

**Nigeria: Too Rich for Dignity and the Law?
Perspectives after the 2007 elections**

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Democracy, Internal Security and the Challenges of Policing in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Since the return to civil democratic rule in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed the relative deterioration of its internal security. This is worrisome because internal security crisis is inherent with tendencies that threaten national unity and cohesion, discourages investments and retard development. This paper attempts a critical analysis of the causality of the state of relative insecurity in Nigeria and the related problem of policing in the country. It argues that the state of relative insecurity in Nigeria derives from its material base: the question of inclusion and or exclusion from access to opportunities and resources (economic, political, social, etc.). In other words, the violent character of politics, rampant corruption, ethno-religious/communal crises, police brutality, electoral fraud, armed robbery, proliferation of ethnic militias, etc, all of which constitute credible threats to security in Nigeria derive from the structural foundations of the society. We argue in conclusion that the best possible policing strategy for Nigeria will require not just the reform of the police and the adoption of Community Policing strategy, but also a wider and more comprehensive reform of the structural foundations of the Nigerian society.

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The transition, in 1998-1999, to civil democratic rule in Nigeria was greeted with popular enthusiasm and optimism. The relative cordiality that characterized the process of the formation of political parties and the relative ease with which such parties were registered was a clear demonstration of the optimism and commitment of Nigeria's political class and the state elites to democracy project in Nigeria. Among the generality of the people of Nigeria, the transition was a welcome development, not only because it signaled the eventual termination of authoritarian military rule, but more so because it was perceived as the dawn of an era of great optimism and the realization of the dream of a good life. Such optimism was equally widely shared in the international community, even if cautiously.

Eight years after, the great expectations among Nigerians seems to have waned and is fast replaced, at best, by feelings of resignation and disappointment. This development is to be appreciated against the background of the experiences of the people during military rule, when the space for popular participation in the determination of matters affecting them highly constricted and when any forms of organizing to question the policies of the state was scarcely tolerated. However, democratic governance turned out to be a mixed bag. As old grievances, suppressed during military rule, resurfaced and seek to be resolved, the actions and or inactions of the state made no room for their resolution, and in certain instances even compounded those grievances.

It is not surprising therefore, that since the return to civil rule in 1999, Nigeria is said to have witnessed over 90 violent ethno-religious, communal, political, etc conflicts of varying intensities and magnitude (Elaigwu: 2005; pp. 57-76). Added to and or as a result of this, is the palpable feeling of growing insecurity (broadly conceived), due, in large parts, to rising crime rates and the increasing constriction of space for effective popular participation. This conjuncture elicited a wide range of reactions from the populace, and the Nigerian state too (Mohammed: 2005;p.18-19). On either side, some of the (re)actions further eroded the basis of internal security.

The growing erosion of internal security in Nigeria and the responses it elicited from the people and the state raises several pertinent questions, such as: is the state of relative insecurity in Nigeria the result of democracy deficits? Is the state of relative insecurity in Nigeria due to any defects in the Nigeria Police and policing strategy in the country? Can the Nigeria police and the strategy of policing guarantee internal security and support democratization in the country? These are some of the questions central to the issues we engage in this paper. To make these questions amenable to inquiry, we structure this paper into six parts. Other than the preceding section, in which we introduced the

issues and some of the cardinal questions in the discourse, the paper is divided into five other sections. In the second section, we attempt a review of the concepts of security, democracy and policing. In section three, we analyze the structural foundations of governance and how such affect the state of internal security in Nigeria. Section four focuses on the concrete manifestations and impacts of governance on internal security and democratization. Particular reference is made here of the impacts of official corruption and its impacts on internal security. In the fifth and concluding section, we consider the effectiveness of the Nigeria Police and the need for and prospects of alternative policing for better internal security and the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.

From a largely strategic/Clausewitzian perspective, security conjures images of weapons and weapons system for defence of cherished values. On the other hand, from a broader and less conventional, Human Security perspective, security is conceived as development (DFAIT:1999; PP.3-4, UNDP: 2006 P.35) . However, what is common in the literature, irrespective of the perspective, and which accounts for much of the failure of the efforts in managing security crises in Nigeria, is the segmented approach to the conceptualization of, and engagements with security. In other words, we approach security as a one-off-event. This failure to see security as trajectory accounts for the recurring trend of security crises in Nigeria

In conceptualizing internal security, it is only logical to begin by considering the predicator, i.e. security. According to Imobighe (1990), broadly conceived, security has to do with “freedom from danger or with threats to a nation’s ability to protect and develop itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interests and enhance the well-being of its people”. Implied in this definition is the fact that security manifests at the levels of nation-states, individuals, etc, and also has internal and external dimensions. Flowing from this conception, internal security may be conceived as the

freedom from or the absence of those tendencies which could attenuate internal cohesion and the corporate existence of the nation and its ability to maintain its vital institutions for the promotion of its core values and socio- political and economic objectives, as well as meet the legitimate aspirations of the people. Finally, internal security also implies freedom from danger to life and property and the presence of a conducive atmosphere for the people to pursue their legitimate interest within the society (Imobighe: *ibid*; 224).

This conception is applicable here for several reasons; first, it is more all encompassing than the narrow strategic conception, and second, because it gives vent to the intricate connection between security and democracy. The conception of security by Mc Namara (1968;P.125) also fits in here and is equally illuminating:

In modernizing society, security means development, security is not military force though it may involve it; security is not traditional military activity, though it may encompass it; security is not military hardware though it may include it. Security is development and without development, there can be no security.

The salience of this non-conventional conception of security is its emphasis on security as human security. Seen from this broad perspective, security could imply the maturation of the structures and process that can engender and guarantee political space and sufficient conditions for the realization of, among other things, personal, group, national, e.t.c, aspirations.

From a development centered Human security perspective, Kofi Anan submits that:

Today we know that “security” means far more than the absence of conflict. We know that lasting peace requires a broader vision encompassing areas such as education,

health, democracy and human rights, protection against environmental degradation, and the proliferation of deadly weapons. We know that we can not be secure amidst starvation, that we cannot build peace without alleviating poverty, and that we can not build freedom on the foundations of injustice. These pillars of what we now understand as the people-centered concept of 'human' security are inter-related and mutually reinforcing (1998: P.13)

The Human security perspective on security has several attractions; first, it is more all encompassing than the narrow strategic conception, and second, because it gives vent to the intricate connection between state security and the security of persons. As it rightly observed, as with other applications of security, "human security is about protection". This is largely because the security of the state is not an end in itself, rather it is a means of ensuring security for its people. National and human security are mutually supportive in the sense that "improving the security of its people strengthens the legitimacy, stability and security of a state". Corroborating the broader conception, Nigeria's president Obasanjo (1999: P.3) submitted that national security be conceived to purview the security of the interests of individuals, political entities and other groups in the country, and the prosperity of individuals and corporate Nigerian institutions within... the country.

Democracy, like security, is also a charged concept. For a start, this concept is not devoid of ideological colourations. Indeed, the dominance of Western ideology of liberalism has caused the conflation of this concept so much that western democracy is taken as synonymous with democracy. Such conceptions are reductionist, and makes democracy something like a one-size-fits all. According to Jega (2002;12), there is not only a multiplicity of conceptions which often are contradictory, but also , democracy is used to mean "different things to different people". However, despite the differences in historical and social settings which often manifest in the various definitions or conceptions of democracy, democracy can be said to refer to three basic ideas, namely:

- a) *a moral imperative, in that it represents a permanent aspiration of human beings for freedom, for a better social and political order, one that is more human and more or less egalitarian;*
- b) *a social process, in that it is a continuous process of promoting equal access to fundamental human rights and civil liberties for all, and*
- c) *a political practice or a mode of governance based on the principles of popular sovereignty, the rule of law, accountability, participation and alternance (meaning leadership renewal or change) (Nzongola-Ntalaja;2001).*

Policing simply refers to the task and responsibility for the provision and guarantee of law and order in society. It revolves around law enforcement, crime prevention, the protection of lives and property from danger, etc. The Police is often one of the most visible of security agencies responsible for the task of policing in most societies. Indeed, without the feeling of safety, security and order, the provision of which the police plays cardinal roles, the prospects of the realization of the goals of domestic security and the consolidation of democracy, among other things becomes bleak.

However, in the recent past, there has been growing concern with the increasing decline of the efficacy of traditional policing strategies for ensuring the goals of orderly, secured and safe society. Changing contexts, especially in post-conflict societies and also in democratizing society therefore informs the need for, and the increasing adoption by, such countries, of newer models and philosophies of policing. Thus, the concept of policing requires context specific reading and appreciating.

DEMOCRACY AND INTERNAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA: A CONTEXT ANALYSIS.

In Nigeria, as in other societies, there is evidence of correlation between democratic governance and the state of security in the country. From 1999 to date, Nigeria has experienced considerable erosion of domestic security. This is evidenced by the increasing proliferation of private security organizations (Ebo and Mijah) and the prominent place which matters of internal security enjoyed in the campaign agenda of almost all political parties in Nigeria's recently concluded general elections. We argue hereunder, that the state of relative insecurity in Nigeria is the result of the deficit of democratic governance in the country.

In large parts, democratic governance in Nigeria has not instituted sufficient policies and programmes to alter the structures of imbalance and inequity entrenched by colonialism and prolonged authoritarian military rule (Ibrahim:2002; 197). These structures are exclusionary and ill suited for democracy. They are however, the very foundation on which Nigeria's democracy project is anchored.

To a large extent, colonialism imposed on Nigeria a structural imbalance in the configuration of Nigeria's federalism. In its federal arrangement, the Northern part of Nigeria accounts for as much as over one-half of the country's land mass (79%), leaving the Western, Mid-Western and Eastern regions with 8.5%, 8.3% and 4.6% respectively. Similarly, the Northern part of the country was, and still is, more populous than the rest of the country put together, accounting for over one-half of Nigeria's estimated population of 140 million people (NPC 2005). In addition, the differential distribution of such developmental infrastructures such as education, in which the Southern part of the country enjoys preponderance, combined to instill a feeling of fear of domination and mutual suspicion. These factors, i.e the fear of domination and mutual suspicion manifested in the political, economic and social dynamics of the country. For instance, by virtue of its large population, the Northern part of the country dominated in governance and control of political power, making it almost impossible, outside a democratic framework, for any other parts of the country to control political power at the center. This is made more difficult for the South by the ethno-regional character of politics in the country. However, it is in the area of the determination of citizenship and the exercise of citizenship rights that this imbalance entrenched a seed of insecurity.

As a result of the multi-ethnic character of Nigeria and the failure of the Nationalist project to evolve a true nation and a corresponding national identity (Ibrahim: op. cit; 179-184), ethnic, religious and other primordial points of reference assumed added importance. The eventual transformation of identities along primordial lines and the entrenchment of negative identity politics, made ethnic and religious identities the basis of inclusion or exclusion in the distribution of resources. Thus, so-called dominant ethnic groups systematically excluded minority ethnic groups from national and even regional (state) processes and from the acquisition of resources and opportunities for individual and collective development. Thus, as a safeguard for their communal and group resources, ethnic nationalities began to define citizenship along the lines of indigeneity. Indigenes benefit more opportunities and resources than "settlers", i.e people whose ancestral roots can not be traced to their immediate community of residence, notwithstanding how long they might have resided in such community. This "indigene"/ "settler" identity became the standard for inclusion or exclusion in the distribution of resources (see IPCR (2003), Sanda (2003), Mustapha (2004)). It is important to state at this point, that the transformation of identity and the entrenchment of negative identity politics in Nigeria, as part of the wider causality of insecurity in the country, gained ascendance under situations of crisis and adjustment in Nigeria (Jega: 2003; 15).

The crisis of state and economy in Nigeria, dating back to the early 1980s, and the consequent structural adjustment it engendered, revealed the potent threats to domestic security inherent in its structural imbalance (Mijah:,2006; 56). Also, debt and economic crises has had varying impacts across social and political divides in Nigeria. For the state elites, this conjuncture caused intra elite conflicts as the resources available to the state to maintain its rentier and prebendal character dwindled, thereby intensifying the struggle for the little available resources. Thus, as factions of the state elites get excluded from the largesse of the state, they began to fall back on their ethnic/religious constituencies

and to manipulate such sentiments in the struggle for state resources, ie to wrest more resource concessions from the state.

In large parts therefore, the structural imbalance in the ethnic, religious and regional composition of Nigeria and the manipulation of such identities can be said to be responsible for the various ethno-religious and even communal conflicts in Nigeria, especially in the more heterogeneous Northern part of the country. It also explains the attacks, in the past decade, on the Igbos in Kano on one hand, and the reprisal attacks on Northerners (Hausas) in Enugu and other parts of the Igbo dominated Eastern Nigeria, on the other. Ditto, the various ethno/religious conflicts in Kaduna state (Kafanchan (1987), Zangon Kataf (1992), Kaduna, (2001)and (2003), Jos (2002 and), Numan (2003/2004), (Mijah; 2005;379-380), etc

The state of relative insecurity in Nigeria is also to be understood in the specific context of the programme of neo-liberal reforms, especially of the economy, as implemented in the period of democratic rule in the country. In large measures, the programme of economic liberalization, the implementation of which was further accelerated in the period since 1999, was instituted in the same context of structural imbalance and differential distribution of resources between regions, ethnic nationalities and individuals. In spite of its modest gains, especially in the areas of telecommunication, consolidation of the financial sector, etc (dividends of democracy as it is called here) (Soludo: 2006; 49), the programme of economic reform in Nigeria is exclusionary and departicipatory. By this, the so-called attempt at the "democratization" of the economy by the Nigerian state can be said to have constricted the room for participation by, and alienated the state from, the mass majority of Nigerians. This feeling of economic exclusion and the struggle to create alternative space for economic security also threatens domestic security in Nigeria, as we shall attempt to demonstrate in subsequent paragraphs.

The programme of economic reform in Nigeria has its ideological roots and orientation in the scheme of neo-liberal globalization as championed by the West under the aegis of the trio of the World Bank, IMF and the WTO (Onimade;2001). Neo-liberal globalization as a process seeks to entrench the core ideals of free market economy, namely; liberalization, deregulation and privatization, in the governance of national economies. These ideals are manifested in the economic reform programme of the Nigerian state, more especially since the return to civil democracy in 1999. Thus, under the accelerated programme of economic reform, over a hundred Public Enterprises have been divested of public ownership, with attendant job loses and the stripping of majority of Nigerians of their claims to property rights, which they enjoyed as citizens. Also the increasing privatization of other sectors of the national economy, such as education, health, housing, etc, and the far reaching de-subsidization of such social services, has excluded majority of Nigerians who could not afford the financial means to effectively participate in the acquisition of privatized shares, or afford the higher charges for better services as charged by private health and educational service providers. In this way, as the space for participation in the economy is being expanded for the rich few, the same process constricts legitimate participatory space for the teeming majority of Nigerians, thereby intensifying the competition at the lower economic rank, thereby also increasing the prospects of violent eruption of conflicts within and between the various socio-economic categories in the Nigerian society (Mijah:op. cit;pp379-381).

Essentially, the adverse impacts of economic reforms in Nigeria, for instance the impact of trade liberalization which has led to the closure of several industries in the country as a result of cheaper imports (Abdu: 2003;p. 14), has led to the increasing privatization of the state and the alienation of the people from it. It is this vacuum, resulting from the increasing roll-back of the state, particularly out of the domain of social provisioning, that is increasingly being filled by ethnic militias, religious fanatics, and disgruntled state elites who feel marginalized or excluded from participating in the public domain. And as the state distance itself from the people, it forecloses the use of dialogue and other mediatory mechanism that are vital for the management of conflicts. Thus, in the absence of constructive dialogue, and as a result of the adverse impacts of economic reforms, violent outburst

became inevitable. Of course, neither people nor investments or government can feel secured in such a conjuncture.

As Ake (1996) noted,

...the state is in effect privatized: it remains an economic force but no longer a public force, no longer a reassuring presence guaranteeing the rule of law but a formidable threat to all except the few who control it, actually encouraging lawlessness and with little capacity to mediate conflicts in society.

The capacity failure of democratic governance and the growing insecurity it engenders, elicited violent forms of reactions that threatens internal security and the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. Nowhere else does this conjuncture manifest better than in the large looming threats to internal security posed by the situation in the oil rich Niger-Delta area of Nigeria.

The situation in the Niger-Delta area (made up of nine oil producing federating units-states) appropriately captures the theme of this conference, and the issue of insecurity, the need for an alternative people centered approach to governance in general and that of the security sector in particular. This is in view of the fact that in spite of the fact that oil resources from the area accounts for up to an average of 79.52% of total revenue that accrued to the federation between 2000-2004 (UNDP: 72), the Niger delta is about the most unsecured part of Nigeria. According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2006, ...despite the huge revenue allocation to the area, through the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), development is slow to guarantee security (p. 39). Analysing the situation of prevalent poverty, want and insecurity in the area, Jonathan (2004: 20-21) (former Governor of oil rich Bayelsa state and current Vice President of Nigeria) submitted thus: "...juxtaposed against the potential for economic growth and sustainable development are deteriorating economic and social conditions that have been ignored by contemporary policies and actions". The situation in the Niger delta is significant to this study because of its strategic nature to the Nigerian and global political economy. The volatility of the Niger delta, arising from feelings of injustice and inequity in the distribution of national resources, has led to the disruption of oil activities, as result of which among other loses, Nigeria is said to be losing about 721,000 Barrels Per Day of crude, or about 28.84% of Nigeria's OPEC daily supply quota (*Guardian*, 24 Feb., 2006). Indeed in their attempt to wrest concessions from the state and to bring local and international pressure to bear on the Nigerian state, taking hostage of expatriate oil workers, open gun battles between armed militant groups and security agencies of the state, etc, all of which constitute credible threats to the internal security of Nigeria in numerous dimensions are have become a feature of the Niger delta. Indeed, the situation in the Niger delta brings to the fore not only the question of bad governance and growing insecurity, but also revealed the tendency of the Nigerian state to use its armed and security agencies to respond to the grievances of the people.

The prevalence of crimes and criminal activities in Nigeria is also another form of the manifestation of insecurity in Nigeria. Various forms of crime ranging from violent to non-violent; white collar, and other forms of crimes were witnessed in the period since the early 1990s. Other than such crimes as theft, armed robbery, rape, house breaking, assault,(Ebo and Mijah; op. cit.) financial crimes and corruption deserve closer scrutiny.

Corruption is yet another serious threat to internal security of the nation and also one of the major challenges of democratic consolidation. In his May 1999 inaugural address, former President Obasanjo described corruption as a "full blown cancer" and also as "the greatest single bane of our society today". Since then the fight against official corruption in the country has not relented, though not without much controversy. According to the national anti graft commission, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), politicians are the single largest perpetrators of corruption (*The Guardian*; 14.04. 06). To date, at least two state governor, an Inspector General of Police and a Minister are among top government functionaries who have lost their posts for offences related to official corruption. Akinyemi (2004; 8) rightly pointed out the complexity and adverse effects of corruption in

Nigeria when he observed that, "there is a symbiotic relationship between crime and corruption. Crime breeds and feeds on corruption, just as corruption breeds and feeds on crime". Indeed, the potent threats posed to internal security and democratic consolidation in a society can not be exaggerated. The Russian experience (*The Economist*, Oct. 24th · 2001) where corruption and crime have eaten deep into the political system and institutions in the country and how that affects national security and the consolidation of liberal democracy is quite instructive to Nigeria in this regard. Indeed, Akinyemi rightly summarized the extent and dangers of corruption and criminality (in Nigeria), and for want of a better way of putting it, we shall cite him at length. Akinyemi submitted that:

...criminals have taken over banking and financial institutions, have control over police and judiciary and are now in the process of taking over the legislative chambers. Given the fact that it is the legislature that has the power of impeachment, it does not take a leap of the imagination to conceive of a time when criminals will be in control of the executive. Then the lunatics would really have taken over the running of the asylum (op. cit.; 9).

The desperation for political office, and by extension for unrestrained access to state resources is has also heightened feelings of insecurity in the country. In the build up to elections and as the jostling for power intensified, top government officials and prominent politicians were murdered or attempts made on their lives. This however, is not out of the character of a post colonial state as Nigeria. According to Ake, in Nigeria, as in other post-colonial societies, the premium on power is exceptionally high, and the system lacks the institutional arrangement to moderate political competition, as a result of which political competition tends often to assume the character of warfare (1995;16). Thus, it is not surprising that since 1999 there has been series of politically motivated murders in the country. Among those killed were then minister of justice, the late chief Bola Ige and prominent national politician chief Alfred Rewane. Both former national chairman of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Audu Ogbe, and then Chairman of the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), Chief Sunday Awoniyi, escaped what was widely described as politically motivated murder attempts. However, the wife of former governor of (old) Kano state, Alhaji Abubakar Rimi, was not so lucky. She was murdered in her house in Kano in 2005. Equally significant is the murder of the national Vice Chairman (South/South) of the ruling PDP chief Aminasoari Kala Dikibo which took place in early 2004(ThisDay, 23May). At the burial of the late Dikibo, then national Chairman of the PDP, Chief Audu Ogbe under captured the feeling of insecurity in the political circle and the country at large correctly when he said "...the killing is too much. There is so much blood flowing in the land. People say that those killings are sponsored by some of us who are suppose to be leaders, and it is time for everyone to go back and examine his conscience" (ibid). Despite this and other calls for introspection by other prominent Nigerians, the killings persisted, as just before Council bye-elections in May, 2006 in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), two politically motivated murders were recorded (*Sun*, 30April, 2006. p.52).

So far, we have attempted, albeit at length to situate the problem of insecurity in Nigeria within the context of democratic governance in the country. We have tried to demonstrate how bad governance and the seeming lack of capacity by the ruling elites to address the structural and other causes of insecurity in Nigeria has engendered a climate of widespread credible threats to internal security in Nigeria. The scenario that evolved from this analysis raises the question of the the effectiveness of the security agencies in the country. For as Akenyemi (op.cit) rightly observed that corruption and criminality has taken over control of the police... , it will not be out of place to ask the question: can a corrupt security agency, such as the Nigeria Police as is presently, provide the necessary and sufficient condition of law and order which is vital and irreducible requirement for human security and the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria? If not how can the task of policing Nigeria be reconfigured to support internal security and democratization in Nigeria? These questions are central in the following discuss.

THE NIGERIA POLICE AND THE IMPERATIVE FOR ALTERNATIVE POLICING STRATEGY IN NIGERIA.

The evolution, roles and effectiveness or otherwise of the Nigeria police have been amply documented to warrant recounting here (Alemika (2003;1993a), Suleiman (1996), Ubani (2002) Iweze (1990), Tamuno, et. al (1993), etc. What is common in most of these accounts is the depiction of the police as an adjunct of the Nigerian state. Alemika (op. cit. pp. 156-158), sums up public perception of the police and their roles in society when he observed, and rightly too, that "... Nigerians are concerned about their security and rights and they expect that their police should be able to guarantee these. They certainly do not bargain for and cannot tolerate a militaristic, repressive and extortionist police force". He ended up calling for a new "peoples' police force" (ibid).

A cursory look at this submission reveals that the Nigeria police is has indeed constituted itself into a part of the problem of the growing insecurity in Nigeria. Alemika and Chukwuma (2000) have amply documented cases of brutality by the Nigeria Police on numerous communities, citizens, etc, as well as other forms of Human Rights violations in the country. Further more, the role of the Nigeria police in various unconstitutional "impeachment" of some state governors, for instance those of Plateau and Oyo states leaves much to be desired. In fact the it the role which the police played in the alleged abduction and subsequent resignation of Chris Ngife, then governor of the state that clearly depicts the police as culpable in what Williams(2006; p.34) appropriately referred to as a "civilian coup de etat" that really demonstrated the use of the Nigeria Police by the Nigerian state elites for the vilation of the rights of Nigerians. Certainly, such acts questions the integrity of the police and their suitability for policing in a democracy.

The raging debate about police and policing in Nigeria tends to focus on the appropriate location of the power to establish, control and deploy police (state police) and the need for the democratization of the task of policing (Community Policing). This debate has enjoyed copious space in the engagements by civil society groups and NGOs, especially withing the context of Constitutional Review in Nigeria, (see report of the Citizens Forum for Constitution Reform, and the accompanying publication –Ogbuzor and Bamidele :2002).

The issue of the problems of the police and policing was also one of the terms of reference (ToR) of the National Security Committee at the 2005 National Political Reform Conference (NPRC). This committee was composed of carefully selected persons with sufficient experience in internal security management. In engaging the Nigeria Police as the most visible and active of the internal security agencies in the country, the committee observed that from its inception in the colonial era to the immediate post independence and even in its present form, the Nigeria Police was "trained and equipped for the required efficiency of protecting government". Against the background of the specialized needs for policing in a democracy, the committee emphasized the urgent need for a reformation and transformation of the Police Force to a people's force-

... one that is well trained and highly motivated for optimal performance; one that is people oriented and people friendly. ... it should be one that is prepared at all times to meet the security needs of the Nigerian polpulance and guarantee Human Rights and privileges that are dividends of true democracy (NPRC/NSYCR, P.10).

In its recommendations, the committee recommended the adoption of the strategy of "Community Policing". Other recommendations of the committee which are relevant to this paper, which were also adopted by the conference with little or no modification in substance include:

- the retention of the present centralized structure of the Police, which should be reformed to make it more effective and representative of the federal character of the country;
- improved manpower procurement to meet expected efficiency;

- Improved and adequate funding to meet logistics needs;
- Proper screening of the background of prospective recruits;
- Establishment of a department to evaluate and review performance standards;
- Etc.

It is important to note that even before the NPRC was convened, former president Obasanjo had flag off the implementation of the Community Policing project of the Nigeria Police, in April 2004(NP,nd). Former Inspector General of Police (IGP), Ehindero while speaking of his vision as the man at the helm of the Nigeria police said, in a 10 point programme, that community policing and Police-public relationship was one of his top priorities. He acknowledged that "corruption was pervasive in the force, that recruitment and training were poorly done, and that the Nigeria police engaged in 'gruesome violation of human rights', engage in extortion, etc. the police IG also acknowledged that the force's Criminal Investigation Department was in shambles as it was staffed by 'square pegs in round holes' who use outdated methods of crime investigation, etc". On the whole, the IGP said the Nigeria Police was in need of a "paradigm shift" (2006:PP.3-5) . The Community Policing Development Project (CPDP) is part of a wide range of reform programmes aimed at the institutionalization of a paradigm shift in policing in Nigeria.

The programme was, as at late last year, still in the Training of Trainers (ToT) phase, with the assistance of the British Council, among others (CLEEN: 2006; P. 11). In Kano state, industrial and commercial nerve center of Northern Nigeria, the Community Policing programme kicked-off on 27th July, 2005(Police News, Jan.-Mar., 2006;p.59). Under the ToT, Nigeria Police Officers are to be trained at Zonal Command levels, after which the trained officers will train other officers and men of the Force, impliedly along with members of select pilot Communities.

However, three years after the commencement of the project, there are ominous signs that the project is bedeviled by a number of challenges which would have to be frontally confronted if the Community Policing project is to make any meaningful difference in the system of policing in Nigeria. Such problems include, among others:

- 1) Lack of local ownership: the training content of the programme and the management of the training is said to lack local content as retired British Police Officers in charge of the training are said to rely solely on their home experience of Community Policing without consulting with the relevant local institutions and the communities.
- 2) There is very little or no awareness about the programme, talk less of its imports, among the general public and even within the Police force.
- 3) There is high optimism among top ranking officers of the police about the efficacy of the project. Thus optimism glosses over the reality of the negative perception by the public, of the police in Nigeria. Rather than embark on an initial 'image laundering' project, the authorities are more concerned with the training of the police on the details of the programme. Thus, at the end of the day, a good programme may be grafted on the wrong context/setting.
- 4) The project will have to grapple with the problem of Nigeria's Federal structure in which the police is centralized. This is because, to be effective, the CPDP will have to decentralize powers over certain basic functions, such as recruitment, criminal arrest, investigation, etc. there is much controversy over this issue for now.
- 5) The CPDP seems to lack inter-agency partnership. Often, talk of security sector reform is a euphemism for police reform. There is need to sufficiently integrate the training to address the issue of Border policing (Immigration), and to take on the programme a more defined role for the newly established Civil Security and Defence Corp (CSDC). There is the task also of intelligence sharing between the police and other internal security agencies, such as the State Security Services, National Intelligence Agency, etc.

6) The CPDP, and indeed the entire programme of the Nigerian state on Security Sector Reform, seems to lack any form of integration with the wider reform programme of the political and economic spheres of the Nigerian political economy. This is a major challenge for the reform of the Nigeria Police and Policing in Nigeria.

7) Also, there is ample evidence of low levels of Human Rights education and awareness among officers and men of the Nigeria police. This will certainly have to be addressed for the success of the CPDP.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

So far we have attempted to join in the debate on internal security and policing, with specific focus on the Nigerian context of the debate. We started on the premise that the problem of internal security in Nigeria derives from and is aggravated by a number of primary causal factors such as; the structural imbalance inherent in the Nigerian federation and the gross inequity which it engenders. We also tried to demonstrate that the crisis of the state and economy in Nigeria, and the adverse effects of these elicits different forms of (re)actions from the state and society, both of which erode internal security in the country. Essentially, we argue that the state of insecurity in Nigeria derives from material bases: the question of inclusion and or exclusion from access to opportunities and resources (economic, political, social, etc.). In other words, the violent character of politics, rampant corruption, ethno-religious/communal crises, police brutality, electoral fraud, etc, all of which constitute credible threats to security in Nigeria derive from the problem of material understructure of the society.

Although one of the responses to these context of democracy and insecurity has been reform of the security sector, particularly the adoption of Community Policing approach, rather than the decentralization of the power of policing, we contend that the foreclosure of decentralization as a strategy for improving effective policing in Nigeria is still inherent with the causes of insecurity.

To safeguard democracy and guarantee internal security in Nigeria and to make policing more effective, Nigeria must reform its economic and political foundations. That will require a people inspired and people centered constitution.

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23/07 Nigeria: Too Rich for Dignity and the Law?

Perspectives after the 2007 elections

International Conference, June 15 to 17, 2007

In co-operation with Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), Church Development Service (EED), German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) Nigeria, Heinrich Boell Foundation, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, sponsored by Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Berlin

Subject

Nigeria, the demographically largest country with the most extensive oil resources in Africa has become an important power in the region despite its conflict-ridden history. Economic interests dominating the use of resources from outside, large-scale poverty stirring ethnic-religious rivalries about social and political participation, and also disparate structures of government, administration and the security sector have created complex tensions between controversial perspectives of the stakeholders involved.

The ways in which Nigeria will enable itself to deal with the causes of the conflicts make the country an important case of scholarly and political interest far beyond its borders.

Short after the local and federal elections in Nigeria in April 2007, the conference aims at discussing the following issues: How to empower the various segments of the Nigerian population, politically and economically, enhance good governance, fight rampant corruption, conduct appropriate methods of conflict resolution and implement conflict-sensitive codes of conduct for international corporations? How much responsibility, in close cooperation with Nigerian players, for a policy focussed on human security, peace and justice may be assumed by external governmental and non-governmental initiatives?

Our hope is to provide a forum for Nigerian players such as politicians, scholars and analysts along with representatives of civil society to discuss their views with German and international organisations involved in development and conflict resolution. We encourage people with expertise in these fields to share their knowledge and to help identify future areas of cooperation.

Dr. Corinna **Hauswedell**, Director of Studies for International Politics

Program

Friday, June 15, 2007

Welcome and opening of the conference

Dr. Corinna **Hauswedell**, Loccum

Nigeria After the Elections

Introductions to the conference

Prof. Attahiru **Jega**, Präsident, Bayero Universität Kano

Heinrich **Bergstresser**, Journalist, Köln

World Order - Africa - Nigeria

Dr. Denis **Tull**, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin

Saturday, June 16, 2007

Representative of the Nigerian Embassy in Germany

Introductions to the Workshops

Federalism, Governance and Security

Prof. Dr. J. Isawa **Elaiwu**, Jos

Responsible Use of Resources

Bunu **Lawan**, Principal Accountant, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Abuja

Ethnic-religious Dimensions of Political Conflicts

Prof. Dr. Klaus **Hock**, University Rostock

Workshop I: Democracy and Security - Issues of Participatory Governance

Chair: Dr. Andreas **Heinemann-Grüder**, BICC, Bonn

Prof. Attahiru **Jega**, Vice Chancellor, Bayero University, Kano

Ibrahim **Biu**, Director Voter Education, Independent National Electoral Commission Headquarters (INEC), Abuja

Heinz **Jockers** / Ralph-Michael **Peters**, Core-Team, European Union Election Observation Mission (EUEOM), Hamburg

Dr. Etham **Mijah**, Nigerian Defense Academy, Kaduna (to be confirmed)

Olufunmi **Olayinka**, Deputy Governor candidate for Ekiti State, Lagos

Dr. Klaus **Pähler**, Representative to Nigeria, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Abuja

Workshop II: Too Much of Plenty - Too Little to Share?

Issues of Responsible Resource Use and Economic Development

Chair: Kristina **Steenbock**, German Watch, Berlin

Abbia **Udofia**, Chief Legal Officer, Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Abuja

David **Ugolor**, African Network for Environmental and Economic Justice, Lagos

Dr. Rose **Ngomba**, University of Göttingen, Germany

Dr. Stefan **Cramer**, Director, Heinrich Boell Foundation, Lagos

Dr. Andreas **Dally**, Academy Loccum

Yahaya **Ahmed**, Development Association for Renewable Energies Kaduna, Bonn

Workshop III: Beyond North and South - Ethnic, Religious and Social Dimensions of Conflict

Chair: Dr. Lidwina **Meyer**, Academy Loccum

Ms Hauwa **Ibrahim**, Abuja

Rev. Habila **Istifanus**, General Secretary of ACLA; Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Movement, Jos

Rev. Ike **Okorie**, General Secretary, Christian Council of Churches in Nigeria, Lagos

Fr. Dr. George **Ehusani**, former General Secretary, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, Lagos

Dr. Nick **Idoko**, Centre for Peace in Africa, Lagos

Future Perspectives I:

How do the different players in Nigeria articulate, position themselves and co-operate on the issues at stake?

Round table feedback from the workshops

Facilitator: Dr. Corinna **Hauswedell**

Sunday, June 17, 2007

Future Perspectives II:

How to address a policy focussed on human security, peace and justice through external initiatives and in close cooperation with Nigerian players?

Panel discussion

Facilitator: Dr. Corinna **Hauswedell**

Dr. Viktor **Matz**, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Berlin

Gabriele **Groneberg**, MP/Social Democratic Party, Berlin

Hartwig **Fischer**, MP/Christian Democratic Union, Berlin

Bunu **Lawan**, ECOWAS

Dapo **Oyewole**, Centre for African Policy & Peace Strategy (CAPPS), London & Lagos