Rethinking the National Contextual Change as a Cause for Reconceptualizing the Security Architecture in Nigeria

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Abstract
The Nigerian State, as a nation, has had a long history of the conflict as well as efforts to create a practicable concerted security arrangement, some designed to transform conflicts and improve broad-based socio-political and economic dimensions. Albeit, this is an harder task, but there are indications to show a determined effort to create a viable collaborative security arrangement.
This paper will discuss how the nation could indeed move towards a security community. It also indicates the start of a new process to build and maintain security in the country through a formal institution and the building of the structure and institution itself. A question that arises is whether the nation will provide the conditions and mechanisms necessary to establish and develop a security community.
This paper examines two developments that influence the reconceptualization of security and the dual change that had an unswerving influence on how security threats, challenges, vulnerabilities, and risks have been reconceptualized with bearings to the high degree of vulnerability of modern societies to attacks by non-state terrorist actors.
In conclusion, this paper canvasses that the paradigm of vulnerability and risks are not only implemented in line with foreign and defense policy but concerning environmental security, the challenges of the global environmental change, the climate change with its threats and disaster communities, where there has been no agreement within and among these communities exists on the meaning of vulnerability and risks.

Keywords: *Reconceptualisation, Security Communities, Conflict, Nigeria.*

Introduction

The geopolitical situation of Nigeria has deteriorated since the militancy in the Niger Delta, the insurgency of Boko Haram in North-Eastern Nigeria, herders and farmers' conflicts, and the spate of kidnapping in the country. It has affected both the objective as well as subjective security of the Nigerian population. This paper assesses subjective security and relates it with the subjective perception of geopolitical and military threats, mainly social attitudes towards national security and the willingness to defend the country. The paper holds that individuals are the primary referents of security. Over the last ten years, a clear shift towards the understanding of potential security threats has occurred. Nevertheless, the predominant concern about individual security overshadowing the security of the state. An individual, as a rule, feels most secure in his/her "closest" environment, e.g., family and friends, and least secure in the "farthest" environment, e.g., within the state or other states.

Nigeria is passing through a crisis of social change, and this had necessitated the emergence of novel threats, challenges, vulnerabilities, and risks to her security. Nigeria rated on a steady decline in the global peace index. Out of 162 countries surveyed, the country was 118th in 2008, 127 in 2009,137th in 2010,142nd in 2011, 146th in 2012, 148th in 2013, 151th in 2014 and 2015, 149th in 2016 and 2017, 148 of 163 countries in 2018, and 2019 and 147 in 2020 making Nigeria the 17th least peaceful country in the world. [23]. On this basis, there is a need for the nation to have a rethink on the present security architecture as a basis for reconceptualizing for security if we must rise to the modern-day challenges of securing the territorial integrity, lives, and property of the citizenry. A transparent approach to national security, given new waves of insecurity in the nation, is still missing. The need arises to analyze the impact of both objective and subjective measures of national security on subjective well-being (SWB.) and redefine what threats, challenges, vulnerabilities, and risks are to our nationhood. This is a better way to contribute to a complete approach to national security that will impact

positively on the nation as well as on the well-being of citizens.

The goal of this paper is to debate whether the national security threatened by the terrorist attack on North East, kidnapping in the country, killing of farmers by herdsmen, and other sundry security challenges, including banditry, had resulted in a reconceptualization of security; by widening the scope from the narrow political and military dimension of counterinsurgency and the coercive response of deploying troops for managing crises to the economic, societal and environmental dimensions, by deepening the level of analysis from the national level to both the individual, local, as well as to the global and planetary level of analysis; and by shifting the primary referent from the national level to the individual or humankind.

Defining Security: Objective and Subjective Security
To the question of what is security? Many Scholars emphasize a very narrow view of security. Waltz answers that: "it is the phenomena of war, the threat of use, and the control of military force" [36]. Balogun [6]. in his view, opined that the primary and engaging concern of man was that of survival and protection, emanated from the vagaries of nature, natural disasters, and the ill-intentions and misdeeds of his fellow-men."

Cicero and Lucretius referred to security as a psychological and philosophical construct framed as a political thought within the 'Pax Romana' framework. The term which means "Roman peace," refers to the period from 27 B.C.E. to 180 B.C.E. in which the Roman Empire saw unprecedented peace and economic prosperity throughout the Empire. The Roman Empire recorded an estimated population of seventy million people during this period in terms of land area and its bloated population [18]. Today 'security' as a political value has no independent meaning and is related to individual or societal value systems [14].

Ullman, [32] posited, 'we may not realize what security is until we are threatened with losing it.' It takes someone to know the concept of security, to know whether one is threatened with losing it or not. There are two sides of the security concept that will be considered in this paper to get a complimentary definition: Security is viewed in an objective sense (Peace of mind) as measures of the absence of threats to acquired values, and in a subjective sense (absence of fear) as the absence of fear that such values will be attacked.

The perception in the country shows that an issue requiring a military intervention determines what would be considered a security issue. If military force was not required, that issue was relegated to the level of low politics" security has been relegated in the opinion [16] to a banner to be flown, a label to be applied, but not a concept to be used by most security specialists. In Nigeria, there is a realization that military force, not security, has been the central concern of security experts. Therefore, within the context of its double meaning, security can be defined as an absence of objective dangers, i.e., of threats, challenges, vulnerabilities and risks, and subjective fears, and subjectively to the perception thereof [37]. Objective security is achieved if the threats posed by manifold danger, tasks, risks, and vulnerabilities are alleviated and adapted to by individuals, societal groups, or the state [29].

What it means to be secured

The ultimate goal of building security architecture in any nation is to enhance holistic security. Therefore, it is pertinent to take some time and think clearly about what it means to be secured. Security oscillates between "how safe you are actually" (Objective security) and "How safe you feel" (Subjective Security). How safe you are is relative; you may likely suffer harm. What determines how you live your daily life, which is a function of your overall quality of life, is subjective security. There is a loose relationship between how safe you feel and how safe you are. That gives rise to false confidence, a situation where people feel safe in the midst of imminent danger, and paranoia, a situation where people live in perpetual fear when they are not likely to be attacked.

Kidnapping, banditry, militancy, insurgency, and terrorism affect a narrow target's objective security to undermine a wider audience's subjective security. For instance, a kidnap or terrorist attack is successful not only based on its immediate cost in life and property damaged, but also its wider implications on the economy, habits, and reactions of the overall target [31]. A quite small number of people are killed in a single attack, but a much larger number sees the television coverage and worry about their own safety. This level of insecurity is far-reaching. Many of these security challenges do not discriminate between powerful, rich, and poor people, although the rich have better means to insure against damages, to adapt, to mitigate against, and to enhance their own resilience. Therefore, there is a need for community collaboration in order to achieve sustainable peace.

Contextual and Conceptual Change
The political context for the security concept has fundamentally changed in Nigeria since the advent of

the third republic; therefore, an extended or wider security concept should be adopted as recognition of new emerging security challenges. The terrorist attack on the North East in Nigeria and the incessant rate of kidnapping in the country demonstrated the extreme vulnerability of our critical infrastructure.

Thus, the wave of insecurity in the country since the beginning of Boko Haram triggered a fundamental rethinking of threats posed by non-state actors in new asymmetric conflicts. However, the new threat legitimated a revival of a major military build-up and constraints on civil liberty. The current security challenges in the country triggered major reconceptualization of security: a widening of security after the technical defeat of Boko Haram, militant agitations, and kidnapping. Nigeria, guided by military rationale, has never given up their narrow focus on "national military."

The national contextual change fostered this reconceptualization of security both in the political and scientific realm. The dialogue between the security and the development community is ripe to be launched. We share responsibility for each other's security. Today's threats recognize that no national boundaries are connected, and must be addressed at both the local and national levels. No state has the capacity to make itself impenetrable to today's threats. And it cannot be taken for granted that every state is strong enough to protect its own peoples and not cause harm to its neighbors [14].

Determinants of Contextual and Conceptual Change in Nigeria.

These eight fundamental elements, as identified, constitute the most important challenges to our national security.

1. **Socio-political stability**. Achieving peace and harmony among all Nigerians is not negotiable regardless of creed, ethnic origin, or social station to foster sustainable development. The government and the citizenry must engage in nation-building on the basis of constitutional democracy, the rule of law, and the full respect for human rights. Apparently, politics in Nigeria runs contrary to what obtains in the developed countries. African political leaders are not defined in terms of their values [21]. Congruent and consonant authority patterns are relevant to political stability and high governmental performance.

The direction of a social unit includes the understanding of its goals, the regulation of the conduct of its members, and the allocation and coordination of roles within it" [19]. The crucial incidence of poverty remains a serious danger to national security, for breeding and abetting rebellion, crime, and dissidence. Severe calamities lead to serious food shortages, abet hoarding, and profiteering and cause hunger, disease, and deprivation.

2. **Territorial integrity**. The demarcation and determination of fixed territories and the subsequent loyalty between those territories and the inhabitants is arguably the prime factor that creates room for individuals and groups within international and human rights law [13]. We must ensure the enduring inviolability of our national territory and its effective control by the Government and the State and its protection from illegal incursions and resource exploitation.

The main internal threat arises from the Boko Haram insurgents, a small band of highly mobile terrorists with suspected links to international networks has the avowed objective of establishing an independent Islamic state in North-Eastern Nigeria. While the government has engaged the insurgents in constructive counter attacks, the armed conflict remains a source of serious concern, particularly the build-up of its defensive and offensive capabilities.

3. E**conomic solidarity and strength**. Nigerians are experiencing the devastating effects of an economy that places the profit of a few above the well-being of everyone else and plunges the country into recession. However, the political and business leaders who benefit from this arrangement consistently declare that there are no real alternatives, yet citizens and grassroots organizations around the world are boldly demonstrating otherwise. A compelling array of grass-root economic initiatives already exists. While incredibly diverse, these initiatives share a broad set of values that stand in bold contrast to those of the dominant economy. We must propagate an economic regime where the people take command of their own lives, their livelihood, and their economic fate.

Graft and corruption are becoming another threat to national security by undermining the

public resources, the morale of the civil service, and the provision of quality basic services. It has also become a disincentive to investment. Achebe[2] upholds that corruption in Nigeria cuts across political patronage, budgeting abuses, public funds being given out to political cronies and personal friends; a collection of mobilization fee or full payment without executing the contract, rewarding politicians who failed elections with the ministerial appointment, re-assigning ministers, council members or commissioners who are involved in scandals to another ministry or department. Other forms of corruptions found among the African Politicians include greed, selfishness, intimidation, oppression, violence, thuggery, nepotism, and tribalism.

4. E**cological balance**. National survival hinges on the effective conservation of our natural environment in the face of industrial and agricultural expansion and population growth. We must promote sustainable development alongside social justice. The prevalence of desert encroachment, glacier melting, environmental challenges, ocean surge, and wind patterns are pointers that the ecosystem is affected by climate changes. Climate change is a function of environmental challenges and an imbalance in the ecosystem [3]. Persistent environmental degradation poses a long-term security risk. The proliferation of toxic substances and the attrition of forests and watersheds, air-land-water pollution are causal factors of sickness, death, and the diminution of national productivity and well-being. Environmental protection has assumed a high priority in defense and law enforcement concerns and is an institutional area of emphasis in the educational system. Albert [4] pointed out that the movement of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) is a threat to the environment. They trample on endangered forest resources, destroy rivers, and cut down wood for cooking and construction of shelter. This is a pointer to the effects of environmental degradation on human security.

5. C**ultural cohesiveness**. Nigeria is a multi-culturally and ethnically diverse country with a history of various conflicts arising from her ethnic and cultural diversity. We must be ruled by a common set of values and beliefs hinged on high moral and ethical standards, drawn from our rich heritage and embodying a Nigerian identity transcending religious, ethnic, and linguistic differences. National integration and its benefits can only be realized only with the development and entrenchment of a supportive public culture, understanding, respecting, and tolerating differences occasioned by socio-cultural diversity; as well as creating new institutions and mechanisms that address poverty, revenue allocation, and other national issues peacefully [20].

6. Organized crime is a national security concern. The challenge of illegal drugs has grown into a major threat to the national community. The anti-drug campaign is a major cornerstone of the government's law and order drive. Drug use among the youth has risen, and the national crime rate is also exacerbated by drug use. Economic sabotage weakens the market economy, the nation's resources, and the financial system. Under this category are underground activities such as counterfeiting, money laundering, and large-scale smuggling. This is being met through vigilant economic intelligence by the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC). Cybernetic crime is a growing national threat, as experienced within corporate and private organizations. Many vital decision-making processes of our government are now electronically-based and, therefore, vulnerable to this threat.

7. M**oral-spiritual consensus**. As a nation, we must be driven and guided by a national vision inspired and reflected in our words and deeds, patriotism, national pride, and the advancement of national goals and objectives. Ethnic, religious, and cultural conflict pervades our nation. It is constantly exacerbated by mass poverty, limited access to resources, denial of human rights, lack of national integration, and international issues.

8. E**xternal peace**. We must live in peace and harmony with our neighbors and pursue constructive and cordial relations with all nations and peoples, even as a matter of priority, the country must chart an independent course, free from external control, interference, or threat of aggression.

Human Security Threats, Challenges, Vulnerabilities, and Risks

Choosing a wide or a narrow concept focusing on freedom from want, fear or hazard impact' is what poses a threat, challenge, vulnerability or risk to human security, that is to the individual human being or humankind, Barnett [8] considered a "human-centered environmental security concept" as justified on the ethical and realistic grounds "because attending to the welfare of the most disadvantaged means addressing the potential sources of environmental degradation" by protecting the rights of the most susceptible members of society and by enhancing peace, welfare, and justice on which legitimate institutions should be built are required "for human and environmental security" [17].

Drawing a parallel from Abdus Sabur [1] with Bangladesh as an example, I cannot entirely agree less that there is a need for the rethinking of our security given the new crimes pervading the nation in "the idea that the security of an individual in terms of his physical safety, human dignity and development is as important as the security of the state." While national security requires investment in the military, "human security needs investment in human development and humane governance."
Nigeria must shift the basis of defense planning from an outmoded 'threat-based' model to a modern capabilities-based' model that focuses more on how an adversary might fight rather than specifically who the adversary might be or where a war might occur" [14].

Threat

The threat had earlier been defined as: "capability coupled with intent" [30]. This definition mainly focuses on military capabilities. Security threat as a concept has been widened and acknowledged by the United Nations to include new security threats, such as poverty, infectious disease, and environmental degradation, and war and violence within states [33].

Challenge

A security challenge is also security concerns that are not acutely time-critical or are non-violent. These challenges are primarily issues of the internal security agenda [15]. The biggest security challenges we face now and in the years to come are from beyond States waging aggressive war. These extend to poverty, infectious disease, and environmental degradation, war, and violence within States. These threats, which are from state and non-state actors, are to human as well as state security [33]. As the range of security threats has shifted away from primarily military threats, so has the range of security challenges. 'Soft' security challenges, such as poverty, the collapse of the environment, and underdevelopment are being increasingly addressed [7].

Vulnerability

For security to be affected, there must be an identification of a referent object which must be vulnerable to the threat. The vulnerability can be defined as "a weakness that makes targets susceptible to physical or emotional injury or attack" [24]. To effect security, a threat to an object has to be acknowledged, and the referent object must be vulnerable to this threat. Accordingly, the concept of *vulnerability* has achieved a high degree of recognition in different fields, such as disaster management and development studies.

The factors influencing vulnerability can be divided into external and internal. The internal factors are those of coping with and anticipating a threat, while the external factors are those involving exposure to risk (hazard) and shock [11]. These highlight vulnerability's dependence on specific characteristics, for example, of an individual, an environmental system, or a social structure [10]; [35].

Risk

The risk is described as the combination of the likelihood of a future event and its possible impact. As a concept, risk represents our *"desire to control the future"* [22]. Risks were perceived to be induced by non-human forces, so-called 'external risks before the advent of modernity. Modern societies are exposed to many human-made risks (hazards) that are a product of modernization itself: "manufactured risks" [22]. It is probable to measure the level of risk being produced as the nature of risk shifts away from external to manufactured risks. With the notion of manufactured risks and human impact on the environment, some environmental risks (hazards) have gained attention. These include likely disputes arising from human-induced local environmental degradation or scarcity-induced conflict over resources such as water [25].

Reconceptualising Security

The state-centered security did not provide an explanation for states threatening their own citizens [26]. This led to the identification of the need for a human-centered perspective. "The concept of security has in the past been interpreted narrowly: as security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interests in foreign policy. It has been related more to nation-states than to people. For many of them, security symbolized protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression, and environmental hazards" [34]. Therefore, human security emphasizes human rights, safety from violence, and sustainable development, thus

moves the focus away from states and towards individuals [28].

The Concept of Security is defined as "a necessary but not sufficient precondition" for human development, with a suggestion that "If human security could cover the most urgent threats,
the development would then address societal well-being" [27]. Therefore, Seven
dimensions of human security are distinguished by the UNDP thus:

1. **Economic security**—assuring every individual a requisite minimum income.
2. **Food security**—the guarantee of physical and economic access to basic
foodstuffs.
3. **Health security**—the guarantee of minimum protection from disease and
unhealthy lifestyles.
4. **Environmental security**—protecting people from the short- and long-term ravages
of nature, man-made threats in nature, and deterioration of the natural environment.
5. **Personal security**—protecting people from physical violence.
6. **Community security**—protecting people from the loss of traditional relationships
and values and from sectarian and ethnic violence.
7. **Political security**—guaranteeing that people live in a society that honors their basic
human rights [34].

By conceptualizing human security in the political context, there are three interrelated blocks of human and national security that have been identified by the United Nations, "Freedom from want, freedom from fear, and the freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy environment" [5].
The national security in Nigeria can be conceptualized in three ways;
• Firstly, where the referent object is the individual affected by hazards, migration, crises, or conflicts [15].
• Secondly, from a political perspective where human security is conceptualized in
close relation to human rights. [12].
• Thirdly, as an encompassing concept, including the widened concept of security:
economic, societal, environment

Conclusions

Security, according to Wolfers, is a value 'of which a nation can have more or less and which it can aspire to have in greater or lesser measure [37] Writing during the same period as Wolfers, Bernard Brodie observed that not everyone views security as a matter of degree.

He cited as an example of a statement by General Jacob L. Devers: National security is a condition that cannot be qualified. We shall be secure, or we shall be insecure. We cannot have partial security. If we are only half secure, we are not secure at all [9].

In the absence of a major crisis, it is always difficult to rally public opinion and political leadership around investing in security. Developments in Nigeria are a great source of concern for many in the local community. The challenge of protecting the Nigerian community is not one of procrastination. The critical risks to national security appeared to be crystalizing or lie in the future; their imminence now makes action urgent. The challenge is to come to an agreement and to implement a holistic national security architecture that will go beyond mainly a focus on the military but including threats, ranging from economic and social threats (including poverty, infectious disease, and environmental degradation, inter-state and internal conflict, the proliferation of small and light weapons, terrorism, kidnapping and transnational organized crime.

Firstly, political leaders in all the geopolitical zones will need to take the time to enlighten their wards on the deterioration of the security situation in Nigeria. They must speak with one voice irrespective of political and ethnic leanings about the undeniable risks of the prevailing security challenges pose to the principles upon which the national security is built. At present, the military is not the best vehicle to strengthen the community's relationship with the government. But unless the federal government reassures all members about their security, it will find it difficult to build a new relationship with the citizenry in a dire situation.

Secondly, political leaders must promote the awareness of security consciousness to the upcoming generation about the importance of a stable neighborhood and a secure national environment to the future welfare and prosperity of the nation. Nigerians must reconcile themselves to contribute to national unity; to assure the security of their own community. This will mean acquiring the right mix of defense capabilities; deepening cooperation between the ethnic communities to manage complex national crises.

Finally, political leaders should remind their public of the values that underpin community alliance, is not simply a mutual defense arrangement; it is a community collaboration that shares a deep commitment to democratic institutions, open economies, and the rule of law. These shared beliefs have long defined the national bond. They are all the more important as the nation

becomes less secure. Citizens now need to invest the appropriate resources and political will to protect them.

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