UNGOVERNED SPACES AND EMERGING THREATS OF INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria has been experiencing an overwhelming insecurity ranging from armed banditry, ethnic militias, armed robbery, militancy and insurgencies, Kidnapping/abduction, piracy, Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons and trans-national crime. These criminalities are leveraged by the vast ungoverned spaces. Governance coverage is not wide spread and not decentralized from urbanised areas to areas at the fringes and so they experience insecurity. The areas now become safe sanctuaries for armed group and insurgents who continue to attack and depredate rural communities hence the limited governance in those areas. Governance that embraces prioritizing security sector with primacy of taking a centri-fugal approach to development is much distant away from the realities in Nigeria. The study adopts the theory of failed/ungoverned space as theoretical underpinning which argues that states should be internally and externally sovereign, legitimate and capable of delivering public goods, including security, welfare, and development to their citizens and spaces within its territorial confines. Areas excluded from the state 'net' are likely to descend into anarchy and violence by allowing non-state violent actors to settle, plan logistics, engage in crime to

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generate funds, recruit, train and operate therein. The exploiters of the ungoverned spaces are Boko Haram insurgents, Niger Delta Militants, Kidnappers, Armed Robbers, Herdsmen militia and Bandits, Smugglers, Human Traffickers, Pirates and Trans-national criminals. The drivers of insecurity in ungoverned spaces include Forest Reserves, State failure, Socio-Economic Factors, Religious Extremism, Niger Delta Agitation, Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons and Porous Borders. The study concludes that Nigeria has the requisite wherewithal to take control of these hitherto ungoverned spaces for the security and welfare of the citizens hence the expediency to prioritize development at the fringes.

KEY WORDS: Ungoverned Spaces, Insecurity, Sanctuaries, Sovereignty.

INTRODUCTION

Many African countries are facing catastrophic insecurity situations for decades where armed militia, kidnapping, insurgency and militancy are common denominators. Some nations show lack of capacity and provide limited governance to their citizens. According to Whelan (n.d) Sub-Saharan Africa continues to face constant security, political, and economic crises. Government corruption is a major problem. Many countries have limited or unreliable capacities for internal security, law enforcement, and border protection. This lack of governance capacity makes them attractive venues for the development of violent extremism, terrorism, and criminal activities.

Nations that have non coverage of governance in some areas within their frontiers suffer the threat of insecurity. Nigeria is a nation with about two hundred million people of which the most part of the population is in the rural areas. The nonchalance of government to provide governance at the fringes can be attributed to the fact that the seat of government are in urban areas and most secured environment. According to Teniola (2018) in a review of Dr. Bala Usman's analysis of communal conflict in Nigeria, says that 'since these violent communal conflicts, between farmers and nomads, occur entirely in the rural areas, the governments do not seem to feel threatened by them and accord

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them low priority, as they generally do with the whole of rural Nigeria'. Juxtaposing the wanton profligacy in government's idiosyncrasy and the unreached areas with governance shows total neglect of these areas in Nigeria.

The constitution unequivocally spells out as fundamental objective and directive principle of state policy that "the security and welfare of the people (of Nigeria) shall be the primary purpose of government"(Section 14 (2) (b), Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,1999).The state remains the fundamental purveyor of security as it is the only institution vested with the power to use the instrument of coercion in securing the nation, lives and property(Jah,2019). Also, the state formulates and implements policies, programmes and mechanisms geared towards managing internal or intra state conflicts. The ungoverned spaces in Nigeria is pervasive across the six geo-political zones. The northern Nigeria which is profiled amongst the sahelian states region , south-south, south-east and south-west have the limited governance in those spaces. Raleigh and Dowd (2013) opine that the main consequence that we focus on is how the reach of the state creates opportunities for violence. 'Ungoverned space' perpetuates a state-centric understanding of governance and conflict, implying in the first instance, that in such spaces the state is entirely absent; and in the second instance, that such absence results in a lack of any effective governance, and therefore conflict.

Some reasons such that are allied to ungoverned spaces development issues, challenges of poverty, infrastructure, inequality gap, youth-related issues, cross-border terrorism, infiltration of criminals, immigrant and among others. According to Feldman(2009) such factors include large unemployed populations of youths who are likely to fall prey to terrorist recruiters, haphazard borders that are poorly manned, and the proliferation of arms due to unending conflicts and poor governance, among others.

The Nigerian Armed Forces is made up of the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy, Nigerian Air Force and the Nigerian Police force. Thus, the personnel-strength of the Nigerian Armed Forces has remained a critical challenge to internal security policy implementation in Nigeria. As a country with pervasive cases of internal insecurity, the capacity of Nigeria's Armed Forces in terms of personnel strength, funding, sophisticated equipment, deployment and rapid emergency response, are grossly low (Aliyu, 2011). The numeric strength of Nigeria's police whose primacy is internal security of the nation, is grossly inadequate. Nigeria far away from meeting the United Nations benchmark ratio of 1:450(1 police man to 450 persons) in the population. The statistics is indicative of the number of police-population ratio serving a community in relation to its size. The former Inspector General of Police, Ibrahim Kpotum Idris, during a Summit: Forging Partnership for Effective Strategies to Curb the Menace of Kidnapping, Recurring Farmers-Herders Clashes and Criminality in Nigeria, remarked that 'to attain the United Nations ratio requirement of one police to 400 citizens of a country, the Nigeria Police Force needs to recruit 155,000 to police Nigerian population of 182 million persons(www.vanguardngr.com).The ungoverned nature of the territories in a state has been attributed to state weakness or state fragility (Julum & Evans,2015). Nigeria over the years has established an elite police where government functionaries, wealthy individuals, foreign nationals are attached with policemen to guard them to the peril of areas at the fringes where it is most needed. Using the police for this task is lucrative as those given the police cover pay fees to the police command.

The criminal assume full control of the ungoverned spaces thereby having the Nigerian state to de-assume full sovereignty. Government's control of these areas could only reflect in- principle. Depredators establish cells, sanctuaries which thus far metamorphosed into safe havens. Julum and Evans (2015) state that in ungoverned spaces, non-state actors are fillers of state authorities,

establishing their writ as alternative power centres, supplanting the functionality of the state. The spaces termed 'ungoverned' usually come under the control of warlords, tribal leaders and criminal gangs with established physical presence in control of carved territory within existing state boundaries and having the capacity to challenge the legitimacy, authority and sovereignty of the country.

Most areas in Nigeria are ruralized, with adjourning towns in acute absent of governance. The areas at the fringes of the nation suffer severe threats of insecurity. Nigeria is bordered by Chad, Cameroun, Benin Republic and Niger with the following dimensions: Nigeria's shares 773km border stretch with Benin Republic, 87km with Chad and then an entire stretch of 1,049km with Niger republic and 1,690km with Cameroon. The Nigeria Immigration Service, NIS announced there are about 1,487 illegal routes to Nigeria through these porous borders. This presents how overwhelmed the Nigerian state is in the face of this phenomenon.

METHODOLOGY

The study relies on secondary data. Therefore the content analysis method is employed to extract important and related literature for the attainment of empiricism in this study. Feshinger and Katy (1968) observe that content analysis is a research technique for objective, systematic and qualitative description of the manifest content of communication. They concluded by saying that the objective of content analysis is to convert recorded raw phenomena into data which can be treated in essentially scientific manner so that a body of knowledge may be built up.

CONCEPRUALISATION FRAMEWORK

Ungoverned Spaces

In their book, *Ungoverned Spaces,* Trinkunas and Clunan (2010) contend that one cannot talk about ungoverned spaces without talking about failed states. They define ungoverned spaces as social, political and economic zones where states do not have effective control, which non-state actors can exploit to avoid state surveillance and undermine state sovereignty. They go further to argue that when analyzing ungoverned spaces, scholars should not limit themselves to failed states alone but also consider the lack of effective sovereignty in organized and strong states like in border areas and inner cities of the United States and suburbs in France that tend to harbor criminals.

The term is intended to refer to both physical territory and non-physical policy space in which there is an absence of effective state sovereignty and control (Piombo, 2007; Hazen, 2010). In 2003, the Director of the Central Intelligence's Worldwide Threat Briefing maintains that the threat posed by 'vast stretches of ungoverned areas – lawless zones, veritable "no man's lands,"' demanded 'a constant level of scrutiny'. At that time, emphasis was placed on the need to focus on 'ungoverned spaces' in spite of the fact that such challenges were 'not occupying space on the front pages' (Tenet 2003). In the intervening decade, ungoverned spaces have become a staple of the security lexicon of policy-makers, analysts and researchers, and the territories the term describes thereby inextricably linked to terrorism, terrorist 'safe havens' and multiple emerging security threats (State Department 2012, pp. 180).

Ungoverned space pervades discussion of global security threats, and dominates analysis and policy approaches to North Africa and the Sahel in particular. The term is intended to refer to both physical territory and non-physical policy space in which there is an absence

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of effective state sovereignty and control (Piombo, 2007; Hazen, 2010). The physical and non-physical spaces are where there is the semi-presence or the absence of control of the government of a state. The physical spaces that are considered to be ungoverned constitute hinterlands that are beyond the reach of the state to exercise sovereignty and control, while the non-physical spaces considered to be ungoverned are those within a state where the government is not able or willing to exercise authority or control (Whelan, n.d.).

Insecurity

Insecurity is the antithesis of security and has attracted such common descriptors as want of safety, danger, hazard, uncertainty, want of confidence, state of doubt, inadequately guarded or protected, instability, trouble, lack of protection and being unsafe, and others (Achumba, Ighomereho & Akpor-Robaro, 2013). Achumba *et al* argue further that these common descriptors point to a condition where there exists a vulnerability to harm, loss of life, property or livelihood. Therefore, they consider insecurity to be a state of not knowing, a lack of control, and the inability to take defensive action against forces that portend harm or danger to an individual or group, or that make them vulnerable.

For Beland (2005) insecurity is "the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection." It refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger. This definition reflects physical insecurity which is the most visible form of insecurity, and it feeds into many other forms of insecurity such as economic security and social security.

According to Osawe (2015) the concept of insecurity connotes such meanings as: a state or condition of being unsafe or the feeling of being unsafe characterized by self-doubt, anxiety, fear and vulnerability; danger; hazard; uncertainty; lack of protection etc. At national level, insecurity could be seen as the threats to the general peace ranging from low-level civil disorder, large scale violence, or

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even an armed insurgency. Threats to national security may be directed at either the state's citizens, or the organs and infrastructure of the state itself, and may range from petty crime, serious organized crime, political or industrial unrest, or even domestic terrorism. The above definitions of insecurity emphasize that insecurity directly affects people as it makes them vulnerable to the threats and dangers.

Coupland (2007) observes that insecurity has a far reaching impact on people's lives and well-being and for this singular reason the government has to be alive to its responsibility of guaranteeing security.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory of failed/ungoverned spaces

A main tenet of the failed/ungoverned space argument is the presumption that states should be internally and externally sovereign, legitimate and capable of delivering public goods, including security, welfare, and development to their citizens and spaces. By this logic, areas excluded from the state 'net' are likely to descend into anarchy and violence by allowing non-state violent actors to settle, plan logistics, engage in crime to generate funds, recruit, train and operate therein(Raleigh & Dowd, 2013).

In a situation of ungoverned spaces, governance is central to pervasive control and enacting sovereignty on entire frontiers and territories. There are four main theoretical frames which consider how regimes make choices about space, inclusion and exclusion: Herbst (2000) contends that African states have a favorable or unfavorable political geography, largely determined by state size, population distribution and resource wealth. The type of political geography influences the extent of state capability and control; in turn this regulates how much violence is likely to erupt therein. Small states with even population distributions are expected to be the most peaceful, while large states with under-

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populated 'hinterlands' are likely to have the most violence, due to the inability of states to effectively police these territories. The political geography of Nigeria is a direct picture of this scenario. The creeks where the Niger Delta Militants operate are spaces with limited governance as well sahelian areas which the violent group, boko haram operates. This is same with the bandits, armed robbers, kidnapers and violent herders group. Their areas of operations are mostly the under-populated rural communities with no iota of governance coverage and spatial presence.

Ungoverned spaces are synonymous to state failure and fragility. These two portray incapacity of state to fulfill the essence of its existence. Arsenault and Bacon(2015) note that weak states experience "systemic weakness." They therefore posit that "fragile states, crisis states, post conflict states, failing states, and failed states" all translate to three key features that characterize weak states. These include: a government's inability or refusal to ensure security within and on its Borders, a failure to provide basic services to the populace and a lack of legitimacy among the populace."31 In these conditions, non-state actors find an enabling environment to operate from.

In understanding the realities and limits to power (especially in large states), we accept that regions and groups will be differentially governed, and some marginalized. Those that are excluded tend to live in peripheral areas, have higher rates of poverty and are effectively 'politically irrelevant' (Raleigh, 2010). Yet only Herbst (2000) argues that those areas outside of effective 'central' and 'hierarchical' state power can be considered 'ungoverned' due to a vacuum of power. Developed countries have established institutions and robust governance coverage to include all areas at the fringes. This accounts for the little or no breaches of security in such areas.

UNGOVERNED SPACES AND INSECURITY

The concept of ungoverned space is a discourse surrounding issues of global security challenges. As an emerging and contested area of discourse, ungoverned space resonates constant global debates among scholars, policy-makers, analysts, researchers, publicists, diplomats and commentators. Ungoverned space is a conceptual construct that defines "a general condition of weak to non-existent state authority in a defined geographic area" (Menkhaus, 2007). Keister (2014) asserts that ungoverned spaces are "areas of limited or anomalous government control inside, otherwise functional states." For Raleigh and Dowd (2013) they are "anarchic zones outside formal state control that constituted a security threat." It also describes areas linked to terrorist activities, creating safe havens and multiple security challenges. Put differently, in an ungoverned space, there is no "effective state sovereignty and control."

Raleigh and Dowd (2013) argue that obnoxious threatening activities exist in ungoverned spaces, because the presence of the state is entirely absent or that there is the lack of any effective governance, which create a vacuum of power that becomes exploitable by non-state actors.

The presence of ungoverned space is a consequence of semi-presence or absence of security governance. Security governance traditionally is sovereignty and control of the territories within its geographical boundaries. In this context, security governance is about national security, which is about policing people using coercive apparatus to restrain and make them behave in conformity with the norms established by the state (Baipai, 2002).

Terrorists who hold resentment against the state and cannot tackle the state headlong digress aggression to the people in the unreached areas. Government show lack of capacity or unwillingness to extend governance coverage to those areas. "A place where the state or central government is

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unable or unwilling to extend control, effectively govern, or influence the local population, and where a provincial, local, tribal, or autonomous government does not fully or effectively govern, due to inadequate governance capacity, insufficient political will, gaps in legitimacy, the presence of conflict, or restrictive norms of behavior. "Ungoverned areas" should be assumed to include under-governed, ill-governed, contested, and exploitable areas" (OUSD, 2007).

DRIVERS OF INSECURITY IN UNGOVERNED SPACES

According to Foster (2014) the Federal Republic of Nigeria faces a major security threat related to the circulation of Illicit SALW. Extremist violence perpetrated by Boko Haram in the northern regions, community fighting in the Plateau State and separatist claims in the Niger Delta, are all distinct but powerful threats to the stability of Nigeria and for peace in the region. Inadequate border control capacity also helps in the proliferation of SALW, whereas the growing problem of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and the activities of criminal networks are aggravating an already precarious security situation.

Forest Reserves

He mentions other facilitating factors for insurgencies like "difficult terrain (mountain, desert, forest, swamp, and jungle)" especially when this terrain has been mastered by the rebels. External support and young unemployed populations are also considered as enabling factors for insurgents (Bekett, 2005). This is an indication that if such areas were stable and well governed, the terrorists would not subsist.

According to Feldman (2009) such factors include large unemployed populations of youths who are likely to fall prey to terrorist recruiters, haphazard borders that are poorly manned, and the proliferation of arms due to unending conflicts and poor governance, among others.

Nextier SPD Policy Weekly(2019) reports that, indeed, the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia in northern Ecuador used mountains and forests respectively as their havens. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta set up bases in the creeks in the violent campaign for control of oil resources and for environmental security. Until recently, Boko Haram terrorists relied on the Sambisa forest and Gwoza mountains to launch attacks against state and civilian targets.

Socio-Economic Factor

There are several factors that lead to the emergence of ungoverned spaces in a country, among which include a combination of poverty among the people, weak institutional response to the demands of the people and gross level of corruption of the political system, especially among the political classes in control of power. (Keister,2014). The rural people are poverty stricken and most are readily available and susceptible to the overtures of terrorists. The rate of poverty in Nigeria has risen exponentially seemingly without solution in sight. The political system is designed in such a way that developments are city centric with the exclusion of rural areas.

The failure to provide good governance endears and gives fillip to the constant readiness for the youth to be recruited into the sect and subsequently as insurgent (boko haram). According to Nchi (2013, p. 229) "the social, economic and political environment sustains the violence." He further avers that "increasing rate of youth unemployment, political, economic, and cultural exclusion,

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poverty, corruption…." The youth constitutes the bulk of the people engaged in the offensive with the use of dangerous arms and weapons in the conflict. When this category of persons in the society, are not gainfully employed, they offer themselves to commit all sorts of heinous acts with the payment of pittance.

The demographic growth of the youth in Nigeria is exponential and alarming. To Say the least, it is a ticking time bomb. More than half Nigeria's population is under eighteen (UNICEF). Regional youths are increasingly restless over slow economic growth, lack of job opportunities and narrow political space(Tunji,2014). Governments are resented as unwilling or unable to provide for basic needs and aspirations (Crises Group Interview, 2015a). "No one seems capable of responding to the youths' quests for opportunities", said a man familiar with the region, "neither their families, nor the state, nor traditional community leaders" (Crises Group Interview, 2015b).

State Failure

State strength is relative and can be measured by the state's ability and willingness to provide the fundamental political goods associated with statehood: physical security, legitimate political institutions, economic management, and social welfare. Many countries have critical gaps in one or more of these four areas of governance. In effect, they possess legal but not actual sovereignty. In the security realm, they struggle to maintain a monopoly on the use of force, control borders and territory, ensure public order, and provide safety from crime. In the political sphere, they lack legitimate governing institutions that provide effective administration, ensure checks on power, protect basic rights and freedoms, hold leaders accountable, deliver impartial justice, and permit broad citizen participation. In the economic arena, they strain to carry out basic macroeconomic and fiscal policies or establish a legal and regulatory climate conducive to entrepreneurship, private enterprise, open trade, natural resource management, foreign investment, and economic growth.

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Finally, in the social domain, they fail to meet the basic needs of their populations by making even minimal investments in health, education, and other social services (Stewart, n.d.).

The manifest character of the Nigerian government is near numbness to confronting security eventualities. Nigeria is fraught with weak institutions which cannot prosecute kidnappers, insurgents, militants, bandits and Fulani herdsmen who evidently are culpable of crime against humanity. This a demonstration of a nation where instead of counter criminality, it is rather courting criminality. The constant release of insurgents back into the society portrays an incapacity and lack of will power to provide justice for the victims, perverted and violated of dastard practices. Government neglect of the peripheries, unwillingness to address local conflicts and tendency to rely on personal, at times criminal, clientelistic alliances rather than develop democratic institutions feed a growing sense of marginalisation, particularly in rural areas.

Religious Extremism

The ungoverned space narrative is underscored by a context of state failure, and the trigger mechanisms for regional instability are variously presented as poverty, Islam or environmental change. These other narratives of violence in Sahel states are also poor. In detail, the poverty mechanism suggests that 'disconnected' areas within states are the hotbeds for modern political violence (Barnett 2004). The Sahel as a poor world region is classified as 'disconnected'. North east Nigeria as classified as part of the sahalean region host the notorious activities of religious extremists who carry violence on unarmed civilian.

Niger Delta Agitation

The Niger Delta militants' are driving home a message of neglect by the federal government to their socio-economic and environmental predicaments. The gradual responses and resolve of government to solve the adduced problem in that region, has reduced the incidences of the uprising. O'niell (2017) says the perception of marginalisation by the Niger Delta people suffering in the midst of plenty of revenues generated from the wealth taken out of their region motivated resentment against the Nigeria government from 1966 onward, making Nigeria one of the countries experiencing resource-based conflicts, with the Niger Delta becoming one of the volatile ungoverned spaces in the world.

Their militant activities range from shutting down of oil producing facilities, kidnapping of expatriates and oil bunkering. The emergence of several militia groups such as the All Ijaw Youth conference, the Egbeso Boys of Africa, the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF) and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta people. According to Obi (2001) and Omotola (2006) the massive resurgence of ethnic militia heightened arms proliferation and worsened the spates of violence, most of which were targeted at the oil companies operating in the region through seizure of oil wells, kidnapping and hostage taking of oil workers.

However, these activities happen in areas where there is limited governance coverage. The militants assume full control of the ungoverned areas and since became enclaves for them.

Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons

Nigeria is experiencing increased violence owing to the availability of SALW in circulation. Its proliferation is attributed to the existence of electoral injustice, ethnic bigotry and religious intolerance, porous border, several forms of deprivation and continuous existence of ungoverned

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spaces. These key elements are bases upon which violence are fuelled. Whereas, fractionalized political system, elite system, youth bulge, internal and external support for local militia, and easy access of aggrieved groups to surplus small arms and light weapons serve as triggering elements. According to Wezeman (2003) the availability of SALW in Nigeria is alarming. Those arms are illegally held by unauthorized persons and are used for violence. Small arms and light weapons are portable weapons made or modified to military specifications for use as lethal instruments of war. Small arms are broadly categorized as those weapons intended for use by individual members of armed or security forces, they are weapons designed for personal use.

Experts have identified six drivers of violent conflicts, which are also pertinent to ungoverned space. These include lack of quality governance and transparency, ethnic rivalry, religious extremism, mismanagement of land and natural resource, declining economic conditions and proliferation of small arms and light weapons (Ejeviome & Oseloka, 2019).

Porous Borders

The major border countries with Nigeria are Cameroon (1,690 kilometers) in the east, Niger (1,497 kilometers) in the north, Benin (773 kilometers) in the west, and Chad (87 kilometers) in the northeast. Most of these border areas are either mountainous or in the jungle which makes effective surveillance in the borders very difficult (Mustapha, 2004).

In these major borders, there are over hundreds of illegal routes in Nigeria that link or lead to some neighboring African countries. Nigeria's borders are massive with hundreds of footpaths crisscrossing to neighboring countries of Cameroon, Chad and Niger with links to Mali, Libya and Sudan. From conservative estimate by locals, there are well over 250 footpaths from Damaturu/Maiduguri axis that link or lead direct to Cameroon, Chad or Niger. These paths are mostly

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unknown by security agencies, are unmanned, unprotected and thus serve as leaky routes for arms and ammunitions trafficking in to Nigeria. It is disheartening and unfortunate that the "merchants of death" have since devised methods use to beat security agencies at the borders and through the footpaths (Osimen, et al, 2017).

Criminal networks are using the Sahel's porous borders and weak governance to traffic licit (eg, cigarettes, subsidised oil and food from Libya, and vehicle parts) and illicit (eg, arms, drugs and people) goods. The same convoys may transport both, and the distinction between smuggling and trafficking is little understood by local traders (Crisis Group interview, 2015c).

Experts have identified six drivers of violent conflicts, which are also pertinent to ungoverned space. These include lack of quality governance and transparency, ethnic rivalry, religious extremism, mismanagement of land and natural resource, declining economic conditions and proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Grappling with the manifestation of the ungoverned space syndrome in Nigeria, warrants acknowledging that effectiveness of state presence or lack thereof makes all the difference.

Commonly, border permeability is considered as one of the causes of the security challenges countries face. Contributing to the debate on porous borders and the security risk they constitute, Aduloji et al, (2014) identify the inability of concerned governments to exercise strict control and authority over their borders as part of the main causes of the security dilemma in West Africa. The sub-region is classified by Aduloji et al, (2014) as composed of weak and failing states that are offering sanctuary for terrorist movement from within and outside the continent.

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EXPLOITERS OF UNGOVERNED SPACES IN NIGERIA

Boko Haram

In 2009, the police and the armed forces of the Joint Task Force (JTF) were deployed to urban centres to quell Boko Haram violence. But from 2013 they began to operate in rural areas, generating an increase in collateral damage. In April 2013 more than 200 people were killed and hundreds wounded by the JTF in the village of Baga in Borno state (Marc-Antoinem,2014).

Between 2009 and 2013, the insurgents have killed more than thirteen thousand (13,000) people (Olatunde, 2014). In addition, Human Rights Watch (cited in Falola, 2012) reports that Boko Haram has killed at least 935 people since it launched an uprising in 2009. Between January and May 2012, hundreds of more lives have been lost to the insurgency. The group was alleged to have carried out more than 115 separate attacks in the Northern part of the country in 2011 alone.

At the end of 2013, Boko Haram carried out large-scale attacks on villages and later targeted schools, churches, bus stations, and markets. According to Amnesty International, in 2013 Boko Haram "conducted more than 100 deadly attacks, killing more than 1,350 civilians." Cook (2014) opines that early in 2014 alone, Boko Haram is known to have killed 2,053 people in major areas of its operations in northeast Nigeria. Later in December 2014, the group is also known to have pillaged towns of Madagali and Adamawa where it abducted an especially high number of boys and men and killed those who tried to resist. In another attack in January 2015, the group ransacked towns of Baga and Doro Baga,where it destroyed about 3,700 houses and massacred numerous people. Besides killings and destruction, the group has been abducting and raping women and girls in its areas of operation. One incident in April 2015 showed the level of savagery of the group when it abducted

276 girls from the Government Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State, and took them to Sambisa Forest where some were married off to fighters and others sold into slavery (Amnesty International).

Bandits

Slatta (1994) is of the opinion that bandits usually operate in the shadows, often on the fringes of society, in geographically isolated areas. Those who operate on that platform are regarded as bad people, who have nothing good to offer society. Mburu (1999) opines that the motive for contemporary banditry is the pauperization of people living in a harsh physical environment.

The activities of bandits are inhumane and lead to violence, creating insecurity challenges that encourage other forms of criminalities. The large scale effects of contemporary banditry cannot be justified on any ground when compared with what existed in the past, when bandits were feted as heroes by the peasant population, celebrated for their opposition to the oppression of the rich or predation of the government. Hobsbawm's (1959) thesis on banditry suggests that the link between banditry and violence is tied to terrorism, well rooted in peasant culture. Banditry as a social phenomenon adversely affects all spheres of life. Insecurity and instability easily surface in banditry inflicted societies.

The North West is a host to rampaging bandit. They engage in depredation of rural dwellers, intimidation, kidnapping and cow rustling. Their activities at a time became elusive to security prowess so much that they were called for negotiations by the Katsina State government.

A report on Rural Banditry in Zamfara says that in Zamfara and parts of neighboring Katsina state in the Northwest, rampaging gangs of armed bandits have engaged in violent acts, attacking, abducting, killing, and robbing villagers and travelers, and engaging in cattle rustling. Zamfara State is mostly surrounded by forests (with little or no government presence) from where bandits launch their attacks

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on outlying towns, highways, and villages. The Rugu, Kamara, Kunduma, and Sububu forests have become major hideouts for criminals. Worse still, with a fragile state system and waning public confidence in police and state security institutions, the allegiance of defenseless rural communities is gradually shifting toward informal, armed groups and local vigilantes.

Rural banditry by all accounts is undermining security, peace, and development in Nigeria's northwest. While the unfolding crisis could be linked to a set of factors, the threat to security in a region already reeling from the effects of a decade-long Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast cannot be over-stated.

Herdsmen Depredators

The North-Central remains on the edge following the internecine conflicts between nomadic pastoralists and sedentary agriculturists which have claimed over 1,300 lives between January and July 2018. The epicentres of these conflicts are difficult terrains including mountains, forests and rural settlements with little or no government presence.

There has been a wave of recent killings in the Middle Belt and in northwestern Nigeria, regions where Boko Haram does not routinely operate. The killings are often the result of quarrels over land use, referred to as "herder-farmer conflicts," cattle rustling and other criminal activity, and reprisal attacks. According to Kuna and Ibrahim (2015) what began as conflict between pastoralists and farmers over land has recently developed into rural banditry with heavy human and economic cost, ranging from the sexual assault of women and girls, attacks on villages, to cattle rustling, amongst others. The bandits traversing Benue, Plateau, Niger, Kwara, Nassarawa, Zamfara, Kaduna, Sokoto, Kebbi, Kano are involved in crimes such as armed robbery and kidnapping. There have also been reported cases of rural banditry in Delta, Enugu, Ondo, Oyo and Ebonyi states.

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Niger Delta Militants/Pirates

The resurgence of militancy in the Niger Delta has had devastating effects on the crude oil production capacity of Nigeria. It has led to the depletion of revenue generated from the rent of crude oil production. The activities of the Niger Delta Avengers has led to Nigeria losing over 800,000 barrels per day since February 2016. Nigeria's crude oil production has depleted to 1.4 million barrels per day, which is the lowest in 22 years (Editorial, 2016).

Insecurity within the Niger Delta region and Nigeria's continental shelf remains a cause for concern due to piracy and militancy. Of the recorded fifty-three incidents of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea in 2016, thirty-four occurred within Nigerian territorial waters. In 2017, fifty-six mariners were kidnapped off the coasts of the Niger Delta. These numbers exclude foreigners and Nigerians kidnapped for ransom in the oil-rich Niger Delta (Ejeviome & Oseloka, 2019).

Kidnappers and Armed Robbers

Kidnapping is taking its toll on the Nigeria state, posing serious threats to citizens. The kidnapping either takes the form of kidnap for ransom or vendetta. Chukwuma (2019) says that Nigeria has one of the world's highest rates of kidnap-for-ransom cases. Other countries high up on the list included Venezuela, Mexico, Yemen, Syria, the Philippines, Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia. Thousands of Nigerians have been kidnapped for ransom and other purposes over the years. Kidnapping has prevailed in spite of measures put in place by the government. The Nigerian police's anti-kidnapping squad, introduced in the 2000s, has endeavored to stem the menace. But this is to no avail, mainly due to a lack of manpower and poor logistics. These efforts have also failed because of weak sanctioning and deterrence mechanisms. Kidnapping thrives in an environment that condones crime; where criminal opportunism and impunity prevail over and above deterrence.

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In addition to militants and insurgents, organized local and transnational criminal syndicates have been involved. This is happening to apocalyptic proportions in North West Nigeria where rural bandits engage regularly in kidnapping in the states of Zamfara, Kaduna, Katsina, Kebbi and Sokoto (Chukwuma, 2019). Organized violent groups such as militants and insurgents have also been involved in kidnap for ransom in Nigeria. Current trends have been linked back to the example set by Niger Delta militants who resorted to solo and group abductions as a means of generating funds both for private use and for the cause of a particular group (Chukwuma, 2019).

In April 2014, Boko Haram carried out the abduction 276 schoolgirls from the Government Secondary School in Chibok in Borno State, Nigeria (Human Right Watch, 2014). This attack attracted sustained international attention to Boko Haram and sparked a global campaign for their release. Efforts toward recovering the abductees were met with resistance and hampered by corruption. However, continuous efforts finally led to the recovery of 106, while the rest are still in Boko Haram's captivity (Information Nigeria, 2017).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Nigeria should address underdevelopment and structural disparity that incentivize the vulnerability of marginalized groups. This will reduce propensity of conflict and violence in the hinterland as well making rural community dwellers less susceptible to accepting terrorist overtures.

Hybridizing Nigeria Military operations at the fringes will reduce incidences of criminality and violence that occur often. By way of bilateral, regional and multilateral Joint Tasks Force mechanisms may offer some orderliness in ungoverned spaces and overcome all attendant insecurity.

Veritable border management should be put in place to check illegal immigrants. With the transnational outlook of Boko Haram, Al quaeda in the Maghreb, Islamic State, and their entry point is the land border. A workable bi- and multinational security collaboration, in the areas of intelligence and

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border surveillance and management especially with nations in the sahelian region and other nations sharing border with Nigeria will diminish the notoriety.

In the absence of police outpost in rural arrears, government should resort to deployment satellite image capturing. Good drone management system be put in place. This will take footages of activities occurring in the ungoverned spaces.

It is an imperative for Nigeria government to rejig its security architecture especially as it concerns border security governance. This will be done simultaneously with strict observance and possible review of ECOWAS protocol on free movement of persons. This will check trans-national criminals.

Nigeria should prioritize pro-activeness rather than being reactive to situation. Emerging terrorist group must be mustered to dissolution at embryonic stage.

The government should grant the local population some form of incentives that will win their hearts and mind. This is an effective mechanism for intelligence gathering dissemination in the ungoverned spaces which is critical to Early Warning Signals (EWS) for forestalling eventualities. Such response to internal security threats will be prompt forestalling impending security breach.

Nigeria should leverage on the use of modern technology reconnaissance and surveillance of its territorial space. Through this, Nigeria's land, sea and aerial borders will be effectively monitored against exploiters of ungoverned spaces.

The provision of infrastructural development and security formations in those areas cannot be overemphasized. The presence of government- provision of roads, water, health centres, electricity, police posts and other security agencies formations will mitigate the rampaging activities of the criminals.

Border Communities Development Agency should be strengthened to act along- side security agencies working at the border. A collaboration between them will ensure greater coverage of government's function and mandate.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria's ungoverned spaces are increasingly on the rise while governance coverage shrinks drastically. This trend is in favour of urban areas and state capitals with no focus on the rural communities. Lives and property are being destroyed in industrial numbers making the citizens to resort to self-help. The palpable perils at the fringes create the survival of the exploiters of the ungoverned spaces.

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