

CONVERGING ECOWAS COUNTRIES' INTEREST IN SECURITISING DEVELOPMENT: THE NIGERIA CHALLENGE

Adoyi Onoja

Department of History, Nasarawa State University, Keffi-Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The absence of converging point on the primary determinant of insecurity and insisting that the solution addresses endogenous issues amongst countries of ECOWAS is a major challenge in their engagement with bilateral and multilateral countries and institutions. As a result, the region responds to initiative that addresses issues of importance to these partners. Using Nigeria's experience, the paper argues that this represents what is the major challenge bedevilling the region. The region needs to securitize development as fundamental to addressing other security challenges. Any partnership between external bodies and the ECOWAS should consider this question: How can and why should development and security strategies converge to suit the partners in view of their different needs? The work re-examines documents of engagement between ECOWAS and external bodies and the Nigerian experience of dominant regime type.

Keywords: Securitisation, Development, Convergence, ECOWAS, Nigeria, Medium Power

Introduction

The coups in Mali and Guinea Bissau but in particular the former which ended almost two decades of representative government once again put on the political agenda the theory and practice of security, democracy's growth producing deficit, response of the people, sub region and the larger world. The ostensible excuse for the Malian coup was the government's inadequate support to soldiers fighting the rebellion in northern Mali. This excuse not only weigh deep into governance in Mali and the sub region and the potential it holds for instability but also on the need to revisit the issue.

The implication for the region of the Malian coup includes questioning the reception of armament versus development debate on security, growth producing potential of democracy,

proactive ECOWAS response and the seeming endorsement of their stance garnered from the international community. In the first place, most countries of the region came from a military/one party authoritarian background where state security or regime safety counted above all else. Secondly, when the post cold war necessitated the shift to representative government it continued to foster the old state centric security mindset of the past. This is because the transitions that produced these governance types benefited the old power elite and political class created in the course of the transitions. Thirdly, the democracy ideology built unsustainable expectation in the minds of people. Coming from a background of colonial underdevelopment and the immediate post colonial state crises producing growth deficit regimes of all types, it was hardly surprising that when democracy was introduced, people believed its local and international salesmen. However, expectations have been dashed as demonstrated in the coup in Mali and the not-too-dissimilar state of apathy in other countries of the region. Fourthly, the ECOWAS' ability in fostering governance that generates growth seemed never to have moved beyond the statement of its founding fathers in 1975. As a regional body and in tandem with development elsewhere, the ECOWAS should be the driver of change through securitising development which would enhance security in member states. So far the body has been limited to responding to external initiatives that has little in the way of addressing its members' pressing problems. This included intervening in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s to contain governance related disaffection that threatened regional security. It was at the instance of Nigeria which was itself confronting similar crisis.

The need to securitize development as fundamental to addressing other security challenges in the sub region and by extension others is paramount. The coup in Mali is metaphor for the failure of representative regime type to address basic need challenges such as unemployment, poverty, inequality, decaying and overstretched economic and social infrastructures. The dividend of democracy is not evident in daily lives of people to produce the inclusive security beneficial to individual and the state. It is this that pushes government into relying on the armed forces to safeguard the regime against the growing dissatisfaction of their people. It is not the threat from outside the country that imperils state security. It is the threat from within in the form of corruption that threatens unemployment growth. Thus the attempt to engage in security cooperation within and beyond the region only addresses issues of mutual interest to partners. Within the region, the mutual interest includes safety of regimes and for partners

outside the region, it is to restrain migrants, refugees and transnational criminal elements forced out of their countries in search of economic opportunity mostly in Europe. It is evident that the welfare of the people of the region is secondary in the partnership.

This paper seeks to address the Nigerian challenge as representative of the region. How can and why should development and security strategies converge to suit the partners in view of their different needs? To what extent did regime types shape security theory and practice in the region? How has this orientation influenced their response to external security cooperation proposals? Is their security practice in tandem with their changing development needs? Has the ECOWAS response addressed the degrading human conditions threatening partners' security? To what extent can the Nigerian challenge explain those of ECOWAS in view of her role as a medium power in the region? In order to answer these questions, the work re-examines documents of engagements between external bodies and ECOWAS and the Nigerian experience of dominant regime type shaping the theory and practice of security.

Building Concepts and Framework of Analysis

At stake in this paper are the processes that came to light following the end of the cold war. No longer was the world viewed as a tri-polar one represented by the defunct USSR, USA and Nonaligned countries. Regional power blocs have since emerged defined in what Huntington called the civilisations paradigm. Of these identified civilisations, some of which are extinct, five still exist including Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Islamic and Western, competing for prominence. Accordingly, “to these five civilisations it is useful in the contemporary world to add Orthodox Latin American, and, possibly, African civilisations” (Huntington 2002: 44-45). There was distinct hesitation to the inclusion of Africa because major scholars except Braudel, for numerous reasons, do not recognise a distinct African civilisation (Huntington 2002: 47). In the absence of this, regionalism with one dominant power with the human and material resource to drive development within specific regions could represent an attempt to overcome this lacuna. Nigeria seemingly fulfils this role in the West African sub region considering its involvement in the areas. However, Nigeria lacked a focused and cohesive domestic base that would project this power and confront the many challenges bedevilling the region.

The inability of Nigeria to exact her potential was reflected in the many crises the region had confronted and is confronting. Consequently, interventions from external organisations and governments are the result of the absence of clear cut direction from the ECOWAS and Nigeria. Almost two decades after the United Nations system pushed through the seminal paradigm shift from security to human security, the region has yet to put this into practice to check the constant crisis of insecurity affecting the area. It is true that most governments in the region are elected thus fulfilling the minimalist requirement of representation. This explains their principled stance over the Malian and Guinean coups. It is equally true that the expectations of their people that should come with representation which would guarantee their security remained unfulfilled. Failing to enhance human security, the leadership continue to subscribe to the security tenets of realism founded on politics among nations (Morgenthau 1969) as a safeguard against threats from their people.

Security of the realist type seeks to protect the state, conceived of threats as external and relies on the armed forces to contain it. Since justifying this security situation is difficult in the region, regimes subsumed state and non state actors as external threat and linked them to the internationally branded ones such as Al-Qaeda and Al-Shahbab, in the emerging security governance (Krahmann 2003). It made no distinction between the circumstance that informed Anglo Saxon view of security that put the defence-power security emphasising the centrality of state at the heart of discourse and policy and those that affect the region. The primary distinguishing criteria is the difference in what obtained in the West particularly Europe and USA and in Sub Saharan Africa. In this we argue that while the enabling environment of the west prevail on them to make the state-anarchy-external environment-nuclear issue central to the pursuit of security, in the region, security is internal owing to the prevalence of abject poverty occasioned by perennial governance and corruption crisis, driven by states' focus on regime survival and not because one country has its gun pointed on another.

The west, in spite of the Euro zone financial crisis, has remained a model of economic prosperity to which other regions of the world try to emulate. They have succeeded in attaining material prosperity of the type that is a magnet to the deprived people of the third world. Indeed the cold war was fought to demonstrate the model that held the most promise of satisfying mankind's quest for material prosperity. One of the consequences was instrumental in consolidating the state centred security pursuit since Europe and America

were assured of stable domestic base as they confronted the defunct Soviet Union led Warsaw Pact. This reality does not apply to the region. Although countries in the region were allied to either one of the superpowers in the cold war, the benefit to them in being proxies embedded in the leadership the same security mentality prevalent with their benefactors.

The security architecture of the world was already structured before countries of the region emerged. These countries were the handiwork of British, French and Portuguese colonialism. These powers broke most resistance put up by indigenous people and their territories were cobbled together regardless of differences to form colonial countries. The new states embraced the ideals bequeathed them by their colonial powers. With a heterogeneous population whose sense of oneness was embryonic, with politics revolving around ethnicity and with the people in dire need of improvement in living standard that pre independence rhetoric promised to deliver, it was not surprising that the contest for space pitched the different groups against each other making the control of the state the sole preoccupation.

The state is attractive making insecurity and reliance on its resources inevitable because of the manner of its evolution and transformation in the region. Three phases of the evolution of state can be discerned. The first was when European obstructed the process of state formation underway in most of these societies. The implication of this to development then and now are immense. The second was the creation and imposition of the colonial state on the heterogeneous people. This created new super-ordination and subordination while enhancing old ones among the people. The third was the negotiated transfer of power, amidst the unsettled climate of the two previous phases, to the new post colonial state. The post colonial state became the theatre where the internecine struggle of the past were re- enacted. It undermined whatever unity created to facilitate the attainment of independence.

As proxies in the cold war and eager to contain the growing internal opposition to their rule, the leaderships valued the life enhancing military and political support that their benefactors offered them. These opposition were often label communist to chime with the prevailing threat. The result was the emergence of one party or military regimes intolerant of opposition and willing to use all means at their disposal. It was this enabling environment that deepened the growing gulf between peoples' expectation for growth and development, leadership

inability to fulfil this and their reliance on force to ensure their security. It was a recipe for perpetual instability. Political instability is common in the region.

Thus for the people and leadership, security was defined differently. For the leadership, security was the safety of the state personified by the regime, against the rising tide of opposition and threats. Their solution to this was to crack down on the opposition using the resource at the disposal of the state. For the people, security meant putting their economic welfare emphasising the centrality of human being and being human at the heart of discourse and policy. What is germane is the realisation that for most of sub Saharan Africa, the pursuit of security has been off the local realities in both theory and practice. The development and propagation of human security by the UNDP in 1994 (UNDP 1994; Booth 2007: 2) and the subsequent adoption of the perspective in explaining the changes evident since 1989 brought to concrete surface the abysmal condition in which most human being lived in the whole of the last century. The state of deprivation is most acute in sub Saharan Africa which has translated into unending conflicts often wrongly diagnosed as ethnic, religious and regional contest. To the extent that this explanation subsist, it is to drive an essentially economic conflict. The UNDP analysis, to borrow Chomsky's word, painted the human condition in the region as "sharp, clear, and highly instructive"(Chomsky 2006).

The state of human existence in the region calls for the securitisation (Waever 1995: 57; Williams 1998; Huysmans 1998; Abrahamsen 2005: 50-80) of development. Securitisation describes a process whereby urgent 'security issues' or 'threats' are identified or 'constructed' in order to mobilise opinion and constitute legitimacy and authority for means of dealing with that 'threat' (Huysmans 1995). According to Huysmans, it is the way in which areas of political life can be shaped by the framing of political debate in terms of existential threat and survival (Huysmans 2006). The existential threat is the lack of development that yields growth in countries of the region which produced perpetual instability spawning migration, transnational crimes, refugees. The latter constitutes issues of security to countries and organisations in Europe and USA whose intervention only strengthen the old state responsible for this. It is about tackling corruption, unemployment, poverty and inequality through growing the economy; strengthening the family as the basis of security; tackling hunger and disease; enrolling children in school; improving economic and social infrastructure; creating housing for all classes; That the region experienced fragile

peace since decolonisation was because people lacked security in their daily lives. Conflicts were internally generated before spilling into neighbouring countries and not necessarily because countries had issues to settle. Countries in the region possessed the human and natural resources to satisfy the need of their people. However, they lacked the leadership and will to move in this direction.

Nigeria's potential is far more immense than those of others countries in the region. It has demonstrated its ability to pull the region out of crisis¹. But it suffered from the same malaise of lacking the domestic base for this regional endeavour. Nigeria is a middle power (Yamasaki 2009) in the region which could mean intermediate countries in terms of national power. Pratt characterised middle power as "those which by reason of their size, their material resources, their willingness and ability to accept responsibility, their influence and stability are close to being great powers." (Pratt 1990: 72) With the exception of stability, these attributes are in abundance in Nigeria. This should propel the country into leading the way in the search for standard in the management of regional and Africa affair in the seeming absence of compelling defining characteristics in Huntington's civilisations paradigm.

Geographically and culturally, the area does have some homogeneity in tandem with the civilisations argument. The people of West Africa maintain cultural homogeneity across state boundaries: the Fulani are to be found in the Sahelian area stretching from Senegal to Chad; Hausa language is spoken in Niger, Chad, Ghana, Cote-d'Ivoire, Nigeria and a number of other countries in the region while Yoruba is spoken in Nigeria, Benin and Togo just as Igbo language is spoken in both Nigeria and Cameroun. Geographically, they belong to the Western part of the African continent and are referred to ethnographically as the Sudan (Olowu et al 1999: 1). Nigeria is the largest Black Country in the world and shared similar cultural, social and political characteristics with others of her kind within the continent. It is potentially the biggest economy and democracy in the making and should lead the banner in addressing regional problems including growing its economy to address poverty that spawns regional and international insecurity.

¹The formation of the ECOWAS as economic bloc in 1975 was one and the second was the ECOWAS Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) that intervened in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Regime Types and Security Profile in the Region

Insecurity has never been far from the surface of countries in the region. It is embedded in the way countries of the region were created during the colonial period; in the policies put in place and subsequently pursued during and after colonial rule; in the compromises forged by the disparate communities to achieve independence; in the failure of the leadership to adhere to the compromises arrived at prior to independence; in not fulfilling the expectation of the people for development yielding governance after independence; in the consolidation of personal/regime security through the emasculation of the opposition; and in the perpetual state of instability that characterized governance till date.

In the late 50s through the early 60s, all states in the region achieved independence through some form of election. By the end of the first decade of independence, the post colonial crisis of state had compelled most of these countries to transmute into outright military or one party form of government. It was borne of the reality of local and international politics. Locally, the forces baying at the new administration were enormous as much as the ability and resources to satisfy this was meager. Internationally, the cold war politics enabled the leadership to resolve this problem by curtailing dissent of all kind. This was the case in Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Senegal. These states were overrun by military rulers and Ivory Coast, Guinea, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Liberia became de facto one party states. Indeed Ghana and Nigeria had succeeded in completely routing their opposition before they were overthrown by their armed forces.

The most pressing rationale behind the transformation of governments into security regimes was their inability to meet the growing expectation of their people for growth and development that would yield roads, schools, health care facilities, employment, improve agriculture as well as stimulate the sense of belonging considering the manner of their inclusion into the colonial state. While blaming colonial legacy, social pluralism and its centrifugal tendencies, the corruption of leaders, poor labour discipline, the lack of entrepreneurial skills, poor planning and incompetent management, inappropriate policies, the stifling of market mechanisms, low levels of technical assistance, the limited inflow of foreign capital, falling commodity prices and unfavourable terms of trade, and low levels of

saving and investment as partly responsible for the state of development in Africa, Ake believed that political conditions are the greatest impediment (Ake 1996: 1-8).

It is essentially the political legacy of colonialism which engendered the post colonial situation that necessitated the emergence of security regimes. The colonial experience was statist. The state was involved in almost all aspect of lives of the people making it absolute and arbitrary. According to Ake, the two features of state power-its absolutism and its arbitrariness-framed colonial politics. Since the colonial state was for its subjects an arbitrary power, it could not engender any legitimacy even though it made rules and laws profusely and propagated its values. Accordingly, in struggling to advance their interests, the colonial subjects did not worry about conforming to legality or legitimacy norms. Colonial politics was thus reduced to the crude mechanics of opposing forces driven by the calculus of power. For everyone in this political arena, security lay only in the accumulation of power (Ake 1996: 3). This was the tradition inherited at independence. The character of the state remained much as it was in the colonial era. It continued to be totalistic in scope, constituting a statist economy. It presented itself as an apparatus of violence, had a narrow social base, and relied for compliance on coercion rather than authority (Ake 1996:3).

Most of the leaders of the early post colonial period- indeed right to this moment- operated in a state of siege. According to Ake, “besieged by the multitude of hostile forces which their betrayal of popular aspirations, exploitative practices and political repression had bred, they became completely absorbed in the very difficult task of surviving in a hostile political environment”. All aspects of social life were suffused with politics and the premium on power grew exceedingly high (Ake 2000: 36).

It was this environment that bred internal conflicts amongst the warring factions in the countries of the region whether in ethnic, political or economic terms. The conflict was over the control of the state as instrument for appropriating resources. The contest was intense enough to create problem for these countries as well as others of the region. The confrontation embraced ethnicity (Nnoli 1998) as its driver. Ethnic conflicts are a fact of life in the region. It was rife in Nigeria, Liberia, Ghana, Senegal, Ivory Coast. The Nigerian civil war was one of such conflict (Adejo 2008). It was described as the region’s bloodiest war. It was between the Igbo ethnic group on the one hand and the Hausa, Yoruba and other groups

on the other. Nigeria has over four hundred ethnic nationalities. The causes of the war lay deep in the colonial engineering that produced the post colonial situation. Its immediate cause was the coup that elevated the Igbo leaders into prominence in the government after eliminating Hausa political and military leaders. Although the coup was inspired by nationalist fervor, it was soon interpreted in ethnic term in tandem with the politics of the period.

Thus all governments in the region were far more concerned with the survival of their regime than with the welfare of their people. This condition shaped their reception of the theory and practice of security. Security was defined as increasing the capacity of the state to meet the challenges emanating from disgruntled opposition from other ethnic groups. It was conducting security operation to flush out these elements which resulted in exclusion thereby exacerbating the situation. Security was not defined as addressing the grievances of the people whether in political or development terms. In equipping the state to meet this challenge, conceived in the realist paradigm, peoples' quest for development took the place of the enemy threatening the state. It is not surprising that the region, at the height of international economic crisis of the 1980s and 1990s, became a hub of tendencies threatening regional as well as international security. Such tendencies include refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, criminals etc. It was the period that also gave birth to numerous security cooperation aimed at addressing these problems.

West Africa and External Security Cooperation

The insistence by the ECOWAS that Malian and **Guinea Bissau** coup plotters return to the barracks in preference for democratic governance type demonstrate how far along the road the region has travelled. This is the third time that it would traverse this path. The first two were in Sierra Leone and Sao Tome and Principe. Nigeria led the way in both instances to restore the elected leaders. In the course of the Sierra Leonean intervention Nigeria suffered a variant of democratic deficit as it was ruled by the military. Each decade since independence represented a transition from one form of crisis to another for the region. In the late 50s and early 60s, they were all democratic; by the late 1970s, they were either military dictatorships or one party authoritarian regimes as mechanism for containing the mounting internal opposition; in the 1980s and 1990s, international economic crisis had consolidated the grip of

these regime types providing the basis to further their repression of all internal dissent; when in the 1980s, structural adjustment programmes(SAPs) was adopted on a massive scale into the economic crisis management strategies, it added new dimension of opposition including social movements, nongovernmental organizations, anti military/pro democracy groups, low intensity conflict and in some instance outright civil wars; from the late 1990s onward, the call was for the enthronement of representative government which renewed the age old struggle for the control of the state in the region. All these development had the backing of external patrons of sort.

While foreign assistance has been a feature of development in the region, the implementation of structural adjustment consolidated this. Bangura identified three sets of crises confronting states. The first was a legitimization crisis in which the states' dwindling fiscal base undermines the ability of leaders to satisfy post colonial expectations of a growth in the formal sector to provide jobs, social services and welfare, as well as maintain patron-client networks. The second was a regulatory crisis in which retrenched states find it difficult to manage the economy and influence the way social groups and individuals behave since a substantial proportion of economic and social transactions are uncaptured by state institutions and rules. The third was a territorial crisis in which state officials not only surrender major areas of policy making to foreign donors and the international financial institutions, but they also encounter difficulties in maintaining the states' presence in large sections of the rural areas (Bangura 1995: 93-94). External interventions or assistance channeled to countries in the region mask these donors anxiety over the likely implication on their interests(Nivet 2006).

All the states in region confronted and are confronting this legitimization crisis. This has hampered their ability to satisfy post colonial expectation for growth that would yield jobs and social service for their people. It is the source of the instability that the region has grappled with since independence. West Africa, unlike North, East, Southern and Central Africa, has cut a reputation as an unstable region on the continent. Central Africa matched West Africa as another unstable region except that the source of this emanates from and

outside region². Almost all the countries in the region have experienced one type of instability or another. Nigeria topped the list of endemically unstable countries. Others that have made the headlines are Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Togo, Ivory Coast and Senegal. These countries fall into the categories of small states³. Some of these countries are resource rich and slightly better off potentially than others in the small powers category (Yamasaki 2009). However, they all have weak leadership without the ability to put these resources to use to better their poverty stricken population.

Most of these countries' state barely control all the individuals and social groups within its confine prior to reform. The way in which the state evolved made this difficult. Increasingly inclusion after independence reduced either through lack of delivery of services and/or as opposition politics developed. The imposition of structural adjustment exacerbated the situation which further limited the reach of the state. Deregulation confined the state to limited range of area making the once powerful state compete with foreign and foreign funded nongovernmental organization, community based organization and international financial institutions. The dwindling reach of the state created porous areas which served as haven exploited by dissatisfied groups. It was the case in the Nigeria's Niger Delta, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Mali and Niger.

As a result of the foregoing, three types of intervention/assistance can be identified. The first was based on erstwhile colonial relation. Here Britain, United States and France intervened in their former colonial territories. Britain intervened in Sierra Leone; America reluctantly paid for the resolution of the Liberian crisis and France was in Ivory Coast. The second is from European Union (Malmstrom 2010; Defense and Security 2009); and US African High Command to curtail fallouts from the crisis incapacitating countries of the region from affecting their interest (Ploch 2011; House 2012; Raphael and Stokes 2011:903-921).

² Madleine Albright, one time US secretary of state, described the constellation of forces in Central Africa as having the potential for Africa's first world war. *The Economist*, "Central Africa: Bloody history, unhappy future", <http://www.economist.com/node/12970793> accessed 25/04/12

³ Some of these countries have the characteristics of small power. For this, see The United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.(UN-OHRLLS) <http://www.unohrrls.org/en/ldc/related/62/>; Yamasaki "Rethinking Hierarchical Understandings in International Relations" in *International Public Policy Studies* 13(2009)

Economic migrants (Engelbrecht 2010) and hard drugs (Vandystadt 2008) are issues of interest to Europe. The region is a source of these problems to the EU. The prospect of Al-Qaeda exploiting weak states, porous borders and the possibility of failing states which could threaten energy supply from West Africa, worries the United States (Raphael and Stokes 2011). The third is the UN system (Security Council 2011) including the UNHCR, UNDP and the Hague Court. The latter has been instrumental in checking delinquent leaders such as Laurent Gbagbo. Political miscreants from the region have been test running the court's experiment. They include those from Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ivory Coast. Security and stability support in the form of security sector reform is a significant component of their intervention.

Raphael and Stokes(2011:903-911) provided a comprehensive rationale for United States intervention in West Africa culminating in the creation of AFRICOM in 2007. The enhanced US strategic presence in the region has led to accelerated levels of assistance to key West African states. Substantial levels of both economic and security assistance now flow into the region, and these are increasingly defined in terms of the energy resources that West Africa holds. Wider economic stability, poverty reduction, conflict resolution, counterterrorism and counternarcotics and infrastructure building are all elements of Washington's objectives in the region. However, the fact remains that oil forms the primary interest, and significantly determines the nature and direction of US strategy towards West Africa (Raphael and Stokes 2011:910).

Nigeria was recipient of millions of dollars' worth of military equipment sold or granted through key security assistance programmes such as Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and Foreign Military Sales (FMS), as well as through the licensing of direct sales from US defence companies, emergency legislative mechanisms to authorize the drawdown of millions of dollars worth of military hardware from the Pentagon's stock and accelerated military training programmes. Nigeria became the second largest African recipient of funds from the International Military Education and Training (IMET) programme. In 2006, almost US\$800 million was allocated to the country. All these assistance, apart from increasing Nigeria's military capacity(Raphael and Stokes 2011:911), addresses concern over political instability in US military planning by the provision of security assistance to local elites in order to bolster their capability to respond to challenges 'from below'.

These interventions did not address the fundamental source of the instability of countries in the region. It addresses the national security interests of the powers without challenging the governance decay that created these conditions. Since the intervention is in the form of strengthening the state, it leaves the impression in the mind of the leadership that the consolidation of traditional security rather than securitizing development is the answer to the crisis of the state. Nigeria manifests this challenge.

Nigerian Challenge

A BBC documentary series while arguing that Nigeria has the potential of becoming Africa's largest economy and democracy drew attention to the many obstacles that impede this possibility. Most of these obstacles are internal with corruption inducing poverty as the linchpin (Doyle 2012). Nigeria's inability to tackle the basic needs of its population in spite of its resources meant that the state has been at war with its people since independence. Consequently, it has had to invert the realist view of state and external enemy to state and internal enemy and thus rely on the security forces to contain manifestation of resistance to the exercise of its authority. This remains the foremost challenge which needs to be overcome if Nigeria is to assume her place as the most important power in the region driving development in other countries in order to ensure its continuous growth.

The challenge is to shake off the security culture entrenched by military rule which has permeated all facets of the national life. Military rule was dominant as evident in 29 out of the 39 years of independence as at 1999. Their imprimatur was everywhere. The first civil government had inherited a strong state from the colonial authority, confronted daunting challenges from numerous oppositions and demonstrated its inability to meet the expectation of the people thus creating room for its reliance on state resources. When the military took over, it was faced with what Buzan described as defence dilemma (Buzan 1991: 272-273). This is the contradiction between military defence and national security. As military rule became endemic, the distinction between their defence and security roles blurred. With time, national security developed into the symbolic ambiguity type. In their case, defence and security began to work against each other. Their focus on defence (regime survival) compromised other security objectives including the welfare of the people.

Prolonged military rule robbed Nigerians of independent understanding of security. Security discourse enjoyed prominence among professionals because of their so called experience, academics for their studies and lay people from what they glimpsed from these two. Both the discourse and practise's currency is hidden in the ideological language of the occupying power-the Nigerian military. This state of affair was created first by colonial rule where the state was not only pervasive in its extraction of surplus value; it was fused together from diverse people who were yet to come to term with their forced cohabitation. These centrifugal forces were inherited by the post colonial government. Secondly, because the society was fractured, opposition politics was violent necessitating the consolidation of the state. Regime survival became the goal of the government and in this it fenced itself away from the reality of daily lives. Thirdly, this scenario was bolstered by the cold war environment. The superpower turned a blind eye to development within as long as it did not threaten their security interest. It was in this climate that military regime emerged and complicated the security atmosphere in its favour. Fourthly, the onset of reforms in the 1980s and 1990s following international economic crisis not only consolidated military misrule, their security culture which favoured the unpalatable phases of reforms restrained social crisis that resulted but also the popularisation of the now growing perception of security amongst Nigerians.

As the forces of opposition to military regimes grew, backed by donors in the emerging post cold war order, and as the attempt to reengineer the political and economic landscape floundered because of insincerity, repression heightened and spread to all strata of society including the military itself. The regime security mindset was inculcated into and imbibed by the political class created by the military. Fifthly, the war against terror did offer another chance to enhance this security type as it enjoyed international legitimacy from the major powers. Nigeria enlisted in that crusade and squandered the chance of its transition of 1999 to 2007 offered to address the internal dissatisfaction threatening its security. The Boko Haram menace has not lessened the emphasis on state security by the political class⁴.

⁴ N921billion was voted for security in 2012. See Uchenna Awom, 'Budget 2012: Security, Low Capital Votes As Albatross', Leadership Newspaper, 18 November, 2012
http://www.leadership.ng/nga/articles/10860/2011/12/18/budget_2012_security_low_capital_vote_albatross.html accessed 30/04/12

Conclusion: Securitizing Development

The focus on regime security all these years affected development which did not reduce unemployment, poverty and inequality. The defence measure adopted by the government was inappropriate and irrelevant to the security need of the country. The government was oblivious of the armament versus development debate in national security. The debate, a product of stocktaking prior to and after the cold war, coincided with a difficult phase of Nigerian history. On one hand was the effect of military rule and on the other the consequences of the SAP reform on the former and the people. Perhaps it was the post SAP debasement of being human and the post cold war paradigm shift that necessitated the re-evaluation of past focus on security. In arguing for a change so that mankind can survive, the UNDP Human Development Index was of the view that the world needs another profound transition in thinking from nuclear security to human security. People are central to this type of security because “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 been related more to nation-states than to people” (UNDP 1994). In the case of Nigeria, security has been focused on the survival of regimes. Realism’s security premise has been found to contain multiple and overlapping flaws (Booth 2005:5-10).

Nigeria needs a sustainable security model to address the growing challenge of human security by adopting “a new development paradigm that puts people at the centre of development, regards economic growth as a means and not an end, protects the life opportunities of future generations as well as the present generations and respects the natural systems on which all life depends” (UNDP 1994). This can be done through the securitisation of development instead of the state which is the practice today. Human security means safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease, unemployment, inequality and lack of economic and social infrastructures. It is the implementation of short, medium and long term economic and social planning; it is the curtailment of corruption of all type which has stunted the potential of people and country; it is good governance at all levels; it is the reduction of destitution, deprivation and dissatisfaction; it is addressing Niger Delta militancy and Boko Haram criminality. The inability to address these is the source of instability that drives regimes into consolidating state power against their people. All these are prevalent in Nigeria.

If Nigeria is to assume its role as middle power and lead the region out of state to people centred security culture which reduces unemployment, poverty, inequality and instability; as its most endowed country with unparalleled human and material resource that could drive region-wise development; with the potential to hold the banner of the black race as its core civilisation; tackling its domestic problem is fundamental to imbuing in it the legitimacy to securitize development in the region and to insist that external patrons do the same.

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