

NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY

SEGURANÇA NACIONAL E OS DESAFIOS DO SÉCULO 21

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Abstract: This paper is set to discuss the issues on Nigeria's national security and ways of meeting the challenges of the 21st century. It therefore examined and assessed what it requires to achieve national security and suggest ways of improving her national Security for a better 21st century. It was discovered that Nigeria's security issues over the years have been wrongly defined, relegating the major factors that bring better security. This paper, therefore recommend that for a better national security attainment in the 21st century, both the conventional and grand strategic measures should be applied. The need for economic empowerment, good governance, advance science and technology, human and material resources development, etc., must be considered and used for alternative national security attainment.

Keywords: National Security. The Challenges of the 21st Century. Nigeria.

Resumo: Este artigo tem como objetivo discutir as questões de segurança nacional da Nigéria e as formas de enfrentar os desafios do século 21^o. Portanto, ele examinou e avaliou o que é necessário para alcançar a segurança nacional e sugeriu formas de melhorar sua segurança nacional para um melhor século 21^o. Descobriu-se que as questões de segurança da Nigéria ao longo dos anos foram erroneamente definidas, relegando os principais fatores que trazem uma melhor segurança. Este documento, portanto, recomenda que para um melhor alcance da segurança nacional no século 21, tanto as medidas estratégicas convencionais como as grandes medidas estratégicas devem ser aplicadas. A necessidade de capacitação econômica, boa governança, avanço da ciência e tecnologia, desenvolvimento de recursos humanos e materiais, etc., deve ser considerada e utilizada para a obtenção de segurança nacional alternativa.

Palavras-chave: Segurança Nacional. Desafios do Século 21. Nigéria.

1. Introduction

Man from time immemorial has sought in one way or the other means of protecting himself from danger of any kind. The issue of security therefore is an age-long. Through attempts and efforts to seek for protection or safety from attack, he has been able to devise means and from time to time improved on these means of seeking safety. According to Fage (1999:5) he said:

Since men began to organize themselves in defined territories for the purpose of social production and reproduction, the imperative of social security and collective survival has assumed a very crucial dimension.

National security includes the safety of all who are in the same geographical zone, or those who have a common interest or value. The nation's security above any other thing is the upper most in the list of its agenda. A nation is in great danger when she is incapable of providing for its security; it is then porous and prone to any form of attack, be it external or internal. The National Security of Nigeria in the era of globalization is the concern for the challenges of the 21 St Century. Therefore, our major concern would be suggesting ways or means of tackling these issues as the case may be for a better and ideal Nigerian national security in the 21st century.

2. Conceptual Framework

National security is the safety of a whole people within a nation. It is the defence of a nation's interest from external or internal attack. There are some schools who see it solely as a military matter and therefore all efforts should be geared towards providing latest weapon to secure the nation. Lugard (cited in Fage 1999:3) argued that "a state's power is measured largely on the basis of military capabilities like the number of nuclear war heads, missiles, tanks and men under arms, aircraft, warships, military expenditure and others." This was critically observed by Ebo (1997:28) that, due to the state-centric nature of the international system and the historic pre-occupation.

The protection of the lives, rights, dignity and property of its citizens, and the resources, territory, sovereignty, and lawful institutions of the country, in so far those institutions are utilizing the resources of the nation for the provision of scarce, just and equitable living of the nation for all the citizens Of the country.

National security as defined on the web is the condition of a nation in terms of threats especially threat from outside. According to them it is the major job of the federal government to ensure the security of the nation. It has also been explained as the condition of a nation's safety from threat, especially threat from external sources. Some others see it as the territorial integrity, sovereignty and national freedom of a nation. It is the extent to which all the elements of power are used for the protection of national interest. Samai (1987:6) posited that:

Security is a multidimensional issue. The dimension and levels on which the concept and respective policies are based can be specified as political and military, external and internal, social and economic. That is to say that national security is encompassing of all necessary factors which brings security to a nation. Security is not limited to deter external attack as the other attack from other dimensions could be more dangerous.

In support of the multidimensional nature of a nation's security, Barney et.al(1991:129) added that, "national security, properly understood includes not only military security against foreign invasion, but also food security, economic security, environment security, domestic order, educational security, old age security and national disaster security." Where all these problems are smoothly taken care of a nation is sure and from threat, hence it can boast of national security.

3. The Nature of Nigeria's National Security

The misconception of security by the concentric circle theory deforms Nigeria's national security. This places the nation's security on mainly defence of the territorial integrity and sees military power as sine qua non in the security of the Nigerian nation. The doctrinal security paradigm by official Nigerian security strategists are all the problems that hinges the proper knowledge of what national security should be. These have contributed to the nature of the national security. Asoble (1988:32) criticized the doctrinal security paradigm which states that:

It is only after completing territorial defence against external aggressions and perhaps internal revolts that the state will be free to pursue independent and effective exploitation of natural resources and the development of strategies for the achievement of socio-economic goals. This, idea or view ignores the urgency of other important security matters which— notwithstanding the external aggression could manifest themselves and require immediate attention. This ideology fails to understand that what could attract the outsider could be those natural resources unexploited or rather ignored by a nation.

It is a conception which ignores the basic question why an enemy would want to attack, and seize another state's territory. It is not the territory, quasi geographical area but the material and human resources that other state desire.

In other words, what actually the enemy is seeking to attack and seize is not just the territory but what makes the territory what it is which the core interest economic power of that nation is. The poor perception of what the core value or interest of a nation places on the premises which it is. If the nature of the nations security has been rightly situated, it could have given it a better reasoning to know that security to deter external aggression could have come after securing the resources within it. The faulty nature cum approach to what national security should pursue has created a big margin or gap on development between Nigeria and the developed world. Tedhéke (1999:57) asserted that:

While the Americans, the Europeans and others see the economy as the basics of national security, Nigerian leaders see territorial or geostrategic as the basis of national security. This has given birth to our faulty approaches to the national security question.

The advice is that if Nigeria is interested in being like others it should have a refocus and change the nature or pattern of her pursuit of national security.

4. Important Issues in Nigeria's National Security

Realizing the porous, weak and one-sided nature of Nigeria's national security, one urgently needs to discuss some important issues that broader and re-awaken the minds of both individual and collective groups in Nigeria to wake-up from their slumber and pursue a true national security for the benefit of all and sundry.

Defence and national security are mutually reinforcing, one aids the other. Defence carries the security as security embraces other things that make life safe including defence. National defence is as important as to national security. This calls to question: defence for what? If it is defence for the national security, then we agree with Muktar (1996) who noted that:

National defence is the ability to coordinate all human and material resources to resist external and internal threats. It also involves the

method of acquiring or developing the weapon system, training and development of personnel for the purpose of attaining national security.

For effective realization of the objective of national security, economic buoyancy must be assured. Fage (1999) said that, the training of manpower, procurement of armament, combat mission logistic operations, etc., are functionally predicated on national economic buoyancy. A nation with a buoyant economy is almost secured and can stand anywhere to boast of her power. This opinion was highly supported by Karl Marx (1859) that economy is the fundamental base on which the superstructure of the society are constructed. Therefore defining national security and defence outside the envelop of economic framework is as elusive as it is counter-productive.

This explains the primacy of the economy in the issues of Nigerian national defence and security. The link between-economy. And security is strongly fitted and cannot be rated. Quoting from the words of Payne (1995) “as a result of the tight linkage between economic developments is an essential part of US policy”. Ferris and Jackson (1994:55):

The human and material resources must be coordinated in order to achieve security. What is to be coordinated is all valuable in a nation, vis a vis the territory, the resources of any kind and the socio-political and socio-economic matters.

5. According to Abubakar (1996)

The main objective of national defence is to ensure the protection of territorial integrity, economic resources, political and social values as well as national interests which are found within and outside immediate borders to a nation’s external environment. Pointed out that the core of national strength is the economy, thus still upholding the supremacy of the economy in quest for national security, Avner Yaniv (1987) reminded us that:

A nation’s ability to survive in conflict, or even to win, hinges not only on its military capabilities but also on its economic potential forward and social mobilization. Overemphasizing of these elements of national power to the detriment of the other two may be natural and quite acceptable in the course of a brief crisis, but it would be disastrous in the long term.

Asserting the place of economy as an important issue in national security, MEU Tedheke (1998:8) pointed out that; “Economic power must be viewed as the ultimate source of national power. It is the fundamentals of grant strategy the base on which stands military strategy.

The bed rock of military strategy is the strength of the economy. A poorly based or backward national economy cannot afford the instruments of sophisticated weapon to defend its territorial integrity, no matter the quality of training received. No wonder the developed nations of the world in America and other European nations and recently China have discovered a big market in Africa for the sale of their produced weapons. For Nigeria to escape from the slavery of dependence on foreign products it must develop an integrated economy based on research and development. -

Research and development. Brings about an integrated economy. Integrated economy encompasses the conventional strategy, man power development, education, science and technology etc. Oberg (1984) in support of integrated approach to national defence and security opined that:

Security measures must be directed towards immaterial objects like life style, culture, freedom, identity and the protection of nature. An individual who has not satisfied his or her basic needs like food, clothing, housing, health, education and work can hardly be called secure, no matter how much weaponry the individual may have at his disposal. Furthermore an individual lacking in basic rights to speak, travel, meet and communicate is also not a secure human being.

In this sense to attain a level of national security so many important things are put together properly and wisely. The idea of security brings together all that matters. Buzzan (1983) argues that the concept of security binds together individuals, states and the international system so closely that it demands to be treated in a holistic perspective... An attempt to treat security on any single level invites serious distortions of perspective.

Holistic approach is the definite method to tackling the problems of security issues in Nigeria. Science and technology should be considered very essential in issues concerning national security.

We therefore agree with Fage (1999:6) that the modern day security apparatus, specifically the armament industry, are based on highly advanced technological requirements that are inherently products of intense and serious research. In other words, serious research produces high advanced technology and is a must for any modern nation that seeks security from any form of threat. Collin Powell (1992) opined, that "maintaining technological advantage remains a critical concern of senior (American) military commanders." Col RO Yusuf was of the view that

national security and national strength is dependent on advanced technology and sound economic base, he then advised that, "A strong national economy, which is essential to national security and national strength is in turn greatly dependent upon science and technology and industrial products they bring to the market place at home and abroad," A nation is highly rated with what she has, what she can produce or boast of and not what her problems or weaknesses are.

Another important issue in Nigeria national security is the issue of education. Education is among the fundamental of a nation's security. Tedheke (1998, a 1998') stressed that, "Security goes beyond just well-being of the citizen. It must include capacity building of the people or populace through education, training and retraining to be able to maintain sustainable development". It therefore means that sustainable education gave rise to sustainable development; this in turn leads to achievable national security. Onucheyo (1996) quoted President J.F. Kennedy of US who said that "Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education." This achieved progress orchestrated national security. Those who equally want to maintain national security should learn a big lesson from this and utilize every avenue of educating the people for sound security attainment. We therefore agree with Tedheke (.1999) on the view that, "people see security as being underpinned by socioeconomic, political, educational, science and technological dimensions.

6. Towards Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century

Security related issues are very crucial, sensitive and dynamic and so requires urgent and constant review and assessment. Therefore, it is of a great task to meet tile challenges and expectations of the .2 i Century on ntional security, if and only if Nigeria want to join the band wagons of the modern nations of the world. Security is first among equals in any nation agenda or budget..

As a developing nation, Nigeria has many developmental cases on different levels, ranging from 'poor research- and development, science and technology, political, social -and economic instability and poor human resources development. It s of extreme importance to recommend ways of improving this chequered condition and. conquer the challenges of the 21 century in the history of Nigeria. We then examine the need for research and development, technological

advancement, economic power, manpower development, good governance, Mobilization of civil society, poverty eradication and our foreign dependence as means of achieving our expected goals. We must as well clear the misconception and myopic ideology of defining or understanding national security to be solely military or conventional matter. Robert McNamara (1968) posited that:

In a modernized society, security development, security is not military force though it may involve it, security is not traditional military activity, though it may encompass it, security is development and without development there and be no security.

The issue is how can we achieve development so as to have national security in the 21st Century? Dudley Seers (1977:3) explain the make-up of development as eradication of poverty, unemployment and inequality. According to him:

The questions to ask about a country's development are: what has been happening to POVERTY? What has been happening to UNEMPLOYMENT? What has been happening to INEQUALITY? If all three of these have become less severe beyond doubt there has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result development, even if per capita income has soared.

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Economy behind a strong national defence. Can't Nigeria toe this line which wise nations have toed? We must borrow leave from great achievers to also be achievers ourselves. This may not cause such if we organize ourselves and our resources. Strategy means planning and planning

leads to success. Whoever fails to plan, plights to fail. Nigeria has been given a clue on what makes a sectored nation, she should go ahead to do so by developing the God given resources which she has.

Research sets one to acquire knowledge as well as discovering in the process, this knowledge and discovery leads to national security. For some years now there have been urgent call for a discovery of AIDs' cure, such a disease is a dangerous threat to national security; the only way of solving this is through research. Nigeria in the 21St century may likely be among the nations that could come out with a possible answer to its cure by investing heavily on research and development (R&D).

Nigeria as a developing country could adopt adaptive research, which is needed •to complementary transferred or borrowed technology. Many nations developed this method such as, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Pakistan and India. It is only vigorous R&D that can assist Nigeria in crossing the hurdle of national security.

A strong infrastructure of science education and science-oriented populace is requisite for technological knowhow. The science of today is the technology of tomorrow. For a better national security in: the, 2lt Century, The new national policy on science and technology can be implemented in the spirit in which it was written. Foreign companies know about R&D and utilized every means to improve the situation. Korea recognized her technological outfit and developed a research complex with 30 R&D institutions closely linked with 3 universities. This yielded an amazing success worthy of emulation by Nigeria. If Nigeria is serious about technological development, research and development should be compulsory and backed by appropriate legislation. With improved research and development, there would be improved technological advancement; Nigeria may not only improve her economic strength but will as well produce her own weapon for national defence and security.

Socio-economic reforms will aid in solving the problem of national security in the 21St Century. There must be reforms in such areas as civil service, education, capital and investment agro-allied industries iron arid steel industry etc. The industrial base of any nation is on iron and steel etc. The steel industry opens up ways for other industries, facilitating engineering, the making of machines, machire tools and alloys. The nations steel industries at Ajaokuta and Alaja have to be visited for a solid industrial base. The Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON) in Kaduna should be revived to do that for which it is meant for and not for furniture

construction. It is a high time for Nigeria to produce her own weapon and stop providing market for foreigners.

A sound agro-allied industry, combining technology in agricultural productive removes Nigeria from food dependence and gives her strong base for domestic power projection in international system. Without an effective agricultural base, food insecurity will definitely continue, The importance of food cannot be overemphasized in national security. Put in the words of Ebo (1997:29) “while man continues to be threatened by bullets and guns, non-availability of bread and butter are no less potent threats.”

A stable economy will solve the problem of national security in Nigeria. There is a need to maintain economic stability and reinforce the structural policies that will make the economy more flexible. These include further reforms in the areas of public enterprise activity, the labour markets and trade regime. There should be provisions for public services including transportation networks, electricity, water, health and education. When these problems are taken care of, the nation is then secured, and we can rate them among the developed nations of the world. Arlenhouse (1984) posited that: “the level of development really determines the definition of security.., in the developing world security is economy and economy is security.”

Since Nigeria’s independence it is unfortunate that she has not gotten a powerful leader that could transform the nation and lead her people to better glory, just like, Mao Tse Tung of China, Lenin of Russia, Napoleon Bonaparte of France, Pandit Neru of India, Ho Chi Mm of Vietnam, Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Oto Von Bismack of Germany, etc. The major problem has been how to tackle corruption, inefficiency and non-accountability in government. These will curb the scope of distortionary activities, reduce wasteful and unproductive uses of public funds, and provide necessary domestic security. By the time Nigeria will produce a good leader, there will be good governance, it is then that Nigeria. will celebrate national security. Accordingly, Gambari (1996) said “the answers to Nigeria’s security are found in the reformation of socioeconomic development of the nation are not necessarily in militarism and internal security mechanism.”

Dependency syndrome is one of the major problems that has hindered Nigeri’s national security. This must be looked into for a better 21st Century. It has been observed that national security anywhere in the world is achieve through the control of all facts of national life and that implies absolute sovereignty, the major problem of Nigerian state is her inability to detach herself

from her integration with the capitalist world. Over, dependence on external assistance is highly vulnerable, unreliable and dangerous. Akinyemi(1980:8) warned that:

It is that foreign dependence by a state that is inimical to the evolution and defence of national interest., because if the push comes to the shove, the patron nations are going to ask a dependent nation to pay the price of that dependency.

For us to timely meet the challenges of the 21st Century, certain Institutions, mechanisms and instruments must be put in place.

There must be a new thinking. Accordingly, Aforika Nweke (in Tedheke 1999): the only rational strategy of national security for African states is not in inter-dependence but policies which give priority to self-reliance development in economic, industrial, technological and military sphere.

A developing country of Nigeria's endowment in human and material resources must be well utilized to strengthen the foundations of its security. Nigeria should liberate herself from dependency syndrome and improve herself. Self-reliance is a source to national security.

Conclusion

A lot of issues had been raised bordering and hindering effective national security in Nigeria, equally recommendations and suggestions have proffered. Where these ideas are applied, there will be an improved national security, but if ignored that would be unfair to the progress of the nation and her security but worse on the common people of Nigeria. We therefore, call on the decision makers of the nation to effect the reform that will meet the Nigerian national security of the 21st Century. We finally conclude this chapter with the comment of Fage (1999:1) that: Unless the pretension and hypocrisy of the country's elite of using force to quell the multidimensional crisis in Nigeria are set aside and genuine efforts are made to address the real issue of meeting the basic needs of the masses like food, clothing, housing, health, education, employment etc, every effort in this regard cannot be made mere window-dressing and shadow-chasing.

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