Change and Continuity in Security Management Systems in Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated change and continuity in security management systems in Nigeria. The study examined the historical account of Nigeria's security system management; the transformations that have taken place in Nigeria's security system management before the nation's political independence; and the transformations that have taken place in Nigeria's security system management after the nation's political independence. Historical research method was used in carrying out this study. A critical examination of the roles of stakeholders and shareholders were analyzed using findings from secondary sources such as books, journals, conference proceedings and internet sources which are to be explored to enrich this work. Furthermore, this research work depended largely on archival materials to gather relevant materials on the study. Data for this study were gathered from the secondary source. The secondary sources of data were collected from already written works, both published and unpublished that have relevance to the subject matter, these includes text books, magazines, newspapers and various journals. The study revealed that Nigeria's internal security management posture has been predominantly reactive and ineffective. This is not unconnected with the weakness of intelligence gathering, a situation made worse by the absence of a credible and reliable national identification system and the limited application of high-tech gadgets in intelligence gathering. The study recommended that there is the need for the enthronement of good governance in Nigeria through the conduct of credible elections, energetic campaign against corruption and justifiable distribution of

resources.

Keywords: Change, Continuity, Security Management Systems,

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Introduction

It appears that there is no disagreement regarding the strategic importance that security holds in the expansion of any nation. Definitely, safety of lives and property remains supreme to the existence of any state. This assessment finds its motivation in the intellectual formation of Thomas Hobbes through his work on social pact painting a disgusting picture in the matters of men in the state of nature where there was noticeably an absence of government to control relationships among men. The cruel and muddled nature of the Hobessian state compelled people to stand up in unison and decided to surrender their individual influences to a central authority from who they presumed that their security could be realised (Hobbes, 1962).

Security can simply be defined as liberty from danger, that is, the protection from physical or unswerving violence, and freedom from fright, that is, a sense of safety and relative comfort in political, legal, socio-economic and cultural terms, that is, a measure of fortification from structural violence (Wairagu, Kamenju and Singo, 2004). Indisputably, the issue of security remains imperative to the continued socio-economic survival of any person (Hyden, 2005). It is for this motive that there have been different attempt by stakeholders especially governments to create frameworks to advance security of their people and develop strategies to alleviate the risks that both human and non-human hazards can pose to the wellbeing of the people.

Security management in Nigeria dates back to the pre-colonial era where numerous nation-states had their internal security management substructure for the maintenance of peace and firmness. Some of these were managed by precise age grades and title holders or some other chosen class of persons. Really, the pre-colonial non-professional "armies" that were set up across what later became Nigeria contained mainly of able-bodied men from group of people that were called upon to guard their villages as the need arose.

The internal security management of the colonial system left a variety of injurious legacies which were not only hereditary but have continued to order conduct, approaches and outcomes. Security attention and management was state-centric and regime-centred, resolute by state security agencies, rather than the security of the people, and their source of revenue, social welfare and well-being. Daura (2016) opined that the colonial security organisations were pro-imperialist, powerful and anti-people, and were "intolerant instruments of conquest and subjugation with the aim of attaining the grand objectives of resource removal and political control". Thus, security management was dominated by disproportionate coercion and force, high handedness and suppression. The security agencies were separated from the people, alien to them and positioned to enforce security by intimidation and power.

Post-independence, Nigeria's security management system can be further divided into the periods of military autocracies and civil rule. The first period of civil democratic rule (1960–1966) was categorized by low levels of criminal violence. Criminality was more limited to trivial crimes, and there was a system of justly effective implementation of laws and management of criminal justice administration. The bigger problems were those of civil demonstrations, political violence and electoral violence. There were mutinies against perceived political, governance and electoral matters in the Middle Belt of the Northern Region and the Western Region, which among others contributed to the termination of the First Republic through a military coup in 1966.

The Second Republic however observed increased violent criminality, political violence and electoral violence. Criminal violence, predominantly armed robbery, became

more commonplace, while there were occasions of political violence. The 1983 general election was particularly overwhelmed by electoral violence and excessive use of force by the security agencies. There were fierce protests in several states of the South-West following massive rigging of the 1983 general election.

The lengthy period of military rule altered the face and character of internal security trials and management. Armed criminal violence intensified, including the appearance of armed robbery just as there was more brazen and extreme force in the management of internal security such as public killings of armed robbers. The emphasis was on subjugation of criminal elements and dissenters. This finally led to the replication and intensification of violence in social life, militarisation of society, the socialisation of the use of arms and violence, and a fortified race between offenders and state security forces. The military set up special courts and tribunals, thus, meddling in the judiciary and management of the criminal justice organization.

Civil independent rule was associated with widespread security sector reform in the military, police and other security organizations. These included efforts to re-professionalise the agencies reduce uncertainty and rights abuses, acquaint with good governance measures, demilitarise the security workforce and institutional conduct, and build up democratic control. Measures have been taken to recruit more security personnel, increase motivation, improve skill sets and equipment holding, and expand performance of the agencies. To further confront new security challenges, security agencies in the civil defence and anti-corruption sectors have been recognised.

In view of the above, the study is set to examine change and continuity in security management systems in Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The study examined change and continuity in security management systems in Nigeria. Specific focus was on:

i. the historical account of Nigeria's security system management;
ii. the changes that have taken place in Nigeria's security system management before the nation's political independence; and
iii. the changes that have taken place in Nigeria's security system management after the nation's political independence.

Methodology

In describing research design Kolawole and Olofin (2018) stated that, research strategy is a term used to define a number of decisions which need to be taken concerning the collection of data. Historical research technique was used in carrying out this study. A serious examination of the roles of shareholders were analyzed using discoveries from secondary sources such as books, journals, conference proceedings and internet sources which were studied to enrich this work. Furthermore, this research work depended largely on archival resources to gather appropriate materials on the study.

In adopting any method in research study, it is important to put into consideration the approach that will produce the most beneficial result relevant to the challenges at hand. In this regard, data for this study/research were collected from the secondary sources. The secondary sources of data were gathered from already written works, both published and unpublished that have significance to the subject; these include text books, magazines, newspapers and various journals.

To draw on a useful meaning from the data and assess the proposition of this study, data from secondary sources were analyzed by means of qualitative (content analysis) method.

Results and Discussion
Research Objective 1: Historical Account of Nigeria's Security System Management

Ever since its emergence as a state, Nigeria has struggled with myriad of security challenges from varied sources. It is important not to confuse the sources of insecurity in Nigeria, that is, the causative factors of insecurity, with the appearances or indicators of insecurity. Numerous threats to national security which emerged at different stages in the evolution of the Nigerian state were pointers of insecurity and these indicators owed their causation to a collection of factors.

The first era of civil democratic rule (1960–1966) was categorised by low stages of criminal violence. Criminality was more limited to petty crimes, and there was a system of fairly effective implementation of laws and management of criminal justice organization. The larger problems were those of civil disputes, political violence and electoral violence. There were riots against supposed political, governance and electoral issues in the Middle Belt of the Northern Region and the Western Region, which among others led to the death of the First Republic through a military coup in 1966 (Okolie-Osemene 2016).

The Second Republic however saw increased violent criminality, political violence and electoral violence. Criminal violence, mainly armed robbery, became more commonplace, while there were incidents of political violence. However, it is important to state here that for the duration of the Nigerian Civil War, there was mass deployment of the security agencies mainly the army in the war against the Biafran forces. At the end of the war, which ended in 1970, majority of the agencies were redistributed and relocated to the barracks, and so they became fairly underused internally except in severe cases or on foreign missions due to the scanty nature of internal crisis before 1999. Since the end of the war, most of the internal crises that transpired in the country before 1999 were minimal and restricted in both scope and effects.

The 1983 general election was mainly plagued by electoral violence and extreme use of force by the security agencies. There were violent demonstrations in several states of the South-West following enormous rigging of the 1983 general election. The lengthy period of military rule changed the face and character of internal security crises and management. Armed criminal violence heightened, including the emergence of armed robbery just as there was more brazen and excessive force in the management of internal security such as public killings of armed robbers. The emphasis was on subjugation of criminal elements and dissidents. This finally led to the replication and increase of violence in social life, militarisation of society, the socialisation of the use of arms and violence, and an armed race between criminals and state security forces. The military established special courts and tribunals, thus, interfering in the judiciary and management of the criminal justice administration (Omodia & Aliu, 2013).

The military took grave exceptions to dissidence, dissent and criticism, which led to repression of the opposition and wide-ranging abuse of human rights. The period of military rule witnessed the proliferation of the offshoots of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) with attendant duplications of security agencies. The later era of military rule observed the arrival of militant challenges to the state. In the Niger Delta, militants and militias emerged that

resisted military force and agitated for resource benefits between 1997 and 1999 (Nwogwugwu & Oluranti 2015).

Militant resistance also emerged with the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) in 1994 in the South-West. Quite astonishingly, military rule witnessed the abandonment of the internal security agencies and even the military with decline in the rate of enrolment, equipment holding and security infrastructure, thus diminishing the capacity of the agencies to confront security challenges. Civil democratic rule emerged in the midst of the experience of enormous civil and anti-military protests between 1988 and 1999, and resistant militant movements in the Niger Delta and South-West between 1994 and 1999. Armed criminal violence and mainly armed burglary was at its increase. There were widespread internal security trials related with the militancy in the Niger Delta, the ferocious conflicts between the OPC and the police, and other ethnic groups in the South-West and the appearance of ethnic militias and militant youth factions across the country, mainly in the South-East and Niger Delta. Self-actualization groups proliferated in the South-West and South-East, while secessionist groups such as the Movement for the Actualisation of Sovereign State of Biafra also came into being. In the same vein, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) surfaced years later.

Moreover, the return of democracy in 1999 was supposedly thought to guarantee peace, security and improvement, which would safeguard the fundamental rights of Nigerians. Unfolding situation since 1999 in Nigeria have however confirmed this popular prospect to be very wrong. This is due to the fact that there has been a multiplicity of internal pressures within the country from the Fourth Republic. The nascent democracy has not transformed to the safety of people, as the capability of the state to keep up with the maintenance of law and order remains questionable, considering the turbulences across the country (Malasowe 2016).

Another thoughtful source of internal security which has continued to be a problem for the nation is the outburst of insurgency since 2009. Boko Haram has continually launched very inhuman and disastrous attacks on both hard and soft targets such as barracks, and police stations, markets, farms, villages and so on since 2009 (Omodia & Aliu, 2013). According to Matfess (2016), the heavy-handed state response to the insurgency led to more than 50,000 deaths since 2009, with more than 2.8 million people already displaced from their homes.

The remorseless brutal attacks of this group have formed an atmosphere of distress and chaos. This has reduced life expectancy in the region. The trend of Boko Haram's insurgency reached a more sophisticated, hazardous and international dimension when the UN compound in Abuja was bombed in August 2011, murdering about 23 people and wounding scores (Nwogwugwu & Oluranti 2015). In fact, it was in a bid to curb the excesses of this dreaded group within the North Eastern states that prompted Goodluck Jonathan's administration to deploy troops to unstable areas (Sodipo 2013). Militarism has continued as one of the measures used in handling internal security threats in the Fourth Republic. Militarism is the deployment of coercive instruments of a state to restore law and order through the Armed Forces with implications for human rights (Okolie-Osemene, 2016). Through militarism, state violence becomes a necessity and sanctioned act of violence to forestall breakdown of law and order.

Since then, combined security patrols and mounting of road blocks have characterised internal security. With the military option, the state makes violence a valid response to insecurity aimed at routing non-state actors, and this led to the establishment of the joint task

force to prevent internal hostility and protect Nigeria's territory from being divided by non-state actors (Okolie-Osemene 2016).

Civil democratic rule was related with widespread security sector reform in the military, police and other security agencies. These included efforts to re-professionalise the agencies, lessen arbitrariness and rights abuses, present good governance measures, demilitarise security personnel and institutional conduct, and strengthen democratic control. There have been struggles to recruit more security personnel, increase motivation, improve skill sets and infrastructure, and improve performance of the agencies. Along with increased security crises there has been the deployment of the military in joint or singular operations and the constitution of several special task forces and operations.

To further confront these challenges, new security agencies in the civil defence and anti-corruption sectors have been established. However, there have been problems of political interference in the management and deployment of the security agencies.

Research Objective 2: Transformations in Nigeria's Security System Management before Independence

In history, domestic security has been a primary duty of the state. In Nigeria, it goes back to the colonial period when the colonial agents were battle-ready with all the machinery of cohesion (police and army) in their bid to overpower the native people into total compliance to the colonial state and also maintain order for the swift running of their regime. According to Malasowe (2016), most people in the country were in need of adequate security, despite the indirect rule introduced by colonial administrators, and native people became vulnerable in the face security concerns during that period (Malasowe 2016).

The chiefs became agents of law enforcement instead of defending their own people. Being a colonial establishment, the Nigerian state at independence inherited the state-centric nature of colonial domestic security measures. The major justification for the increase in the scale of violent insecurity and the poor state of Nigeria's security architecture is the centralization of security apparatus. This partly shares in the historical evolution and philosophy of the security services.

The Nigeria Police Force was fashioned by the British colonialists to deal with the 'troublesome natives'. Originating from the West African Frontier Force, the Police was centralized and slanted towards guaranteeing compliance with the imperial Acts of 1807 and 1833 which abolished slavery and slave trade as well as attaining the colonial objectives of 'divide and rule' and for smoothing the passage of raw materials to the metropolis (Jemibewon, 2001).

The policing system transformed during the colonial period as the institution functioned in line with the provisions of the British colonial laws. This period saw a paradigm shift from the tradition-based policing to modern-based police system. The first consequence was the change in orientation and objective of the police where it no longer protected the people's overall interests, but rather secured the colonial and commercial interests of the Britons at the expense of the people.

Officials of the ancient order and the control chain were rejected, with new recruits managing the structure under the direct control of the colonial officials, a situation which Rotimi (2001) described as 'strangers policing strangers'. The effect of this new order is seen in the incessant clash between the police and the people. This situation made scholars and criminologists such as Alemika (1998), Ahire (1991), Ikime (1977), Tamuno (1970) and Crowder (1978) suggest that the activities and rules of engagement of the police during this period were tailored toward the defense of British occupation in Nigeria. This compelled

Peterside (2014) to argue that early recruitment and deployment of police and security resources were done to accomplish the colonial economic and political objectives which thereafter shaped the posture of policing in the contemporary period given its oppressive tendencies.

The Nigerian Army is the eldest branch of the Nigerian Armed Forces established in 1862 by a British colonial officer and the Resident Governor of Lagos Captain John Glover with the singular goal of using the troops to defend the Colony of Lagos. This small formation called Hausa Constabulary, formed a nucleus in the Royal Niger Company Constabulary, which were the troops raised up by the Royal Niger Company in 1886 to form the West African Field Force (Ukpabi 1966). The purpose of establishing the Royal Niger Company Constabulary was to safeguard British interests in Northern Nigeria. By 1900, when Nigeria officially became a colony under the British government, the army became the coercive tool of national security defence of the British colonial government in Nigeria.

The First Battalion was established on 26 August 1896, while the Second and the third Battalion were formed in 1898 (Butts and Metz 1996). The establishment of the three battalions was to make up for the effective takeover of the disparate nations that would be amalgamated under Nigeria as a full colony of the British government in 1900. At the end of the day, the West African Field Force and the Northern Nigeria Regiment were amalgamated in May 1900 (Killingray 1986). By 1914, the Southern Nigeria Regiment and the Northern Nigeria Regiment were merged to form the Nigeria Regiment of the West African Frontier Force, and this brought about the unification of Nigeria's Armed Forces. By 1928, WAFF was rechristened the Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF), and during the 1930s, it expanded from four to six battalions which worked in two theatres. The Northern and Southern Commands had major installations at Sokoto, Kano, Zaria, Kaduna, Maiduguri, Yola, Enugu and Calabar (Peterside, 2014).

However, Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Nigeria in 1956 led to a further change of name of the Nigeria Regiment of the WAFF to the Queen's Own Nigerian Regiment (QONR). That same year, Britain approved military autonomy to her units and the QONR was given a new name, the Nigerian Military Force (NMF) (Luckham 1998). At independence in 1960, the name transformed again to Royal Nigerian Army. As soon as Nigeria became a Republic in 1963, the name was changed to the Nigerian Army and with the other two forces, navy and air-force were designated the Nigerian Armed Forces, the name it bears till today (Adekson & Adekanye 1981).

Research Objective 3: Transformations in Nigeria's Security System Management after Independence (With particular reference from 1999 – till Date)

1) Over five decades ever since Nigeria got political independence, the country's security architecture remains architecturally centralized with damning consequences for management of offence and lack of self-confidence at the grassroots. Despite tireless agitations for communal and state policing so that the local people familiar with the language, geography and socio-political terrains will be in charge of security, the federal government persists in holding on to the police and armed forces tenaciously

2) However, between 1960 and 1967, the Nigerian federation was 'bottom-heavy' as the three regions sustained efficient control in their areas of jurisdiction. They had their own regional constitutions together with the federal constitution. They also had their own police and prison systems in addition to liaison offices in the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, the intrusion of the military into politics disrupted the operations of Nigerian federalism (Ayoade, 1997).

3) The country experienced military coups in 1966 (January and July), 1975, 1976, 1983, 1985 and 1993) as well as a civil war (1967-1970). These lengthy years of military rule gave rise to the hyper-centralization of power (including the police and armed forces) and assets at the federal level. For example, the regional constitutions which existed between 1960 and 1967 were eradicated; the regional police formations were centralized; the universities formed by the regions were taken over; the local government system was unified; and a Land Use Decree was promulgated in 1978 ceding the possession of all lands to the government (Ayoade, 1997). These were some of the structures that characterized military rule and pulled apart Nigerian federalism (Ekeh, 2007; Ayoade, 1997). This over-centralization was made possible by the oil boom of the early 1970s which made the first phase of Nigerian military government (1966-1979) to be awash with massive oil rents.

4) There are several agencies in charge of internal security of a state but the lead agency usually saddled with the responsibility of internal security management is the police. The military is primarily charged with the responsibility of protecting the Nigerian state from external hostility. However, the liberalisation of the political space, as well as poor financing of the police has seen a dramatic rise in military deployment for Internal Security Operations (ISO). The role of the military in internal security matters has mainly sustained the harmony of Nigeria. However, their heavy deployment in ISOs has opened their shortcomings, including being implicated in human rights abuses.

5) The inadequacies of the police and military in the management of internal security have given motivation for the establishment of Joint Task Force(JTF) usually involving the army, the Navy, the Air Force, the police and other security agencies (Peterside 2014). Over time, the Nigerian government has adapted to activating distinctive task force, engaging the military and other security agencies in tackling its internal security concerns.

6) This is obvious in the deployment of such security management posture in the fight against militancy in the Niger Delta in the South-South, Boko Haram insurgency in the North-East, herdsmen-farmers conflicts in the North-Central, kidnappings in the North-West, separatist agitations in South-East, and oil theft in the South-West. In fact, there is no part of Nigeria that has not played host to such distinctive military operations.

7) Another paramilitary agency that assists the police in internal security administration in Nigeria is the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC). The agency is projected to assist the other state security organisations, most especially the police in curtailing threats to internal security in the country. Despite making huge contribution in protecting lives and property, it also faces the challenges of corruption, recruitment and training deficit.

8) The Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) equally plays a role in internal security management. The agency is constitutionally accountable for observing, documenting and regulating trans-border migration. The institutional feebleness that is rampant in Nigeria has also affected the functionality of NIS. The result is that Nigeria has become exposed to trans-border crimes such as violence, human trafficking, small and light weapons proliferation and many others.

9) Meanwhile, the Nigeria Prison Service (now renamed Nigeria Correctional Service) guarantees that all confined persons are transformed before re-joining the society. However, the circumstance in Nigeria is such that those constricted come out becoming more toughened criminals than they were before their incarceration. This problem is implicated on the condition of Nigerian prisons, which are overcrowded, underfunded and punitive-

oriented. The result is that the prison in Nigeria further toughens rather than transform the inmates.

10) Beyond the formal security institutions that are essential to the management of internal security, informal security organisations that are also involved in the management of internal security which this study observed were private security companies and the vigilante groups. Private security companies in Nigeria have developed in scale due in part to the growing level of anxiety in the country and the failure of state security institutions in security provisioning. These companies are involved in asset protection, guard duties for a host of clientele such as government establishments and shared business organisations (e.g. banks). While corporate bodies have augmented their security and protection needs with services provided by private security companies, the lack of ability of the state to deliver internal security obligation has forced members of the local communities to enhance their own security arrangements through the creation of vigilante groups.

11) Some of these groups are known and enabled by some state governments, while many others survive and operate on donations from community members and charitable individuals. In numerous communities in Nigeria, these groups serve as community police and are involved, sometimes, in performing judicial tasks such as settlement of disagreements. Though the presence of vigilante groups has been used to measure the abysmal performance of the police and other security agencies in Nigeria, it has equally proven to serve as a tool for complementing the efforts of the formal security groups.

12) In spite of the presence of these agencies, internal security management in Nigeria continues to face stiffer tasks. These range from the seeming inability of the state to settle the contradictions that underscore Nigeria's multi-ethnic nature and post-colonial character, to lack of funding to the security agencies as a result of absence of transparency and accountability in the distribution and utilisation of security resources. Others include lack of social security, owing to development shortfall, lack of sustainable youth empowerment packages and the growing interconnectedness of the world through globalisation.

13) Despite the avalanche of both formal and informal institutions available to successive Nigerian governments in security provisioning, responses to evolving internal security problems leveraging these organisations have proven grossly insufficient (Nwagboso 2016). This situation have been ascribed to a mix of historical, structural and contextual factors that underpin weak ability of state institutions to anticipate, reply and manage the prevalence of multiple security challenges.

Conclusion and Recommendations

There is a need for a paradigm shift and thorough reconsideration of the architecture and posture of security management in Nigeria. Reconsidering the framework of internal security management in Nigeria will require comprehensive reforms in the area of policy and practice. In this regard, the articulation and acceptance of a national security strategy to communicate what constitutes national security in Nigeria and streamline the contradictory responsibilities of a myriad of unimpressive security institutions and agencies in Nigeria are fundamental imperatives. Such a national security policy is critical in ensuring that security priorities concisely reflect citizens' needs, limited resources efficiently shared across agencies and agencies liaise professionally in the discharge of assigned duties.

The failure to efficiently manage security problems confronting the nation is more of a lack of synergy among extant state security organisations than the dearth of such critical organisations. Thus, a national security policy will serve as a critical enabler for the much-needed support, teamwork and synergy to optimise security delivery. Moreover, the diversity

of Nigeria and the difficulty of the security atmosphere necessitate a shift from a highly integrated structure of internal security management to a dispersed framework.

For too long, Nigeria's internal security management position has been predominantly reactive and unproductive. This is not unrelated with the weakness of intelligence gathering, a condition made worse by the lack of a credible and consistent national identification system and the limited application of high-tech gadgets in intelligence gathering. The plethora of identification systems that are obtainable in Nigeria are not harmonised and mainly isolated platforms to serve some vested interests in different subdivisions of the economy. To meet the security expectation of the twenty-first century, there is the necessity for the harmonisation of the country's diverse national identification frameworks as a prerequisite for national security and development. This is vital because a reliable national identification system is key to evolving a strong crime database as well as intelligence gathering for managing diverse security needs of the state.

Poor intelligence gathering has impacted on the ability of the state to efficiently anticipate and proactively respond to security challenges. To overcome this task, the Nigerian government should adequately provide its agencies with the prerequisite modern apparatus and technological gadgets to improve their ability to combat security threats. The establishment of an Intelligence Fusion Centre that generates dossiers of accurate information with a system of efficient retrieval by the numerous security agencies is critical in improving internal security management in the country.

There is likewise the need to evaluate and refocus Nigeria's conflict management approach. The persistent dependence on the military to deal with security tasks ranging from maintenance of law and order to battling organised crime has serious effect on the professionalism of the military as an organisation for external defence and the police as the first line of response to internal insecurity challenges. The political leadership should de-emphasise militarisation and prioritise the empowerment of the police and other security and law enforcement agencies to proactively fight crimes and timely douse tension before they assume more dangerous dimensions.

To efficiently address the problems of internal security management, there is the need for the enthronement of good governance in Nigeria through the conduct of credible elections, aggressive campaign against corruption and equitable distribution of assets. Good governance is important to decreasing poverty, unemployment and economic marginalisation that underpin most of the security threats that plague Nigeria. The underlying code of good governance is the attention on human development as key to achieving sustainable security in the society.

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