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## **IMPLEMENTING A PEOPLE CENTRED NATIONAL SECURITY FRAMEWORK FOR NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE (NPF)**

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### ***Abstract***

The issue of having security to be people-centric, has dominated international security discourse for decades now. The people centred security (PCS) approach was defined in response to the critique of the human security agenda. It retained its focus on meeting the diverse security needs of men, women, boys and girls, but sought to engage rather than antagonize the state in pursuit of this goal. In the case of Nigeria, the nature of the evolving dynamics of the internal security threats it has been facing, makes it critical to carry the citizenry along, making them a key strand in the national security framework or architecture. This study, using largely qualitative research, highlights Nigeria's security landscape and identifies the loop holes in Nigeria's security system. The paper argues that a people-centric approach to security in Nigeria, when will address complex situations of insecurity in Nigeria's security system through collaborative, responsive and sustainable measures that are; a. people-centered, b. multisectoral, c. comprehensive, d. context-specific, and e. prevention-oriented. The study however finds that, vulnerability of the concept to the vagaries of the Nigerian society, makes implementing it, a herculean task. It also finds that, implementing the concept, within the existing institutional internal security arrangements, may be challenging. To mitigate these challenges, the paper tries to suggest the improvement of policing methods by the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), as a panacea.

***Keywords:*** National Security, Nigeria, Nigeria Police Force, and People Centred Security

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### **Background**

The protection of values, vital human and physical resources, territorial integrity, and the lives and property of citizens from threats have all been included in definitions of national security. Under a perfect security architecture, the Social Contract Theory of Thomas Hobbes governs national security while the process

is led by the people and the state's law enforcement organisations, with the police holding the primary position.

In the face of current national security challenges and the resonating national discourse on the efficiency of the security agency, this paper explores the national security question, highlights the imperative of a people centered national security framework and proposes options towards strengthening national security within this framework and furthering the capacity of the State to meet its statutory obligation as enshrined in Sec.14(b) of the 1999 Constitution which provides that „*the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government*“.

While it is argued in the paper that the mechanisms for upholding social order are motivated by three strategic elements—people, technology, and systems—this paper takes the position that any national security architecture that is not motivated by the concept of citizens or the people, as the centre of those architecture's efforts, is doomed to failure. This paper also holds that the country's current, seemingly insurmountable national security issues are a direct result of the lack of a framework for people-centric national security policy and of strategic actors' inadequate comprehension of the needs and dynamics of a people-centered security management approach, which leads to the evolution of ill-thought-out approaches.

Other militating factors include the inability to evolve new security strategies and systems towards security governance in the country. Consequently, a new security architecture that is people-based, and systems-governed is proposed. The paper thus begins with the method adopted for this study, before delving into some conceptual expositions.

### **Methodology**

This research is primarily guided by constructivist ontology, utilising a qualitative research strategy to identify what could be Nigeria's security framework, from a people-centric approach. In doing so, the researcher combines historical analysis, and qualitative case study to interpret gathered data. This thesis therefore, is largely qualitative in its methodological approach. In this regard, data was gathered from archival review of secondary sources published and unpublished. These included; academic books, journals, periodicals, reports and internet sources. The study also collected data through content analysis of policy and strategic documents.

Essentially, this research draws on existing scholarly articles within the realm of the state and national security, analysing the hitherto explanations for

phenomena akin to the People-Centric Approach to security. To achieve this, analysis resorted to a sample of authoritative literature on the state and security, as well as historical literature on National security, and how it relates to the existing security configuration in Nigeria

The sampling technique applied for this paper is purposive aimed at studying the security patterns of the Nigerian state that include; security concerns, dynamics of Nigeria's internal security architecture, loop holes in Nigeria's security system, and contending issues in instituting a people-centric security approach. This facilitates the analysis of the possibilities of how to implement the people-centric approach to national security, within the existing internal security architecture or framework in Nigeria.

## Conceptual Discourse

### *Concept of National Security*

Threat management is at the heart of security, which is frequently viewed as the goal of threat-free living. Security demands that a threat and a referent item be specified. Threats concern the potential for harm to an important referent object. The term "national security," which describes the dynamics and relationships between internal security, which refers to dangers from within the nation, and external security, which touches on transnational threats, has been used to characterise the notion of security within the national area.

Within this perspective, Arnold Wolfers, defines national security as "*the absence of threats to acquired values and subjectively, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked*" (Quoted in Prabhakaran, 2008) Professor Charles Maier of Harvard University similarly defines the concept through the lens of *national power* by noting that national security is best described as a capacity to control those *domestic* and *foreign* conditions that the public opinion of a given community believes necessary to enjoy its own self-determination or autonomy, prosperity and wellbeing (Maier, 1993). Also highlighting the intertwining relationship between internal and external security within the context of national security, Moshe Keinan (2004) defines national security as-

*The dynamics of a state's ability and readiness to deal effectively with **external** threats caused by rival states and rival organizations, and deal effectively with **internal** threats- caused by parties inside the society, which put in risk the physical existence of the state's population, its identity, its values ant its vital interests*

In addition to the aforementioned, some authorities have attempted to define national security in terms of demographic threats brought on by epidemics, natural disasters, climate change, and other events that cause severe environmental damage, as well as the State's ability to put in place an effective emergency response plan to quickly protect it from such occurrences or to rehabilitate the populace in the event of such occurrence. The claim made here is that there are two significant components to national security. Both internal and external threats are present here. Internal security, which is concerned with internal threats is all State actions directed at enacting, upholding and deploying national laws, strategies, policies and state law enforcement agencies towards the maintenance of peace, law and order; safeguarding citizens from fear or threats to their values, livelihood, liberty, lives and property within a country's territory. While there are usually several secondary law enforcement agencies that are statutorily empowered to advance the internal security interests of a nation, the Police is commonly acknowledged as the lead agency within the internal security framework of any nation.

In contrast, external threats within the context of national security is according to Harold Brown, U.S. Secretary of Defense from 1977 to 1981 -

*The ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory; to maintain its economic relations with the rest of the world on reasonable terms; to preserve its nature, institution, and governance from disruption from outside; and to control its borders* (Brown, 1983)

The primary responsibility for guaranteeing external security lies with the Military of a nation and where this is undertaken in conjunction with other security agencies, the military will, under an ideal situation, take command and control pre-eminence in such operational relationships.

### **People-Centered Security**

It is crucial to evaluate this concept in light of the state-centric approach to security in order to fully comprehend it. The absence of external threats, the presence of a military, and the establishment of a strong political power that fosters a stable national environment in which its population can live are more straightforward ways to define state security. In other words, governmental security only offers the conditions within which personal security measures can

be established. Human security is likely to be defined significantly differently by any state.

Simply put, people-centered security is meant to be protective. It acknowledges that events that are out of people's control, such as a financial crisis, a violent conflict, AIDS, a national policy that undermines public and private investments in health care, a terrorist attack, water shortages, persistent destitution, or pollution in another country, pose a fatal threat to individuals and communities. Many dangers are much more damaging if they are unexpected. The repercussions of a financial crisis can be decreased if preventative measures are put in place in advance, and early warning systems can lessen the impact of famine. Earthquake damage and fatalities can be reduced by creating earthquake-resistant structures. Yet many of these preparations require threats to be acknowledged, before they occur (or at the very least, as they occur). The people-centered security approach urges institutions to offer protection which is institutionalised, not episodic; responsive, not rigid; preventative, not reactive. In this way, people will face inevitable downturns "with security" (Thakur & Newman, 2004). Safeguarding human lives implicates not only those institutions that intend to promote people-centered security overtly, but also institutions that unintentionally undermine it. The methods used to provide people-centered security first identify the dangers, then work to stop them from happening, lessen the effects of those that do, and assist victims in coping.

Although the United Nations (UN) founders arguably always gave "equal weight to territories and people," as well as to both "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want," it must be acknowledged that, following World War II, the international community largely became obsessed with territorial and state security at the expense of people's security (UNDP 1994: 24). In large part because of the Human Development Report of 1994, which propelled the idea of people-centered security in public, academic, and policy discourse, it took four decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union for the emphasis to return to a broader concept of "people" security.

The argument is summed up in the following statements from the report:

"The concept of security has for too long been interpreted narrowly: as security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interests in foreign policy or as global security from the threat of a nuclear holocaust. It has related more to nation-states than to people [...] Forgotten were the legitimate concerns of ordinary people who sought security in their daily lives. For many of them, security symbolised protection from the threat of disease, hunger,

employment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards” (UNDP 1994:22).

*“For most people today a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event. Job security, income security, health security, environmental security, security from crime – these are the emerging concerns of human security all over the world” (UNDP 1994:22).*

*“In the final analysis, people-centered security is a child who did not die, a disease that did not spread, a job that was not cut, an ethnic tension that did not explode into violence, a dissident who was not silenced. People-centered security is not a concern with weapons - it is a concern with human life and dignity” (UNDP 1994:22).*

These comments from the *Human Development Report 1994* make it abundantly evident that in the years following the Cold War, people began to recognise the significance of hazards to human life that extended far beyond the confines of physical conflict. In its 2005 *State of the World Report*, the *Worldwatch Institute* discusses "issues beyond borders," such as endemic poverty, rising inequality and unemployment, global crime, population shifts, frequent natural disasters, ecosystem collapse, and newly emerging and resurgent communicable illnesses. It emphasises that a military solution to the issues is insufficient and probably ineffective.

On a more analytical note the *Human Development Report (1994)* observes that the concept of people centred security must focus on four of its essential characteristics: First, “human security is a universal concern. It is relevant to people everywhere, in rich nations and poor. .... Their intensity may differ from one part of the world to another, but all these threats to human security are real and growing.” Second, “the components of people-centered security are interdependent. .... [Most hazards] are no longer isolated events, confined within national borders. Their consequences travel the globe.” Third, “people-centered security is easier to ensure through early prevention than later intervention. It is less costly to meet these threats upstream than downstream.” Fourth, “human security is people-centred. It is concerned with how people live and breathe in a society, how freely they exercise their many choices, how much access they have to market and social opportunities – and whether they live in conflict or in peace”

(UNDP 1994: 22-23). People-centred security not only means safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression, but also must include protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the pattern of daily life. The concept has led to a shift from security through armament to security through sustainable human development. In addition, it encapsulates the different new challenges to security, including environmental and sustainability concerns (this was referred to above as 'widening' security).

The import of these postulations is simple. It is that as a critical component of security, should be geared towards the citizenry or the people. In its evolution, it should be with the intention of addressing the needs and wants of the citizenry and the community. In consequence, any national security model that alienates the citizens will remain ineffectual. Conversely, any model woven around the people and community is bound to remain potent. The concept of people-centered security draws from this exposition. It is with this in mind that a synopsis of the security threats in Nigeria is now provided, as these threats will now further accentuate the argument for security to be people-centered.

### **Threats to Nigeria's National Security**

The most significant threats to Nigeria's national security over time have included terrorism, which is exacerbated by violent extremism ideologies, separatist agitation and the growth of ethnic militias, kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery, which occasionally may be orchestrated by criminal networks, and agrarian/Pastoralist farmers' crises, which are particularly potent threats to national security because they can spark ethnic and religious interpretation. Others include cattle rustling and banditry; religious, inter-ethnic and intra-communal crises; oil theft and piracy; Sabotage, disruption and vandalism of critical infrastructure; murder and cultism-related violence; cybercrime; political violence, especially election-related violence; and financial and economic crimes such as corruption; money laundering, electoral fraud, trafficking in persons, drugs and arms, and fraud, which trigger or aggravate poverty and inequality which constitute motivations for crimes and threats to internal security. Some of these problems derive from or are aggravated by economic and social conditions such as erosion of ethical and moral conduct in private and public life, corruption, ethnic and religious intolerance, deterioration of infrastructure and service delivery, steady rise in unemployment and mass poverty, widening social and economic inequality, proliferation of arms and drug abuse.

As Nigeria grapples with persistent insecurity challenges – the Boko Haram insurgency & Banditry menace representing the latest – attention has shifted to

the call for the creation of a Ministry of Homeland Security. The call highlights the source, understanding and role of Nigerian intellectuals in the debate on post-cold war security. The thrust of post-cold war security theory and practice attempted to broaden and deepen security away from states and military, to human welfare and non-military matters. Once the debate was ignited, it filtered into the developing world where the term 'security' has become misrepresented. In Nigeria, the perception, source and practise of security prevalent amongst scholars and practitioners are outside prevailing Nigerian realities.

### **The Requirements for Framing People-Centered Security for Nigeria**

The integration of military and state is itself the source of insecurity for Nigerians. Non-state actors like Bandits, insurgents, ethnic militants and kidnappers are internally generated whether they claim affiliation to external patrons or not. These groups emerged because of economic dissatisfaction. There is unemployment; reduced social spending at the behest of the IMF and World Bank; decayed and inadequate infrastructures; ad-hoc pronouncements instead of short, medium and long term planning; unparallel corruption; low human development in spite of tremendous resources.

States supposedly fall apart because they can no longer carry out the fundamental tasks necessary for them to continue existing as states, according to William Zartman (1995). He therefore listed this as one of the three fundamental tasks of the state, along with the other two being the state's role as a sovereign authority and its role as an institution. Because Nigerian governments have not fulfilled their primary duty of ensuring the material well-being of their citizens, these opinions are not grounded in the country's realities. To claim that the homeland ministry is necessary to bolster the security guarantor part of state function in order to avoid falling into the failed or collapsed state category is not the answer. The preceding decades demonstrate the failure of the options of more expenditure on the armed forces, weapon, equipment and bureaucratisation.

Essentially, the creation of a ministry of homeland security is not security and will not guarantee security. The centralisation of power in the presidency created layers of bureaucrats and interests that have worked against the functioning of the existing institutions. These contradictory structures are cemented in the constitution. For instance, the governor of a state is the chief security officer of his state and yet all the law enforcement agencies are controlled by the central government. Creating another institution for security would not only enhance the power of the central government to the detriment of other federating units. It



would entrench the prevailing bureaucratisation that has weakened the effectiveness of existing institutions.

What should constitute security is a multifaceted approach to addressing the degrading condition of Nigerians. Addressing the material poverty of Nigerians is security. The western world has succeeded in providing the basic necessities for its people hence they can dissipate energy on the pursuit of strategic interests. Indeed these strategic interests are in part geared towards maintaining or advancing their material interest. Catering for Nigerians is the first step to safeguarding the state because once the government puts Nigerians first, Nigerians will safeguard the state and not the armed forces. Security is too broad an edifice to be left to the military alone. The military play a minor role of defense in the security architecture. To attain relative degree of security for the country, the entire society has to be involved. The aforementioned, may require some deep reflection on what steps could be taken to actualize a sector wide security framework.

### **Steps to Operationalize a People Centered Security System for Nigeria**

From an operational perspective, a people-centered security for Nigeria, will aim to address complex situations of insecurity through collaborative, responsive and sustainable measures that are (i) people-centered, (ii) multisectoral, (iii) comprehensive, (iv) context-specific, and (v) prevention-oriented. In addition, a people-centered security, will employ a hybrid approach that brings together these elements through a protection and empowerment framework. Subsequently each people-centered security principle will inform the human security approach and must be integrated into the design of a people-centered security programme. Thus, a people-centered national security framework for Nigeria, must entail the following elements

- Inclusive and participatory.
- Considers individuals and communities in defining their needs/vulnerabilities and in acting as active agents of change.
- Collectively determines which insecurities to address and identifies the available resources including local assets and indigenous coping mechanisms.

### **It will be Multi-sectoral**

- Addresses multi-sectorality by promoting dialogue among key actors from different sectors/fields.
- Helps to ensure coherence and coordination across traditionally separate sectors/fields.

-Assesses positive and negative externalities of each response on the overall human security situation of the affected community(ies).

### **It will be Comprehensive**

Holistic analysis: the seven security components of human security.

-Addresses the wide spectrum of threats, vulnerabilities and capacities in the Nigerian society.

-Analysis of actors and sectors not previously considered relevant to the success of a policy/programme/project.

-Develops multi-sectoral/multi-actor responses.

### **It will be Context-specific**

Requires in-depth analysis of the targeted situation.

-Focuses on a core set of freedoms and rights under threat in a given situation.

-Identifies the concrete needs of the affected community(ies) and enables the development of more appropriate solutions that are embedded in local realities, capacities and coping mechanisms.

-Takes into account local, national, regional and global dimensions and their impact on the targeted situation in Nigeria.

### **It will be Prevention-oriented**

-Identifies risks, threats and hazards, and addresses their root causes.

-Focuses on preventative responses through a protection and empowerment framework in all stratas of the Nigerian society.

## **Issues and Challenges in Operationalizing a People-Centered Security System in Nigeria**

### **Vulnerability of the Concept to the Vagaries of the Nigerian Society**

Many academics have brought up the fragility of the people-centered security idea or policy for Nigeria, whether this is due to the country's inter-communal conflicts or structural events like economic downturn. For instance, if people-centered security is defined as a person's "expectation of a life free from the situation of generalised poverty. The idea provides an index of security that only contains those aspects of well-being that people have deemed significant enough to fight or put their lives and possessions in serious danger for. Health, education, income, political freedom, and democracy are listed as these realms. The index sets thresholds in each domain that are in some sense absolute; the index would identify a person as insecure if he or she fell below a threshold in *any* of the

domains. The approach does not include violence, but rather focuses on issues associated with the “freedom from want.”

Also, we can outline the increasing inequality in Nigeria, brought about by globalisation, and the insufficiency of current international measures to address it, and see the challenge in operationalizing the concept, as people-centered security entails basic material needs, human dignity, and democracy. Moreover, people-centered security describes a condition of existence in which basic material needs are met and in which human dignity, including meaningful participation in the life of the community, can be met. Thus, while material sufficiency lies at the core of people-centered security, the concept still encompasses non-material dimensions to form a qualitative whole.

### **Critical and Pervasive Threats**

Protecting the heart of people's lives from serious and pervasive dangers is the goal of people-centered security. The next phase is to pinpoint significant dangers that are widespread to the heart of people's lives in Nigeria and to pinpoint effective response strategies. In order to distinguish between bad news and undesirable events that pose a threat to human security, we must sort through the huge array of negative events that occur in human life. Of course, in Nigeria, this is not an easy feat. For instance, the West did not foresee the Velvet Revolutions, and futurist strategic scenarios range wildly from a world fighting terrorism, to a world simmering with multiple civil wars and water fights, to a world with China or Japan rising as the next superpower, to a world huddled together without energy or water.

The catalogue of threats to people-centered security in Nigeria is often recited at length, as a means to motivate listeners as to the importance of the issues at hand. However, a simple litany of Nigeria's threats offers very little strategic information. For this reason, strategies for dealing with idiosyncratic threats to the Nigerian polity, are often not clear, and therefore makes it difficult to build an effective response strategy and operationalize the concept.

### **Institutional Appropriateness**

How people-centered security fits within Nigeria's already-existing institutions and Organizations (many of which already support people-centered security) and how to determine what institutional structures need to be built are other procedural issues. There are two major strategies that Nigerian institutions can use for people-centered security, as is the case. The first is the immediate provision of security that is oriented on people. In order to prevent threats from

materialising, lessen their negative impacts if they do, and assist victims in coping, people-centered security solutions first seek to detect risks. Hence, the Nigerian government has the duty and power to ensure that its inhabitants are protected in a way that puts their needs first. In many instances, state or national agents also undertake particular responsibilities. For example, state governments may have a responsibility to invest adequately in their primary health care sector; while the Federal government may undertake a responsibility to protect civilians during violent conflict.

The second strategic approach to people-centered security protection is *respect*. Respect for people-centered security means that *whatever their primary objective may be*, all actors, whether institutional or individual, must ascertain that their actions do not foreseeably albeit unintentionally, threaten the security of the Nigerian citizenry. For example, certain active processes to respect environmental integrity, and certain types of research into the foreseeable, even if “unintended” consequences of a multi-national corporation’s project in the Niger Delta such as a pipeline (perhaps resulting in resettlement of the locals there that causes severe deprivation) are essential. To take another example, if a structural adjustment policy package regularly and predictably catapults populations into poverty without setting up safety nets, *the policy package does not respect people-centered security* – even if these side effects are utterly unintentional. This is quite demanding, although it has already been taken up in various impact assessment procedures (environmental, social) as well as in some ethical codes. Essentially, respect for people-centered security in Nigeria, will entail research or investigation; it is active, not passive; it requires time and resources. Ensuring respect for people-centered security is likely to require formal or informal enforcement mechanisms, such as documenting or protesting incidences of disrespect, or enforcing impact assessments and business codes of conduct in Nigeria.

The issue of which institution is or will be in charge of and has the power to offer people-centered security is another institutional problem. The notion of subsidiarity is typically always defined in an effort to shield employees from hostile working environments where they are unable to use their own initiative or creativity. Its initial goal, like that of human progress, was to safeguard people's autonomy and independence. It asserts that a decision or obligation should only be taken on by the most qualified agent. This principle's key finding is that the most regional or specialised organisations should take on the greatest amount of responsibility. In this way the freedom of local organizations is best preserved, while large institutions siphon off needs which cannot be addressed

by smaller or weaker groups, or where there are significant economies of scale. But with the increase in civil tensions, insurgency, militancy and conflicts, the geographically “most local” instrument of government is often one of the primary actors that perpetuates people-centered *in*security. Thus those who are capable of providing people-centered security may be external or international actors. The mention of subsidiarity effectively introduces the array of procedural concerns – ranging from authority to efficiency to justice to sustainability to empowerment to feasibility – which all, directly influence – how – and how well – people-centered security is or will be operationalized in Nigeria.

### **The Role of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) in Enhancing People-Centered Security System for Nigeria**

Despite the above concerns, a people-centered security system has become almost inevitable for Nigeria, and the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), can be central to instituting such a system. It can therefore do this by improving the following policing methods.

#### **Providing Social Services**

The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) must offer a range of services to victims and their families in order to maintain adequate policing in a security system that prioritises the needs of people. In an era of security systems that are oriented on people, policing will be primarily concerned with identifying and evaluating the requirements of victims and offering solutions to specific cases. NPF would unquestionably need to comprehend the communities they work with in this period. For instance, it is crucial for NPF officers who respond to crisis circumstances in Nigeria, a nation with such a diverse cultural and ethnic population, to comprehend the requirements of victims from different backgrounds. Officers need to critically analyze the role of systemic victimization, and the treatment of victims from diverse political, cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds.

Also, it is crucial for the NPF officers to stay protected, secure, and safe while doing their many duties. The challenge that many NPF officers have during interventions is deciding whether to foresee the possibility of an escalation or not within a limited window of time. Due to this, and as demonstrated by the many deaths of both civilians and police personnel in Nigeria, including social workers in patrol units during potentially dangerous interactions can significantly lower mortality rates. In order to achieve these goals, we believe that cooperation between law enforcement and social workers during NPF police interventions

will lessen the number of preventable casualties and foster or boost police-community trust.

### **Engaging Communities More**

Also, the necessary NPF units or departments will need to collaborate with local partners to help people with a variety of issues and social circumstances, including helping the sick, resolving minor "domestic conflicts, controlling traffic, and educating kids and teenagers about drug use. The amount of time cops spend on duty frequently has no bearing on reality. It appears that some NPF employees may be unaware of the kinds of social situations and social problems they meet as first responders based on the initial observation of police professionalism today. After all, it should go without saying that the police's main duties do not include making arrests, issuing penalties, or responding to calls. Their roles transcend all of these, therefore, the NPF must understand community problems and effectively respond to them. The police live in the community and should be cognizant of why people in their communities call for the police. The NPF is usually local since each city or rural area has a police department, and specialized groups like traffic police, etc.

The fact that policing in Nigeria has a geographic focus must also be mentioned. As a result, in the era of people-centered security, patrol personnel may be stationed in the same places for extended periods of time in order to get to know the locals better. So, in the modern era, policing in Nigeria would involve contract negotiations between police departments and community partners. Using problem-solving tactics and strategies and collaborating with residents and other agencies to develop activities that deter crime are a few examples of this form of policing. Instead of the pronounced bureaucratic and militaristic style that was heavily influenced by British policing and adopted since the birth of policing in Nigeria, policing would be people-centered in this period. Police will focus more on offering community members services from a partnership viewpoint rather than overburdening them with law enforcement.

In order to connect with community members or offer rapid linkages to community services, NPF departments will need to use information and communication technologies. Although they avoid the in-person interactions that are necessary to develop trust, these introduce fresh methods of connecting with the locals. NPF departments may now be required to actively participate in online communities through the use of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn as well as to maintain websites with contact information such email addresses. Social media

platforms will therefore play a crucial role in the plan for involving the community.

### **Problem-solving approach**

The problem solving-approach has been viewed as crucial to policing and not just a one-off activity for a unique project. This method shows that the NPF working along with other agencies and organisations may be extremely relevant for tackling problems in the new era of people-centered security. Today's NPF units must employ problem-oriented policing, which seeks to address the unsavoury or potentially violent circumstances by identifying recurring crimes and other social issues in Nigerian culture. The NPF's staff may have spent a lot of time resolving domestic disputes, providing information, counselling, mediating, and referrals for expert aid, managing mental health issues, reducing drunk driving, and upholding order..

### **Social service provision**

Several NPF departments have historically delivered social services to Nigerian communities, but more specialised services are now required in response to the growing demand for people-centered police. Community members typically contact police departments for a variety of reasons, such as drug abuse, domestic violence, mental health conditions, child abuse, and concerns with the juvenile justice system. Hence, the NPF must play the tasks of a mental welfare officer, marriage counsellor, home-helper for the elderly, and friend and confidant to the welfare worker. Poor families frequently call NPF departments since they are one of the few public organisations that operate on a 24-hour service model, as opposed to middle-class people who might call their doctors or religious leaders in times of distress. Infact, many have said that calling the Police has been described as the cornerstone of policing in a democratic society.

Even while the NPF departments offer a wide range of social services, it must be acknowledged that these duties are rarely or never depicted in media because the police are almost always seen against crime. The delivery of social services involves several facets of professional social work, including social justice, efficient communication, and prompt action. As they deal with crimes perpetrated against their family members, hundreds of victims come forward every day to give testimony and aid in the conviction of offenders; in some situations, they could require treatment. In its Declaration of Basic Principles of

Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power adopted by the United Nations General Assembly of 29 November 1985, the United Nation defines “victim” as the “immediate family or dependents of the direct victim and persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimization” (United Nations Rule of Law, 1985, p. 1). In some cases the perpetrator of a crime may be a breadwinner, and arresting the individual may leave the rest the family in need of social services. So, having police available to victims could be helpful in an era of people-centered security. Since nearly every NPF department is open 24 h a day and 7 days a week, personnel of the NPF would be readily available during nights and weekends, times of high propensity of crisis situations for families.

### **The need to pursue a People-Centered National Security System for Nigeria**

At this point, this paper comes to its main argument. It argues that the people-centered security approach, despite some of the drawbacks outlined above in terms of definitional vagueness and difficult-to-implement comprehensiveness, in essence represents a sound and sensible approach to the promotion of a fundamental and deeper kind of security than any coercive approach can perform in Nigeria. It has the capacity to deal with the different types of natural and anthropogenic security threats facing Nigeria at the moment. Recent developments in Nigeria’s North East have underlined that state-centric security of the population is ultimately not sustainable and unable to bring long-term stability. It is also pertinent to add that state-centric security brings with it, a lot of contradictions that seem to be deepening Nigeria’s Security conundrum, which still needs adequate answers to deal with. It is to be hoped that the people-centered security approach with its preventative and developmentalist agenda, will be able to bring change in a more gradual and less bloody manner in Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has, presented a working conception of people-centered national security for Nigeria, in full awareness of the main competing definitions, characterizations, and complaints about the people-centered security concept. It showed how the concept can be coherent within the Nigerian context, being based in practical reason, and argued that people-centered security was best specified procedurally, so that it would be both appropriate and feasible. The definition retains many degrees of freedom. But concrete situations have far



fewer. They are constrained by data sets, by political realities in the country, by limited resources and by the needs for urgent action. While people-centered security is not an unfamiliar concept, and while it overlaps considerably with concepts that underlie systems of state security, human development and human rights protection, its distinctive emphases make a valuable contribution that the present altered security environment in Nigeria requires.

It has to be said also, that, Nigerian scholars have enhanced the dominance of state centric security rather than demystifying and indigenising it. It is the opinion of Booth that scholars who study security, whether they recognise it or not, have a direct relationship with the real world conditions of relative insecurity or security; their ideas can contribute to replicating or changing people's condition of existence in specific situation. Security is should be people-centric, not state-centric because human beings make up the state. As Booth argued, emancipation is the heart of security. We should study and practice security in a way that would emancipate Nigerians.

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