

Towards Creating an Enduring Peace and Security in a Stable Nigerian Nation

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Abstract

The paper is hinged on how to find lasting solution to the socio-economic and political crises in Nigeria. It examined the efforts and challenges of the successive governments in Nigeria towards ensuring peace and security for good governance and development. Utilizing the descriptive method of analysis, it traced the expectations of the Nigerians at independence, the failure of the successive governments to deliver the goods (dividends) of good governance, violent reactions arising from the citizens' frustration and how to liberate the nation from the state of dilemma. It identified socio-political cleavages fuelling instability borne out of frustration, not leaving out the horrible globalization drive cutting across the entire globe and continuous bloody acts of terrorism dominating parts of east and northern Nigeria. Thus, Nigeria being assertive and occupying her rightful position in world affairs is a function of stabilizing the home front via ensuring enduring peace and security by suppressing the separatists' elements and groups destabilizing the country.

Keywords: expectations of independence goods (dividends) of good governance, international community, peace and security

Introduction: Conceptual Framework of Peace and Security

For a society or nation to forge ahead and advance in the social, economic, military cum strategic, technological, political arenas and in other areas, such society needs peace and security. This implies that a stable human habitation can only be guaranteed when concerted efforts are made by all and sundry towards promoting peace and security. Therefore, there is the need to clarify the concepts of “peace” and “security” before delving into the task of this study as this is central towards understanding their importance in human society.

There are several connotations regarding the concept of peace which is generally defined as the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering and violence, and about peaceful coexistence. It is primarily, concerned with creating and maintaining a just order in society and the resolution of conflict by non-violent means (Francis, 2011 p.16). This definition presents a situation where there is harmonious relations void of rancour and crises and for the betterment of the citizens. It means the absence of dissension, violence or war. It is against this backdrop that peace is conceptualized, from sociological perspective as a value that emanates from just human relationships which enhance social harmony, creativity and productivity and prevention of war (Ikejiani-Clark & Ani, 2009 p.4). Going by this definition peace is a condition in which there is no social conflict and individuals and groups are able to meet their needs and expectations.

However, there is also the political interpretation of peace which regards peace as a political condition that makes justice possible and this significantly presupposes the institutionalization of political structures. Ibeanu (2011, p.8) while citing Samuel P. Huntington says institutionalization means that political structures acquire value and stability. In the absence of institutionalization, there is a primacy of politics. In that condition, “every group uses its unique endowments to pursue and enforce its interests- mobs riot, students demonstrate, workers strike and soldiers organize coups”. It is when efficient, effective and functional political and administrative structures are put in place that good governance exists and security of the concerned

society is established. Consequently, within a state, the conditions for peace are created and maintained when the leaders and the citizens carry out their constitutional, political, social and economic roles by providing security for all (Ikejiani-Clark & Ani, 2011, p.5). This ultimately leads us to the concept of security.

Like peace, security has been variously conceptualized by scholars and experts. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* 2010, p.1335), security is defined as the activities involved in protecting a country, building or person against attack, danger; the department of a large company or organization that deals with the protection of its buildings, equipment and staff; protection against something bad that might happen in the future. In his own definition, Akinyeye (2001 p.17) views security as a multi-faceted concept that covers every sphere of human endeavours and as a result, people are conscious and discuss social security, economic security, psychological security, job security, among others. Damus who views security from the socio-economic dimension defines security as “the prevention of property damage, injury and loss of lives caused by military and death in the event of war” (cited in Akinyeye, 2001, p.17).

Handreder and Buel however assert that security deals with “the protection of a nation against all types of external aggression, espionage, hostile reconnaissance, sabotage, subversion, annoyance and other inimical influences” (cited in Akinyeye, 2001, p.17). The definitions being advanced by the scholars are not exhaustive by glossing over non-military threats such as famine, ecological disasters and even destruction of a nation's resources without recourse to arms. Their connotations focus on internal security and mobilization of the military against external aggression. The lacunae is fixed by McNamara who values the centrality of security by commenting that the security of any nation or entity lies not solely or even primarily in its military preparedness but also in developing relatively stable patterns of economic development and political growth at home and abroad” (cited in Akinyeye, 2001, pp.17-18). However, Imobighe (1990, p.224) submits that security generally “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 interest and enhance the well-being of its people”. He goes further by shedding light on internal security which he describes as:

The freedom from or the absence of those tendencies which could undermine 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 aspiration of the people. Internal security also implies the presence of a conducive atmosphere for the people to pursue their legitimate interests within the society (Imobighe, p.224).

A critical examination of the definitions of security reveals that humanity needs to be protected from dangers, wars, conflicts, hunger, unemployment, environmental disasters, economic loss and many other issues. Indeed, Imobighe’s conceptualization stands out as being the most comprehensive and goes extra-mile in linking security to internal security. Peace and security therefore implies wholesomeness of societal values and their institutionalization so as to avoid crises in the society. But by looking at what happens globally, it is discovered that the countries of the world are far from enjoying the expected highly prized peace and stability. This study interrogates Nigeria’s experience as the nation has failed the citizenry as a result of the inability of the leadership/political class to meeting the expectations, yearnings and aspirations of the masses at the time of achievement of independence.

‘The People’s Expectations of Independence

The pre- colonial African societies were noted for economic advancement in trade and commerce, extractive industries, works of art, domestication of animals and cultivation of food and cash crops whose surpluses were internally and externally exchanged for the farm produce and other commodities in which they recorded shortages or produced none at all. The traditional legal systems of the Africans were superb and they created room for social justice and equity. This

was strengthened by democracy and democratic principles as most indigenous African communities and societies operated constitutional checks and balances. Hence, autocracy and totalitarianism were frowned at. The pre-colonial Africa was therefore egalitarian in nature and there was no scourge of unemployment as the people were creative and imaginative. In the area of security, African leaders had reliable and efficient warriors comprised of able-bodied men who were conscripted into the militia on ad-hoc basis. Religious practices were adopted to concretize the workings and operations of the societies before the incursion of imperialist grandmasters and their subsequent imposition of colonial rule on the continent. The advent of colonialism served as a clog in the wheel of African progress as the erstwhile socio-economic, political and cultural doctrines and beliefs became obliterated. Autocracy and high handedness of the colonial rulers became the political norm thereafter in Africa which characterized colonial administrations.

The Africans including Nigerians were forced to adapt to the Western European lifestyle, they were forcibly recruited into the colonial police and army, had their rights curtailed, deprived of their socio-economic rights to own land- which was communally owned in the old order and most of the lands were expropriated by the foreign rulers. Africans were compelled to pay taxes; they were denied concessional rights to explore the mineral resources in their respective countries while the European merchants and oligopolistic companies were granted license to extract such natural endowments. The African farmers could not and were denied the right to fix prices of their farm products which were cheaply bought by the exploitative companies owned by the agents of the colonialists. Worse still, Africans were poorly remunerated while the continent's economies were not industrialized by the foreign economic exploiters. Nigerians were incensed further by the British colonial administration's failure to grant loans to Nigerians as capital to start their own businesses (Erinosho, 2009, pp.92-95).

The colonial situation was hostile to the people's traditional life patterns. To worsen the situation, the British colonial rulers introduced divide and rule mechanism between the traditional rulers and the

educated elite; Northerners and Southerners; Christians and Muslims; the rich and the poor, and between civil servants employed by the imperialists and those not involved in colonial administration.

Nigerians, like other colonized peoples in Africa, Asia and Latin America, therefore saw the “wind of change” heralded after the termination of the Second World War in 1945 as a welcomed development. The United Nations Organization, United States of America, Russia and even the Labour Party in Britain had condemned colonialism in strong terms and mounted fierce campaign towards the liquidation of colonial empires in the Third World especially Africa. In West Africa, politics was liberalized with the increase in the creation of political parties spearheaded by the educated elite and the returnees of the Second War, who had been disappointed by the colonial rulers and having witnessed the demystification of the whites in war zones as they were terribly shattered militarily. It was only the Portuguese that had vowed to remain in Africa with the crazy idea of creating a ‘Greater Portugal’ by making their country’s colonies on the continent an extension of Portugal. This step led to bloody warfare in those former colonies like Angola, Cape Verde Islands, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau (Agbi, 1986, pp.95-96).

The masses and the middle-class individuals watched closely the politics of decolonization, and they were optimistic that the attainment of independence would usher in better life for them. Their expectations of independence are summed up by J.F. Ade Ajayi, a frontline African historian renowned for his logic, incisive comments and in-depth analysis thus:

Insofar as they fully appreciated what was involved in the independence movements, their basic expectation was to see an end to the unpredictability and irrationality of the white man’s world. Without the dubious disadvantages of Western education, they rejected the white man’s culture, and for as long as possible, stuck to what they knew. This did not mean that they wanted to recreate the past in its entirety. Their notion of freedom was not an abstract ideal, but a

catalogue of specific wants: freedom from unjust and incomprehensible laws and directives; return of their land, and freedom to be left alone to live their lives and seek their own goals, especially in regard to land tenure and local government groupings that affected historical relationships. These wants developed and became more specific with each new hope and each disastrous frustration. So, expectations came to include improved standards of living in housing and clothing, greater returns for their labour, better transportation for exporting and marketing their surpluses, education as a means to the social mobility that would ensure a better life for their children, and an adequate water supply, electricity, health – care facilities, and other such amenities of life (cited in Nzongola-Ntalaja, 1987, pp.76-77).

This was the interpretation of independence by the masses who hoped that their own kith and kin, drawn from the same socio- cultural milieu, who were conscious of the African ethos, would redirect the affairs of the continent and their respective countries in the interest of their own peoples. The masses looked up to the nationalist crusaders as agents of change that would right the wrongs being inflicted on them by the colonizers; and formulate and implement policies and programmes that would ameliorate their conditions. They believed their leaders who were acquainted with both the African and Western cultures should be able to strike a balance between the two divergent patterns and so create a better and salutary society where equity, egalitarianism, justice, economic growth and development and other indicators of qualitative life including a good education, social infrastructure and effective and efficient security networks would be established, nurtured and sustained.

This was the position of Nigerians as far as their own connotation of independence was concerned. They were looking forward for a better society to be led by their own people. Some of whom were intellectuals while the vast majority of them were professional

politicians. The horde of “ freedom fighters” included Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, S.G. Ikoku, H.O. Davies, Obafemi Awolowo, Anthony Enahoro, Adelabu Adegoke (a.k.a *Penkelemes*- Peculiar Mess), Ahmadu Bello and many others. These personalities and their successors were regarded by the masses as the catalysts that would transform the Nigerian society. Their attitudes, behaviors, utterances, actions, reactions and inactions would determine the extent to which peace and security as well as law and order that would emerge in a sovereign Nigeria. The degree or level of attention paid to the yearnings and aspirations of the down-trodden by the new rulers dictated the extent to which peace and stability or chaos and crises pervaded the nation’s socio-political landscape.

Nigeria’s Leadership Failure and the Masses’ Response

Nigerians were excited, joyous and hopeful with the attainment of independence on 1 October 1960. The international community similarly expected that the newly won independence, through patient negotiation between Nigerian leaders and their colonial masters, not by violent revolution, would launch the country on the path of steady progress and stability. Nigeria was fortunate because unlike the majority of African states, it had a viable, diversified economy with great potential for development given the size of its market and the existence of substantial oil resources. Indeed, the nation was looked upon to shoulder the Africa’s leadership role in world affairs for as Osuntokun (2005, pp.34-35) has pointed out: “being the most populous black country in the world compelled her to shoulder, wittingly or unwittingly, the leadership of the black world...Nigeria is blessed with tremendous natural and human resources which should be harnessed for economic development and progress”.

It is however lamentable that the nation began to experience socio-political cleavages and total instability that permeated the entire federation due to a number of factors. The new political class demonstrated utter lack of maturity and developed great propensity towards ethnic and geo- political leanings. The First Republic was therefore characterized by political crises at both the regional and

federal levels particularly in the southwest where emergency rule was imposed. The disagreement that rocked the 1964 population census, 1964 general elections and the October 1965 election into the Western House of Assembly accentuated the crises that ultimately sealed the political coffin of the First Republic with the bloody military take-over of 15 January 1966 (Ademoyega 1981). The ineptitude of the military under Major- General J.T.U. Aguiyi- Ironsi, the counter coup of 29 July 1966, which brought Lt.Col.(later General) Yakubu Gowon to power and the power tussle between Gowon and Lt. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu followed by the Igbo pogrom in the north eventually culminated in the outbreak of the civil war which raged between 1967 and 1970 (Dudley, 1982 pp.79-80). The military continued to be in power up to 1999 with a short break between 1979 and 1983 which marked the lifespan of the Second Republic.

Corruption was a major contributory factor to the military intervention of 1966 and 31 December 1983. The new civilian rulers (and later military officers) and top civil servants amassed the nation's wealth for themselves and their families. They raised (and in many cases became on their own) emergency contractors for themselves. These served as the agents through whom they looted the nation's wealth to the detriment of the masses. While advancing reasons for the collapse of the First Republic, Crowder (1980, p.260) remarks:

... by the end of 1965, the politicians had earned almost universal contempt for their corruption, profligacy and lack of real concern for those they ruled and who had elected them. Suddenly, the gap in wealth between the burgeoning middle classes and the growing wage earning classes grew rapidly greater during the first five years of independence.

The military also became a beehive of corruption under Generals Gowon, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida and Sani Abacha. The corruption spree became escalated with the birth of the Fourth Republic particularly during the presidency of Dr. Goodluck Jonathan. The state governors stole billions of naira from the treasury of their respective states while local government chairmen and councilors as

well as top government workers enriched themselves through ill-gotten wealth (Uche-Okoli, 2014, pp.14-22; Ayodeji, 2014, pp.111-135). In addition, the Fourth Republic has been characterized by extravagant salaries and allowances being paid to federal law makers and ministers. At the same time, a large retinue of assistants in the name of personal assistants, consultants, advisers, among others follows a single political public office holder, whether elected and appointed (Okhueleigbe 2015, pp.18-25; Ayodeji & Efundowo, 2017 pp.260-273).

Consequent upon this development has been the inability of successive governments to provide the basic needs of the people – food, qualitative education, employment, security of life and property, stable and constant power generation (electricity), good medical services, potable water, good road networks, among other things. In fact, apart from being unable to employ younger generation, the governments at all levels have got involved in downsizing of workers, owing workers unpaid salary arrears for many months while retirees have not got their gratuities and pensioners are wallowing in abject poverty due to irregular payment of their monthly pensions.

The selfishness and greed of the ruling elite and their marginalization of the masses have attracted the attention of Meredith (2011, p.581) who asserts that “billions more had been sunk into an ultra-modern capital at Abuja, complete with glittering hotels and office towers, that the ruling elite enjoyed using but that brought little benefit to ordinary Nigerians”.

The self- aggrandizement being enjoyed by the nation’s political rulers accounted and still accounts for their desire to remain in power or return to power by all means. Hence, the military staged coups against the civilians and counter coups to oust military regimes out of power. On their own part, the civilians have embarked on violence during elections which has led to electoral process being marred by gross irregularities and falsification of electoral results because of their sit-sight orientation. They therefore adopt do-or-die attitude in their bid to remain/return to power. According to Meredith (2011, p.220):

As things stand now, the Nigerian state appears to intervene everywhere and to own virtually everything including access to status and wealth. Inevitably, a desperate struggle to win control of state power ensues since this control means for all practical purposes being all powerful and owning everything. Politics becomes warfare, a matter of life and death.

The violence that followed electoral processes that have taken place since the emergence of the Fourth Republic was greater in enormity if compared to the crises that permeated the First and Second Republics' elections which galvanized the military to come to power. However, the Nigerian armed forces seem to have come to term with the reality that military rule is no longer acceptable in the global community, and this has helped to preserve the new political dispensation being experimented.

The political leadership has failed in the areas of economic management. The military helmsmen were not trained as economic managers or public administrators while the civilians, largely drawn from policy makers and technocrats have not performed better. They are barren of managerial skills and ideas, and have therefore failed to add any significant value to the economic advancement of the country. In fact, the political parties lack ideology and so have no clear-cut direction. It is against this background that Erinosho (2011, p.24), while writing on the poor conduct of the 2007 General Elections opines that "unfortunately, those who were fraudulently returned into offices or newly rigged into power are not adequately mentally equipped to do the job accorded their posts or are only there to serve their selfish ends". The economic situation is worsened by practical absence of the political will to industrialize the economy. One can hardly blame the political elite who have inherited the aspirations of the intellectual elite. The intellectual elite in Africa started the fight against colonialism before the politics of decolonization was led by the politicians. The intellectuals, as Ajayi (1982, p.3) has posited"...had no clear-cut goals and nothing like a blueprint for development. They mentioned economic development, but it seemed to have been lowered

down their list of priorities, and they subsumed it under the concept of well-being and national progress”. This implies technological backwardness of the nation and the hiring of expatriates for the extraction of mineral resources and construction works which creates room for capital flight. The only attempt being made towards real industrialization process of the economy is the Ajaokuta project which was a total fiasco. As it has been revealed “A total of \$8billion had gone on constructing a steel industry complex based at Ajaokuta that had yet to produce a single bar of sheet” Meredith (2011, p.581).

There was the presence of maladministration that has bedeviled and still bedevils Nigeria’s government, especially at the federal level. This has manifested in the areas of poor administrative policies, corrupt practices, inefficiency and laziness of political/public office holders and career officers in the civil/public service, as well as duplication of ministries, departments and agencies; and embarking on official overseas trips with large numbers of aids and officials which gulp huge amounts of the tax payers’ money. In addition is the issue of ghost workers who draw heavy salaries and allowances as well as award of contracts that were either abandoned or not executed at all. The administrative malaise has become so pronounced in the Fourth Republic that even international observers have become critical at the ways the country wastes its financial resources which ought to be used to cater for the masses especially for creating job opportunities and providing other social services. For instance, the nation has ministry of petroleum which handles such matters that should be under the purview of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, and there is the existence of Police Affairs Commission when there is Ministry of Police Affairs. Again, there exist Niger Delta Development Commission and Ministry of the Niger Delta. This duplication of ministries, parastatals/agencies and commissions has led to the public/civil service becoming over-bloated with staff leading to redundancy of many personnel. Well-meaning Nigerians have been calling for the merger of those ministries and parastatals/commissions which perform similar functions to reduce wastage (Okhueigbe, 2015, pp.16-22).

Nigeria's case presents nothing but characteristic features of a failed state. It is not Nigeria alone but almost all the African nations whose leaders exhibit total insensitivity towards the plight of the poor citizens. The resultant effect has been the crisis that pervades the provision of social services. While commenting on the poor condition that Nigeria has found itself in this regard, Meredith (2011, p.580) writes:

Despite an oil bonanza of \$280billion, the economy was derelict; public services were chronically inefficient; schools and hospitals were decaying; higher education had virtually collapsed; roads were pitted with potholes; the telephone system hardly functioned. There were frequent power cuts; even shortages of domestic petroleum supplies. On the average, Nigerians were poorer in 2000 than they had been at the start of the oil boom in the early 1970s. Income per head at \$310 was less than one-third of that in 1980. Half of the population lived on less than 30cents a day, half of the population had no access to safe drinking water. Almost one-fifth of children died before their fifth birthday; nearly half of under-fives were stunted because of poor malnutrition. Millions of people lived in shuns surrounded by rotting mounds of garbage, without access to basic amenities.

The above summation of Meredith about Nigeria's situation is a total departure from the people's expectations of independence. The nation further receded into a state of coma during the Goodluck Ebele Jonathan six year presidency, from May 2010 to May 2015. His administration was fraught with pervasive corruption and total inability of the president himself to exercise grip control over the nation's affairs. Therefore, while taking stock of the nation's journey since independence, Chinua Achebe is right by blaming the leadership with acerbity. According to him "there is nothing wrong with the Nigerian law or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the

responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership” (cited in Meredith, 2011, p.221).

The failure to meet the people’s yearnings and aspirations implies development has become elusive. The masses have become frustrated and disillusioned. Indeed in many ways, the quality of life of the average farmer and his family in the village or worker in the urban areas has not improved significantly; in some respects and in some areas, it is even worse than on the eve of independence (Ajayi, 1982 p.18). This situation has alienated the governed from the so-called leaders. It is not surprising that the masses have taken their destiny in their own hands since the government has failed and disappointed them. The masses have therefore responded in numerous but mostly in violent ways. Nigeria’s condition has led to the escalation of ethnicity which has found expression in the regrouping of primordial sectional groups seeking for identity. Thus, an array of vibrant and dynamic ethnic and sub-ethnic organizations and unions adorn the socio-political landscape of the nation. This development has been brought about by the marginalization and alienation of the citizens by the government; and the people have seen the need to associate with their kith and kin, with who they share linguistic, historical and cultural identity. Hence, there exist the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) in the north; Afenifere and the Oodua People’s Congress (OPC) among the Yoruba of south-western zone; the Ohaneze-Ndigbo that unifies the Igbo of south-east; while south-south elements have created ethnic or nationalist groups including the Egbesu Boys, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), and recently the Niger Delta Avengers. The various ethnic groups have transferred their loyalty to their ethnic umbrella organizations due to the social injustices, marginalization, alienation, exclusion and frustration they have suffered in the hands of the successive governments. The most vocal, volatile and dangerous are the Niger Delta militia formations which had fought for their people’s right and towards the protection of their environment which suffers from degradation as a result of oil spillage and gas flaring. In the face of tyranny, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) under the leadership of the slain environmentalist and playwright, Ken Saro-Wiwa became

assertive until the hanging of the man and other eight Ogoni by the Abacha military junta in 1995. This however only fuelled the anger of the Niger Delta militants who engaged in violence by bombing oil installations and kidnapping expatriate oil workers some of who died in the custody of the militants until the amnesty programme of the late President Umaru Yar'Adua mitigated restiveness in the area in 2009 (Ekpo & Omoweh, 2001 pp.96-98) but the newly created Niger Delta Avengers resumed bombing after the assumption of office by President Muhammadu Buhari.

The average Nigerian workers that have similarly been involved in the struggle to have their working and living conditions improved by their employers especially the government. As a result, the workers have employed threats of strike, industrial actions; and both peaceful and violent protests while pressing for their demands when their employers turn deaf ears to the frustrated workers. This struggle has involved virtually all categories of workers-civil servants, teachers, lecturers, medical workers, judicial staff, police and even soldiers, among others.

Nigerians have similarly found solace in social vices. The reason for this is their will to survive. Since thousands of retirees and pensioners have been denied their statutory rights to draw gratuities and monthly pensions, they have found it extremely difficult to cater for themselves and their dependants. Consequently, many have died prematurely, while numerous others suffer from chronic diseases but having no money needed to consult medical experts and for medication; and their children have taken to crimes such as armed robbery, fraudulent practices popularly known as 419, cyber-crimes, kidnapping, drug trafficking, gun running, money rituals, stealing, thuggery, begging for alms, suicide bombing, and prostitution.

The declined state in which Nigerians have found themselves has led to religious crises. The nation's history is replete with religious crises being fuelled by fanaticism and bigotry especially in the north. However, the most worrisome of them is the *Boko-Haram* menace which began in 2009. Whether it is true or a mere pretense, Abu Kaka, one of the leaders has accused the northern governors of insincerity, injustice, insensitivity, corruption and other acts of immorality. The

bombing incidents that characterize the deadly operations of the sect have battered the image of the nation and its military wing / branch, not only at home but also in the international community. The bitter truth of the matter is that if the successive Nigerian governments at all levels have catered for the welfare of the generality of the citizens and demonstrated a sense of social justice and fair play, the crisis may have been nipped in the bud. This is because the previous religious crises ringleaders and the horrendous *Boko Haram* arrowhead recruited and recruit the terrorists they use(d) from the hordes of depressed, frustrated, hungry, jobless and neglected young men and women. It has therefore been a terrible headache for the government to contain and crush the fissiparous groups operating as religious rioters or ethnic liberation movements. And this has degenerated into general insecurity with its attendant multifaceted repercussions.

Towards Moving the Nation Out of the Woods

Having analyzed the failure of the Nigerian state and the people's repulsive response, there arises the need to proffer solutions that will move the nation from its precarious condition. The following recommendations are therefore advanced:

The leaders should create an enabling environment that will give room for the satisfaction of the people's needs. This implies that the basic needs of the people – food, shelter and clothing be readily made available. This can only be realized if the working class and the senior citizens enjoy good conditions of service and quality treatment after retirement. Other social services such as adequate and qualitative medical services, qualitative education, job creation as well as formulation and implementation of living wages for the working population and regular payment of gratuities and pensions should be urgently addressed.

There is also the need to devise policies for the rational use and exploitation of natural resources. This is especially germane concerning the Niger Delta zone where the degradation of the environment arising from oil exploration and gas flaring has become an albatross to the residents in the region. Places where solid minerals like coal, bitumen, limestone and tin etc are being extracted should

also be taken into cognizance as regards the protection of the people against health hazards and possible earthquake

There is similarly the urgent need to diversify the nation's economy by paying considerable attention to other sectors of the economy – agriculture, extraction of solid minerals, development of tourist centres, and by exploring other viable areas. The expansion and diversification of the economy will definitely bring about employment generation opportunities, and this will grossly reduce the army of jobless Nigerians. However, this calls for the industrialization of the economy and technological advancement.

In addition, corruption must be tackled. This can only be destroyed by putting in place punitive measures that go beyond lip service. Legal and administrative bottlenecks should be done away with. The issuance of endless court injunctions restraining anti-corruption agencies from performing their duties should be removed. Anybody found guilty of corrupt practices should either be jailed for life or publicly executed after he or she has surrendered the public monies and other properties he has stolen. Until this is done there seems to be no hope of sanitizing the nation by getting rid of the pen robbers who have sent several thousands of Nigerians to the early grave through their rapacious tendencies and actions. Hence, transparency, accountability and public probity must be promoted.

The family as the basic unit of human society must be proactive in good upbringing of the children. Parents should train their children and wards positive societal norms and values, good behavior and character training that will help them in their interaction in the larger society. The failure of many families in this respect has led to the emergence of rascally social miscreants who have constituted themselves into a nuisance disturbing the peace of the nation and being conscripted by insurgent groups.

The issues of freedom and justice should be accorded quality attention. Where people are denied fundamental human rights and injustice meted to them by the powers that be, the society in which the victims

live cannot know and enjoy peace. High premium should therefore be placed on egalitarianism.

Moreover, in order to cut overhead costs, there is the need to slash the salaries of the political office holders especially as concerning the governors, ministers, advisers, the president and his vice while the offices of councilors, state houses of assembly members, the senate and the house of representatives be converted to part time. This is necessary as Nigerian politicians have turned politics into the fastest and biggest way of making fabulous money and acquiring properties worth billions of naira for themselves to the detriment of the masses. In the same vein, duplication of functions /offices should be discontinued with through the merger of ministries, departments and agencies performing similar functions.

Finally, the ruling class must endeavour to integrate themselves with the masses. This can be done by being sensitive to the latter's plight. By so doing the widening gulf between the two groups will be closed and the present alienation between them eliminated. The political elite should be able to interact with the people without being afraid of being molested or mobbed.

Conclusion

This paper examined the relevance of peace and security in human society. It began by examining the concepts of peace and security before looking at the expectations of Nigerians on the eve of independence. Thereafter, it undertook a navigation of the successive Nigerian governments underscoring that the nation exhibits the features of a failed state due to the insensitivity of the ruling elite and the virulent reaction of the masses. A number of recommendations were proffered. However, it is instructive to state that it requires the political will of the leadership and collaborative efforts of all and sundry to successfully implement the recommendations.

The study is anchored on the fact that if the goods or dividends of good governance are made available in Nigeria, the country would enjoy relative peace and security as well as stability. The leadership should, in addition to the above recommendations, provide security

agencies and military the necessary support so as to enable them suppress any uprising in the country and similarly protect the nation's territorial integrity against external aggression. The ruling class has to relate, cooperate and collaborate with the international community so as to be able to meet most of the people's demands. It is when the people are satisfied that they can have due respect for the nation and its ruling elite and they will become law abiding citizens. By implication, the country will also become a diplomatic darling in the comity of nations when enduring peace and security as well as stability reign supreme.

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