



IJSST

International Journal of Social Science Tomorrow

Published by SPIRI (Society For Promoting International Research and Innovation)

*Gabriel Lanre Adeola
Fayomi, Oluyemi*

The Political and Security Implications of Cross Border Migration between Nigeria and Her Francophone Neighbours

Dr. G. L. Adeola; Lecturer, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Crawford University
Fayomi, Oluyemi; Lecturer, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Covenant University

Abstract

International migration between Nigeria and her neighbours has been a source of concern in the formulation and articulation of diplomatic and foreign policy of the nation. The porosity of Nigerian borders has made it possible for unwarranted influx of migrants from neighbouring States to enter the country illegally from such countries as Republic of Niger, Chad and Republic of Benin. This paper wants to explore the process of migration between Nigeria and her neighbours when the issue has served as a basis of determining the foreign policy direction of the State. Also, to explore the political and diplomatic consequences and impact of such a policy to eradicating international terrorism, criminality and smuggling which have become intractable.

1. Introduction

Migration is a most dynamic feature of population distribution. It is a process which has been from the creation of the universe. In sub-Saharan Africa, it has been a permanent characteristic of the region long before colonization. In West Africa, it is a normal process of interaction without barrier even with the forceful partition of the continent between the western capitalist powers which paved the way for colonization.

During colonization, migration was not significantly altered either as a result of forceful separation of kith and kin into different countries nor was the native language tampered with. This can be said of the Yoruba in the

western part of Nigeria, the Hausa/Fulani in the north the Ibibio, Efik in the eastern part and so, migration continues till this day.

However, with the advent of colonization, Nigeria came to be bonded on every side by French speaking countries. Even Cameroun is not entirely Anglophone as the greater part speaks French. Despite this enriching arrangement, migration has never been a subject of state policy in the sub – region until after independence. The changing economic fortunes of the various countries have attracted notable mobility in the direction of economically buoyant countries and the downturns have called for state policies to stem migration which in some cases have boiled down to large scale deportation.

Theoretically, Nigeria and all the countries sharing border with her with the exception of Cameroun are all members of the Economic Community of West African Countries (ECOWAS); in which case, the citizens of these countries are to enjoy freedom of movement. All the same, migration became a subject of state policy especially for Nigerian authority with the increased rate of criminality recorded at the borders which come in form of smuggling, trafficking (Drug and Human), religious carnage fuelled by imported extremism and the resulting deaths of innocent Nigerians and threat to state security and stability.

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York has brought to the centre stage security implication of migration. Already, Nigeria has had at different intervals serious armed confrontations with migration intruders from the Republics of Chad and Niger trying to forcefully import religious fanaticism and extremism into Nigeria. Despite her avowed foreign policy of Africa as the centerpiece of her foreign policy, Nigeria cannot but result to force against unwanted and criminally minded migration in order to protect its sovereignty.

2. Statement of Problems

Migration is a highly diverse and complex phenomenon that transcends societies, cultures and races. It is a phenomenon that has continued to impact and contribute to the transformation of the entire facets of various countries changing the racial, ethnic, linguistic and socio-cultural composition of their population (Adeola and Ogirai: 2010 Marshall, 2000). It is a dynamic process which affects every dimension of social existence. Studies have indicated that 97 percent of the world population in 2000 is not international migrants (UNDESA 2005) yet, their communities and ways of life are changed by migration (Castles et al 2009). In the sub-Saharan Africa, it is a process which predates colonisation and assumed greater impetus after the countries have traversed colonialism and became sovereign independent states. The countries were confronted with problems of integration, economic growth and underdevelopment, the people were also in haste of adjusting to the new realities brought about by self government. This of course is in response to the contact established with outside cultures brought about by long years of colonization and so the new aspirations was spectacular and the urge for modernity was high.

The motivation for employment and better life inspired migration within the countries and across borders and so cities were attracted by migration from the rural areas while economically developed regions became magnets of migratory destinations. In West African countries such as Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal and Nigeria became destinations of international migration and Lagos and Dakar as preferred cities with teeming inflow of people from other parts of the sub-region. Nigeria which shares borders with francophone countries has to contend with influx of people from these countries and Lagos becomes the African metropolitan city for the citizens of these countries.

The economic boom of the 1970s and 80s brought about by the fortunes derived from the oil sector attracted increased immigrants to Nigeria from the sub-region. The Nigerian border which is porous became easy access especially as members of a single ethnic group hold dual nationalities. As the movement was more of labour inspired, there was not much state reaction. However, Nigeria later started experiencing confrontations along the borders due to the activities of smugglers, traffickers and security challenges by the Muslim extremists who took the advantage of the porous borders to troop to the northern part of the country from Niger, Chad and northern Cameroon. At various times, some of these Muslim fundamentalists had declared holy war in the northern part of Nigeria. In the 90s the Maitasine Muslim fundamentalists and insurgency killed many innocent Nigerians before they were overwhelmed by the state security apparatuses.

At other times, in the western part, the menace of traffickers and smugglers who have turned armed criminals posing serious threat to the security of the nation has forced the Federal Government to take draconian laws against the affront. It got to an unbearable height during the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo between 1999 and 2003 that the president had to close the borders with the Republic of Benin at least two times. The persistent and deepened cases of smuggling and trafficking in the sub-region have induced other heinous

crime causing serious security and political problems among the states (Adeola and Ogirai: 2010). The September 11 2001 terrorist attacks in the USA have brought issues of migration and security in the front burner of state diplomatic and international relations. The analysts have (Castles and Miller: 2009) remarked that Nigeria is among the radicalized Muslim countries in the world (others are Caucasus, Somali, etc.) and so the threat of Al Quaides cannot be swept to the carpet. Yet, the states are bound together by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) charter of free movement of the nationals of the sub-region throughout the 16 states. And like other regions of the world, state security will have to be integrated into legislations dealing with international migrations and external relations.

3. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Population movements have become a major feature in African history. The process of movement from one place or culture to another is viewed as a purveyor of innovation, technological development and progress. International migration has continuously forged and reformed societies and states since time immemorial (Gugler: 1969; Adeola and Ogirai: 2010; Castles et al 2009). However, much as its importance can be appreciated by some, many including governments are scared by immigration when it is not clearly defined. The reason being that in modern times, international migration has brought with it serious security issues which continue to affect international relations and shape foreign policy legislations, diplomatic and security matters.

The Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences defines migration as “the movement of people over considerable distances and on a large scale with the intention of abandoning former homes.” Everett (Everett: 1969) on the other hand, defines it as broadly as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence. No restriction is placed upon the distance of the move or upon the voluntary or involuntary nature of the act, and no distinction is made between external and internal migration. The problem with the former definition is the abandonment of homes for a permanent one. The focus of this article is not so much abandonment or movement of people over considerable distance rather, the ability to move from one country to the other which may even be of short distance such as cross-border movement between Nigeria and Niger Republic or Nigeria and Benin Republic. Such migration is more often motivated by economic opportunity or criminal intentions (trafficking and smuggling) and so our definition for the purpose of this article is the movement of people on a long or short distance involving crossing from one country to the other and for a short or long period but usually on a short period but with high frequency for the purpose of seizing economic opportunity or perpetrating economic, political or social crime (Adeola and Ogirai: 2010).

This definition will not be complete without making analogy to differentiation of migration (Castles and Miller:2009) which states that most countries do not simply have one type of immigration, such as labour migration, refugee or permanent settlement but a whole range of types at once. Typically, migrating chains which start with one type of movement often continue with other forms, despite government efforts to stop or control the movement. Cross border migration between Nigeria and her surrounding neighbours may start with one motive and end up with another. As remarked by Everett (1969) the difference between both in terms of economic and amenities become heightened especially between Nigeria and her neighbours. Again, as Castles et al (2009) observe, the growing politicization of migration resulting from domestic politics, bilateral and regional relationships and national security policies of states are increasingly affected by international migration. In effect, the security implications are these days dictating foreign policy directions of most countries all over the world. Globalization has complicated migration issues in security terms in such a way that state security has become a deciding factor in shaping the direction of diplomatic and foreign policy of countries in the sub-, region. In consideration of the stated issues, the theoretical exposition shall be articulated.

Africa has been described as the continent with the world’s most mobile population (Curtin: 1997). One of the greatest migrations in human history was recorded in sub-Saharan Africa involving the Bantu people who left the area now encompassing Nigeria and Cameroun and formed settlements throughout the entire southern half of the continent (Castles et al. 2009). Migration is increasingly driven by economic, political and social changes. In West African sub-region migration can better be explained theoretically from economic standpoint, other factors do play a role but economic remain outstanding. The neo-classical links migration to movement from low to high income area or more specifically, to fluctuation in business cycle. The approaches are known as push-pull theories (Castles et al. 2009). The “push factors” include lack of economic opportunities and political freedom among others and “pull factors” demand for labour, good economic opportunities and political freedom.

In West Africa, the trend of migration has generally followed this pattern. The mere existence of economic disparities between various areas should be sufficient to generate migrants flow (Borjas: 1990; Borjas: 2001). This form of movement has been typical in Africa as a whole; migration tending towards economically buoyant and prosperous region from weak economic areas. However, on the international front, between countries

certain faction may reduce intervening obstacles to migration. With reference to Nigeria and the surrounding francophone neighbouring States, which view Nigeria as metropolitan state from all perspectives, increasing technology plays an important role in diminishing intervening obstacles (Everett; 1969).; communication become easier and transportation relative to average income cheaper. Even if there were no change in the balance of factors at origin and destination, improving technology alone should result in an increase in the volume of migration.

Migration to South Africa has been basically economic or labour motivated; people from various parts of Africa migrating to South Africa to seek employment. The push-pull theories also imply movement from densely populated areas to more sparsely peopled regions. We found such movements take place from the large populated countries. We see such examples from the largely populated countries such as migration from Nigeria to Ghana, Togo, even to Cameroun. There is also migration from Cameroun to Gabon, Central African Republic among others. In contemporary times, the “push-pull theories of the neo-classical can no more be sufficient to explain migratory movements in Africa, especially in respect to migration and international security. In this respect, there is the transnational theory which cannot be over looked. One aspect of globalization is rapid improvement in technologies of transport and communication. This has made increasingly easy for migrants to maintain close links with their area of origin or operations as the case of international chains of criminals’ networks. This facilitates the growth of circular or temporarily mobility, in which people migrate repeatedly between two or more places where they have economic, social or cultural linkages (Castles et al 2009). Trafficking and smuggling resulting from transnational migration network (Koser M in Marshall et al 2006) are carried out with ease and in rapid frequency along the porous borders. Between Nigeria and Niger Republic, a customs officer put the number of illegal borders entry points at 921. Alongside criminally prone migration is the importance of transnational business communities (Portes: 1999) which can either be large scale enterprise or small ethnic entrepreneurs; also the political and cultural communities. They distinguish between transnationalism from above – activities conducted by powerful institutional actors, such as multinational corporations and states – the transnationalism from below – activities that are the result of grassroots initiatives by immigrants and their home country counterparts (Portes et al 1999).

Transnationalism is thus causing the emergence of deterritorialized states with important consequences for national identity, international politics and international security. Globalization or transnationalism is impacting strongly on the security networks of West African states: since the September 11, 2001 the foreign and security policies of most states have prioritized the combating of trafficking, smuggling and other types of transnational crimes (Castles et al.2009). The era of internationalism has deepened the security implications of transnational crimes among the sovereign states of the sub-region and is dictating the articulation of foreign and diplomatic policies of the States.

3.1 Migration Trends between Nigeria and Her Neighbours

Nigeria is a big brother to other West African countries including the francophone countries in terms of numerical strength, diversity and socio-cultural power. Adepoju (2005) is of the view that West Africa has experienced a variety of migrations caused by population pressure, poverty, poor economic performances and endemic conflicts. Therefore, it is important to set migration trends between Nigeria and her neighbours in an adequate historical perspective.

According to Adepoju (2005), the pre-colonial migration in West Africa occurred largely in search of security, new land safe for settlement and fertile for farming. Colonial regime altered the motivation and composition of migration by introducing and enforcing various blends of political and economic structures, imposing tax regimes and establishing territorial boundaries. As a result of these developments, there were large-scale population movements, giving rise to the male-dominated, seasonal and cross-border migration which subsequently became institutionalised.

During the colonial period, Amin (1974), states that colonial period provoked large-scale labour migration required for plantations, mines and public administration beyond local supply. A series of economic measures, including compulsory recruitment, contract and forced labour legislation and agreements to secure cheap labour, sparked clandestine internal and cross-border migration of unskilled adult males required for infrastructural work, especially transport networks in the north and plantation agriculture in the coastal countries.

Therefore, the contemporary patterns of migration in West Africa are rooted in socio-economic, political and historical-cultural factors which have shaped the direction of development and types of economic activities and laid bold imprints on especially international migration.

Migration between Nigeria and her neighbours includes temporary clandestine workers, female and male traders, farm workers, cross-border workers, professionals, and refugees. They are essentially intra-regional,

short term and male dominated, in response to the interdependent economies of neighbouring countries. The emigration configuration is also highly diversified. West Africa encompasses countries of immigration and emigration as well as both immigration and emigration. Some of the countries serve as transit paths for migrants.

The main traditional countries of immigration are Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. In the early 1970s, Nigeria also became a major migration receiving country buoyed by oil-led employment in various sectors of the economy. The major labour exporting countries have been and still are Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea Conakry, Cape Verde and Togo. The situation in Cape Verde is unique in that the Diaspora outnumbers the resident population (Carling, 2002).

Senegal has been a labour exporting and labour receiving country. All these have changed in recent years. Ghana and later Nigeria turned labour exporting countries when economic conditions deteriorated in Ghana in the late 60's and in Nigeria in the middle 80's. Currently, Ghana is currently experiencing return migration of its nationals in response to the government's progressive economic policies, and political stability in the country.

The deteriorating socio-economic conditions and deepening poverty in the late sixties and early seventies propelled a wide variety of migration configurations. Macro-economic adjustment measures and a huge increase in the number of entrants into the labour market have fuelled a job crisis, creating a sustained pressure for emigration. A significant amount of brain circulation takes place between Ghana, Gambia and Nigeria; Togo and Cote d'Ivoire; Burkina Faso and Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire, countries with shared colonial legacy. (Adepoju, 2005:3).

Currently, within the context of ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Rights of Residence and Establishment, most countries of the sub-region have enacted, or retained a series of laws, which in effect restrict 'foreigners', including nationals of ECOWAS, from participating in certain kinds of economic activities; the expulsion of aliens also negated the *raison d'être* for establishing the Community. So long as the economies of recipient countries accommodated clandestine labour migrants there was little sign of stress. As economic conditions worsened and unemployment among nationals deepened, immigrants become targets for reprisals through expulsion (Ojo, 1999). It should be emphasized that Illegal immigrants are being expelled from virtually all West African countries before and even after the formation of ECOWAS.

3.2 Migration between Nigeria and Her Neighbours: Moving Forward and Backward

International migration has not been a matter of public policy nor of public debate in Nigeria until the 80s, even at that, have the authorities not taken it as a serious issue of public policy. That attitude changed as cross border crimes became notorious and touched virtually every aspect of human activities - economic, social and political. Despite this change of perception, migration is an integral part of labour market and a source of livelihood. Like all over Africa and other parts of the world one of the major reasons to migrate is to find work. It is this crave to find work and improve material well being that have been the overriding motive of the nationals of the countries surrounding Nigeria to cross the border to Nigeria.

Nigeria is bounded to the east by Cameroun; Benin Republic on the western side, to the south the Atlantic Ocean; to the north east, Chad and North West, Niger Republic. The people of these countries are virtually African descent with Nigeria commanding the largest population. The mainstay of the economies of the countries is agriculture even though Nigeria and Cameroun have discovered other sources of foreign exchange such as petroleum, gold, bauxite and other mineral products. Nigeria remains to a large extent the most industrialized. With the exception of Cameroun, the other Nigerian neighbours are members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Migration has been part of a dynamic feature of the area as with the entire West African sub-region and most of the ethnic groups in each of the countries had settled in more than one country in the area. The artificial boundaries imposed by the colonialists were responsible for cross border population movement within the area. Compared to other parts of Black Africa including Cameroun, West Africa stands in an almost unique position. It is an area where European colonization in the form of permanent settlement never took firm roots which makes the areas in consideration as per excellence the land of Blacks (Mabogunje, A, 1972). International migration between Nigeria and her neighbours is made easy by a number of factors; the greatest being the short distance and the porosity of borders; the likelihood that no language barriers and a minimal set of intervening obstacles to use Stoffer's terminology (Stoffer: 1946). These apparent less stringent factors, make migrants troop to Nigeria. The harsh conditions of weather in the Sahara leading to drought in Niger, Chad and northern Cameroun made Nigeria the ideal destination of the migrants.

Cross border migration between Nigeria and her neighbours which did not attract state intervention gradually became a matter for state policy as modern mobility continue to impact dangerously on the security of the nation and the need to defend the state from external aggression and criminality which has grown along the international borders.

3.3 Security, Public Policy and International Migration between Nigeria and Her Neighbours

The attack on the 11th September, 2001 has brought increased awareness and relevance to security implication of international migration. A phenomenon which is often not given much attention by some countries has become a matter for public policy. Between Nigeria and her neighbours, it is viewed as economic phenomenon and largely beneficial to the migrants especially those crossing the borders from the north, avoiding the scourge of the drought and encroaching desert. All that have changed as international migration is bringing, harsh consequences on the security and diplomatic relations between Nigeria and her neighbours, forcing Nigeria to take unpopular policy stand against security threat.

International relations based on good neighbourliness and friendships continue to dictate Nigeria foreign policy towards her immediate neighbours anchored on:

- Sovereign equality of all African states
- Respect for the independence, sovereign and territorial integrity of every African state
- Non-interference in the internal affairs of other African states and
- The commitments to functional cooperation as a means of promoting African unity and economic development.

Despite these commitments increased cross-border crimes have forced Nigeria to intensify her security network along the borders with Chad posing serious migration and security threat.

3.4 Nigeria and Chad Republic: A Highly Problematic and Confrontational Border Relations

Nigeria and Chad shares a 75 kilometre border, all of which is on Lake Chad. The border is porous and unreliable but because of her African policy of cooperation, invested about one million dollars in the development of a huge agricultural project called the Chad Basin Development Authority (CBDA) in the basin on the Nigeria side. The influx of migrants reached an unacceptable proportion when in 1983; forces from Chad overran many Nigerian islands on the lake. They were repelled by combined forces of the 3rd division of the Nigerian Army, the 23rd Armorial based in Maiduguri and detachment of the army in Baye and Doro on the shore of the Lake.

The Chadians were forced to withdraw before it could have resulted into war between the two countries. The issue was resolved after a temporary closure of the borders; it however exposed the economic fragility of Chad and its dependence on transit facilities in Nigeria. One lesson for Nigeria as remarked by a scholar is the propensity for international migration to interact with other factors to foment violent conflict in three ways: by providing resources that fuel internal conflicts; by facilitating networks of organized crime and by serving as conduits for international terrorism. Nigeria was quite concerned about events in Chad and in particular the rate of arms smuggled across the borders and the huge arsenal in the hands of the Chadian army most of which were either seized Libyan weapons or weapons supplied by France, the United States and Israel.

The situation led to a militarization of the border and construction of all weather road by the federal government from Baye to Doro facilitating rapid movement of troops. Migration across the borders continues as it has always been with Kanuri and Shuwa Arabs families divided between the two countries.

3.5 Nigeria and Benin Republic: A Notorious Trafficking and Smuggling Border Route

Nigeria and Benin Republic share a lot in common linguistically and racially which explains the dynamism of cross-border migration. The Yoruba, gun (Egun) and other Ajo speaking people in the south, the Beriba (Borgwa) in the middle and Fulani and Hausa in the north straddled border between the two countries. Historically, southern and central Benin was part of old Oyo empire. The cultural affinity coupled with Nigeria's policy of good neighbourliness informed Nigeria's participation in joint economic, industrial and agricultural ventures with Benin counterparts. Such was the cement factory at Onigbolo (Queme province) and sugar factory at Save (Zou province): Both towns are located in the republic of Benin. The two companies have since been privatized.

Despite this spirit of enterprising and promising neighbourliness, the borders linking the two countries are the most problematic because of the activities of internationally reputed criminals engaging in smuggling and

trafficking of virtually everything from human trafficking, ammunition, arms, drugs manufactured goods, agricultural produce, prostitution, child labour to religious fanaticism, terrorist attacks and insurgency.

It got to a point in 1985 during the regime of Buhari/Idiagbon when the borders had to be closed severally. They were not re-opened until the emergence of Babangida on August 27, 1985. The decision to reopen the borders removed major source of conflict but the politics of border surveillance and monitoring became a major public policy. International migration and security has continued to blur the difference between illegal/irregular and legal migration. The deepened and devastating activities of smugglers to the economy, security and state sovereignty has made it impossible for policy makers to effectively differentiate between policies that infringe on human rights from those that actually address illegal migration.

In 1996, following the execution of nine Ogonis including Ken Saro Wiwa for illegal murder of four prominent Ogoni chiefs by the regime of General Sanni Abacha, there were closure of borders between the two countries. Many Ogonis fled and sought political asylum in Benin Republic; the Beninois authorities denied granting political asylum to Ogonis; the tense political situation and security fragility made both countries closed their borders. The land borders were re-opened on April 18, 1996 after the two leaders, the Beninois President Mathieu Kerekou and General Sanni Abacha had had bilateral talks.

Cross border crime increased at alarming rate between the two countries again in 2003 involving and international robbery network, the leader of the gang, a Beninois national was so notorious that his operation rocked the customs and security operatives of Nigeria. President Olusegun Obasanjo had to order the closure of the borders at least two times. The second time, the President ordered the border to be closed was on August 9, 2003 and it lasted six days. It was only reopened after President Mathieu Kerekou personally ordered the handing over of the notorious criminal gang leader Hamani Tijani to Nigerian authorities to face criminal charges before the borders were reopened.

Many scholars and policy makers have commented on the effect of trans-border crime between the two countries which has been worsened by globalization. At the moment, Nigeria economy is fast becoming a dumping ground for Asian goods as Benin Republic is more of a transit country for these goods and virtually everything shipped there are smuggled into Nigeria. A tour of our borders will unveil the eyesore of how textile materials, rice, vegetable oil, tin tomatoes, cars, among others are smuggled daily through the country's borders into the country. Such comments aired by Oshuntokun (Oshuntokun: 2003) conveys the views of most Nigerians in respect of Nigerian/Benin borders. According to him, a greater part of the trade between Nigeria and Benin Republic and other francophone countries bordering Nigeria is unrecorded because much of the trade is carried on through smuggling which is illegal business, seriously limiting the virility of Nigerian economy and a security threat to the nation.

3.6 Nigeria and Cameroun: War over Bakassi Averted

Cameroun was a former German colony which was divided between France and Britain after the First World War as a mandate territory; After Second World War, the eastern part went to France and western part went to Britain. The British side considered Cameroun administered as part of Borno and Adamawa provinces (now States) in northern Nigeria. In 1961/62, after a plebiscite organized by the UN, the southern Cameroun voted to join Cameroun Republic while the north merged with Nigeria. Cross border migration has been carried on without much trouble for the security operatives which made relations between the two countries cordial.

Relations became sour as cross border migration was overtaken by criminals and armed bandits. Border clashes that have led to the killing of many Nigerians were regularly reported. The recurrence of such clashes with devastating consequences for Nigerians and Nigerian security operatives was daily reported as the dispute over Bakassi peninsula between Nigeria and Cameroun Republic came to the front burner.

However, since the judgment by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ceding the peninsula to Republic of Cameroun, international migration has continued on a larger scale as many Bakassi nationals who were bitter on the judgment and prefer to be Nigerians are being repatriated for settlement in Cross River State. As a result, the borders between the two countries are under close security surveillance against all forms of trafficking and smuggling. This measure is necessitated as a result of reports along the coastal borders of Nigeria. There have been frequent raids in the Niger-Delta by pirates, armed smugglers in boats along the coast. The security operatives have been strengthened with the navy, army, police and the customs doing joint border surveillance and protection.

3.7 Nigeria and Niger Border: Least Problematic

The Nigeria/Niger borders appear to be the least problematic of the borders Nigeria have to contend with. The borders stretches for over 150 km and cut across one of the densely populated areas of the two countries; the southern Niger Republic and the northern Nigeria straddling such historically notable towns as Katsina, Kano

and Sokoto. The two countries are linked together culturally and linguistically. The Hausa language is freely spoken by the nationals of the two countries both sides of the borders. Despite the strong ties, there have been no serious border clashes or adverse reports of smugglers and traffickers. The reason may be due to the solid commercial links between the two countries. For example, the trade in cattle is carried freely across the borders from Niger to Nigeria. However as a result of the issue of desertification which appear to be profound in Niger Republic may be responsible to the great number of immigrants coming from Niger to flood Nigerian cities. They move into the northern most parts of Nigeria to the southern part of the country, such that lots of Nigeriens are found in cities like Lagos, Ibadan, Benin city, Enugu Port – Harcourt among others. They are found in menial jobs, house gardening and security.

Despite the relative peace observed at the borders, and because of the experience of the Nigerian security operatives along the Chadian borders, the Niger borders are equally fortified under close surveillance to avoid infiltration by Muslim fundamentalists that may take the advantage of the porous borders to enter Nigeria illegally and cause uprising.

4. Observation and Conclusion

International migration is a complex phenomenon enhanced by contacts with outside cultures; its dynamism within the studied areas is spurred by new aspirations for economic and material betterment. The spread of migration is embedded in the primary motive of migration which is to find work. Its transformation to crime-related activities is viewed within the prism of economically or politically-induced. Migration between Nigeria and her francophone neighbours is a very pertinent and sentimental issue as the people are historically, culturally and ethnically linked. Nigeria has always adopted cooperation rather than confrontation even in the face of provocation. It was this attitude that has always eased off tension and even wars between her and neighbours. She has always been guided by her policy of concentric circle.

The issue of Bakassi is enough to have caused war at many instances but Nigerian authorities have exercised restraints. At the borders with Chad, the Nigerian authorities had to militarize the routes, the same goes for Niger Republic. At the western flank, the borders with Benin have been the most problematic as a result increased activities of smugglers and traffickers which have caused border closures from time to time. There seems better understanding and cooperation among the states on security. This gesture of good neighbourliness made the Beninois President Mathieu Kerekou hand over the leader of a notorious international robbery gang network, Hamani Tijani to Nigerian authorities to face criminal charges.

Migration remains a global phenomenon which will most often take place from less developed to areas of greater opportunities. Globalization with its open borders is turning less industrialized to dumping grounds. Both ways, Nigeria in comparison with her neighbours will continue to be flocked by unwarranted immigration from countries such as Niger, Chad and even Cameroun. At the same time, transit goods of all types from all over the world shipped to Togo and Benin Republics will at the end of the day be smuggled to Nigeria in which case Nigeria has a hard nut to crack with her neighbours by permanently expanding her security network along the borders and making international security a major policy plank,

On human trafficking and smuggling, Nigeria can initiate a memorandum of understanding on General Agreement on the Movement of Persons (GAMP) with her neighbours as being experimented in Europe to seriously check the menace. On the economic front, Nigeria must move closely with Benin Republic in particular by establishing industries in that country. Nigerian businessmen can also be encouraged to establish joint venture participation with potential investors in Benin Republic. This is to assist the country from making its territory a dumping ground to foreign companies. On the home front, Nigeria has two options: the first is to increase coercive measures to combat smuggling and trafficking. This is a daunting task going by the observation of a custom officer on the Niger axis who says that there are 921 known illegal border routes between Niger and Nigeria alone. The other option is to approach the issue of industrialization with the fullest determination and remove whatever bottlenecks to full industrialization with particular reference to energy which is the major clog. Then encourage industries to produce qualitative products that can compete effectively with imported or smuggled products. Once Nigerian products are competitive and can match any product from anywhere in the world, the country can then truly benefit from globalization and smuggling will be rendered unattractive.

Nigeria needs authentic economic development that can guarantee political and social security of the people. Migration can be a source of economic transformation, innovation and development; therefore, genuine migration should be separated from illegal and criminally prone migration such as smuggling and trafficking in all their facets for a peaceful and stable polity.

Dr. G. L. Adeola,
Lecturer,
Department of Political Science and International
Relations,
Crawford University,
Faith City, Igbesa, Ogun State, Nigeria.
Member International Political Science Association
(IPSA)
Member, International Sociological Association (ISA)

Fayomi, Oluyemi,
Lecturer,
Department of Political Science and International Relations,
Covenant University,
Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria,
Member International Political Science Association (IPSA)
Member, International Sociological Association (ISA)
Member, Royal African Society (RAS)
Member, Network of Migration Research in Africa (NOMRA)
Member African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE)

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