures, introducing subjects bordering on the Nigerian cultural heritage into the educational system, promotion of arts and culture by organizing cultural days etc.

Poverty, Illiteracy and Unemployment:

These are the main killers of national security. These three canker worms have eaten deep into the fabric of our nation and in order to progress they must be eradicated to a large extent.

Effects of Poverty, Illiteracy and Unemployment

Money they say: is the root of all evil. It is very easy to manipulate someone stricken by poverty. Imagine a man that has not had anything to eat for two days and is being offered money in exchange for illicit activities. What choice does he have? Poverty will consequently increase the crime rate in the society.

An idle mind is the devil's workshop and an idle man is the devil's worker. Unemployment in our society today doesn't kill only the initiative and potential of the individual, but it is also a motivating factor for involving oneself in illicit activities. Unemployment has an adverse effect on the National security of the nation, as statistics have shown that unemployment rate in any country is directly proportional to the crime rate.

Corruption

The threat of Corruption and Bribery are now so endemic in our country nowadays to require any definition. This includes all dishonest and illegal acts in return for money or personal gain. Indeed, in a country rated as the most corrupt nation in the world few years ago, it is unnecessary of define the term corruption.

According to ASUU (2005) "in Nigeria, corruption is not series of accidental occurrences resulting from defective individual character; it is not the characteristic of any ethnic, cultural, religious groups. Since 1960, corruption has been an essential tool in the hands of the ruling class in Nigeria, for the accumulation of wealth and for the seizure and substance of political power. Unable to organize a productive economy, generally unconcerned about productive generation of wealth, lacking a sense of historical mission, our rulers have used state power essentially as a base for leading a style and standard of our Country, both during military dictatorships (1966-79; 83-99), and the civilian regimes (1963-66, 1979-83, 1999 date) is replete with a history of progressive development of the culture of corruption.

Thus, despite the existing laws and the presence of anti-corruption agencies like the ICPC and EFCC today – bribery and corruption is still in our nation. Indeed, allegations are rife that some officials of these agencies have been compromised either by the ruling class or by those being investigated to the point that they are recording little or no success in the fight against corruption. From 1966 to date each successive government had taunted the slogan of wiping out corruption to gain legitimacy. From Aguiyi-Ironsi to General Gowon to Murtala Muhammed/Obsanjo to Buhari. The struggle against corruption appeared to have gathered little momentum until Babangida took over in 1985 with the official entrenchment of corruption. Till date, the country appears to have lost the battle against corruption. Corruption now manifests itself arrogantly in all fabrics of our national life leading to severe economic and socio-political consequences.

The crises of Nigeria is surely multi-facets, which brought about all these insecurities giving rise to the following security threats in Nigeria as shown in the table below.

S/N	SECURITY THREAT	YEAR	POLITICAL ZONE
1.	Niger Delta Militancy	1999-2007	South-South

2.	Jos Religious Crisis, Benue/Nasarawa herdsmen killings	1999 till date	North Central
3.	Kidnaping, ritual killings and armed robbery	2007 till date	South East
4.	Boko Haram Crisis, Banditery and Armed Herdsmen invasion	2009 till date	North East, North-Central, North West, moving to the East and South gradually.

Recommendations

1. The Federal government should formulate and effectively implement policies and programmes capable of addressing the root causes of insecurity in Nigeria such as poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation, dearth of infrastructural facilities, uneven development, amongst others.
2. The government should be more proactive in the implementation of Amnesty programme designed for former Niger Delta Militants to avoid a situation where the repentant militants would go back to the regions and resume their hostilities against the government, oil companies and the residents of the area.
3. The Federal government should reorganize the country's intelligence system and build a capable and more proactive security apparatus in Nigeria. This will add more values in checking incessant bombings, robbery, kidnapping and violent crimes/crisis by hoodlums all over Nigeria.
4. The government should include Peace Studies and Security Management in school curriculum at secondary and tertiary levels in Nigeria. This will enable the Nigerian youths to appreciate the importance of peace and security in a secular state like Nigeria.
5. The federal government should phase out the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and establish a more viable and result oriented agency, capable of addressing the problem of abject poverty among large population of Nigerians, particularly those residing in the rural areas.
6. The government should resuscitate the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and reposition the agricultural sector so as to play active role in job creation for Nigerian youths.
7. There is the need for collective security arrangement by federal, state and Local governments in Nigeria. This arrangement should produce a

committee at village, community, local, state and federal level with the responsibility of providing sensitive security information for security agencies in their areas of operation.

Conclusion

The Nigeria's national security policy must be capable of identifying security problems, deciding on what measures to adopt in order to address the problems, assessing if the measures are effective or not, as well as monitoring the implementation of internal security measures.

Nigeria's security concerns and threat perception emanated from many quarters. Over the years, the inability of the government to address the root causes of dissatisfaction, anger and agitation among various groups in the country resulted to serious security challenges confronting the contemporary Nigerian state.

This ugly situation has not only denied the Nigerians government enormous revenues, but also led to serious problems such as unemployment, infrastructural decay; poor health status, poor image of Nigeria at regional and global scene, low participation of investors in Nigeria's economic development, relocation of existing investors to peaceful states in Nigeria, among others.

These problems are traceable to internal security challenges in Nigeria occasioned by the activities of militias in Niger Delta region, kidnapping in the South-East, the Islamic extremists in Jos crisis, Boko Haram group, armed robbery in many parts of the country, Armed banditry invasions, Herdsmen/Farmers clashes, bunkering of Nigeria's oil outlets by saboteurs among others.

In consideration of the consequences from these challenges on the economy of the Nigerian state and to save the country from the brink to total collapse, the need for good governance, justice, equity and tolerance among ethnic nationalities as well as religious groups in Nigerian, is advocated and should be rigorously pursued by both the government and the Nigerian people.

REFERENCES

- ASUU (2005) "The Position of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) on the Problems of Corruption and the National Dialogue in Nigeria.
- Attorney General of the Federation V. Attorney General of Abia State and Others (2002) 6, N.W.L.R. (pt. 764) 542.
- Attorney General of Adamawa State V. Attorney-General of the Federation (2005) 18 N.W.L.R. (pt 958) 581
- Boon, C., Den Hartog, D.N., Lepak, D. (2019). A systematic review of human resource management systems and their measurement. *Journal of Management*, Sage Publishing, 45(6), 2498-2537.

- Chukwu Ikechi Douglas (2013) National Security in Nigeria Effects and Possible Solutions. Available at: <http://cidouglas.com>.
- Little Richard (1981): "Ideology and Change" in Barry Byuzan and R.J. Barry-Jones (eds) Change and Study of International Relations, London, Frances Printers, 3v5.
- Mudiaga-Odje, Akpo (2008): "Nigeria Delta Region and the Principle of Self- Determination" being a paper delivered at the University of Benin Law Students Association Distinguished Graduates Awards Ceremony on 8th October, 2008.
- Ogwu, U. Joy: "Foreign Investment and National Security" in Proceeding of the 33rd Annual Conference of the Nigerian Society of International Law held at Benin City in 2001.
- Sagy, I: "The Niger Delta and the Case for Resource Control: Vanguard, 13th June, 2005
- Stewart, N: "Promoting Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: An Unexplored Route to Conflict Resolution in Nigeria's Niger Delta Region" (2008), II (1 & 2), University of Benin Law Journal, 2016.
- The Guardian Newspaper, August 15th, 2009 and 6th November, 2009 Wokocha R. Aduche (2005): Resource Control in Nigeria: the Legal and Regulatory Challenges and Implications.
- Wordpress.com/2012/11/22/national-security-in-nigeria-effects-And-possible-solutions/