# DEMOCRACY AND INTERNAL SECURITY IN THE NIGERIAN FOURTH REPUBLIC

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**Abstract**
*The study examined Democracy and Internal Security in the Nigerian Fourth Republic. The paper is an attempt to extrapolate the nexus between Democracy and Internal security given the present social and political challenges in the country. The study adopts the collapse state, failed state and fragile state theories as the model of our analysis. With regards, to the methodology, the paper made use of qualitative content analysis. A critical assessment of the Fourth Republic revealed that many years after, democracy was introduced in Nigeria on May 29, 1999, the hopes and aspirations of the citizenry could still not be met. The inability of our leadership to provide good democratic governance therefore was responsible for the crisis of legitimacy experienced in the country and this in effect gave rise to robberies, kidnappings, bunkering of oil pipelines as well as the emergence of militancy across the country. The paper therefore submits that until, good democratic governance is put in place with security agencies well funded and trained with modern gazette system, internal security cannot be guaranteed.*
**Key words:** *Democracy, Governance, Legitimacy, Crisis, Insurgency, Security.*

## Introduction

Over the years, emerging forms of human, social and political organization have stimulated a necessity for the protection and safety of the individual, family, community and the nation. As threats become incessant and recurrence on daily basis, insecurity emerged as the dominant fear of human beings.

Insecurity in the present circumstance arose out of social and political contradictions such as the crisis of legitimacy, autonomy and sovereignty. Thus, at the regional level, porous borders, insurgent movements, poverty, human trafficking, official corruption with impunity and underdevelopment have resulted in high level insecurity. To this end, both internal and external threats are becoming a global phenomenon.

A review of the Nigerian Fourth Republic quickly portrays the nation with uncertainty, as many Nigerians are apprehensive of what the future of the country might be. This is as a result of series of threats and attacks that have been ravaging the nation in recent time. With the proliferation of arms and ammunitions gaining entrants into the country on daily basis, it becomes glaringly clear that insurgents are emerging in different parts of the country. This also has resulted in bunkering of

Nigeria's oil, armed robberies, kidnappings and rising trend in ethno-religious conflicts across the country among others.

The importance attached to security therefore is expressed in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Section 14 (2) (b) of the Constitution states that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government".

The implication of this is that the responsibility of safeguarding lives and property as well as the welfare of the entire Nigerians against any form of threats rested on the military and other security agencies.(FGN,1999).

Arising from the above, Nwolise (1995) cited in Odoma ( 2014:11)argues that:

> *A country may have the best armed forces in terms of training and equipment, the most efficient police Force, the most efficient customs men the most active secret agents and the best quality prisons, but yet have most insecure nation in the world, as a result of defense and security problems from within-bad government, alienated and suffering masses, ignorance, hunger, unemployment, or even activities of foreign residence or companies.*

Odoma (2014) therefore maintains that a good security is such that is built on the welfare of majority of its citizen. It is an all embracing activities of human being inspired by strong belief in the system, willful commitment to the actualization of national projects, and the synergy of all formal and informal agencies of social control to protect the state and her citizens.

This paper is an attempt to explain and analyze democracy and internal security in the Nigerian Fourth Republic with a view to finding an enduring and durable solution to security challenges that have been threatening the country since 1999. The central theme of the discussion is that democracy failed to yield the necessary dividends to the people and as a result accentuated crisis of all sorts including the rise of militants and by extension, Boko haram in the present contexts.

The paper is divided into seven sections. Section one deals with the ongoing introduction. Section two is concerned with theoretical framework, while section three treats the methodology. Section four analyzes internal security in the Fourth Republic. Section five also analyzes internal security in the Fourth Republic. Section six deals with towards internal security in the Fourth Republic and section seven deals with summary, conclusion and recommendations.

**Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework adopted in this paper is derived from a combination of "state failure", "state collapse" and "state fragility". It is an eclectic theoretical frame work and the essence is to observe the ineffectiveness of pub;ic policies and governmental regulations among which internal security could be located. The proponents are Osaghae (2010), Reno (2002), Zartmain (1995), Migdal (2001) and Reymaekers (2005).

They argued that states in Africa constitute a generic species and has continued to be at the lowest substratum in order of ranking when it comes to matter of performance. They stressed further that state failure in Africa is as a result of regional pheneomenon.

According to Rotberg (2002) and Reno (2002), state failure generally connects institutional breakdown of society, which are seen as two sides of the same coin. Zartman (1995), also observes

that in a "weak" society, there exists a general inability to refill the institutional gaps left b withering government structures: the organization and allocation of political assets thereby easily fa into the hands of "warlords and gang leaders" who often make use of "ethnic elements" as a sourc of identity and control in the absence of an overriding social contracts that bind citizens to the state Supporting the above, Dorff (1996) argues that in arelatively weak states, democratic institutions an processes can easily fall prey to the forces of uncertainity and fear, especially when there are indeginous actors ready, willing and able to exploit human emotions for the sake of redirecting o killing democratic reforms.

Giving the democratic and security situations in Nigeria and the current trends in security breaches the theories above capture the study.

**Methodology**

In this research paper, the data for the study were basically selected from secondary sourced materials such as textbooks, internet sourced materials, newspapers and magazines, journals and articles through the method of qualitative content analysis.

**Analysis of Internal Security before the Fourth Republic**

Generally, Nigeria had a chequered history of internal crisis. At any point in time, the military had always been drafted to maintain peace and order. The prosecution of the civil war between 1966 and 1970 posed serious threats to the corporate entity of Nigeria. The civil war therefore provided the Nigerian military with the litmus test for the defense and security of the country (Omede, 2012).

According to Atofarati (1992), decades after the conclusion of the civil war, the nation is still played by threats of ethno-religious intolerance and political violence, corruption, mass unemployment, poor economic growth, arms smuggling and proliferation of small arms as well as unprecedented upsurge of ethnic and armed militia groups. These threats have resulted in "a weak, volatile and unpredictable internal security situation, which has, more than ever, resulted in heavy military aid to civil authorities" (National Defence Policy, 2006: 16).

Omede (2012) contends that there has been a persistent outbreak of ethno-religious violent attacks across the country in the period before the fourth republic. Some of these violence a according to him were: The maitasine riots of 1978 (Kaduna) and some Maitasine uprising of 1980, 1981 and 1984 in Kano, Yola and Maiduguri. Similarly, there were the Musa Mankini riots in Kano in the 1980s, the 1991 and 2000 Kaduna sectarian violence among others.

Omede (2012) noted that these crises in military perspectives are regarded as internal security and low intensity conflicts, which is the primary responsibility of the Nigeria police and other paramilitary agencies. Unfortunately the Nigerian police and the paramilitary agencies have been noted to be ineffective in managing such crisis in the past. It was on the basis of this that military intervention are often sought to assist civil power in times of civil disturbances. Therefore, the period before the Fourth Republic witnessed several security challenges but were ably controlled by the police and the army as these crises were not above the spectrum of the Nigerian security apparatuses.

**Internal Security in the Fourth Republic**

It should be understood that domestic laws usually apply in internal security operations, but this is normally been influenced by rules of engagement and standards of international law. While the domestic law provides the basis for military involvement in internal security operations, the international human rights law regulates the conducts of operations (Idowu, 2014).

According, to Omodia (2012), the present democratic dispensation of Nigerian Fourth Republic is characterized by high level socio-economic, ethno-religious and political conflict which is a challenge to national security. These conflicts range from the Ife Modakeke conflict in the Western part, to the Niger Delta militancy in the South-South, and the Jos Indigenship-settlership crisis as well as the Boko Haram militancy in the Northern part of the country. Omodia, (2012) further stressed that the above internal crisis and conflicts constitute a major threat to internal security in Nigeria and cannot be separated from poor leadership which is not favourable to most Nigerian and ethno-religious groups after the return to democratic governance. In other words, the return to democracy in 1999 was viewed by most people in the country as a process that would provide the most desired opportunity for good leadership, poverty reduction, self- determination through free and fair elections as well as addressing the problem of fiscal federalism among others.

Unfortunately, all these according to Jega (2006) fall short of expectations and the tragedy of the Nigerian situation is that "social capital" was almost extinct, while the performance of government at all levels can be measured through high profile corruption and incompetence (Jega, 2006).

Against this background, internal security in the Nigeria Fourth Republic witnessed an unprecedented crises in many parts of the country. In fact, security system in the present dispensation is worse than that of any previous administration.

**Towards Internal Security in Nigeria**

It is true that no nation is free from security challenges. However, the pattern of these challenges varies from one country to another. Given the scale of violence and the seeming increase in insurgency on our political landscape in Nigeria at the present time, the country is definitely in a state of war.

One of the security challenges in Nigeria is the wide expanse of porous borders with neighbouring countries. The porosity of the Nigeria border has negatively affected the revenue base of Nigeria. Also, it has provided an opportunity for all kinds of persons to gain access into the country in what is referred to as trans-national migration. Also, arms and ammunitions are being smuggled on daily basis into the country through these porous borders.

As a matter of fact, most of the "fighters" in the Boko Haram insurgents are not even indigenes of Nigeria. With no property and nothing to lose, they fight and kill innocent Nigerians on daily basis. It does not matter whether any of their members die or is killed. After all, they belief that once you fight and die for their self acclaimed course, heaven is guaranteed.

According to El-Rufai (2012:6), all sectors of the Nigerian state care being negatively affected by the security challenges facing the country. He posited further that:

> *Particular problem, developmental project life infrastructure, welfare programmes and other key aspect of development are suffering. Insecurity causes fear among citizens. It results in movement and travels restriction and curtails human rights.*
> *He stated further that:*
> *These combine to reduce employment opportunities, wealth creation and capital formation. Indeed, security is the foundation and underpinning upon which civilized society is founded as opposed to jungle justice where the lion is the*

*king. Put simply, without security there can be no development (El-Rufai, 2012: 6).*

As a result of security challenges, the economy of Nigeria has been on the brink of collapse. There no internal capital formation due to the vicious circle of low productivity, low income and lo savings. In the present circumstance, government investments in most vital sectors like power, roa rail ways and other social amenities have been dwindled.

According to World Investment Report on United Nations Charter on Trade and Developme (UNCTAD), Foreign Direct Investment (DFID) in Nigeria dwindled from about $8.65billion (U. Dollars) in 2009 to $6.1billion (U.S Dollars) in 2010 as a result of security challenges.

**Conclusion**

The paper is an attempt to extrapolate the nexus between democracy and internal security in th Nigerian Fourth Republic. The paper contends that the dividend of democracy has not really bee achieved and to that effect, hopes and aspirations of many Nigerians dashed despite the re-introduction of democracy in the country in May, 1999. The paper further argues that the high level political, ethno-religious crisis as well as the rising waves of crimes such as armed robberies, kidnappings, and bunkering of the oil pipelines as well as the emergence of militancy across the nations was as a result of bad leadership. The paper further argues that unless there is a synergy in the operations of security agencies in the country the much desired peace cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, the military and the paramilitary operative should collaborate and stem the tide in their security networks in order to forestall against unforeseen perils.

**Recommendations**

Without good democratic governance there can be no accountability. Good governance will ensure peaceful and collaborative co-existence among the people that make up Nigeria. This will equally reduce tension among the citizenry and encourage investment to the country. There is therefore a strong relationship between democracy and internal security. Leaders should intensify efforts to play politics according to its rule and ensure that every party is carried along.

It is however recommended that the present security challenges require the use of both carrot and stick as suggested by the former president of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (Daily Trust, 2013). The Nigerian predicament in the Fourth Republic is not only economical but also political. Therefore, military alone cannot find solutions to the problem.

Also, the Nigerian government should apply the game theory as exemplified by the United States of America recently. The Obama administration released five Talibans from the Guatanamo bay prison in lieu of an American Sergeant, who has been in prison custody in Afghanistan since five years ago. Therefore, if America can do this then, nothing is wrong in Nigeria's Government doing same to rescue the lives of our school girls that were abducted in Chibok, Borno state of Nigeria. The lives of these girls should be considered as our core values. As such, we should be committed to their release rather than playing politics with it.

It is also recommended that more persons be recruited into the Nigerian security apparatuses. As a matter of fact, every Nigerian should be protected by the government and that the securing agencies should be trained in intelligence gathering so as to forestall against future threats.

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