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Conflicts and Insecurity as Threats to Nigerian National Development

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Abstract

One of the major setbacks to development in Nigeria is insecurity. Until very recently, plethora of explanations on the crawling pace of development in Nigeria tends to pay infinitesimal attention to the centrality of security to national development. It is no surprise, therefore, that since 1999 when Nigeria returned to civil rule, insecurity tends to have hampered national development. Security evidently is the pillar upon which every meaningful development could be achieved and sustained. The development strides in most western capitalists' states that place premium on security lend credence to this assertion. While Nigeria is endowed with abundant resources, negligence to numerous challenges of insecurity in the environment appears to have created porous security conditions that engendered violence and retard development. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the imminent security danger posed by conflicts and insecurity (terrorism and political conflicts) in the light of the present onslaught and the extent the insurgences have shaped development trajectories in Nigeria. Security avails the opportunity for development and Nigeria can only achieve sustainable development through firm prioritization of security in the development agenda.

Introduction

Development generally has to do with dynamics. Positive development connotes progressive changes. Development economics emerged after the Second World War. And since then, the meaning of national development has not been fixed and consistent. Between the 1940s to the early 1960s, development was seen as synonymous with economic growth. Otto and Ukpere (2012), Rostow (1952), Harrod and Domer (1957) cited in Otto and Ukpere (2012), propose models of development, generally identifying structural changes, savings and investments as the sources of economic development and growth.

It was assumed that as the economy grows and output increases, there will be more happiness and improved welfare arising from the large pool of resources which if well distributed would have generally improved the well-being of the masses. The basic assumption was that in so much as the economy grows, trickledown effect will at least lead to improvement for everybody in the economy and the living standard would generally improve. Development defines a dialectical phenomenon in which man and society interact with their physical, biological and inter-human environments transforming them to better humanity at large and being transformed in the process. Development, therefore, connotes a high ability to exploit nature for the improvement of the greatest good of the greatest number in society (ibid). However, due to the security challenges in the nation Nigeria, this trend is not obtainable, thereby causing serious developmental challenges.

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Understanding Developmental Trends in Nigeria

The 1960s, was seen as the development decade. Growth targets were set and in several cases achieved; however, it was discovered that misery, poverty, and unemployment, grew worse visa-a-visa economic growth. This prompted a redefinition of development to mean a growing economy in addition to even distribution of resources and reduction in poverty, unemployment, inflation and other social maladies.

In the 1970s, capacity became a key determinant in the definition of development. At present, the ability to understand nature and transform it to human needs became the understanding of development. In other words, a developed country is one that has a high capacity to transform nature and its inter-human environment to meet the needs of man. According to Nnoli (1981):

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In recent times, intergenerational consideration has become part of the understanding of development with the introduction of adjective sustainable to development. Sustainable development holds that development of today will not compromise the development of tomorrow (the next generation). Thus, to say Nigeria is developed, we would be saying that its capacity to meet its need had increased significantly. Consequently, in May, 1999, Nigeria's return to civil rule was accompanied with fresh hopes and latent optimism. The optimism is predicted on the fact that democracy would guarantee freedom, liberty and equity and enhance life and property which would indeed reposition development trajectories to sustainability.

Regrettably, this optimism seems to be a mirage. Nigeria is presently rated as one of the poorest nations in the world with debilitating youths' unemployment. For instance, Aganga (2009) observes that over ten million Nigerians were unemployed by March, 2009 and unemployment is running at around 19.7 per cent on average. The figures geometrically increase yearly with less realistic efforts by the managers of the state to abate the rampaging unemployment problem (National Bureau of Statistics, 2009). In Nigeria, like many other developing countries, about 70 per cent of the population lives in poverty (Otto and Ukpere, 2010). The majority of the population lacks access to pipe borne water, health care facilities, electricity and affordable quality education.

Amidst these development challenges, the national security in the country deteriorated drastically. Nigeria's democratic rule is threatened by national security disaster. It is true that considerable progress has been achieved in the area of freedom of speech and liberty but series of resources based conflict (Niger Delta), ethno religious crisis (Jos Crisis) and communal conflicts persists. On the other hand, Sen (1999) observes the centrality of freedom in the process of development. To him, development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or over activity of repressive states. In the last two decades, development trajectories in Asia (Asia tigers) and Middle East

depict that the developing nations need to formulate functional homegrown development models if they really want to escape the pains of underdevelopment (Sen, 1999).

Since the end of the cold war, security and development concerns have been increasingly interlinked (Chandler, 2007). In fact, no sustainable development can be achieved in an atmosphere of conflicts, crisis and war and Nigeria is not an exception. Understandably, security and development are two different concepts that tend to affect each other, making both concepts inseparable. This relationship has recently triggered debates on security development nexus (Chandleo, 2007 and Stan, 2004).

Okorie (2011), Jaga (2002), Slawu (2010), Onyishi (2011), Ezeoha (2011) and Lewis (2002) identify several causes of insecurity crisis in Nigeria that pose great consequences to national development. Among them are ethno-religious conflicts that tend to have claimed many lives in the country. Such society is characterized by lack of cordiality, mutual suspicious and fear, and tending towards violent confrontation (Salawu, 2012). Since independence, Nigeria has been bedeviled with ethno-religious conflicts. Ethnic and religious affiliation determines who gets what in Nigeria, it is so central and seems to perpetuate discrimination. The return to civil rule in 1999 tend to have provided ample leverage for multiplicity of ethno-religious conflicts. And the inability of the Nigerian leader to tackle development challenges, distribute state resources equitably and render good services to the people, appears to be one of the causes of ethno-religious violence. Salawu (2010) argues that a major cause of what we now see as ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria has to do with the accusation and allegation of neglect, oppression, domination, exploitation, victimization, discrimination, marginalization, nepotism and bigotry.

The Impact of Insecurity on the Nation's Development

Nigeria is one of the nations in the world whose political landscape has been inundated, suffused with and deeply enmeshed in spectrum of reoccurring complex conflicts ranging from resource, communal to political and ethno-religious conflicts (Jega, 2002). The implication of all these setbacks is poor implementation of policies, rising unemployment, hardship, economic and political stagnation that give rise to present threats to national security and development which seem to be developing beyond the capacity of the state.

Apart from the issue of poor governance and leadership failure, the electoral politics has assumed an ugly dimension since 1999. A cursory look at electoral politics in Nigeria since 1999 depicts catalogues of election related assassinations. Several cases can be cited. On 23rd December, 2001, the former Attorney General of the Federation, Chief Bola Ige was assassinated and in March, 2003, Harry Marshall the national vice chairman for the South-South Zone of All Nigeria Peoples Party was also assassinated (Idu 2011). The former chairman Nigeria Bar Association, Onitsha Branch, Barnabas Igwe and his wife were gruesomely murdered on 1st September, 2002. Engr. Funsho William and Dr. Ayodeji Daramola, former gubernatorial candidates of the People's Democratic Party (POP) in Lagos and Ekiti States respectively suffered the same fate (Ibid). Indeed incessant political violence in Nigeria is attributed to over-zealousness and desperation by political gladiators to win elections or remain in office at all cost. A good example is former President Obasanjo who publicly declared that the 2007 general elections would be a "do or die affair" (Nwanegbo and Odigbo, 2013).

Furthermore, systemic and political corruption in Nigeria has added another dimension of violent conflict which has eroded national values and development. Corruption is bad not only because money and

benefits change hands and not because of the motives of participants, but because it also privatizes valuable aspect of public life, bypassing process of representations, debate and choice (Thompson cited in Graflumbs dorft, 2001:97). It has been described as cancer militating against Nigeria's development. Corruption hampers economic growth, disproportionately burdens the poor and undermines the effectiveness of investment and aid (Iyare, 2008). The existence of two anti-graft agencies, the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) seems to have done little in an effort to eradicate corrupt practices in Nigeria. In specifics, the following are the effects of insecurity and conflicts on the national security and development of the country:

(i) Terrorism

From all indications, security is a big challenge in Nigeria's effort to develop and the terrorist insurgency has compounded the existing threatening security situation in Nigeria. It is true that security is a major issue globally; Nigeria's security situation has over the years deteriorated owing to poor governance, political desperation and government inability to deliver the needed dividends of democracy to the Nigerian populace.

Insecurity and terrorism are two inseparable phenomena. Domestic terror and other social vices are perpetrated in the absence of strong national security structure. Terrorism and insecurity have a huge economic, socio and physical cost. It is obvious that the loss of human lives and the suffering of survivors in the aftermath of an attack can be tremendous. Apart from the loss of lives, terrorist attacks have negative consequences on the investment behaviour (Gassefaner, 2005). Withdrawals of foreign direct investment by countries and companies at times occur due to the direct destructions of infrastructure, the rise of operating costs as a result of high demand for security (Enders and Sandier, 2006; Frey et al., 2007).

(ii) Hindrances to Foreign Direct Investment

In the field of stock market, insecurity and terrorism negatively influence the prices of stock as well as the sales and purchase of stocks. This increases market volatility due to the perception of investors towards the security of stock market (Jackson et al., 2007). Insecurity also diverts economic resources from highly productive sector to less productive security measure, thereby crowding out investment. No meaningful growth and development can take place in the continuous face of insecurity. This will reduce the GDP and fuel inflation and also the flow of foreign direct investment. McKenna (2005) argues that the increase in government expenditure due to rising insecurity especially in the less developed countries may result in the reduction of foreign reserve. The result is that inflation in those countries keeps rising. Insecurity and conflicts discourage all types of investment in the country. Foreign and domestic, short or long-term investments are not encouraged in nations and societies where insecurity occasioned by terrorist's activities is rampant. This is particularly true of foreign investors whose primary motivation is profit. An economy in which investors are not eager to participate stagnates and eventually disintegrates (Ogaba, 2007). For a developing economy such as Nigeria, any phenomenon or issue which discourages foreign investors cannot be tolerated because it will stall the growth of the economy with dire consequences for the nations' national security. In Nigeria presently, security and socio-unrest are profound challenges, innocent citizens are being killed on daily basis, expatriates are kidnapped for ransom and in the process even killed, people now live in fear and anxiety and tension is mounting high.

The effect is unwholesome killings which are particularly discouraging to foreign investors. When the airports and hotels in any nation are declared or perceived as unsafe, the result on the investment climate is usually drastic. This is also true of tourism as aspect of the economy which is still being developed in Nigeria to earn foreign exchange. Unless the economy is buoyant and stable, the nation cannot be stable and secure. One of the major objectives of the terrorists and other fundamentalist enemies of the nation, therefore, is to discourage foreign investment in the nation's economy. One of the major weaknesses of Nigeria's economy is its near-total reliance on revenue from petroleum products. Rapid industrialization and vigorous promotion of tourism will further diversify the nation's economic base and so reduce reliance on oil. But terrorist acts and political conflicts will discourage both industrialization and tourism. This is very detrimental to stability and security in Nigeria.

The current state of insecurity and bombings especially in the Northern part of Nigeria has posed serious challenges to peace and stability of Nigeria's macroeconomic environment. The nation has not only suffered colossal loss in terms of infrastructure, properties and viable human lives but also economic sabotage which leads to the displacement of foreign direct investment. The key role which foreign direct investment plays in most developing economies especially as a catalyst for economic growth cannot be over-emphasized. Generally, no business can thrive in tensed and insecure environment. This has serious implication for foreign direct investment and economic growth. Domestic terrorism and political violence do not only breed uncertainty in the investment and financial climate but also increase security cost, reduction in output and productive capacity, reduce tourism, damage infrastructure and displace foreign direct investment which has severe implication for economic growth and development of emerging economies (Oriakhi & Osemwengie, 2012).

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is the direct investment of a foreign company or country on the productive asset of the domestic economy of another country. In other-words, according to Graham and Spaulding (1995), foreign investment in a classic form is a company from one country making physical investment into building a factory in another country. However, given the rapid growth and changes in global investment patterns the understanding of foreign investment has been broadened to include the acquisition of lasting-management interest in a company or enterprise outside the investment firm's home country. Thus, foreign direct investment can take many forms, such as direct acquisition of a foreign firm, construction of facilities or investment in a joint venture or strategic alliance with a local firm with attendant input of technology and licensing of intellectual property.

Odozi (1995) asserts that foreign direct investment is a form of lending or finance in the area of equity participation. It generally involves the transfer of resources, including capital, technology, management and marketing expertise. Such resources usually extend the production capabilities of the recipient country. Direct investment, whether portfolio or otherwise involves the movement of resources from a surplus region probably to a deficit region with a view to making profit. The flow of resources can, however, be hampered if the political and socioeconomic environment of the host country is hostile.

Graham and Spaulding (1995) posit that foreign direct investment plays an extraordinary role in the developing economies and is growing in global business. Direct foreign investment can provide a firm with new markets and marketing channels, cheaper production facilities, access to new technology, products, skills and financing. To a host country or the foreign firm which receives the investment, it can provide a source of new technologies and management skills and as such can provide strong impact to

economic development. Caves (1996) and Bakare (2010) observe that the positive effects of foreign direct investment are the reasons for the increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) attractions especially in emerging economies.

Many factors have been identified to determine the flow of FDI in the host country. Chakrabali (2001) and Tarzi (2005) identify market size and growth rate, economic competitiveness, trade openness, infrastructures, and worker productivity as critical to the determinants of foreign direct investment. The most profound effect of FDI has been seen in developing countries, where yearly foreign direct investment flows have increased from an average of less than \$10 billion in the 1970s to a yearly average of less than \$20 billion in the 1980s, to explode in the 1990s from \$26.7 billion in 1990 to \$179 billion in 1998 and \$208 billion in 1999 and now comprise a large portion of global foreign direct investment. This increase is driven by mergers and acquisitions and internationalization of production in a range of industries. Foreign direct investment into the developed countries in 2011 rose to \$636 billion, from \$481 billion in 1998 (UNCTA).

However, through disruption, damage and insecurity, conflicts are reducing foreign direct investment. For instance, the Nigeria Economic Fact Sheet (2011) reports that in 2010, the United States which is the largest contributor of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Nigeria dropped by 29 per cent from \$8.65 billion in 2009 to \$6.1 billion in 2010. The decline in US foreign direct investment is due to the political unrest in the Niger Delta and the Boko Haram terrorist insurgency against the country.

As a result of insecurity, every year, the developing countries spend a large portion of their budget on defense and security. In 2010, Nigeria's budget, over 448 billion Naira was voted for security and in the 2012 budget, security vote received over N900 billion. This is 5.69 and 7.74 per cent respectively of the annual budgets, the highest ever since independence in 1960 (Oriakhi and Osemwengie, 2012). The proponents of the budget attributed it to the insurgence of the Islamic fundamentalist group - the Boko Haram and the inability of the security agents to keep pace with the recent trend of events.

Enders and Sandier (2008) argue that the developing countries are particularly prone to the economic ramifications of terrorism. This will not only lead to loss in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but also significant losses in foreign direct investment and GDP growth (Abadie and Gardeazabel, 20003). Thus, using a terrorism risk index for 2003 - 2004 in a cross-country analysis, Abadie and Gardeasabal (2008) conclude that a higher risk of terrorism depresses net foreign direct investment to a country. High risk and uncertainty are dearly associated with insecurity and political instability. Such incidents disrupt infrastructure, thereby affecting GDP growth rate and also discourage the flow of foreign direct investment.

Bandyopadhyay, Sandier and Younas (2011) investigating the impart of terrorism on foreign direct investment in 78 developing countries from 1984-2008, concluded that terrorism has a negative and significant impact on foreign direct investment as a share of GDP. This implies that the much needed resources for development can be eroded and displaced given the incessant state of insecurity and terrorist activities going on in the nation, Nigeria.

(iii) Increased Expenditure on Security

Every nation commits a certain percentage of its national resources to the maintenance of its internal security. The percentage of the resources committed is a factor of the level of security or insecurity in the

nation. Political conflicts usually create an atmosphere of insecurity, as result of which valuable resources are diverted to security to the detriment of other essential services. Even at the individual and corporate level, terrorism will cause expenditure on security to rise beyond what the resources can reasonably sustain, both for the nation and the individual.

A nation ruled by fear and dominated by fancy security gadgets is not what Nigeria should aspire to. Unfortunately, this is one of the implications of insecurity and conflicts for the nation. Since independence, Nigeria has always devoted a sizeable percentage of its annual budget to defense to the detriment of other sectors. Insecurity and conflicts are bound to increase the percentage of the nation's resources devoted to security and defense. The productive sectors will consequently continue to suffer as more and more resources are devoted to countering urban political violence. Economic development will suffer and valuable resources will be wasted on non-productive but necessary ventures. This is harmful to Nigeria's national development.

Conclusion

In conclusion, insecurity increases the unit cost of doing business in Nigeria. Apart from the fall in output and the increase in unit cost of production, many firms in different industries relocated away from the insecurity prone areas while some left the country completely. Examples include Michelin, Dunlop and several others. According to Tegba (2011), an insecure environment impinges directly on development, it disenfranchises communities, contributes to poverty, distorts economies, creates instability and stunts political development. In Nigeria, apart from the millions of people who have been killed in the course of one security breach or another, sources of livelihood were destroyed, families got disintegrated and social infrastructure were disrupted. Insecurity is debilitating to the economic development of many less developed economies of the globe.

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