

CHALLENGES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND-INTERNAL INSECURITY FOR NIGERIA'S ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

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Abstract

The concept of economic diplomacy in this era of globalization cannot be overemphasized. Economic diplomacy involves the policies, initiatives and processes that are tied to the development of the domestic economy of a given country in its relation with others. In which case, it is linked to the realization of the need to pursue a foreign policy that is centered on improving the welfare and standard of living of the citizens. To realize these crucial goals, it is understood that a secured environment serves as an essential springboard. Nigeria's pursuit of economic diplomacy beginning from the 1980s has been encumbered with strains arising from compromises in environmental and security matters. With the use of historical descriptive method, this work – drawing largely from the Ogoniland degradation in the Niger Delta and the recurring insecurity in Northern Nigeria will examine the impediments posed by environmental sustainability and internal insecurity to the realization of this need. In its arguments, the paper adopted a framework predicated on the theory of integral sustainable development. The research reveals that Nigeria's efforts at development through economic diplomacy have been hindered by internal environmental and security challenges because the leadership failed to adopt more pragmatic and holistic approach in tackling these challenges.

Keywords: Economic diplomacy, Environmental sustainability, Insecurity, Northern Nigeria, Ogoniland.

Introduction

The foreign policy thrust amongst other objectives of post-independent Nigeria was Afro-centric in nature. During this period, Nigeria's political leaders believed in the manifest destiny, which is, seeing the country as a leader and a major player in the continent. This, coupled with the financial wherewithal, Nigeria was emboldened to channel resources and played frontline role for the liberation of other African countries from the last vestiges of colonialism. The foreign policy end was more externally driven, rather than being a sharp focus on developing the domestic economy. This negates the overriding foreign policy objective of realist doctrine which makes states' national or domestic interest *primus inter pares*, whereas, as argued, economic diplomacy has to do with the processes of developing the national economy of a particular country (Salami, 2014, Pp. 81-85). Nigeria on her part used Naira diplomacy to support many African countries without adopting the principle of reciprocity. Perhaps, a hard lesson was learnt when during the Nigerian Civil War, Cameroon demanded for the forfeiture of Bakassi Peninsula before it could support Nigeria. This request made by Cameroon is better understood within the context of realism playing out in international politics.

Moreover, the fall in the price of oil in the international market during the late 1970s, affected the Nigerian economy that was solely reliant on revenues from the sale of crude oil for its government to function. Little wonder that when General Muhammadu Buhari came to power in 1983, one of the reasons adduced for the coup d'état was the failing national economy and the inability of the previous administration to address internal challenges, of which corruption was rife. Thus, the focus of the foreign policy posture of the country this time around did not only cover Africa (as its centerpiece), but also realized that "charity begins at home," which made the economic wellbeing of the country to be on the front line. It was within this context that the lexicon "economic diplomacy" was inserted into the foreign policy thrust of the Babangida administration. The term was used to depict an inward focus of the government while still maintaining good relations with Nigeria's traditional friends and allies.

It is evident that the forces of globalization have brought nations increasingly closer and have made national problems a global concern. Thus, a threat in a particular country has the potential of developing into a global crisis. A recent example is the outbreak of COVID-19 in China that has spread to every other continent with dire consequences on economic activities. Laudable as the objective of economic diplomacy might be, Nigeria's fair share of internal challenges has limited the gains that were to be derived. This work will use the environmental degradation of Ogoniland in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria, and the threat posed by terrorism in the Northern part of the country to highlight the challenges posed by environmental sustainability and internal insecurity on Nigeria's economic diplomacy.

Theoretical Framework

The integral sustainable development approach is used for this study. It is an all-encompassing and comprehensive approach to the study of sustainable development. Kofi (2002) observed that the whole idea of sustainable development is that the environment and development are inextricably linked and that the several approaches to development remain fragmented, funding is seriously inadequate, while production and consumption patterns

continue to stress the world's natural life support systems. On this basis, we are faced with not a single crisis, but a crisis of crises, as well as several breakdowns taking place at the same time throughout our environmental and socio-economic system, on a worldwide scale (Barret, 2005).

The contemporary world is characterized by ever increasing problems that are national, regional and global in scope. Therefore, the present, often fragmented approach of understanding the world will no longer be enough. To appreciate the scope of the problem, a more complex method of addressing the issue is imperative than the current rationality of modern science, characterized by disciplinary fragmentation and increasing specialization (Silos, 1999).

Integral sustainable development is an active response to the call for an end to the age of fragmentation cum specialization in addressing societal challenges. It is the first attempt at combining knowledge from various disciplines in order to remedy social, economic and environmental problems both at local and global levels. For instance, fragmentation is at the root of the different definitions of sustainable development and the different methodologies involved in its implementation. Each of these definitions and methodology respond differently to social, economic, security and environmental challenges - which makes it difficult to achieve a sustainable solution. An integral sustainable development clarifies all these issues and incorporates the various definitions and methodologies into a single mechanism - in order to remedy global challenges. Basically, integral sustainable development can be used to:

- organize knowledge concerning sustainable development through a very expansive understanding of the world that draws on as many disciplines, worldview, and methodologies as possible;
- showcase sustainable development challenges of any scale and their remedies, from a very inclusive vantage point which takes into account the major dynamics - interior (psychological and cultural) and exterior (behavioral and systemic) that has an overbearing influence on initiatives; and
- optimize resources in order to achieve a more lasting and effective solution (Barret, 2005, p. 3).

The proponents of this approach believe that the more dimensions of the world, a sustainable development initiative takes into account, the greater propensity for the initiative to become an enduring panacea. For instance, a solution that relies on just economic analysis will be less sustainable vis-a-vis one that incorporates economic, ecological and social understandings; this in turn, will also be less sustainable than a solution that also includes psychological, cultural and religious perspectives (Barret, 2005, p. 4). Therefore, the proponents of integral sustainable development argue that it is necessary to access as much knowledge about reality as possible, in the most sophisticated and pragmatic way in order to achieve the desired result (Barret, 2005, p. 4).

Consequently, the present fragmented and isolated approaches in addressing Nigeria's internal challenges have become obsolete. The country is blessed with scholars, researchers, academic institutes, consultants and experts from different fields and disciplines. Each group

seeks after funding, claim to possess the magic wand, and tend to promote its particular perspective through the media, at conferences and events. Yet, each has a piece of the puzzle; none has a complex understanding of reality. It is therefore time to harness and integrate, align and synergize all the various approaches in order to achieve a holistic and multifaceted series of disciplined efforts that will be geared towards addressing internal problems such as environmental degradation and general insecurity (Don, 2002, p. 2).

The Challenge of Environmental Sustainability for Nigeria's Economic Diplomacy: A Case of Ogoniland in the Niger-Delta.

The legacies of colonialism coupled with bad governance by successive administrations in post-independent Nigeria battered the country's economy. There was no deliberate plan to place Nigeria on the path of sustainable growth and development. The development plans that were adopted during this period were based on the modernization theory of development that led to the building of white elephant projects such as the Ajaokuta Steel Industry. The economic meltdown of the 1970s and 80s necessitated economic diplomacy- an initiative that centered on development through trade, aid and investment. In other words, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was needed to boost the economy.

Going by its population and natural endowments, Nigeria should be an attractive destination for foreign investments. However, environmental concerns especially in the Niger-Delta region of the country, is frustrating every effort that is geared towards economic diplomacy. These challenges are propelled by the activities of multinational oil companies and the insecurity thereof which are all intertwined. In other words multinational oil companies in Nigeria have caused serious damages to the environment of oil producing states. A good case in point can be derived from the activities of the Royal Dutch Shell, in Ogoniland, Nigeria. Ogoniland is located in the Niger Delta area of Rivers State, Nigeria with a land mass of about 1,000km. It has four local government areas which are Khana, Gokana, Tai and Eleme with a total of two hundred and twenty-six (226) communities. Oil exploration in Ogoniland started in 1958 and the major oil company in the area was Shell. Over the years, the activities of this company fell short of world best practices and led to a monumental environmental pollution and degradation (Nwosu, 2017).

The impact of oil exploration on the environment was compiled by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), whose services was engaged by the administration of Obasanjo in 2006, to conduct an Environmental Impact Assesment (EIA) on Ogoniland in order to determine the hazardous effects of years of oil exploration. The report covered about two hundred (200) locations and obtained about four thousand (4,000) samples (UNEP Report, 2011, p. 5). On August 2011, the UNEP team released a damning report which indicted Shell for soil, water and air pollution in Ogoniland. The report revealed that:

- oil spillage had destroyed the mangrove vegetation of the region;
- there was contamination of land and underground water;
- the contamination of drinking water is 900 times above World Health Organization (WHO) standard;
- air pollution is serious and affects more than a million people; and
- Oil companies operating in Nigeria failed to meet the country's environmental regulation

standard which even fell short of world standard (Agbonifo, 2011, pp. 240-265).

The UNEP team recommended that \$200 million will be required annually for five (5) years, totaling \$1 billion for a thorough cleanup of Ogoniland.

This also brings us to the issue of insecurity- one that is also associated with the activities of the multinational oil companies in the area. Due to the neglect of the environment by these companies, the Niger Delta region of Nigeria is infested with environmental carnage that has put the people in direct conflict with both oil multinationals as well as the federal government which has resulted in unabated crime in the form of insurgencies, kidnappings, destruction of oil facilities, theft of oil/economic sabotage, and wanton killings (Agbonifo, 2011, pp. 240-265). Following series of confrontations with Shell Oil Company, oil exploration was halted in the area in 1993.

Attempt at Curbing the Environmental Challenges

Both the United Nations and the people of the Niger Delta have made attempts at protecting the environment for sustainable development. The United Nations adopted a sustainable development initiative which would regulate the way nations harness the bounties of nature. Sustainable development has to do with the efforts of the present generation to harness the environment without harming the ability of future generations to also benefit from the environment. Therefore, member nations of the United Nations are expected to domesticate the environmental laws which will regulate the activities of industries and by so doing, safeguard the environment. In spite of the laws, the process of achieving environmental sustainability for economic growth remains an arduous task (Albert, 2017).

Environmental laws present challenges on two fronts. Firstly and from the perspective of oil multinationals, it hampers smooth operation, thereby making the environment hostile for profit maximization. The result has been an increasing withdrawal/reduction of investment by the oil multi-nationals. The second difficulty emanates from Nigeria's over reliance on oil as a source of revenue, which has made the Nigerian government to turn a blind eye to the impunity perpetuated by oil multinationals, to the detriment of the host communities. As a developing economy, Nigeria is seriously in need of investments in its industrial sector so as to accelerate economic diversification. This state of affairs has resulted in the neglect of environmental laws by both oil multinationals and the government. Even the most industrialized economy in the world, the United States has withdrawn from the Paris Agreement on climate change. The goal of the agreement was to prevent global temperatures from rising more than 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial level.

In Nigeria, part of the reason adduced for the delay in the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), owes to the fear that most multinational oil companies will relocate to more favorable climes. It is worthy to note that Nigeria as a mono-cultural economy is highly dependent on revenue from the sale of crude oil. Oil as a means of foreign exchange contributes about 90% for the implementation of Nigeria's annual budget. Owing to this, the federal government of Nigeria has always paid lip service to the negative activities of multinational oil companies so far as they generate the much needed revenue. Supported with arms from the metropolis, the Nigerian state has provided multinational oil firms with

security as they exploit crude reserves without regard to environmental sustainability, and to the detriment of host communities. This has resulted in series of oil spillage, pollution, gas flaring, and the loss of means of livelihood for the local people. A combination of all these has manifested in serious damage to the environment as witnessed in Ogoniland. Hence, the inevitable conflict between the host communities and oil multinationals on one hand, and the host communities and the federal government on the other hand (Young, Ndiformache, & Nakiyingi, 2005, Pp. 23-44).

The contemporary trend towards environmental sustainability is therefore a cog in the wheel of progress as no investor will be attracted to a place with strict environmental laws and penalties. The people of the Niger Delta have also responded to the environmental challenges posed by multinational oil companies. In Ogoniland for example, the challenges have led to the establishment of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). Through the organization, the people were able to articulate their demands for justice. Ken Saro Wiwa, a son of Ogoniland and a renowned environmentalist, was prominent in the demand for the compensation of the people. But instead of looking at the plea of the people, at the peak of the struggle, the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1995 executed twelve (12) members of MOSOP, including Ken Saro Wiwa. This incidence, compounded the already tensed situation as militancy, kidnapping, cultism, and economic sabotage escalated in the area.

The Challenge of Insecurity for Nigeria's Economic Diplomacy: A Case of the North-East.

There is no general definition of the term "insecurity" as several meanings have been ascribed to it. To some, it is threat against hunger, diseases, poverty, and social stability. To others, it signifies a threat to their environment. And yet others see it as physical harm or an unsafe atmosphere. Generally, it is a continuous state of fear emanating from a lack of protection. It refers to the lack of protection from danger (Onifade, Imhonopi, & Urim, 2013, p. 53). Insecurity can be in the form of physical, social, economic and environmental threat. Some of the causes are climate change, environmental pollution, terrorism, corruption, ethnicity, proliferation of arms, and transnational crimes. To understand it better, one needs to understand the meaning of security. Simply put, security is about the individual; the feeling of being free from the threats of diseases, poverty, starvation, to mention but a few. Without the security of the individual, security means nothing.

For the purpose of this work, insecurity will be restricted to terrorist activities in Nigeria. Boko Haram, a terrorist organization started its operations in Nigeria in 2002 in Maiduguri but gained recognition in 2009 following series of events. On the night of 25th July, 2009, the sect attacked a police station in Bauchi State. The stand-off between the sect and Nigeria's security operatives lasted for five days and claimed the lives of about eight hundred (800) people while several others were injured. But the game changer was the abduction and regrettable killing of the founder and leader of the sect, Mohammed Yusuf.

Instead of calming frayed nerves, the killing of Yusuf turned the group into a lethal weapon for the promotion of terrorism. According to the Global Terrorism Index, since 2009, Boko Haram has killed tens of thousands of Nigerians and has displaced about 2.3 million people from their home and was at a time, the world's deadliest terror group (Global Terrorism Index Report, 2015). Thus, the growing rate of terrorism has heightened insecurity in contemporary Nigeria, especially in the north east (Ali, 2013, pp. 1-7). As a result, several companies have

left the northern part of the country.

For instance, in 2011, Flour Mills of Nigeria stopped operations in Borno and Yobe State. In order to fully understand the effects of insecurity in Nigeria, a timeline on some of the devastating activities of Boko Haram as provided by verified Wikipedia source will suffice.

- Between July 26-29, 2009, Boko Haram militants clashed with Nigerian soldiers in Bauchi, Borno, Yobe, and Kano State. This marked the beginning of the insurgency which claimed about a thousand lives;
- September 7, 2010, five people were killed and seven hundred and twenty one inmates were freed from prison by members of the sect in Bauchi State;
- December 31, 2010, there was a bomb attack outside a barracks in Abuja which claimed the lives of four civilians;
- May 29, 2011, during the swearing in of former President Goodluck Jonathan, bomb explosions in Abuja and Bauchi State killed fifteen people;
- June 16, 2011, a failed bomb attempt at the headquarters of the Nigerian Police Force claimed the lives of four people;
- August 26, 2011, the sect bombed the United Nations building in Abuja and about twenty one people were lynched;
- November 4, 2011, about one hundred and fifty people lost their lives through a series of coordinated attacks by Boko Haram in Damaturu, Yobe State;
- December 25, 2011, the sect targeted some churches in Madalla, Jos, Gadaka, as well as Damaturu and killed about forty one Christians;
- January 5 and 6, 2012, Boko Haram targeted Christians again Mubi, Yola, Gombi, as well as Maiduguri and killed thirty seven worshippers;
- January 20, 2012, the sect struck in Kano State and murdered one hundred and fifty civilians as well as thirty two police officers;
- April 8, 2012, thirty eight people lost their lives in a church bombing in Kaduna State;
- June 17, 2012, almost forty Christians were killed by the terrorist group in churches in Kano while nineteen people were also murdered in bomb attacks in Kaduna;
- August 7, 2012, nineteen people were massacred when members of the sect invaded a branch of Deeper Life Bible Church in Kogi State;
- October 1 and 2, 2012, about twenty five people were lynched during an attack at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi, Adamawa State;
- December 25, 2012, Boko Haram killed twenty seven Christians in Maiduguri and Potiskum;
- December 28, 2012, fifteen Christians were butchered by members of the sect in Musari village;
- March 18, 2013, about sixty five people were killed in a car bomb in Kano State;
- June 9, 2013, nine children were killed in Maiduguri while thirteen students and teachers were also killed in Damaturu by the militant group;
- July 6, 2013, a shooting in a school in Yobe State by Boko Haram insurgents claimed the lives of forty two people;
- August 11, 2013, mass shooting by the insurgents in a mosque in Konduga, Borno State, led to the death of forty four people while twenty six were injured;
- September 12, 2013, a well-coordinated ambush by the sect led to the death of forty Nigerian soldiers;

- September 19, 2013, about one hundred and sixty one people were killed by the militants in Borno State;
- September 29, 2013, the insurgents invaded Guba College, Yobe State and killed more than fifty students;
- January 14, 2014, thirty five people lost their lives in a bombing by the insurgents in Maiduguri, Borno State;
- January 26, 2014, two separate attacks in Kawuri, Borno State and Chakawa village, Adamawa State led to the death of one hundred and thirty eight people;
- January 31, 2014, eleven Christians were killed again in Chakawa by the terrorist group;
- February 14, 2014, one hundred and twenty one Christians were murdered by members of the sect in Konduga, Borno State;
- February 15, 2014, one hundred and six people were brutally lynched by the sect in Izghe village, Borno State while ninety Christians and nine Nigerian soldiers were killed in Gwosa;
- February 25, 2014, about fifty nine male students were lynched at Federal Government College, Yobe State;
- April 14, 2014, more than eighty eight people were killed in a twin bomb attack in Abuja;
- April 15, 2014, two hundred and seventy six schoolgirls were kidnapped by members of the sect in Chibok, Borno State;
- May 1, 2014, nineteen people were killed in a car bomb in Abuja;
- May 5, 2014, about three hundred people were murdered in the towns of Gambol and Ngala, Borno State;
- May 20, 2014, almost one hundred and eighteen people were killed by a car bomb in Jos, Plateau State;
- May 27, 2014, Boko Haram insurgents invaded a military base in Buni Yadi, Yobe State and killed forty nine soldiers and nine civilians;
- May 30, 2014, members of the sect assassinated the Emir of Gwoza, Idrissa Timta;
- June 1, 2014, about forty people were killed by a Boko Haram bomb in Mubi, Adamawa State;
- June 2, 2014, almost two hundred Christians were murdered in several villages in Borno State by the insurgents;
- June 20 to 23, 2014, seventy people were killed while ninety one women and children were kidnapped by the insurgents;
- June 23 to 25, 2014, about one hundred and seventy one people were killed in a wave of coordinated attacks by the group in north central Nigeria;
- July 18, 2014, about eighteen people were massacred during a Boko Haram attack in Gamboa;
- July 22, 2014, fifty one people were killed by the sect in Chibok;
- September 19, 2014, about thirty people were killed at a busy market in Mainok, Borno State by the militants;
- November 3 to 10, 2014, twin bombs killed fifteen Shiites and forty six students in Yobe State;
- November 25, 2014, more than forty five people lost their lives in the hands of two suicide bombers in Maiduguri, Borno State;
- November 28, 2014, about one hundred and twenty Muslim followers of the then Emir of Kano, Muhammad Sanusi II, were killed during a suicide bombing and attack by Boko Haram members;

- December 11, 2014, about thirty people were killed in Gajiganna, Borno State by Boko Haram;
- December 13, 2014, almost thirty five people were murdered while about one hundred and eighty five people were kidnapped in Gumsuri, Borno State by members of the sect;
- December 22, 2014, about twenty seven people were killed in a bomb explosion at a bus station in Gombe State;
- January 3 to 7, 2015, Boko Haram insurgents invaded Baga town in Borno State killing as many as two thousand people;
- January 9, 2015, a female suicide bomber detonates a bomb and killed nineteen people in a market in Maiduguri;
- January 28, 2015, the insurgents killed forty people in series of attacks in Adamawa State;
- February 7, 2015, the Nigerian government was forced to postpone its general election for six weeks to enable its armed forces to recapture some of the territories controlled by the sect in north eastern Nigeria;
- February 15, 2015, a suicide bomber kills sixteen and injures thirty in Damaturu, Yobe State;
- February 20, 2015, the insurgents killed thirty four people in a wave of attacks across Borno State;
- February 24, 2015, two suicide bombers kills up to twenty seven people at bus stations in Potiskum and Kano;
- February 26, 2015, about thirty five people were killed in two separate attacks in Biu and Jos;
- March 7, 2015, five suicide bomb blasts take the lives of fifty four people while one hundred and forty three others were injured in Maiduguri. On the same day, Boko Haram declares allegiance to the Islamic State;
- April 5, 2015, the insurgents dressed as preachers murdered twenty four indigenes of Kwafaja village in Borno State;
- April 9, 2015, twenty people were killed by members of the sect in Dile village, Borno State;
- June 22, 2015, thirty people were executed in a crowded mosque by two female suicide bombers in Maiduguri;
- November 17, 2015, a suicide bomber in Yola killed thirty two people while eighty others were wounded;
- January 27 to 28, 2016, sixty five people were murdered and one hundred and thirty others wounded in Dalori village and the outskirts of Maiduguri, Borno State;
- January 30, 2016, about eighty six people were murdered again in Dalori village, Borno State;
- February 13, 2016, the insurgents attacked Yakshari village and lynched twenty two people;
- March 16, 2016, three female suicide bombers killed twenty people and injured eighteen in Umarari village, Borno State;
- June 17, 2016, about twenty four people were killed and at least ten wounded after an attack by the insurgents in a funeral in Kuda village, Nigeria;
- July 8, 2016, almost nine people were killed and more than a dozen injured after a suicide bombing attack on a mosque in Borno State;
- September 25, 2016, four soldiers and several civilian JTF members were killed in Miyanti, Borno State and Dareljamal, Kaduna State after a deadly ambush by members of the sect on Nigerian soldiers;
- October 12, 2016, eighteen people were killed by the sect members in an explosion in Maiduguri;

- November 1, 2016, nine people were killed when a car bomb exploded close to a military checkpoint in Gubio;
- November 5, 2016, an army officer and six soldiers were massacred by the militants during a gun duel;
- December 9, 2016, two explosions by Boko Haram killed fifty seven people and wounded one hundred and seventy seven others in Madagali, Adamawa State;
- January 16, 2017, two underage suicide bombers exploded at the University of Maiduguri, and killed three people, a professor inclusive;
- February 11, 2017, seven soldiers were killed and nineteen injured in a Boko Haram attack in Borno State;
- June 8, 2017, about fourteen persons were lynched while twenty four others were injured as suicide bombers invaded a mosque in Borno State;
- July 26, 2017, the terrorists ambushed an exploration team of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation and killed more than fifty people;
- July 29, 2017, fourteen people died and fifteen others wounded when two suicide bombers exploded themselves in Dikwa, Nigeria;
- August 15, 2017, a female suicide bomber detonated and killed twenty people in a market at Konduga village, near Maiduguri, Borno State;
- September 3, 2017, the insurgents invaded an IDP camp with cutlasses and massacred eleven people;
- November 21, 2017, about fifty people were killed in a suicide attack on Mubi, Adamawa State;
- February 19, 2018, one hundred and ten Dapchi schoolgirls were abducted by the terrorists from their school;
- March 1, 2018, the militants killed about eleven people which included three aid workers in an attack on a military barracks in Rann village, Borno State;
- May 1, 2018, about eighty six people lost their lives while fifty eight others were injured during a Boko Haram attack in Mubi, Adamawa State;
- June 16, 2018, almost forty three people were killed and eighty four others wounded following a suicide attack in Damboa, Borno State;
- July 20, 2018, the insurgents invaded a military base in Yobe State and murdered three Nigerian Army Officers and twenty eight soldiers;
- November 22, 2018, the terrorists overpowered the Nigerian Army in Metele village, Borno State, killing about seventy soldiers;
- July 27, 2019, the militants shot at villagers returning from a funeral in Nganzai District, Borno State, and killed sixty five people;
- September 9, 2019, the sect ambushed a military convoy on a reinforcement trip and killed all soldiers in the convoy;
- March 23, 2020, about fifty Nigerian soldiers were killed by a Boko Haram ambush in Yobe State;
- June 9, 2020, eighty one villagers were massacred in a mass shooting by Boko Haram insurgents in Gubio, Borno State (Wikipedia.org).

Submission

From the foregoing, it is evident that environmental and security challenges present a stiff road block to Nigeria's economic diplomacy. It is not surprising that Kaplan (1994) described the Nigerian state as becoming very ungovernable...where ethnic and religious schism is

being entrenched; religious cleavages are more serious; Muslim fundamentalism and Christian militancy is on a perpetual rise; and northern Muslim anxiety over southern Christian control of the economy is severe...the zeal to keep Nigeria together and united is very weak. This state of affairs is synonymous with contemporary Nigeria as terrorist activities are threatening the territorial integrity of the country. Coupled with insurgencies and separatist movements in the South, one can safely opine that Nigeria is on the verge of disintegration.

Boko Haram claim to be against western civilization and education but its formation and existence cannot be isolated from years of misrule by successive administrations in Nigeria. This unfortunate reality made northern Nigeria “the headquarters of poverty” and a breeding ground for pestilence, frustration and anguish. The effect of poverty on humans can never be underestimated. Many scholars have also argued that the manipulation of religious and ethnic sentiments by Nigerian politicians led to the proliferation of various groups such as the Oduduwa People’s Congress (OPC), the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Arewa People’s Congress (APC), Igbo Youth Congress (IYC), Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and Boko Haram.

Without doubt, security challenges in Nigeria have assumed an alarming dimension and demands immediate remedy. Achumba (2013) is of the belief that the efforts of the government have not ameliorated the situation. Similarly, another scholar believes that Boko Haram is the result of the failure of the Nigerian state. He narrated thus:

The Nigerian state has, for long, been synonymous with despotism, inconsistent policies, fiscal crises, debt-ridden economy, injustices and unequal treatment, bad governance, unbridled appetite for corruption, weak institutions, and a complete lack of security of lives and properties...thus, the state has failed to actually manage the affairs of the state (Isa, 2010, p. 314).

Also, Ikelegbe (2005) puts the blame on the Nigerian state as the problems that motivate terrorists and militants as well as the unemployment and poverty that create the fertile ground have remained unabated. As mentioned earlier, economic diplomacy involves the various efforts aimed at improving the domestic economy of a nation and this has to do with the revitalization of the economy.

In Nigeria, the term “economic diplomacy” was coined during the regime of Ibrahim Babangida and was adopted to create an environment of mutual understanding between growth and development in Nigeria’s relations with other countries (Akinrinwa, 1991). Former President Jonathan sees it as citizen diplomacy whereby all Nigerian citizens, home and abroad, are involved and are at the centerpiece of the economic development of Nigeria. Economic diplomacy is about creating a stable and peaceful environment that will attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Nigeria. The cardinal objectives of the concept are:

- to attract Foreign Direct Investment in the industrial and agricultural sectors;
- to reschedule Nigeria’s external debt; and to expand and accelerate trade with other

countries.

Nigeria's natural resources as well as human capital should have positioned the country as a major investment hub. However, our national image which has suffered as a result of the security challenges bedeviling the country has taken its toll on economic progress. Nobody will obviously want to invest in an atmosphere of insecurity and instability. As a sovereign state, Nigeria is a signatory to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. One of such goals is to actualize the global call for a sustainable environment. The United Nations defines sustainable development as "the development that meets the needs of the present without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development Report, 1987, p. 8). The concept of sustainable development is conceived in terms of attitudinal change in man's efforts at exploiting the bounties of nature. Development is useless if it is unsustainable.

Development through economic diplomacy can only be executed if investors are not restrained by environmental and security challenges. Degradation of the environment does not encourage economic activities and it's only when the people are involved in economic relations, that they can feel the positive effects of development. Environmental pollution leads to friction between local communities and oil multinationals. It promotes an atmosphere of insecurity and hampers economic investment. Sustainable development is erected on three pillars - social development, economic development, and environmental protection. It is unfortunate that terrorism has become a major problem in Nigeria. According to a former United States Ambassador to Nigeria, Eunice Reddick, the insecurity situation in Nigeria is the major cause of the country's underdevelopment (Kufoniyi & Akinyede, 2004).

She concluded that Nigeria's economic diplomacy will not succeed in the face of such insecurity. The activities of Boko Haram in the north and militancy in the south expose Nigeria to the international community as an unsafe place for investment. It places the country as a high risk environment where according to Hobbesian state of nature- life is nasty, brutish and short; where the sanctity of human life is not guaranteed. No wonder, foreign investors in Nigeria are gradually relocating to safer climes.

Nigeria's economic diplomacy discourse should be centered on the relationship between environmental as well domestic security and investments. In this age of economic diversification, the Nigerian economy is in need of foreign direct investment. The foreign investments in both the northern and southern parts of the country can be viewed as one whose protection is essential for the survival of Nigerians and the realization of the objectives of economic diplomacy. Surprisingly, the Nigerian government has displayed ineptitude at providing the security that will protect such investments and meet the needs of human as well as sustainable development.

Conclusion

To be candid, the twin forces of environmental degradation and insecurity have combined to frustrate Nigeria's economic diplomacy. Economic diplomacy is meant to cater for the economic wellbeing of the citizenry through foreign direct investment, but the threat of environmental degradation by multinational oil companies especially in the Niger-Delta, and insecurity as exemplified with the case of Boko Haram mostly in the north-eastern part of

Nigeria, has acted as an impediment towards achieving such goal. Environmental laws meant to protect the environment did not succeed, and government effort to curb insecurity equally failed.

Consequently, a number of observations were made from the study. First, the environmental laws as provided by the United Nation did little to protect the host communities. Thus, the oil companies were either forced by the host communities to stop operations as with Shell BP in Ogoniland, or were protected by the host government to the detriment of the locals, of which both involves revolt and violence. As mentioned earlier, this has placed members of the host communities on a direct conflict with both the oil multinationals and the government. Not only that, the government failed to ameliorate the situation due to its selfishness. Foreign investment should meet the basic needs of the citizenry in a sustainable manner, but the ruling class being more interested in safeguarding national revenue, consistently ignored the depletion of the environment.

Furthermore, the fundamental function of any government is the protection of lives and properties. Unfortunately, this has eluded Nigerians as a result of years of bad governance and ineptitude on the part of policy makers. Security has become another means by which public funds are misappropriated. In view of both challenges, economic diplomacy remains a mirage.

Moving forward, environmental laws has to be revisited in order to protect the interest of all parties: the environment, the people and the investors. Also, government needs to prioritize the security of its citizens. A proactive measure should be employed in the fight against insecurity. Without an atmosphere of peace, there can be no growth and development. Until these conditions are met, the question of economic diplomacy will remain a facade.

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